Why Concepts Matter

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Why Concepts Matter

Translating Social and Political Thought

Edited by

Martin J. Burke and Melvin Richter

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CONTENTS

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INTRODUCTION: TRANSLATION, THE HISTORY OF CONCEPTS AND THE HISTORY OF POLITICAL THOUGHT

Melvin Richter

Translation has always been indispensable to communication among cultures; to transmission of knowledge and belief from one period or site to another; to understanding how and what others think, and the conceptual apparatuses they use. Now, at a time when once- separate parts of the world are increasingly drawn together, for better or worse, by irreversible political, economic, and cultural forces, the significance of translation from one language to another has become increasingly evident but no less problematic. Since translation is as old as civilization itself, there is a vast stock of competing theories and unresolved disagreements about how best to translate. But most of the theories thus far developed have derived from controversies about the translation of sacred books, classical Greek and Latin texts, and literary works. There has been relatively little discussion of the distinctive problems involved in converting texts in the human sciences from one language to another; and even less consideration of the obstacles to translating political and social thought, whether restricted to its classics, or extended to its more ordinary forms.[1]

This volume breaks new ground in its focus on the theory and practice of translating political and social thought. A group of distinguished scholars, drawn from different disciplines and a variety of languages and cultural settings, consider the problems that arise from the study of translation, principally, but not exclusively, in the history of political and social thought, and in the transfer of works in those subjects from one culture to another. Especially novel is the application to these issues of two relatively new disciplines, the newly formulated and increasingly institutionalized university discipline of translation studies, and the history of concepts, or conceptual history (*Begriffsgeschichte*). While the history of concepts emphasizes the central place of language and translation in political and social discourse, especially in concept formation, transmission, and

[1] For a discussion of the history and scope of "the human sciences," see Donald R. Kelley and Bruce Mazlish, "Review Symposium on Roger Smith, *The Norton History of the Human Sciences*," *History of the Human Sciences* 14 (2001): 129–47.

reception, translation studies includes a variety of approaches that differ as much as machine translation, and the historical study of translation theories in the major cultures of the world.

By considering the interrelationships of these three scholarly concerns not previously treated together, this book is meant to begin the discussion of just what and how each of them can learn from and contribute to the others about the theory and practice of translation. In such a meeting of fields hitherto separate, it is most profitable to assume that no one professional expertise trumps all others, that what is to be discussed is controversial and contestable; that since practitioners of all three fields are accustomed to disagreements, great and small; they regard such disputes as normal, rather than pathological; and that they acknowledge that despite differences in matter and methods, colleagues can learn from one another.

Of these three subjects, the oldest and most established is the history of western political and social thought. Its landmarks are inconceivable without translation: the transfer of classical Greek thought to Rome; of Hebrew and Aramaic texts into the Christian Bible, the discovery and reception of the political theories of Greece and Rome in medieval and Renaissance Europe; the transmission of the heritage of Roman law; the impact of Lutheran and Calvinist Bible translations on Protestant political theory; the creation of republicanism in England and America out of the civic humanist texts of Machiavelli and his contemporaries; the complex history of how the modern natural jurisprudence of Grotius and Pufendorf was received by the French, Scottish, and American Enlightenments; the powerful pull exerted by translations of the works of Herder and Hegel upon political thought in Russia and eastern Europe; and, after 1945, the profound effect upon the social sciences produced by the translations of Max Weber into English.

While such large-scale transfers of concepts and systems of thought are the concerns both of historians of political and social thought, and of cultural historians, there is good reason to believe that their research would be greatly aided by knowledge of work in translation studies, including ongoing controversies in that field. As Peter Burke has argued convincingly, "history deserves a large place in Translation Studies, and studies of translation deserve a large place in history."[2] This holds true for the

[2] Peter Burke, "Lost (and Found) in Translation: A Cultural History of Translators and Translating in Early Modern Europe," *KB Lecture 1* (Wassenaar: Netherland Institute for Advanced Study, 2005), 3.

methods used to study the texts central to the history of western political and social thought.

An example of how such a rapprochement might begin is a formulation by André Lefevere, a translation theorist:

> [P]eople who translate texts do not, first and foremost, think on the linguistic level, the level of the translation of individual words and phrases. Rather, they think first in terms of . . . two grids. . . . I would suggest that we think of them as intertwined. One is what I would like to call a 'conceptual grid,' the other a 'textual grid.' . . .
>
> Problems in translating are caused at least as much by discrepancies in conceptual and textual grids, as by discrepancies in languages. This fact . . . becomes blatantly obvious when we are faced with the problem of translating texts from Western to non-Western cultures, and vice versa . . . [T]he grids, in their interplay, may well determine how reality is constructed for the reader, not only of the translation, but also of the original.[3]

These passages are valuable in two ways. On the one hand, they convey one of the few points on which a consensus exists between translators and translation theorists. As Arthur Goldhammer, one of the greatest living translators, has written: "[I]t's usually a mistake to fetishize the lexical dimension of a text. Translation . . . is, like any art, subordinate to a larger order, to a principle of the whole."[4] Thus the criticism of translations is usually and mistakenly made in terms of equivalents of individual words and phrases, rather than in their rendering of the original text as a whole, or of its concepts, as distinguished from the words designating them. Such criticisms are made on the commonsensical but erroneous assumption that translation is a simple transfer of words or texts from one language to another on the model of the bilingual dictionary.

Another merit of Lefevere's formulation is to call attention to the grid of concepts in any theoretical text. This point is helpful when we consider the special problems of translating texts in the human sciences, and especially those that involve conceptual transfers from Western to non-Western cultures, and in the opposite direction. Yet Lefevere does not seem to be aware that major works in the history of concepts exist, which greatly facilitate the translation of texts when considered in terms of their conceptual grid. Here practitioners of two methods focused on closely

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[3] André Lefevere, "Composing the Other," in *Post-colonial Translation*, eds., Susan Bassnett and Harish Trivedi (London: Routledge, 1999), 75–6.

[4] Arthur Goldhammer, "Translating Tocqueville: The Constraints of Classicism," in *The Cambridge Companion to Tocqueville*, ed. Cheryl Welch (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2006), 151.

related problems, could profit from dialogue. Few historians of concepts in the human sciences know anything about the existence of translation studies, much less, about its distinctive methods, theoretical foci, and highly developed fields, such as the history of translation.

This has been studied in terms of its practice, its theory, or both together. Histories of translation as a practice deal with such questions as what has been translated, by whom, under what circumstances, and in what contexts. Histories of translation theory deal with differences among translators and their critics about how to define and execute their tasks. Typical disputes have centered on the relative importance of content, style, and reader response. A characteristic chapter in such a history states and evaluates the concepts of fidelity, spirit, and truth in translation as held by theorists in different periods, places, and disciplines.[5]

One striking characteristic of the history of translation theory is the prominence of its principal figures in so many other disciplines such as political thought, theology, jurisprudence, and philosophy. Among those who made fundamental contributions to translation theory are: St. Augustine, Cicero, St. Jerome, Nicole Oresme, Leonardo Bruni, Martin Luther, Thomas Hobbes, and J.G. Herder. *Mutatis mutandis*, analogous multifaceted individuals are to be found in other cultures and periods when great emphasis was placed on translation into and from Arabic, Hebrew, Chinese, and Japanese. Why do some theorists become translators or formulate normative principles of translation for others to follow? Is this because of the consequences produced by translating a text in one way rather than another? If so, in which cases can such effects of translation upon the reception and use of texts be demonstrated?

Are the purposes of translation best served by literalness or by seeking to approximate the spirit of the text? Should the translator seek to adapt the source text to the cultural conventions of the target audience, or should translations emphasize what is different and foreign about their source? Should the same standards be applied to translating literature, philosophy, sacred texts, the humanities, political and social thought, and the human sciences?

The response to this question by Lawrence Venuti, a prominent theorist of translation studies, merits attention. He evokes Schleiermacher's 1813 lecture on "The Different Methods of Translation," among the most

[5] L.G. Kelly, *The True Interpreter. A History of Translation in the West* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1979), 205–18.

celebrated texts in the history of translation theory. Schleiermacher distinguished between interpreting and translating. The first, clearly inferior in Schleiermacher's mind, involved the mechanical transmission from one language to another of factual, quantitative, or descriptive materials; the second, requires both individual creativity and the imaginative grasp of differences in spirit which distinguish the source from the target language. Schleiermacher argued that the translator must choose between moving the reader towards the author, that is, making the audience aware that the text comes from a foreign language and culture; or else moving the author towards the reader, that is, producing a fluent, transparent version of the source text easily mistaken for a work created in the target language and culture.

Venuti regards the second "domesticating" and "assimilationist" strategy of translation, as a lamentable form of conservative conformity to the dominant values and power structure of the target-language culture, which it thus reinforces and maintains. Venuti attacks Anglo-American translators for accepting the preferences of their readers and publishers for "an illusory effect of transparency, whereby the translation seems to be . . . the foreign original. The transparency . . . conceals a thoroughgoing domestication, in which the foreign text is inscribed with cultural values that prevail in contemporary America."[6] What Venuti favors is a "foreignizing" form of translation which stresses what is strange and unfamiliar in the original, thus resisting and criticizing easy assumptions of domestic superiority, and promoting respect for cultural differences. However, Venuti concedes that his favored strategy is best suited to literary, as distinguished from what he calls technical translation. It is striking that his reason for doing so is that "technical translation" is not concerned with "linguistic effects that exceed simple communication (tone, connotation, polysemy, intertextuality). Technical translation is fundamentally domesticating: designed to support scientific research, geopolitical negotiation, and economic exchange . . ."[7]

The readers of this volume will judge for themselves whether the translations treated in the contributions that follow do or do not conform to

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[6] Lawrence Venuti, "The American Tradition," in *The Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*, ed. Mona Baker (London: Routledge, 1998), 310. See also Venuti, *The Translator's Invisibility* (London: Routledge, 1995) and *The Scandals of Translation* (London: Routledge, 1998).

[7] Venuti, "Strategies of Translation," in *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*, 244.

Venuti's depiction of "technical translation." Can all translations of texts in the history of political and social thought be described as technical, i.e., as scientific research, in Venuti's terms? This is to assume that distinctions between the human and physical sciences are purely verbal, and that despite its use of rhetoric, political and social thought can be safely classified as non-literary. Do the theories of language and translation used in the history of political and social concepts exclude anything beyond simple communication? Finally, can it be said that Venuti's distinctions apply equally well to all intercultural transfers of political and social concepts via translations? If reading this volume produces doubts about any or all of Venuti's assertions, then this will indicate at least one benefit of bringing together translation studies, the history of political and social thought, and conceptual history. That there are others as well will emerge from seeing how insights from translation studies illuminate contributions from the two other fields.

In Jeremy Munday's chapter dealing with translation studies, he first provides both a brief sketch of its history and a sampling of the varied subjects covered and the new methods deployed in its rapidly expanding development. This initial section does not seek to summarize all the information covered at greater length in the latest edition of Munday's valuable book-length introduction to translation studies. Rather it indicates to readers where and how their own interests have been treated in what Munday calls an "interdiscipline."[8]

Among the reasons given by Munday for his belief that it is impossible to develop a general theory of translation is his contention that translation is "inextricably interwoven with political and cultural considerations." In addition to overt manipulation of texts from the outside by the censorship practices of authoritarian political regimes, Munday analyzes occasions, in which the translator's own agenda and perspective contributed significantly to shaping the work as presented to the target audience. One case involves *Ariel*, an essay by the Uruguayan author, José Enrique Ródo, which has been translated four times into American English. Munday analyzes these diverse editions in order to point out how each version uses syntactical patterning, choice of English equivalents for Spanish abstract concepts, and the use of commentary to reframe the text so as to persuade the target American audience to accept the editor's interpretation of Ródo

[8] Jeremy Munday, *Introducing Translation Studies. Theories and Applications* (New York: Routledge, 2001).

and his essay. Although identifying what he regards as partisan distortions in each of the four versions of the text, Munday does not pass judgment on them. Thus he suggests that while translations can and should be criticized, this cannot be done by referring to any one set of criteria for what constitutes a good translation.

Another case analyzed by Munday is Stuart Gilbert's translation of *L'Espoir*, André Malraux's novel about the Spanish civil war. Here Munday emphasizes two more ways in which translations may be altered or redirected by considerations that have little to do with the text as originally written. The first refers to decisions by publishers and editors; the second, to the imposition of the translator's ideology on the text. In this case, the English publisher believed that sales of the novel in translation depended upon its publication before the Spanish civil war was ended by the victory of Franco. Thus Gilbert was subjected to great pressure to finish his translation of a work that ran to 120,000 words, and to accept a title that would help sell the book. The English edition was called *Days of Hope*; the American, *Man's Hope.*

Despite his status as a professional translator, Gilbert was given to altering texts arbitrarily. Before accepting the task of translating *L'Espoir*, he insisted on securing Malraux's assurance that the novel was not "red propaganda." Then Gilbert, after receiving the consent of his publisher, cut three pages because he feared that they were so sexually explicit that the whole translation might be banned. Gilbert's English version of Tocqueville's *L'Ancien régime et la Révolution* is so full of the anachronistic social science jargon of the 1950s, that sociologists of that period, who did not read French, could praise Tocqueville for having anticipated the terms they used in their own theories. Yet Munday concludes that Gilbert was not exceptional. Every translator "operates within a specific sociocultural and ideological context that inevitably conditions the translator's decisions and even distorts the translated text." This description, however, would seem to make it difficult, if not impossible to judge which is to be preferred among competing translations of the same work. Munday is not alone among the contributors to this volume in his judgment that it is impossible to specify what constitutes an acceptable translation. However, others such as Steven Lukes, argue that it is nevertheless possible to identify some characteristics of translations that warrant rejection, especially if acceptable alternative versions are available.

Attempts to provide a strict definition of translation are questioned in Anthony Pym's chapter, "On History in Formal Conceptualizations of Translation." While Pym's discussion of the competing paradigms proposed

for Translation Studies by its practitioners is on the level of metatheory, he makes a number of points relevant to pragmatic issues raised by other contributors to this volume. He first disposes of the "equivalence paradigm," the prescriptive theory of translation that had its greatest vogue in the 1960s and 1970s, and continues to be the view most generally held by readers who have not been exposed to translation studies. The equivalence paradigm is often associated with the theory developed by Eugene Nida in his capacity as advisor to those translating the Bible into the many languages of "the missionary world." The concept of equivalence is usually phrased in terms of words that refer to the same thing in the source and target languages, or trigger the same or similar associations in the minds of native speakers of both languages.[9] Pym asks how can we know what were such associations for users of the two languages. If the answer is fidelity to the source, Pym queries the adequacy of such a characterization; the question remains: "Fidelity to what?" As does Lukes in his chapter on "Translating Durkheim," Pym calls attention to theories of the indeterminacy of translation developed by Anglophone philosophers of language such as Quine, Davidson, and Grandy, who deny that there is any one-to-one equivalence between terms in different natural languages.

An alternative way of proceeding is to concentrate on the reception and receivers of a translator rather than on the resemblance between source and target. Other paradigms, such as Gideon Toury's, would have us concentrate on the ways translations operate within specific cultures. Such an approach also emphasizes the variable positions of translators in relation to the texts they produce. Pym points out that "translators can ally themselves with an author, hide behind an author, distance a text (described in Kari Palonen's depiction of Koselleck's method), obscure thought, adapt ideas to new receivers." Pym's question of whether a given text is or is not a translation recurs in the chapters by Mario Turchetti and Eric Nelson dealing with auto-, or self-translations by Bodin and Hobbes, as well as in those by Douglas Howland and Joachim Kurtz dealing with intercultural translations into Japanese and Chinese.

Like translation studies, the history of political and social concepts is a relatively new discipline, but one that has much to contribute to the subjects treated in this volume. First developed systematically in (West) Germany, it has been applied there in a number of extraordinary reference

[9] Dorothy Kenny, "Equivalence," in *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*, 77–80.

works to the histories of German and French political, social, and philosophical thought.[10] Projects inspired by, but not identical to the German original, are being published or undertaken in the Netherlands, Finland, Denmark, Sweden, Spain, and South Korea. Teams of Italian and Dutch scholars, concerned with the concepts charted in their respective national histories, are considering lexicons comparing and contrasting the varied forms taken by the political, social, and legal concepts developed in modern Europe.

Nor is conceptual history outside Germany confined to the compilation of lexicons. Critical discussion of its methods and findings have led to innovative applications to projects which will study what occurs when political and social concepts are transferred from one setting to another in the course of international cultural exchanges. Such projects aid in developing a more detailed understanding both of how Europeans have conceptualized their experiences of political and social change since the late middle ages, and of how these concepts have been received, adapted, or transformed when transmitted to peoples elsewhere in the world. In this way, the history of concepts contributes to the development of a new comparative field of study made possible by existing and future projects charting national and regional modes of thought.

While such works, both inside and outside Germany, differ in important ways, their main emphasis is upon the history of such basic concepts as 'democracy,' 'civil society,' or 'revolution.' The importance of concepts derives from their relationship to action. Neither political activity nor social behavior can occur without a common stock of concepts. Highly

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[10] These include *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe. Historisches Lexikon zur Politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland*, eds. Otto Brunner, Werner Conze, Reinhart Koselleck (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1972–90); *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, ed. Joachim Ritter (Darmstadt: Wissenschafliche Buchgesellschaft, 1971–2007); *Handbuch politisch-sozialer Grundbegriffe in Frankreich, 1680–1820*, eds. Rolf Reichardt, Hans-Jürgen Lüsebrink, Eberhard Schmitt, in collaboration with Gerd van den Heuvel and Annette Hofer (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 1985–). To them are being added works on allied subjects: *Historisches Wörterbuch der Rhetorik*, ed. Gert Üding (Tubingen: Max Niemeyer, 1992–96); *Lexikon aesthetischer Grundbegriffe*, ed. Karlheinz Barck (Weimar: Metzler, 2000); and *Reallexikon der deutschen Literaturwissenschaft*, ed. Klaus Weimar (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1997–2000).

For overviews and critiques, see Melvin Richter, *The History of Political and Social Concepts, A Critical Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995); *History of Concepts: Comparative Perspectives*, eds. Iain Hampshire-Monk, Karin Tilmans, and Frank van Vree (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1998); *Die Interdisziplinarität der Begriffsgeschichte*, ed. Gunter Scholtz (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 2000); *Begriffsgeschichte, Diskursgeschichte, Metapherngeschichte*, ed. Hans Erich Bödeker (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2003).

complex, always both controversial and contested, the basic concepts of a political or social vocabulary are those that have become indispensable as slogan or target to those who compete for power and influence.

Because they can be recycled, basic concepts carry meanings applicable to novel circumstances and structures, which they may affect in crucial ways. The history of the translation and reception of concepts also shows the difficulties of those authors, who, like Plato, Hobbes, or Bentham, seek to coin a new language to express what they regard as their novel ideas and methods. Theorists cannot disregard the resistance to new usage that comes from the established corpus of their language, the linguistic resources created in the past and shared by all who use it. Thus every basic concept carries a diachronic thrust, against which must work anyone seeking to create a novel set of concepts or to transform the meanings of those already in use.

Translation from other languages plays an important part in the history of political and social concepts. Through translation, every society acquires and adapts some of the new concepts it borrows to meet needs, real or imagined. Often significant information about how a society processes such novel ideas may be gained from systematic use of multilingual dictionaries and encyclopedias which record and date the loanwords adopted as names for concepts, as well as the subjects to which they are applied. In addition, many other types of sources are used to track the history of political and social concepts: parliamentary speeches, newspapers, pamphlets, fliers, as well as non-verbal sources such as images in paintings, prints, cartoons, caricatures, and games.[11] Both synchronic and diachronic analyses are used to chart the history of political and social concepts.

The leading theorists of conceptual history have argued that it is best understood as a form of translation essential to concept formation, transmission, and reception in political and social discourses.[12] Reinhart Koselleck, preeminent among them, has argued that the history of political

[11] For a description of sources used to chart concepts, see Richter, *The History of Political and Social Concepts*, 18, 20, 39, 86–89.

[12] Reinhart Koselleck, "*Begriffsgeschichtliche Probleme der Verfassungsgeschichtsschreibung*," in *Der Staat* Beiheft 6 (1983): 13–14; "A Response to Comments on the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*," in *The Meaning of Historical Terms and Concepts. New Studies on Begriffsgeschichte*, eds. Hartmut Lehmann and Melvin Richter (Washington, D.C.: German Historical Institute, 1996), 62. See also Kari Palonen, *Die Entzauberung der Begriffe* (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2004), 241–44, 330–32; "Translation, Politics and Conceptual Change," *Finnish Yearbook of Political Thought* 7 (2003): 15–35.

and social concepts may be reconstructed through studying the reception, or more radically, the translation of concepts first used in the past but then pressed into service by later generations. Koselleck holds that understanding the meaning of thought in the past "implies a conceptual history."[13] Is Koselleck using translation as a metaphor, or as a rigorous description of a distinctive method?

More extended discussion of his theory, as well as applications and criticisms of it, occur in the chapters by Palonen, "Reinhart Koselleck on Translation, Anachronism, and Conceptual Change," and Jörn Leonhard, "Translation, Cultural Transfer and Semantic Interaction: European Variations of *liberal* between 1800 and 1830." Each chapter takes up and illustrates different aspects of Koselleck's theory and practice of the history of concepts. Leonhard classifies the ways in which translation alters concepts when they are transferred from one context to another. He also stresses Koselleck's contention that basic political and social concepts are ambiguous, controversial, and contested. Palonen, who elsewhere has written the best account to date of Koselleck's development, distinguishes several phases in Koselleck's theory of the relationship between conceptual history and translation.[14] In this chapter, he first examines Koselleck's rationale for choosing what he calls the *Sattelzeit* (c.1750–1850) as the temporal focus of the great lexicon he brought to completion, *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe. Historisches Lexikon zur Politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland*, (*GG*). The project originated in the attempt to track linguistically the advent and perception of modernity in German-speaking Europe.

How was the mapping to be done? When Koselleck defined the Sattelzeit, the transitional period to be covered by the *GG*, he, in Palonen's words, "was as much focused on the limitations of the need for translation, as on the need for affirming it." That is, Koselleck sought to classify concepts in terms of three categories: (1) those with meanings that have remained sufficiently unchanged so as to be comprehensible by readers today, such as 'democracy'; (2) concepts such as 'state' or 'civil society,' whose earlier meanings have been so effaced from usage that their use in texts of an earlier period can now be understood only after scholarly reconstruction of their former uses; and (3) neologisms such as 'fascism' or 'Marxism,' coined in the course of revolutionary transformations they

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[13] Reinhart Koselleck, "Social History and Conceptual History," in *The Practice of Conceptual History: Timing History, Spacing Concepts* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), 21.

[14] Kari Palonen, *Die Entzauberung der Begriffe.*

helped shape or interpret. Every article in turn was organized in three parts: the first dealt with usage of the term prior to the *Sattelzeit*; in the second and longest section, development and changes of the concept's meaning are covered from the mid-eighteenth-century as far into the nineteenth-century as its special history requires. The third and briefest section, the *Ausblick* was meant to establish the extent to which in present-day usage, older meanings of a concept have dropped out or still persist.[15]

At first Koselleck assumed that the terms designating modern concepts were comprehensible to native speakers, and did not need to be translated, unlike those used in pre-modern political and social discourses. But in a self-acknowledged correction of his previous understanding of conceptual change, Koselleck admitted that concepts in use after the *Sattelzeit* also required translation.

However, there still remains the fundamental question of how, without lapsing into anachronism, to understand the political and social concepts used in pre-modern periods. One answer is simply to translate the texts of an earlier period into the nearest equivalents in the language of the historian's own time. Another is to use only the terminology found in the original texts. In one of his most extended discussions of why translation is indispensable to the method of conceptual history, Koselleck reviewed the path-breaking work of Otto Brunner on how the meaning of key concepts used in late medieval Europe had been distorted by nineteenth-century historians. Their work was described by Brunner as having applied retroactively and anachronistically a whole set of binary distinctions characteristic of the liberal, bourgeois, and national structures, within which nineteenth-century historians themselves lived, and were themselves conditioned. Thus, they uncritically conceptualized the past in terms of dualities that were not present in the thought and institutions they studied: state and society, might and right, idea and reality, public and private. This set of systematic anachronisms produced, Brunner argued, major misunderstandings of the constitutional, social, and economic life of late medieval and pre-modern European societies, such as those based on rule by the heads of aristocratic families. Brunner sought to retrieve the original meanings and functions of such key concepts in use during the medieval past as 'lordship,' 'territory,' 'feud,' 'peace,' and 'right.'

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[15] For a more detailed summary, see Koselleck's *Einleitung* to the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, and Richter, *History of Political and Social Concepts*, 36–42.

What is required to retranslate these concepts into modern terms that do not distort their meaning in the past? Koselleck argues that the first step is to retrieve the language of the period studied rather than using that of either later historians or sociological analysts (who work in terms of a-temporal definitions). Yet this return to the language of the historical agents is not enough. In order to recover the original meaning of concepts in the source text, as distinguished from the words designating them, a further operation of retranslation (*Rückübersetzung*) is required. The language of the past must be redefined in terms of its relation to present usage. Thus the history of concepts does not privilege the language of the source text by simply reproducing it without reference to present-day meanings of the same or analogous terms. The historian of concepts is concerned to reveal both similarities and differences between former and present usages, and to do so by contrasting not just words and phrases, but semantic fields as well.

The *GG*, at its best, produces such accounts of political and social language not only in classical antiquity, when relevant, but also during the medieval and early modern periods. In its articles, their authors did not hesitate to conclude that there were no precise analogues during these periods to highly differentiated usages at certain other times, including the present. Thus descriptions of political and social language can report informatively that in given times and places, there were only imprecisely differentiated concepts available to those writing or speaking about politics and society. Such findings may suggest that when comparing the political concepts used at approximately the same time in different European countries and natural languages, it will often be the case that there were no precise matchings of senses and functions. Pointing up such differences and incompatibilities in terms of discourse may be no less valuable than in finding similarities. Some such incommensurable relationships are well known: the fact that the French term *politique* and its German equivalent, *Politik*, may be translated into English as either 'politics' or 'policy.'

To sum up, the *GG* seeks to combine diachronic and synchronic analyses of political and social language at a given time with a treatment of its context. To do so, it identifies the users of and the target audiences for the main concepts of specific, often contested idioms, old and new. In this way, the *GG* calls into question the putative unity of historical periods. It seeks to discover the identity both of those who proposed and the others who opposed the introduction of new concepts.

In his chapter, Palonen both emphasizes the significance of Koselleck's critique of Brunner, and endorses Koselleck's theory that a double act of

translation is needed: between the language of the present and past, and back from that of the past to the one used at present. But Palonen now raises a further question. When proposing hypotheses to be tested in the *GG* about how political and social concepts have changed since the critical period of transition from pre-modern to modern thought, Koselleck identified four different types of change in political and social language, such as its democratization and politicization, not all of which can be discussed here.[16] But, Palonen asks, what is the status of the categories Koselleck himself employs in these classifications? Are they historical or analytical? Does a concept such as 'politicization' have a history? If so, can it be used, as does Koselleck, to analyze texts from historical periods when the concepts of politics and 'politicization' were not available? If so, "how can we choose analytical categories that are both beneficial in the historical analysis of concepts and are separate from the concepts themselves?"

To a considerable extent, Palonen relies on his own long-term work on the history of the concepts of 'politics' and 'politicization' in Germany and elsewhere. After alternating sustained and apposite empirical accounts of the history of these concepts with frequent returns to the theoretical questions at issue, he concludes that "Categories cannot be used for the study of periods or sources in which the categories themselves are immediately a part of the conceptual controversy." A welcome feature of this chapter is the way that the history of 'politics' and 'politicization' is deployed to illustrate and clarify the author's abstract methodological argument.

In his chapter, Jörn Leonhard studies the role of translation in cultural transfers and semantic interactions in Europe during the first three decades of the nineteenth-century. Beginning with a recapitulation of Koselleck's theory of conceptual history, Leonhard then examines the significant variations in what was meant by 'liberal' and 'liberalism' in different European countries, each possessing its own natural language. His target is the assumption that just because the same words are used in disparate linguistic and political contexts, these terms all refer to identical ideas, movements, or programs. Leonhard proposes to replace the notion of a unitary European liberalism by a set of national histories displaying a striking variety of differences in the understandings and usages of 'liberal' and 'liberalism' in France, England, Germany, Italy, and Spain during the same period. Evoking Koselleck's claim that basic modern political and social concepts share a tension created by the gap between past experiences and expectations of the future, Leonhard concludes that

[16] For a brief statement, see Richter, *History of Political and Social Concepts*, 37–8.

the nature of these tensions varied so much from country to country, that after 'liberal'/'liberalism' were translated from a foreign setting, the meanings of these terms became crucially transformed when inserted into local political and social discourses.

The process of transferring concepts from one national language to another, Leonhard tells us, usually proceeded in three stages: (1) translations imitating the original usages in French; (2) translations that adapted 'liberal' and 'liberalism' to the specific experiences, interests, and expectations of the recipient country; and (3) translations which integrated once foreign concepts into domestic discourses so successfully that native speakers, unaware of the concepts' origin, applied them only to their new national context. In time, depending upon local circumstances, 'liberal' and 'liberalism' could come to designate a political party of movement away from traditional institutions and practices, as in Germany early in the century, or to represent, as it did for English Tories, the dangers of Jacobin terror and Napoleonic dictatorship, a set of associations that were to be discarded when those oriented to reform in England decided to call themselves and their political party 'liberals.' This chapter applies conceptual history to the explanation of differences in the outcomes of cultural transfers during the same period of European history. Its account of how translations of 'liberal' and 'liberalism' produced effects differing greatly from one country to another, serves as an admirably clear introduction to its author's prize-winning book.[17]

The next two chapters in this volume focus on self-translations of major books by Bodin and Hobbes, each arguably the greatest political thinker of his century. The contributions by Mario Turchetti and Eric Nelson raise several issues about translation, its relationship to conceptual history, and to the history of political thought. Did Bodin and Hobbes choose to repeat in another language what they had already said in their previous work? Or did they have other reasons for executing Latin versions of their earlier works? What do their respective decisions show about their attitudes towards the two languages in which they wrote. Did their two versions use the same or different concepts, vocabularies and arguments? If variations significantly altered the original texts, what were their authors' reasons for doing so? Should one of the two versions be regarded as more authoritative; or should they be juxtaposed and read together? Given that mastery of Latin is not to be assumed among either French or Anglophone

[17] Jörn Leonhard, *Liberalismus, zur historischen Semantik eines Deutungsmuster* (München: Oldenbourg, 2001).

students of political thought at this time, should the later texts now be translated?

Turchetti and Nelson both ask whether the Latin versions by their authors of Bodin's *République* (*Six Books of the Republic*) and Hobbes's *Leviathan* are translations, or, for that matter, whether Bodin or Hobbes believed their Latin texts to be translations. Thus Turchetti and Nelson are brought to consider the questions raised by Munday and Pym about whether it is possible to determine if a given text is or is not a translation. Clearly, the fact that these versions are interlingual, as classified by Roman Jakobson, does not settle the matter. Neither Bodin nor Hobbes gave much thought to whether their Latin versions were faithful to their respective earlier texts in French and English. Both seem to have felt that to record what they thought later in their lives would interest their reading publics more than precise Latin equivalents of their initial formulations.

Turchetti argues that the French text of the *République* should be printed and read side-by-side with the Latin translation made ten years later by its author. He describes Bodin's reasons for writing in these two languages as differing considerably. The French version was an attempt to support the monarchy by the political argument it made at a time when the government was endangered by a war at once civil and religious. The goals of the Latin translation were more personal and intellectual. It addressed an international, that is, an elite European audience, from which Bodin sought recognition of his contributions to political and legal theory, as well as his mastery of the latest achievements in philology and rhetoric. Both translations presented Bodin's theory of sovereignty as the distinguishing feature of the (early) modern state. But when he published his original version in French, he believed that the survival of the French monarchy depended upon it applying the principles he had developed in his *République*. This predominantly practical emphasis was reinforced by the vocabulary he used. As Turchetti demonstrates, on more than fifty occasions the French version employed forms of *politique*, ('politics,' 'policy,' 'political'). Bodin claimed to have surpassed ancient, or classical political philosophers, thus classifying himself as practicing that same discipline.

Much of Turchetti's chapter is devoted to identifying and explaining a crucial and potentially puzzling difference between the French original and its ostensible translation into Latin. Despite the fact that the proper ordering of governments occupies the central, although not exclusive, place in both versions, the Latin translation never uses *politicus* in any of its substantive, adjectival, or adverbial forms.

Why this difference in the two renditions by Bodin, who contributed so much to modern political language? Turchetti points to Bodin's statement that only Latin is sufficiently 'noble' to convey two crucial facts: on the one hand, the Romans were almost the only people to exalt the rights of the sovereign of the State over those of natural and paternal law; on the other, the Romans granted allies and foreigners the same rights as those of Roman citizens. As for Bodin's decision to use a set of Latin terms that bypass the vocabularies hitherto used to designate everything political in both French and Latin, Turchetti attributes this to Bodin's wish to demonstrate that he had thoroughly assimilated the highest standards of humanist philology developed in Florence by such theorists of translation as Leonardo Bruni.

At the same time, Bodin was unconcerned with reproducing in Latin what he argued in his original French text. Whenever he thought he had improved his argument, or no longer subscribed to what he had written ten years before, he took the occasion to replace it in his Latin version. Thus lexical equivalence was not the issue it might have been for a translator other than himself. Presumably the readers of this later version would be interested primarily in Bodin's latest statement of his position.

Turchetti concludes that analysis of the differences between the French and Latin texts is indispensable to students of Bodin's political thought. By specifying the many modifications and altogether new arguments that appeared in the Latin texts, significant alterations of the texts can be detected. At the same time, the two texts often complement each other; many passages gained in clarity when Bodin offered a fuller exposition in Latin of points made briefly or ambiguously in French. Because of his belief that both versions are equally indispensable to the understanding of Bodin's theory, Turchetti is preparing a critical, bilingual edition, which will print the texts of the French and Latin versions side by side.

In the course of discussing Hobbes's Latin version of *Leviathan*, Eric Nelson addresses several questions: was it a translation of his English text? Or, as some interpreters have argued, was the direction of the translation reversed? That is, did Hobbes first write *Leviathan* in Latin, and only later provide an English version? After a careful review of the evidence for dating the two versions, Nelson concludes that the Latin was the product of Hobbes's last years. But were the two versions of *Leviathan* the same or two different works? Nelson concludes that they differed in significant respects. The Latin both includes passages not present in the English text, and omits other, usually controversial, sections of the earlier version. This being the case, Nelson poses two further questions: first, was the Latin a translation, as understood today? Second, did Hobbes himself consider his

Latin text to be a translation of *Leviathan*? To this second question, Nelson answers by referring to two works written by Hobbes during the same period towards the end of his life, both of which Hobbes classified unambiguously as translations, his renditions of Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.

Nelson finds Hobbes's renditions of Homer's Greek often "astonishing," and in many passages, far removed from anything previously proposed as their nearest English equivalents. Hobbes adds lines of his own invention, and deletes some of those attributed to Homer. It is here that Nelson raises the question of whether Hobbes's understanding of translation falls within the wide range of variations found in the theories of our own day. Nelson sees a fundamental continuity between Hobbes's translation practices in the Latin *Leviathan* and those followed in his renditions of Homer. Concerned to inculcate the duty of obedience to sovereigns, Hobbes treated all three of these texts primarily as a means of civic instruction. Fidelity to the original, even when the text had been written by Hobbes himself, did not rank high among his objectives. Fearful of charges that he was heretical in his religious views, and subversive of monarchy in his political writings, Hobbes treated the Latin *Leviathan* as a welcome opportunity to correct by addition and deletion those statements in the English version which, during the Stuart restoration, exposed him to potentially life-threatening charges that his civil science threatened church and state. Hobbes had come to believe that the translator's first duty is to save authors, including himself, from their own indiscretions.

By the end of his life, Nelson concludes, Hobbes became converted to a theory of translation at once "strident and shocking: . . . faithful translation, as we understand it, is immoral. It can never be right to say what is false, because what is false is dangerous—whether it is a newly-minted falsehood, or an old falsehood repeated in a new language."

If Hobbes here seems to challenge "faithful translation, as we understand it," that understanding becomes even more endangered when, as in the chapters by Peter Burke, Douglas Howland, and Joachim Kurtz, translation involves transposing texts and untranslatable terms from one culture with its own history and natural language to another.[18] Burke treats what he calls the "cultural translation" of the Ottoman Empire by Europeans in early modern Europe; Howland analyzes the nineteenth-century

[18] An entire reference work devoted to untranslatable, principally philosophical terms, is *Vocabulaire Européen des Philosophies: Dictionnaire des intraduisibles*, ed. Barbara Cassin (Paris: Seuil, 2004).

Meiji translation of John Stuart Mill's *Essay on Liberty* into Japanese by Nakamuru Keiu; Kurtz, that of Fichte's *The Vocation of Man* into Mandarin by Liang Quichao during the First World War (using a Japanese translation from German). All three chapters focus primarily on the intercultural circulation and reception of concepts and categories; secondarily, on the terms of the vocabulary used to designate them. Burke is concerned with translations from Turkish to western languages; Howland and Kurtz, with translations in the opposite direction, from English and German to Japanese and Mandarin.

Burke's chapter forms part of his larger project examining early modern European translations of foreign languages in terms of the extended metaphor used by anthropologists such as E.E. Evans-Pritchard when they refer to "cultural translation."[19] By this they mean "what happens in cultural encounters when each side tries to make sense of the actions of the other." In "Translating the Turks," Burke considers two related issues: first, what he denominates as the "cultural translation" of the Ottoman Empire and its Turkish inhabitants by westerners writing in their own languages; second, the translation of these renditions into other European languages: Latin, Italian, French, English, German, and Dutch.

Burke classifies "cultural translations" of the Ottoman Empire under three rubrics: (1) conflations with persisting medieval stereotypes of Muslims; (2) fresh perceptions based on direct observation; and (3) more rarely, views combining old images with new information. The principal novelty of all three, Burke asserts, came in their emphases on the distinctive nature of the Ottomans' political regime. Five terms in different languages were presented as models of how the Ottomans were ruled, and ruled those they conquered: tyranny, despotism, absolutism, slavery, and lordship. Burke's discussions of these regime types are restricted to providing one example of each usage. Perhaps because Burke is concerned primarily with "cultural translation," he does not treat the histories of these regime classifications, or the extent to which in early modern Europe they were regarded as wholly or partially synonymous. Nor does he attempt to present the spectrum of political positions advocated by the writers using each of these terms, the different audiences they addressed, or the political conjunctures that led them to favor the choice of one concept over the others.

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[19] See Peter Burke and R. Po-Chia Hsia, *Cultural Translation in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: CUP, 2007), 8.

Burke does show how changes in the nature of sources can affect translation strategies.[20] When first-hand observation of the Ottoman Empire replaced medieval stereotypes of the Muslim world, unique practices, offices, or institutions were revealed for the first time, thus raising the question of whether they might be legitimate because of the different imperatives confronted by the Ottoman Empire and European governments respectively. If indeed these practices, offices, or institutions differed so radically from those of the West, then it seemed plausible that this uniqueness should be underlined for the reading public by the translator retaining such Turkish words as 'spahi,' 'pasha,' 'bey' or 'janissary.' Burke assesses the consequences produced by the two competing strategies of 'classicizing' or 'foreignizing.' Translation into Latin imposed certain imperatives such as following Ciceronian and humanist stylistics and rhetoric, as well as finding classical analogues. Translation into a vernacular language encouraged use of Turkish terms, and the recognition by writers, such as Rycaut, of legitimate differences in Ottoman maxims from those of European government and morality. On balance, Burke concludes, the refusal to translate culturally specific terms both promoted European understanding of Ottoman culture and enriched the political vocabulary of the target audience. Another, if rare, outcome was the increased ability to view European culture from the perspective of an observer from a culture once thought alien, as in Montesquieu's *Lettres Persanes*.

Burke's analysis of translation, cultural and linguistic, is from the Turkish into the languages and cultures of Europe. This direction is reversed by Howland and Kurtz, both of whom examine transpositions of works written in western languages into the very different linguistic, political, and cultural systems of Japan and China. When we discuss the circulation of concepts, we are apt to do so in terms of whether the transfer from a European text to another language is an accurate transcription of the original. An alternative mode of proceeding has been provided by Joachim Kurtz in his contribution to an earlier volume of studies aptly called *New Terms for New Ideas: Western Knowledge and Lexical Change in Late Imperial China*:

> Modern Chinese discourses, no matter whether on social or ideological questions . . . are articulated to a large extent in terms that were coined and normalized as translations of Western or Western-derived notions. Yet far from serving as simple equivalents of imported ways of understanding, many

[20] "Translation strategies" is an important technical term in translation studies. See the article by Venuti in *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*, 240–44.

> terms of foreign origin have unfolded a life of their own in modern Chinese contexts. More often than not, they have acquired new meanings that creatively alter, extend, or even undermine established European conceptions. In order to comprehend the resulting semantic and conceptual differences, historians of thought must pay close attention to the multilayered process of translation and appropriation from which these terms have emerged.[21]

Analysis of conceptual transfers and changes in Asian thought must be placed within the context of radical inequality in the power of participants. Often, as in nineteenth-century China, such translation and appropriation of political concepts took place amidst unprecedented rapid and violent change, much of it produced by foreign aggression, western, Russian, and Japanese. It seemed clear to some Chinese intellectuals that acquiring modern western knowledge and technology was a condition of China remaining an independent state capable of fending off its aggressors. Yet there was no consensus on whether learning and adapting new political arrangements were on the same level of importance as acquiring the physical sciences and technology of the foreign powers threatening to partition China.

One school of theorists and translators such as Yan Fu, were convinced that if their country were to survive, it had to adopt western political ideas. In the late 1890s, he began translating a series of works, which although they may seem disparate to us, he thought to form an unified and politically indispensable body of doctrine: T.H. Huxley's *Evolution and Ethics*; Herbert Spencer's *The Study of Sociology*; Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations*; J.S. Mill's *On Liberty* and *System of Logic*; and Montesquieu's *The Spirit of Laws.* For all of these books, Yan Fu had to create a political vocabulary by neologisms and by assigning new meanings to the Chinese characters used to designate existing abstract words and terms. And to gain and hold his audience, this had to be done in a style at once comprehensible and acceptable to the literati.[22]

If conceptual transfers between cultures are to be studied in ways that capture the complexity of the multi-faceted process of exchange and adaptation described by Kurtz, then the effects of translation must be considered in terms of reception, just as much as the strategies adopted by

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[21] *New Terms for New Ideas. Western Knowledge and Lexical Change in Late Imperial China*, eds. Michael Lackner, Iwo Amelung and Joachim Kurtz (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 147. See also *Mapping Meanings: the Field of New Knowledge in Late Qing China*, eds. Michael Lackner and Natascha Vittinghoff (Leiden: Brill, 2004).

[22] See David Wright, "Yan Fu and the Tasks of the Translator," in Lackner, Amelung, Kurtz, *New Terms*, 235–255.

translators. The processes by which translations are received and applied to the conditions of the target society require much more careful analysis than it is possible to outline here.[23] In Peter Burke's previously cited paper, he makes discriminating use of the metaphor of cultural translation in treating "the exchange of ideas and the mutual modifications of meanings in cultural exchanges."[24] While Burke's use of these concepts is illuminating, he does not refer to the part played by comparison in the reception of translations. Ultimately, their fates are determined in no small part by comparisons between what has been introduced and what is indigenous. Here it may be useful to recall that comparison itself is far from being a transparent concept, with a meaning unaltered since the early modern period surveyed by Peter Burke. Following John Locke, eighteenth-century European theorists regarded comparison as both a basic operation of the human mind, and as indispensable to understanding the rest of the world revealed by the three preceding centuries of encounters. Ever since European thinkers have continued to develop many different models and conflicting evaluations of these alien regimes, societies, and cultures.[25] Similar variations occurred as well in peoples outside Europe. To engage in comparison on this global scale requires novel concepts and analytic categories.

To take this step, we must ask what happens when the attempt is made to translate the basic political concepts of one society, phrased in its natural language, to another society with an altogether different history, set of institutions, religions, political culture, and language? The barriers to comprehension of the foreign society by both translator and audience are formidable. What is presupposed in the source polity may be unknown in its target, the natural language of which may also differ fundamentally. So too the manifold experiences and expectations which have shaped the basic political concepts being translated may find little or no resonance elsewhere. Do all these considerations make the translator's task impossible? This is what has been suggested by some theories, based on linguistic or cultural determinisms. Yet it is worth investigating the possibility that a

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[23] The works cited above by Professors Howland and Kurtz demonstrate how analyses of the reception of translations should be performed.

[24] Peter Burke, "Lost (and Found) in Translation," 4.

[25] Melvin Richter, "That Vast Tribe of Ideas: Competing Concepts and Practices of Comparison in Eighteenth-Century Europe," in *Archiv für Begriffsgeschichte* 44 (2002): 199–219; "Two Eighteenth-Century Senses of 'Comparison' in Locke and Montesquieu," *Jahrbuch für Recht und Ethik* 8 (2000): 1–22.

more likely outcome is partial understanding combined with creative misunderstanding of what is being translated. It is here that the "multilayered process of translation and appropriation" in 19th and early 20th century China and Japan merits analysis.

An important essay-review by Douglas Howland has surveyed the most important differences in recent work on translation and conceptual transfers from the West to China and Japan. Much as does Kurtz in the passage previously cited, Howland begins with a statement of the adaptations required by the translation of texts in intercultural exchanges:

> We now understand translation in a manner quite different from two decades ago. Translation is no longer a simple transfer of words or texts from one language to another on the model of the bilingual dictionary or the bridging of language differences between peoples. Rather . . . translation has become a translingual act of transcoding cultural material—a complex act of communication.[26]

Thus discussions of cultural transfers necessarily involve differences among natural languages, forms of writing and argument, rhetorics, and structures of authority, as well as the media through which texts are transmitted. In this essay-review, Howland distinguishes two groups of historians treating the effects of western colonialism and imperialism on the peoples of Asia. One group treats states once strong and centralized, such as China and Japan which were never completely subjugated, colonized and ruled by an alien bureaucracy and army. As historians of such states, they tend to focus less on colonial and post-colonial causes than on the role played by translation in bridging differences between languages, social practices, religions, and political cultures. The paradigm situation for them is when indigenous agents wish to overcome obstacles blocking access for their peoples to western ideas, institutions, science, and technology.

Another group of Asian historians has studied just such subordination when suffered either by peoples such as those of the Indian subcontinent with established cultural traditions, or by those of the Philippines whose traditions were largely oral. Both such populations have for the most part been studied from the perspective of colonial and imperial powers, whose practices have successfully dominated those they ruled. Such descriptive and explanatory theories share the view that such foreign powers have forced their subjects to translate their native languages, concepts, and

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[26] Douglas Howland, "The Predicament of Ideas in Culture: Translation and Historiography," in *History and Theory* 42 (2003): 45.

culture into the language of those dominating them. Thus because subject peoples are forced to use alien language and representations, they are coerced into perceiving themselves as inferiors, subordinate to their conquerors, and owing allegiance to them. This school tends to use the concept of translation metaphorically, as the total process of domination.

On which points do these two interpretations differ? One school sees colonialism and empire as always producing a conceptual monopoly, with two and only two possible outcomes: either the victims' identification within their masters' language, concepts, and representations; or else resistance entailing complete rejection of them. This view has been criticized because some native agents may move beyond resistance to creating new usages of once foreign terms by reinventing them in the form of neologisms or previously unknown linguistic practices. Creative reinterpretations can and do appear in the course of translation. How the history of concepts can help identify such developments in the language of intercultural translation and transfers is illustrated by the contributions of Kurtz and Howland to this volume.

Kurtz provides a brief account of how political and social concepts in modern Chinese came into existence through the translation, appropriation, and creative transformation of their occidental originals from either European languages, or from Japanese renditions of European texts. It was easier to learn Japanese than western languages, and Japanese texts were more easily transferable into the Chinese writing system. Always ambiguous, contested, and contestable, western political and social concepts became even more so in China at the stage when there were not as yet any consensus about which Chinese terms should designate these transfers from western conceptual vocabularies. After the fall of the Qing Empire in 1911, Kurtz tells us, Chinese scholars took increasingly great liberties as they adapted to indigenous contexts the concepts appropriated from occidental and Japanese sources.

The two contributions to this volume by Munday and Pym reveal that as practitioners of the new "interdiscipline" of translation studies, they are not only reluctant to make normative judgments about the adequacy of any given rendition of a text from another language, but that they even question whether it is possible to define what constitutes a translation. The historical chapters by Turchetti and Nelson confirm that neither Bodin nor Hobbes seem to have troubled themselves about either issue when they produced Latin versions of texts they had written earlier in vernacular languages. As we turn to "cultural translations," Liang Quichao

seems to have attained an even higher level of emancipation from his source when he used one title to present his Chinese version of three unconnected minor works by Fichte. Because Liang did not read German, he had worked from Japanese translations, which he did not identify.

Yet Kurtz offers a convincing explanation of how Liang was able to produce a text that reproduced successfully "the spirit" of Fichte's works written for a popular audience at the time of Napoleon Bonaparte's invasion of German states a century earlier. How was Liang able to create the fascination Fichte subsequently held for Chinese writers? Kurtz compares the situation of Prussia in the early nineteenth century to that of China when the new republic seemed impotent to fend off Japanese territorial demands during the First World War. Liang represented Fichte as a thinker who had linked national revival and individual self-assertion. By creating a new sense of citizenship and its obligations, Fichte had shown how to rescue first, Prussia, and then republican China, from the external dangers that threatened their national independence. By following Fichte's precepts, the Chinese "body politic" could be revitalized. However far Liang's text diverged from Fichte's German refracted through Japanese translation, Liang captured "Fichte's pathos of immediacy and rhetoric of total identification." By comparing the contexts of Fichte and Liang, Kurtz has shown how conceptual appropriation and rhetorical strategies could make possible this successful cultural translation from the proto-nationalism of a nineteenth-century German state to the full-blooded version characteristic of twentieth-century China.

Kurtz also shows how the criterion of fidelity to an original text in another language can become irrelevant. In the case analyzed by him, the issue of fidelity does not arise for two reasons: first, since Liang had assembled three previously unconnected writings by Fichte, there was no one such original; second, since Liang knew no German, he translated into Chinese a composite volume of extracts taken from Japanese versions of Fichte. Thus Liang published something close to a pseudo-translation, that is a text, not only purporting to be, or taken for a translation, but also a work, the status of which is uncertain because it calls into question the distinction between a translation and an original work.[27]

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[27] Douglas Robinson, "Pseudotranslation," *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*, 183–85.

The chapter by Howland on Nakamura Keiu's translation into Japanese of Mill's *On Liberty* is set in a context both resembling and strikingly different from that depicted by Kurtz.[28] By the third quarter of the nineteenth-century, China and Japan were both ancient East Asian civilizations with histories and high cultures fully comparable to those of the Western states which now sought to conquer, dominate and exploit them. Japan, despite being the later of the two to be exposed to extensive foreign contact, developed a government far more capable of determining its own destiny than the decaying Qing Empire that nominally continued to rule China until 1911. As Howland's two books make clear, the transition from the previous Tokugawa regime (1603–1867) to that of the westernizing Meiji (1868–1912) involved transforming both the actual structures of government, society, and the economy, and developing the concepts of the new language that would be used to describe and legitimize these far-reaching changes. Howland refers explicitly to Koselleck's formulation of the tension between past experiences and expectations of the future that altered political and social concepts during European transitions to modernity. Treating in terms, analogous to but not identical with, Koselleck's depiction of the relationship between conceptual and social history, Howland charts the introduction of Western political and social thought to Japan. He is concerned to explain its reception, which he relates both to the distinctive patterns of Japanese westernization of its governmental and economic structures by the self-appointed oligarchy that led the Meiji Restoration, and to the transformative processes of translation as it actually took place.

Howland's books, like his chapter in this volume, emphasize the role of translation in two processes often, if arbitrarily, treated apart: the creation and circulation of new concepts, and their application to political action.[29] Novel concepts were needed for the intense debates about which policies ought to be adopted in a Japan, which its new rulers believed, had to be westernized in order to survive. While it seemed inevitable that many, if not all of these new concepts were to be translated from Western thought, it mattered a great deal how they were to be interpreted and applied. It was no easy matter to adapt existing Japanese concepts to those being

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[28] This context has been described by Howland in *Translating the West: Language and Political Reason in Nineteenth-Century Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002) and *Personal Liberty and the Public Good: the Introduction of John Stuart Mill to China and Japan* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005).

[29] See note 24.

introduced from contemporary Western political and social thought, particularly when it became necessary to choose among the many variant forms of liberalism. Since even in Europe the key concepts of liberalism were bitterly contested, as has been seen in Jörn Leonhard's chapter in this volume, disputation was even more intense in Japan.

In addition, Howland emphasizes, certain elements of pre-Meiji Japanese political culture persisted even among proponents of reform. In terms of availability for the new political vocabulary that was needed, some key concepts of nineteenth-century western thought such as 'society' did not exist in Japanese; other concepts such as 'liberty' or 'individualism' were apt to be resisted by many, perhaps most, Japanese politicians, educators, and intellectuals. "In translation, a word like 'liberty' connoted a measure of selfishness that restricted its ready acceptability; in the arena of political action, liberty posed an anarchic threat to social stability—thus the ethical decision to restrict liberty seemed reasonable."[30]

In Howland's contribution to this volume, he applies the method of conceptual history to his general thesis about the nature and significance of translation in Japanese cultural transfers, particularly those involving political and social concepts. His subject is the translation of Mill's *On Liberty* by Nakamura Keiu, whose version of Samuel Smiles' *Self-Help* also became a bestseller. While Nakamura Keiu's enormously popular rendition of *On Liberty* retained some of the central arguments originally made by Mill in this essay, Nakamura also attributed to Mill certain positions conspicuously absent from, or even opposed to Mill's own beliefs, such as the view that Christianity is the "quintessential form of freedom." Other elements of Mill's argument, congenial to the Meiji oligarchy, were preserved by Nakamura. These included the restriction of political participation to a minority of the population, and the indefinite postponement of any extension of the suffrage until the elite judged that the majority had been sufficiently educated.

In a stunning departure from Mill's analysis of the greatest dangers to individual liberty in modern states, Nakamura built upon the fact that at this time the Japanese language had no concept of society. It was, of course, Mill's argument that, in contrast to the past, it was no longer government, but modern society, which constituted the principal threat to individual liberty. In the absence of this concept from Japanese, Nakamura consistently conflated government, society, and the power of both. He sought

[30] Howland, *Translating the West*, 4.

to paraphrase Mill's dichotomy by constructing an analogy between Japan as a whole and a self-governing, harmonious village community made up of households equal in wealth and power. While denying the legitimacy of social hierarchy, Nakamura's model left no room for either a theory of representation, or of constitutionalism. He simply assumed that when the common interest of the community has priority, this will ensure that the government will always limit the exercise of its power. While endorsing Mill's vision of a polity based on the liberty and rights of the individual, Nakamura sought to limit that liberty by depicting it as ultimately derivative from the general interest of the community. Christian love and conscience were also introduced by Nakamura (who had been converted to Christianity) as means indispensable to preventing the individualism lauded by Mill from turning into selfish self-assertion incompatible with the general interest of the community.

Howland rejects the view, which he attributes to social science theorists of modernization, that the political concepts and values originating in the West and adapted in China and Japan were "semantically transparent," that is, when translated and deployed in their new context, they meant the same to the Chinese and Japanese as they had to those who had coined them elsewhere. Instead of this view of translation, Howland examines the ways in which translations engage and deliberately modify the arguments of their originals, in order to comment upon those originals."[31] Particularly in his second book, *Personal Liberty and the Public Good*, when Howland calls attention to Nakamura Keiu's departures from Mill's text, he does so, not to designate them as misunderstandings or unjustifiable interpretations, but "as elements of an intercultural discussion on individual liberty and public virtue." Devoting a whole chapter to Mill's contemporary British critics, Howland shows how they too questioned the adequacy of the way Mill theorized the relationship between individual liberty and the public good. In short, Mill's translator, unable to accept Mill's treatment of this theoretical difficulty, used the Japanese text as a way of suggesting a different formulation that resolved or mitigated Mill's argument. In this respect, Nakamura Keiu's treatment of Mill, resembles Eric Nelson's description of Hobbes's way with Homer, treating translation as the occasion for correcting errors in the original text.

[31] Howland, *Personal Liberty and the Public Good*, 19. "Semantic transparency" is also treated at length in *Translating the West*, 18–25.

In contrast to Howland's assessment of Japanese and Chinese versions of Mill, when Steven Lukes and Keith Tribe evaluate English translations of Durkheim and Max Weber, their works are treated as the classic texts of an academic discipline. Those who read such classics in translation presumably wish to learn, insofar as this is possible, just what were the arguments that these two theorists understood themselves to be making in their major works.

But what exactly is entailed in designating a given work in political or social theory as a classic, and then prescribing criteria for evaluating translations of such texts? Two statements by those recently involved in translations of classics merit attention. Both, it may be surmised, were provoked by the appearance of simultaneous multiple translations of such a work. In the first case, there is now, or soon will be, four completely new translations of Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*, including a critical edition; in the second, there are, or soon will be, three completely new translations of Max Weber's *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, again including a critical edition.[32] Arthur Goldhammer has translated Tocqueville; Peter Baehr has collaborated with Gordon C. Wells, in editing and translating *The Protestant Ethic.*

After Goldhammer published his prize-winning translation of Tocqueville's *Democracy*, he reflected on it in a paper called "Translating Tocqueville: The Constraints of Classicism." Goldhammer does not spend much time on defining a classic, or on specifying the difficulties encountered by translators of classic texts in the very different domains of literature, sacred books, political and social theory, the human sciences, history, or philosophy. Goldhammer classifies Tocqueville's *Democracy* as a classic because of its "stature, substance, and style." As such, it has a special relation to other texts, as well as to the language in which it was originally written. Ranking Tocqueville in this way raises a number of questions: "Does the work's classic status constrain its translator? Should it? And if so how?" To these queries Goldhammer replies by connecting Tocqueville to certain predecessors in the history of political thought,

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[32] Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, trans. Harvey C. Mansfield and Delba Winthrop (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001); trans. Gerald E. Bevan (London: Penguin, 2003); trans. Arthur Goldhammer (New York: Library of America, 2004). The Liberty Fund will publish an integral translation by James Schleifer of the critical edition of *De la Démocratie en Amérique* ed. Eduardo Nolla, (2 vols; Paris, 1990). Stephen Kalberg has translated Weber's *The Protestant Ethic* (London: Fitzroy Dearborn, 2001), as have Baehr and Wells (London: Penguin, 2002) while Peter Ghosh has been working on a critical edition.

recognized by him as peers with whom he wished to enter into conversation implicitly. Disdaining the pedantry of identifying them, much less citing specific texts and editions, Tocqueville for the most part preferred to express his views ironically and indirectly. These characteristics lead Goldhammer to comment: "A certain delicacy is required for dealing with such a text lest subtle references—hints contained in a lexical wisp or syntactic murmur—be obscured."

Goldhammer's view of Tocqueville raises the question of which strategy of translation is best suited to his intertextual subtlety. Goldhammer first considers the theory of Leo Strauss and his influential school, which emphasize the special problems of translating the classics, as they define them. Because of the dangers of censorship or of popular opposition, canonical philosophers are said to have presented in veiled form their actual positions on the permanent problems of the human condition. Their language was therefore encrypted. When classics originally written in Greek or Latin are translated into modern, vernacular languages, their present day interpreters all too often misconstrue or seek to improve upon these invaluable original statements. Their translator must not destroy the signs or meanings of the classic texts by imposing modern resolutions of apparent contradictions, or by harmonizing seeming inconsistencies.

Thus in their recent version of Tocqueville's *Democracy*, Harvey Mansfield and Delba Winthrop declare the need to show "reverence" for the classic French text and to do so by following literally its syntax, word order, and sentence structure. This amounts to seeking word-for-word equivalents so as to avoid imposing any interpretation. Goldhammer concludes:

> The belief that literal translation can get us closer to the text than an honest, if inevitably partial, effort to grapple with its meaning strikes me as a kind of scientistic fallacy, in that it seeks to atomize the complexity of language the better to dominate it. It is odd to find such a view of language associated with the name of Strauss, who denounced what he called "the 'scientific' approach to society" as an "abstraction from the moral distinctions by which we take our bearings as citizens and as men. The indispensable condition of 'scientific' analysis is then moral obtuseness.

To this Goldhammer adds, "Literal translation, when it defies the instincts of the translator's ear for his own as well as the foreign language, seems to me to suffer from a comparable aural obtuseness."[33]

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[33] Goldhammer, "Translating Tocqueville: The Constraints of Classicism," in *The Cambridge Companion to Tocqueville*, ed. Cheryl Welch (Cambridge: C.U.P., 2006), 139–66.

Another approach to translating the classic texts in political or social thought has been offered by Peter Baehr in his *Founders, Classics, Canons*.[34] Baehr's closely argued book, although focused on the history of sociological theory, applies equally well to the history of political thought. Finding irremediable flaws in all the competing formulations of what constitute founders and canons, Baehr concludes that the notion of classics is the best way of characterizing the value and vitality of that selected group of texts which make up the indispensable books of a discipline. Noting that continuing membership in this collection is not guaranteed, he refuses to consider the classics of sociology as timeless because of their reputed intrinsic value. Rather their vibrancy depends on a contingent interface of authorial brilliance and interpretive appropriation, that is, their capacity to withstand continual reevaluation of their importance and indispensability. For a text to achieve and maintain the status of a classic,

> [I]t must typically overcome a variety of cultural hurdles; while to survive as one, it must be subjected to continual critical engagement, its concepts reformulated to meet new problems and trials. Not many texts can survive, or attract, such scrutiny and productive reshaping. Those that are able to do so are quite properly described as 'classic'.[35]

How should such texts be translated? By which criteria should translations of classics be judged, particularly when there are rival versions of them, among which a choice must be made whether by historians and researchers, university teachers and students, specialists and common readers? Baehr addresses such questions about the relative adequacy of translations of Max Weber into English. He does so by examining how different renditions have affected the subsequent interpretation and reception of Weber in the English-speaking world. Baehr concludes that translations of Weber have been seriously misleading. Although, in his book, Baehr confines himself to English versions of Weber, he has formulated a systematic analysis of mistakes all too often made by translators of works in political and social thought. These errors result not so much from dubious or incorrect renditions of individual words, but from an identifiable set of indefensible translation practices. The value of Baehr's catalogue of errors in method and their consequences is demonstrated in Steven Lukes's chapter on translating Durkheim, from which further examples will be taken.

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[34] Peter Baehr, *Founders, Classics, Canons. Modern Disputes over the Origins and Appraisal of Sociology's Heritage* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2002).

[35] Baehr, *Founders, Classics, Canons*, 184.

Baehr distinguishes four different ways in which translators of works in political and social theory may have failed to produce legitimate, or even defensible versions of a classic text. First, some of them are unacceptable because of the translator's linguistic incompetence in either the source or the target language, or both. In a symposium evaluating the recent translation of Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* by Harvey Mansfield and Delba Winthrop, Goldhammer identified almost a score of instances when these translators, as the result of failing to identify French idioms used by Tocqueville, used unacceptable word by word renditions of the meanings carried by a phrase.[36]

Thus terms crucial to the analysis may be rendered incorrectly, elided, or omitted altogether. Baehr refers to the distortion caused by the omission by Gerth and Mills of a single word, *zunächst*, ('for the time being,' 'at present') from Weber's "Politics as Vocation." Dropping this one word from the translation produced the impression that Weber was expressing a cultural pessimism similar to that of Spengler, rather than affirming the need for political sobriety and judgment by citizens when confronted by an unpalatable but temporary situation. Another instance of a devastating omission by a translator is provided by Lukes, who instances the first English translation of Durkheim's *The Rules of Sociological Method*, where an entire paragraph crucial to the argument of the first chapter was dropped.

Second, serious distortions may occur because the translator either does not convey the meaning of the concepts used in the source text, or else fails to indicate the semantic field within which the author used these concepts. Thus the binary or other oppositions; the comparisons and contrasts that structure the work in its original language may drop out from the rendition. Lukes refers to the damage done by the English translation of Durkheim's injunction to study society empirically and inductively rather than by deduction from philosophical abstractions: "*comme des choses*." The translator muddied the waters by representing Durkheim as saying that the characteristics of society were things, and should be studied as such, thus denying that there was any place in sociology for the study of morality, religion, or anything else connected to human consciousness.

The importance of understanding the concepts used by a classic theorist has been argued by Peter Ghosh, who holds that transferring Max

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[36] "Comments on the Mansfield-Winthrop Translation of Alexis de Tocqueville, *De la Démocratie en Amérique*," in *French Politics, Culture Society* 21 (2003), 210.

Weber's work from one language to another is not a linguistic, but a conceptual act. Thus the ideal translator of Weber, while possessing linguistic competence in both German and English, should be familiar with Weber's conceptual world and its context, political and intellectual. On this view, Weber's meaning is established primarily through his concepts, which have to be understood strictly historically.[37]

Third, the literary and philosophical allusions of the author may be either omitted or misleadingly paraphrased and explicated. When in his translation of *The Protestant Ethic,* Talcott Parsons reduced Goethe's famous title, *Wahlverwandschaften* (elective affinities), to the prosaic social science "correlations," he extinguished "the compressed imagery of eroticism, attraction, and alchemy" used by Weber. In an analogous misstep, the first translator of Durkheim's most important book on religion, distracts the reader from understanding the author's interest in the philosophy of science, the central point of which he understood to be a theory of what constitutes a proper explanation. Lukes explains that by rendering *Les formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse* as *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, the translator has not only missed the distinction between 'elementary' and 'elemental,' but misled readers into thinking that Durkheim was concerned with the primitive origins of religion, such as totemism. In Lukes's view, Durkheim hoped to discover what were the elements common to the most complex religions.

Finally, the translation of a classic text may fail to register characteristics peculiar to the language used by the author of the source text. In this case, the target language may differ so much from that of the source, that either the translator or a commentator will need to alert readers that their own language has no equivalents for some of the key terms used in the source text. Thus, if the target audience is to understand certain concepts crucial to Weber's argument but absent from English, either whole phrases must be invented, and such neologisms explained, or else the translator must resort to paraphrases. Baehr calls attention to Weber's frequent use of terms such as *Lebensführung* ('a way of consciously conducting one's life'), *Sinnzusammenhang* ('configuration of meaning'), or *Arbeitsverfassung* ('organization of labor'). If, as often occurs in translations of Weber, the translator fails to mark such differences in usage between the two languages, and instead resorts to a single, usually unsatisfactory, English approximation to the concept, this produces a serious obstacle for readers

[37] Peter Ghosh, "Translation as a Conceptual Act," *Max Weber Studies* 2 (2001): 59–63.

seeking to understand the text. Such translation practices misfire, Lukes tells us, "by failing to signal wider semantic field distinctive of the author's structure of thought, which consists in a web of intricately interconnected synonyms and antonyms."

Lukes goes on to add further specimens from translations of Durkheim to this category of misleading translation practices. He points out that the special meanings Durkheim attached to his terms of discourse—'sociology/psychology,' 'moral rules/sensual appetites,' 'concepts/sensations,' 'sacred/profane—all derived from a set of binary oppositions structured around the basic Durkheimean distinction between the social and the individual. Turning once again to Peter Baehr's *Founders, Classics, Canons,* Lukes notes another set of classifications, this time Baehr's outline of the three possible relationships between the classics of sociology and the concerns of sociologists today: presentism, historicism, and reformulations of historicism intended to meet valid objections to its original version. In his own discussion of Durkheim, Lukes accepts and puts to effective use Baehr's analysis of the four ways in which translations of theory may be inadequate or misleading. However, after noting that these four critiques are what Baehr calls "historicist," Lukes comments that they all designate failures of faithfulness to the original text. But this, in his view, is not the only test that ought to be applied.

Lukes now turns to the arguments about the indeterminacy of translation, made by philosophers of language such as Quine, Davidson, Grandy, and Rorty. Their position is that there are no uniquely correct translations between natural languages. This Lukes grants, but not the possible implication that this makes it impossible to define the limits of legitimate translation, and hence, that anything goes. Accepting Grandy's principle of charity in interpretation, Lukes concludes that translations of texts written by a political and social theorist such as Durkheim must meet certain standards of reasoning. If a translation of Durkheim represents him as making claims that are so absurd as to be implausible on their face, then the translation must be rejected as indefensible or illegitimate. Lukes carefully illustrates his point by providing a detailed analysis and critique of an interpretation of Durkheim's *Les formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse* by Anne Rawls.[38]

In the final chapter of this volume, Keith Tribe surveys the performances of previous translators of Max Weber into English, particularly

[38] Anne Rawls, *Epistemology and Practice* (Cambridge: C.U.P., 2004).

Talcott Parsons, who first presented the *Protestant Ethic* to English-speaking scholars, and later went on to collaborate in an influential version of the work Parsons called *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*.[39] Tribe, who is retranslating parts of this same manuscript, is both a noted historian of economic thought, and a professional translator. Concerned with the history of universities and the social sciences in both Germany and the Anglophone world, Tribe perceives the translation of Max Weber into English as shaped in part by the questionable way Weber's works were posthumously assembled, edited, and published; in part, by the university departments that controlled its reception in the United States and Great Britain.

Tribe begins with the distortions he believes to have been produced through the appropriation of Max Weber by the relatively new university discipline of sociology, which has succeeded in claiming him as a founding father. In the view of Tribe and Wilhelm Hennis, several of whose books Tribe has translated into English, to identify Weber's theoretical interests as primarily sociological is a misrepresentation that has been reproduced in the flawed English translations of his works. All the chairs held by Weber were in either economics or economic history, as defined in the nineteenth-century German university. Thus Weber's research and theory were anchored in the study of politics, and economics, both of which, when treated reductively in the new paradigm of value-free sociology developed in postwar America, came to be considered as dependent variables determined by society and culture. The distortion of Weber produced by representing his oeuvre as a sociology so conceived, was reinforced by the selective choice made of which works to translate. From the revelatory bibliography of Weber in English (supplied by Tribe at the end of his chapter), it can be seen that some works were repeatedly reprinted or retranslated, while others, arguably of equal or greater importance, remained inaccessible to those unable to read them in German.

Tribe finds that Parsons's translations are unsatisfactory, not primarily because of the words he chose as English equivalents, but because he added so many more in his vain effort to make Weber more intelligible,

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[39] Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, trans. Talcott Parsons, (London: Unwin Hyman, 1930); *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, trans. Talcott Parsons and A.M. Henderson, ed. Talcott Parsons (New York: Oxford University Press, 1947). Three chapters of *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization* were reprinted in *Economy and Society*, trans. various, ed. Claus Wittich and Guenther Roth (New York: Bedminister, 1968).

sometimes extending Weber's text by a third. Thus making Weber's prose even more opaque then in academic German, it was easier for Parsons to represent Weber as holding positions anticipating, if not identical to his own. Tribe finds that Parsons's most serious fault as a translator was to mislead readers about Weber's theoretical framework. It was in the terms of the social sciences of Parsons's own theory and time, that he placed Weber. He never asked what was Weber's understanding of his own discursive context. At no point in Parsons's long introduction to *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization* did he refer to what and whom Weber read, what he took or rejected from those he engaged, and how, after these exchanges, he created his own theory, sometimes choosing among existing options, sometimes creatively transforming them.

Implicit in Tribe's criticisms of Parsons as a translator of Weber are several distinguishable prerequisites for anyone seeking to provide an adequate rendition of Weber's work for English-speaking readers. The first, relatively neglected by Baehr and Lukes, is the capacity to identify the departments, disciplines, or fields of knowledge to which Weber contributed. This may be done either by referring to how he himself understood and placed his work, or else by locating it within the structures of German universities, professional societies, journals, and reference works during his lifetime. The second prerequisite of an acceptable translation would be to communicate Weber's theoretical framework and *Fragestellung*, his critical formulation of the questions that needed to be investigated within the parameters of that framework. Third, and here Tribe, agreeing with Peter Ghosh that translating Weber is a conceptual, rather than a linguistic act, concludes that Weber's ideal translator would be able to place Weber within his discursive context. Making explicit the concepts crucial to Weber's theories will clarify both what he was asserting, and what he omitted from consideration. What follows from the diagnosis made by Tribe and Ghosh? It would seem that the most pressing need is for a historically reliable account of the concepts used by Weber in his theorizing, including the other concepts which constituted his distinctive semantic field. It would then become possible to identify what Weber perceived to be those alternative concepts and their semantic fields, against which he defined his own positions.

In the survey of translation studies as an "interdiscipline," with which Jeremy Munday opens his chapter, he alerts us to the fact that translation is and has been the term applied to a bewildering variety of activities and practices, many of which bear little resemblance to one another. The number of commercial, technical, governmental, and scientific texts translated

every year outweighs by far those made of scholarly works. In addition, the analyses of linguists, philosophers, and those working in translation studies, have called into doubt the possibility of developing a general theory of translation applicable to all these activities and practices. Pym emphasizes the variable positions translators may take in relation to the texts they produce: translators can ally themselves with an author (as Kurtz depicts Liang Quichao and Fichte), hide behind an author, distance a text (described in the analogy to Brecht made by Palonen while describing Koselleck's method), obscure thought (as Tribe accuses Parsons of doing to Weber), adapt ideas to new receivers (Howland on Nakamura Keiu's translation of Mill). Pym's question of whether a given text is or is not a translation becomes a central issue in the chapters by Turchetti and Nelson dealing with auto-, or self-translations by Bodin and Hobbes, as well as in those by Howland and Kurtz dealing with intercultural translations into Japanese and Chinese.

In this volume, practitioners of translation studies have expressed their doubts about whether it is possible to arrive at a general theory of translation, either in the abstract terms of philosophy and linguistics, or in the form of empirical generalizations about what translators typically do or have done. There seems to be agreement that it is no longer worth continuing the search for equivalence between words and terms in two or more natural languages. Translation can no longer be regarded as the simple transfer of words or texts from one language to another on the model of the bilingual dictionary.

Another group of contributors have centered their attention upon the political and cultural functions performed by translations and translators. Concern with the fidelity or spirit of a textual transfer from one language to another does not figure among their interests. Rather they study the processes and consequences of cultural exchanges in order to determine the parts played by translation in producing new configurations of meaning and symbolism for its target audience. As Kurtz has put it, by a multilayered process of appropriation and translation, those bringing new concepts to a target culture may "creatively alter, extend, or even undermine" the concepts being borrowed. The analyst is focusing on the process and consequences of the cultural transfer, not the accuracy of what is communicated. To determine the nature and causes of the reception is the purpose of the inquiry.

This is not the case when historians of political and social thought evaluate translations of the classic theorists of their respective disciplines, whether Plato and Aristotle, or Durkheim and Weber. Rather, they are

concerned with the extent to which the translator has conveyed the arguments of these major thinkers. Just what these arguments are, may, of course, be interpreted and evaluated differently. But it would seem curious to grant translators complete freedom to render classic texts as they please. Since their readers are unable to read the text in the language in which it was originally written, their purpose in consulting a translation is, presumably, to gain access, insofar as it is possible to do so, to the arguments of the author and the reasons for them advanced in the text.

Both Arthur Goldhammer and Peter Baehr have stated their criteria for designating the work of an author as classic. Both have gone on to specify the qualities which, in their view, would make a translation of such a work inadequate, misleading, or even, in the words of Steven Lukes, "illegitimate." Goldhammer and Baehr agree that if a translator clearly lacks competence in either the source or target language, that this is enough to disqualify the translation. Goldhammer, disagreeing with the Straussian precept that classics should always be translated literally, provides a nuanced account of why he himself believes that the translator should be guided by the instinct acquired both by careful reading and by faith in the power of the text "to instruct, to inspire, to command respect."[40]

Baehr, cited here together with Lukes's glosses and additional illustrations, identified three other ways in which translations of classics may fail. Perhaps the most significant among them, a judgment also made in the critiques of Parsons's versions of Weber by Tribe and Ghosh, is the translator's failure to convey the special inflection given to the key concepts deployed in the text, to provide their matrix, or semantic field, and the author's polemical orientation, that is, the alternative positions he sought to refute. It is here that Tribe and Ghosh invoke the history of political and social concepts as the indispensable resource for communicating Weber's theoretical concerns at the time of writing.

But how are translators of Weber meant to acquire such competence for mapping the history and context of the concepts used or coined by a classic author? The new field of conceptual history can contribute both by its theory and by its methods for investigating sources seldom consulted by either historians of political and social thought or by translators. While translators, like historians and theorists, normally utilize dictionaries on historical principles such as the *Oxford English Dictionary* and their analogues in other languages, few users of such works are aware of

[40] Goldhammer, "Translating Tocqueville," 162.

their defects as sources for the history of political and social discourses.[41] Perhaps the most systematic and critical method for their investigation has been developed and applied by the editors of a lexicon focused on changes in the French political vocabulary between 1680 and 1820. A comprehensive set of sources was designed to ensure inclusion of all the diverse types of materials relevant to that inquiry, including not only books, but also parliamentary debates, pamphlets, games, and other forms of popular political and social expression.[42] While few reference works are equally thorough, there is a growing number that provide information which goes some way towards filling in the context of classic authors.

Although most translators of classic German works in political and social thought cannot be expected to undertake first hand research in primary sources, they can consult existing books and reference works in conceptual history. The *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* contains two thousand pages of a multi-lingual index to its long articles, many of which deal with the histories of such Weberian concepts as *Herrschaft* or *Macht.* Lacunae can often be filled by the shorter but more numerous entries found in the twelve volumes of the *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, including the history of many terms Weber employed in the course of investigating his extraordinarily diverse interests.[43] The availability of German reference works such as these lexicons with their conceptual and disciplinary histories, articles, bibliographies, and cross-references, greatly facilitate the task of researchers investigating the concepts utilized by Weber.

When it comes to translating classic texts in other languages, the translator is less well served. Only after the completion of projects analogous to the German in other languages and cultures, will it be possible to expect translations of classics to be based on their translators' knowledge of the author's conceptual world. One such project has been funded by the Spanish government. It will map the reception and subsequent careers of key Spanish and Portuguese political and social concepts in different countries of Central and South America. This pioneer study in comparative conceptual history by the Seminario Conceptual Comparada del Mundo Iberoamericano became possible only after Professors Fernandez Sebastián and Fuentes completed their lexicon, *Dicconario Politico y*

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[41] See Richter, *History of Political and Social Concepts*, 147–60.

[42] *Handbuch politisch-sozialer Grundbegriffe in Frankreich, 1680–1820*, eds. Reichardt, Lüsebrink, Schmitt, Heft 1–2, 48–148. A summary table is on 147–48.

[43] *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, ed. Ritter. Another work useful for the historical study of language use is the *Historisches Wörterbuch der Rhetorik*, ed. Üding.

Social del siglo XIX español, and made its findings available as the point of departure for the teams conducting this inquiry.[44] Their progress will be reported in the new international journal, *Contributions to the History of Concepts*, and in *Redescriptions*, which appears in Finland. Both are affiliated with the History of Political and Social Concepts Group, which brings together the growing number of those who share three closely connected interests the history of concepts, translation studies, and the history of political and social thought.

[44] *Diccionario Politico y Social del siglo XIX español*, eds. Javier Fernandez Sebastían and Juan Francisco Fuentes (Madrid: Alianz, 2002).

A TRANSLATION STUDIES PERSPECTIVE ON THE TRANSLATION OF POLITICAL CONCEPTS*

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Translation Studies, a name first proposed in 1972 by the Dutch-American scholar and translator James S. Holmes,[1] is a discipline, or interdiscipline, that has grown enormously over the intervening years as it has emerged from the shadows of more established academic fields to become increasingly a focus of academic study in its own right. Translation Studies is the study of the process, product and phenomenon of translation. By its very nature it may encompass any language, any text type, any genre, any geographical or temporal point, more or less any aspect of cross-cultural and cross-linguistic activity. If we are to use Roman Jakobson's famous classification of three types of translation,[2] we can say that in recent years Translation Studies has increasingly broadened out from "interlingual translation" (which Jakobson called "translation proper") to encompass various forms of "intralingual translation" (paraphrase or rewording within the same language, including creative writing and editing) and "intersemiotic translation" (translation between verbal and non-verbal sign systems which includes subtitling, film adaptations, sign language, advertising, the link between the visual and the written).

Because of its reach, Translation Studies is also a controversial field theoretically, since it has often pitted linguists and applied linguists who dominated its earlier days, against those operating in various forms of Cultural Studies and, more recently, Sociology. The reach of the discipline has also expanded hand-in-hand with technological developments that

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[1] Originally presented as a paper at the Third Applied Linguistics Conference in Copenhagen in 1972, Holmes's "The Name and Nature of Translation Studies" only became widely available in a posthumous collection of his work: James S. Holmes, *Translated! Papers on Literary Translation and Translation Studies* (Amsterdam and Philadelphia: Rodopi, 1988).

[2] Roman Jakobson, "On Linguistic Aspects of Translation", in Reuben Brower, ed., *On Translation*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959), 232–239.

have revolutionized everyday working practices; the translator as a focus of study[3] is now understood not as a derivative and transparent conduit of a static text but more as an interested, intercultural communicator or intervener[4] surrounded by or taking advantage of the technology and paraphernalia of the globalized office and engaged in an intercultural process that alters both source and target cultures. The current thrust of much research has centred on new forms or conceptions of translation itself: the visibility or invisibility of the translator, post-colonialism and translation, translation and power and ideology, translation and censorship, language policy and translation, translation and globalization, creativity and translation, the evaluation of so-called translation "universals,"[5] corpus-based translation studies, hybrid texts and "in-between" authors, to name but a few. And this does not cover the growing sub-field of Interpreting Studies, concerned with spoken translation, whether it be at an international conference, a business meeting, at court proceedings, an immigration interview or in a doctor's surgery.[6] The span of Translation Studies is therefore enormous and each new development may incorporate theory from related fields: Critical Discourse Analysis, Post-colonialism, Film Studies, Narrative Theory, amongst many others.

Many of the most successful interdisciplinary translation studies adapt such a theoretical model taken from another discipline combined with close textual analysis of originals and translated texts within their socio-cultural environments. Such a descriptive branch of translation studies, long promoted by the Israeli scholar Gideon Toury,[7] aims at uncovering the basic norms or trends obtaining in the translation process, that is, the "preliminary norms" (such as the policy which determines the selection of texts for translation), the "initial norm" (that is, whether the translator opts for a source-text or target-language oriented approach), and the "operational norms" (relating to the completeness of the target text and

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[3] This is an important point; research now centres on the individuals involved in the process in a particular socio-cultural and political context, and not just on the translation products (target texts).

[4] See the contributions in *Translation as Intervention*, ed. Jeremy Munday (London: Continuum, 2007).

[5] "Universals" are typical characteristics of translated language, such as explicitation of cultural references and grammatical links, avoidance of ambiguity and increased cohesion.

[6] See Franz Pöchhacker, *Introducing Interpreting Studies* (London: Routledge, 2004).

[7] Gideon Toury, *In Search of a Theory of Translation* (Tel Aviv: The Porter Institute for Poetics and Semiotics, 1980); *Descriptive Translation Studies—And Beyond* (Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1995).

the micro-level linguistic and discourse-level choices made by the translator). To do this, Toury proposes a three-part descriptive procedure:

1. The determination of the target text as a translation, "a fact of the target culture", located within its own socio-cultural and historical context;
2. The establishment of relations between mainly linguistic units of comparison in the source and target texts;
3. The formulation of generalizations from the findings and the reconstruction of the process of translation.[8]

The ultimate goal of such studies is to identify probabilistic and non-prescriptive "laws" of translation operating within a systemic framework. Toury himself[9] proposes a law of growing standardization (textual selections in target texts tend to be more habitual and standard than in the source texts) and a law of interference (source text phenomena tend to be transferred to the target text). The very general nature of these laws, and their potential for contradiction (target texts are more standard than source texts yet also exhibit features of those same sources), points to the need for more refined work in this area to investigate more deeply the multiplicity of contextual, linguistic and other elements at play.[10]

The specification of the translation environment is certainly complex. The wide range of extra-textual factors, including the socio-cultural, political and ideological (in its wide cognitive sense of "a special type of socially shared mental representations"),[11] are far from easy to differentiate, as a brief consideration of a few examples from the extensive history of translation will suggest. Much of what might be considered to be the canon of Translation Studies (that is, those sources, not necessarily theoretical, that are most frequently cited, re-cited and anthologized)[12] is dominated by Western writing and Western authors, not all of whom are primarily translators. This list typically commences with diverse comments from classical authors such as Cicero, who, in the preface written in 46 BC to his translation of the Attic orators Aeschines and Demosthenes, claimed

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[8] Gideon Toury, *Descriptive Translation Studies*, 36–39.

[9] Ibid., 267–279.

[10] See *Beyond Descriptive Translation Studies*, eds. Anthony Pym, Myriam Shlesinger and Daniel Simeoni, (Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2008).

[11] Teun van Dijk, *Ideology: A Multidisciplinary Approach* (London: Sage, 1998), 126.

[12] See, for example, *The Translation Studies Reader*, ed. Lawrence Venuti (London: Routledge, 2004).

"Nec converti ut interpres sed ut orator."[13] Together with St Jerome's famous defence of his Vulgate translation of the Greek Septuagint four centuries later ("non verbum e verbo, sed sensum exprimere de sensu"),[14] this defined what there was of translation theory into nearly two millennia of dualistic opposition of literal and free, content and form, and, in religious texts, fidelity or infidelity to the supposed truth and spirit of the original. Some of these same concerns (word-for-word translation or elegant, free translation, depending on the authoritativeness or sanctity of the source text) are also to be found in writing on translation in the Chinese and Arabic traditions, to name but two of the most firmly established traditions.[15]

While religious and classical texts (literary, historical and scientific) were a major focus of translation practice throughout those years and a major preoccupation of translation theory for centuries afterwards, it was also true that the very act of translating often represented a huge political statement. Translation was a threat to the established political and religious order which saw its control of doctrine and thought being undermined by reformers: for example (and these are of course only three of many examples), Martin Luther's translation of the Bible into East Middle German (1522 and 1534) was crucial in making the religious text more readily accessible and challengeable, thereby threatening the authority of the Pope and his representatives, and in promoting a standard form of the German language; elsewhere in Europe, in 1536 William Tyndale was executed on the orders of Henry VIII for the dissemination of his English translation of the New Testament which within seventy-five years was to form the basis of the now classic Authorized or King James Version; and in 1546 the French humanist Étienne Dolet was denounced by the theological faculty of the Sorbonne and ultimately executed for a perceived error

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[13] [I did not translate as an interpreter but as an orator]. Marcus Tullius Cicero "De optimo genere oratorum", in Marcus Tullius Cicero *De inventione, De optimo genere oratorum, topica*, trans. H.M. Hubbell (London: Heinemann, 1960), 347–73.

[14] [I render not word-for-word but sense-for-sense]. Eusebius Hieronymus Jerome "De optime genere interpretandi" (letter 101, to Pammachius), in *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridoniensis*, {Rome: F. Aldi, 1565}, pp. 285–291, trans. P. Carroll as "On the best kind of translator", in *Western Translation Theory from Herodotus to Nietzsche*, ed. Douglas Robinson (Manchester: St Jerome Publishing), 22–30.

[15] See, for example, Dimitri Gutas, *Greek Thought, Arabic Culture: The Graeco-Arabic Translation Movement in Baghdad and Early 'Abbāsid Society*, (London: Routledge, 1998); *Twentieth-Century Chinese Translation Theory*, ed. Leo Tak-hung Chan (Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2004); *The Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*, eds. Mona Baker and Gabriela Saldanha (New York: Routledge, 2008).

in his French translation of Plato's dialogues. Religion, philosophy, politics and translation intermingle in these examples.

Today, translation remains a mainly political act in many countries. What gets translated is as big a question as how it gets translated. Acknowledgement of this fact explains why work in Translation Studies, if not practical manuals of translation, has moved on from the quasi-scientific linguistic attempts at fixing meaning and equivalence which were dominant in the 1960s. Perhaps the most prominent scholar in that trend was the American Eugene Nida, whose groundbreaking sociolinguistic work, inspired by generative-transformational linguistics, was initially conceived as an aid to untrained Bible translators working into oral languages in Africa and Latin America. Nida proposed the principle of "equivalent effect," where "the relationship between receptor and message [in the translation] should be substantially the same as that which existed between the original receptors and the message."[16] This was crucial in shifting the focus of study away from fidelity to the source text and the source text author and towards a greater consideration of target text and of audience. However, the feasibility of achieving equivalent effect (on the reader/listener), and its related notion of equivalent response (from the reader/listener) has long since been questioned and refined—how, for example, would a modern-day translation of a Greek Classic be expected to elicit the same response from different contemporary readers, let alone be comparable to the response it had received from a specific audience in Ancient Greece, even were it possible to ascertain with precision the initial effect of the source text? Yet, although theoretically it may not be feasible to fully recreate an effect on a different audience at a different time in different circumstances, the concept of equivalent effect and equivalent response still maintains practical currency for the professional translator and for those who commission translations. Inevitably so, too, since translation is a daily fact of life for many. For translation theory, however, it is function, purpose, audience, discourse and relevance that have come to modify and enhance the concept of "pure" equivalence.[17]

From the mid to late 1980s, linguistic translation theory began to be displaced by an interest in translation as a cultural phenomenon. This "cultural turn," as it was known, dismissed "painstaking comparisons

[16] Eugene Nida, *Towards a Science of Translating*, (Leiden: Brill, 1964), 159.

[17] For a summary of these, see Jeremy Munday, *Introducing Translation Studies: Theories and Applications* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2008).

between originals and translations" which did not consider the text in its cultural environment.[18] However, many later studies have successfully combined close analysis and cultural theory and have investigated a multiplicity of factors pertaining to professional, poetic, cultural and political contexts, expanding the list of the controlling factors (poetics, institutions and patronage) described by André Lefevere in his *Translation, Rewriting and the Manipulation of Literary Fame*.[19] Examples from Translation Studies across the globe show manipulation of various types, sometimes to conform to a stereotype or to the political view of a translator and his or her institutional patron. Manipulation[20] here is related to all kinds of rewriting (adaptation, revision, editing, deletion, among others) that extend the boundaries of what Roman Jakobson considered to be "translation proper."

The most obvious forms of manipulation are through censorship or political promotion. The most drastic censorship is the refusal to translate or to commission or publish a translation. In certain cases, non-translation may be the result of deliberate ideological marginalization and by the non-transferability of a specific discourse genre, as is shown, for example, in Donald Bruce's incisive paper on the reasons behind the non-translation of the work of the nineteenth-century French anarchist Jules Vallès, whose political background hindered the reception of his fiction in France and abroad.[21] A more recent study of the reception of foreign literature in Nazi Germany[22] points not only to the censorship inherent in the exclusion of alien works deemed to be ideologically unsuitable but also to the other side of the coin, the promotion of a pure and unadulterated image of other northern European peoples, notably in Scandinavia and Flanders, for purely political purposes, namely to increase the sense of solidarity and identification between these supposed kindred peoples and the German Volk. Similarly, there are many cases of translation policy being guided by language policy, reinforcing new or revived or otherwise

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[18] Susan Bassnett and André Lefevere, *Translation, History and Culture* (London: Routledge, 1990), 4.

[19] André Lefevere, *Translation, Rewriting, and the Manipulation of Literary Fame* (London: Routledge, 1992).

[20] A term that encompassed a whole group of translation scholars ("The Manipulation School"), most prominently in *The Manipulation of Literature: Studies in Literary Translation*, ed. Theo Hermans (Beckenham: Croom Helm, 1985).

[21] Donald Bruce, "Translating the Commune: Cultural Politics and the Historical Specificity of the Anarchist Text," *TTR* (*Traduction, Terminologie, Rédaction*) 1(1994): pp. 47–76.

[22] Kate Sturge, *"The Alien Within": Translation into German during the Nazi Regime* (Munich: Iudicium, 2004).

threatened "national" languages. For example, in Israel after the Second World War,[23] in the Spanish autonomous regions of Catalonia, Galicia and the Basque country post 1975, in Québec, where the Charter of the French Language of 1977 specified that French must be the working language and translation into other languages (mainly English) was acceptable where deemed necessary, in post-apartheid South Africa with its eleven official languages, and in the division of Serbo-Croat into Serbian and Croatian after the break-up of the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s.

Translation and political context are therefore often inseparable. This is a point that I shall endeavour to illustrate with three case studies where translation, of various kinds, is inextricably interwoven with political and cultural/ideological considerations, but where, despite the impossibility of systematizing every act of translation, the translator's own agenda and perspective play a key role. These case studies are meant to be illustrative of the possibilities presented by Translation Studies and not exhaustive. These studies concern: (1) translations and rewritings of the political essay *Ariel* by the Uruguayan writer José Rodó; (2) the process surrounding Stuart Gilbert's translation of André Malraux's war novel *L'Espoir*; and (3) politically sponsored terminology construction in translation. Each has a relevance to the discussion of translation issues of political texts and concepts, not least in examining how translation equivalents are selected for sometimes fluid terms and how meanings and interpretations are negotiated or directed.

Case Study 1: Rodó's Ariel *in English*[24]

The Uruguayan essayist and political thinker José Enrique Rodó (1871–1917) is best known for his essay *Ariel*, addressed to "the youth of America," specifically Latin Americans. First published in 1900, it made an immediate impact as a clarion call for the unity of Latin America and the creation of its own separate identity in the face of the growing influence and attraction of its neighbour in the north. It is of relevance here for two reasons: firstly, because Rodó's own use of references to previous political and philosophical works, such as Tocqueville's *De la Démocratie*

[23] See the case studies in Gideon Toury, *Descriptive Translation Studies*, op. cit.

[24] A more detailed discussion of the translation of *Ariel*, and of Latin American political writing in translation, can be found in Jeremy Munday, *Style and Ideology in Translation: Latin American Writing in English* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2008), 151–6.

en Amérique, reveal dubious citation procedures and translations[25] and, secondly, and more importantly, because the different editions and translations over the years reveal much about the way the concepts may be rewritten or manipulated by intralingual as well as interlingual translation. I shall make mention of four editions: (i) the 1922 English translation by F.J. Stimson;[26] (ii) the 1929 annotated Chicago edition of the Spanish text for young learners;[27] (iii) Gordon Brotherston's authoritative critical edition of the Spanish published in 1967;[28] and (iv) the modern 1988 retranslation by the established and respected literary translator Margaret Sayers Peden, published by the University of Texas Press.[29]

It is interesting that both interlingual translations (i and iv) were instigated by diplomats: the first, in 1922, was realized by F.J. Stimson, former U.S. ambassador to Argentina, an enthusiast for Rodó's ideas but not a trained linguist; the new translation of 1988 was an initiative of James W. Symington, chief of U.S. protocol for the Johnson delegation to the Conference of American Presidents in Uruguay in 1967. All four editions are framed with detailed introductions, paratexts[30] that guide the preferred reading. This is particularly the case in another form of rewriting, William F. Rice's editing of the Spanish text for young learners of the language (ii above), where he refashions Rodó's writing through a North American political, moral and religious prism. His many footnotes serve as a commentary where Rice frequently inserts observations relating to his external view of the Spanish-speaking world: for instance, he describes Rodó as being "absolutely free from any allusion of an objectionable nature so common to many writers of Spanish prose."[31] Descriptions of Latin America are also presented from the viewpoint of the North American traveller. Typical is the discussion surrounding the following passage, where Rodó

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[25] Introduction to José Enrique Rodó, *Ariel*, in Spanish, ed. and with an introduction by Gordon Brotherston (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 13.

[26] José Enrique Rodó, *Ariel*, trans. and with an introduction by F.J. Stimson (Boston: Houghton Muffin, 1922). Extensively reproduced in Arturo Torres Ríoseco, *Aspects of Spanish American Literature* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1963).

[27] José Enrique Rodó, *Ariel*, in Spanish, ed. and with an introduction by William F. Rice (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1929).

[28] José Enrique Rodó, *Ariel*, in Spanish, ed. and with an introduction by Gordon Brotherston (Cambridge: CUP, 1967).

[29] José Enrique Rodó, *Ariel*, trans. by Margaret Sayers Peden, foreword by James W. Symington, prologue by Carlos Fuentes (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1988).

[30] The use of paratexts, including peritexts and epitexts, is explored in detail in Gérard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, trans. Jane Elevin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997). Framing as a device in the ideological manipulation of translation is discussed in Mona Baker, *Translation and Conflict* (New York: Routledge, 2006).

[31] Rodó/Rice, *Ariel*, 1.

sees his compatriots losing their Latin roots and succumbing to what he terms *nordomanía* (later translated by Margaret Sayers Peden as "*USA-mania*":[32]

> Es así como la visión de una América *deslatinizada* por propia voluntad, sin la extorsión de la conquista, y regenerada luego a imagen y semejanza del arquetipo del Norte, flota ya sobre los sueños de muchos sinceros interesados por nuestro porvenir.[33]

In a footnote, Rice agrees with Rodó, but only in so far as the Latin roots are stereotypical qualities of an "artistic taste, and air of ease and leisure." The language used in the annotation emphasizes the anthropological interest for a North American, almost as if a primitive people were being observed:

> *deslatinizada*: Rodó's contention that there are elements in the social structure that are in danger of being lost, and which ought to be preserved, is justified, as all who travel in those countries will testify. Most evident among these qualities are the politeness, artistic taste, and air of ease and leisure; while there are subtle, elusive qualities of these peoples that give them a poise and power which the North American may well envy.[34]

Here, the ideological perspective of the argument goes far beyond the categorization of a single term and is expanded into an attempted identification and explicitation of a whole form of behaviour.

A final, and crucial, example from *Ariel* may serve to illustrate how the reception of a text is conditioned by the circumstance in which it is read and by the identity and point-of-view of the translator. It relates to Rodó's understanding of the essence of Americanism, in this case specifically referring to the United States:

> La concepción utilitaria, como idea del destino humano, y la igualdad en lo mediocre, como norma de la proporción social, componen, íntimamente relacionadas, la fórmula de lo que ha solido llamarse en Europa el espíritu del americanismo.[35]

If we compare the Stimson and Peden translations of this sentence below, we can see that the differences are to be found in the syntactic patterning, the choice of equivalents for abstract nouns and, in Stimson's translation,

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[32] Rodó/Peden, *Ariel*, 71.
[33] Rodó/Rice, 75.
[34] Ibid., 5, fn.
[35] Rodó/Rice, *Ariel*, 74.

the omission of two phrases, perhaps through carelessness, inexperience as a translator or a lack of linguistic comprehension:

> The utilitarian conception as the idea of human destiny, and equality in the mediocre as the norm of social proportion, make up the formula which in Europe they call the spirit of Americanism.[36]

> The inextricably linked concepts of utilitarianism as a concept of human destiny and egalitarian mediocrity as a norm for social relationships compose the formula for what Europe has tended to call the spirit of Americanism.[37]

Apart from the omissions of translations of what Peden renders as "inextricably linked" and "has tended to," Stimson has followed the wording of the source text very closely. This mirroring of the lexis and syntax of the original makes the target text very difficult to follow in the English. Some might say that this corresponds to the style of writing to be found in the Spanish, notorious for its complexity. On the other hand, Peden normalizes the word order and simplifies the syntax in English in a strategy that would nowadays be described as "domestication."[38] Just as importantly for the translation of concepts, Peden nominalizes forms such as *utilitarianism* and *egalitarian mediocrity* which are less fixed either in the source text (*la concepción utilitaria* and *la igualdad en lo mediocre*) or in Stimson's calques (*utilitarian conception* and *equality in the mediocre*). This may be because, translating in 1988, Peden had greater temporal distance and a wider or more established political terminology and tradition on which to draw. This indicates the difficulty of tracing interlingual concepts diachronically because they may be expressed in a great variety of different forms that are not easily identifiable.

Case Study 2: Stuart Gilbert and Malraux's L'Espoir

Although Rodó wrote in Montevideo and did not leave Latin America until his voyage to Italy in what were to be the last months of his life, ironically his whole conceptual background was located in Europe, particularly France; he pays special homage to the classics and to the philosophical and political writings of, amongst many others, Auguste Comte and Alexis

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[36] Rodó/Stimson, *Ariel*, quoted in Arturo Torres Ríoseco, 41.
[37] Rodó/Peden, 40.
[38] Lawrence Venuti, *The Translator's Invisibility: a History of Translation* (London: Routledge, 1995), first edition; (New York: Routledge, 2008), second edition.

De Toqueville. The latter's *L'Ancien Régime et la révolution* (1856) was translated into English in 1955 by the renowned translator Stuart Gilbert, an Englishman who turned to translation only after early retirement from the colonial legal administration of India. Gilbert settled in Paris with his French wife and embarked on a long career translating some of the greats of contemporary French literature (including Camus and Sartre) as well as assisting James Joyce, of whom he was later to write a biography. Gilbert is of interest in our debate as an example of the practical working conditions of a translator, in an urgent political circumstance and in the face of some pressure from the publisher. This is the reality of the translator's situation and many of the decisions are taken against a very tight deadline, which inevitably causes decisions to be made that are not fully consistent or systematic.

In 1937, Gilbert was commissioned by Random House in the United States to translate André Malraux's newly published *L'Espoir*,[39] a novel of the Spanish Civil War, which by then had run the first of what would be the three years of its bloody course. Malraux was writing in support of the beleaguered Spanish Republic. The British co-publisher was to be Routledge and correspondence between the London editor T.M. Ragg and Gilbert[40] highlights the many considerations that impact on a translation. Even though the correspondence does not allow the recovery of many individual translation decisions (it would be necessary to look at the various drafts and manuscripts in the relatively rare instances where these are still available, and even then we would only be looking at the results of decisions made at an advanced stage of the process), it does reveal some of the extra-linguistic factors that operate around the translator, and indeed the fact that sometimes a translator's ideology may differ markedly from that of the text.

Because of the swift advances by Franco's Nationalist forces in late 1937, which some considered to presage a rapid end to the Civil War, Routledge were desperate to publish as soon as possible so as to capitalize on the national and international public interest in the conflict. In late 1937, editor Ragg wrote to Gilbert at the start of the translation: "I feel strongly that the Spanish situation is such that the earlier the English edition of

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[39] André Malraux, *L'Espoir* (Paris: Gallimard, 1937).

[40] This correspondence is held in the Records of British Publishing and Printing at the University of Reading, UK, folder ROUTLEDGE–RKP 54/14. Additional information on the publication of *Days of Hope* is held in folder ROUTLEDGE–RKP 91/2.

the book the better its prospects of sales."[41] Gilbert, on the other hand, was concerned mainly about two issues: (1) the practicalities of translating a 120,000 word volume, ensuring quality and delivery without driving himself into the ground; and (2) the issue of the political orientation of the text in the climate of the time. Studies elsewhere[42] have shown that translators are often at the mercy of editors, publishers and other players in this particular power play, and also that Gilbert was particularly prone to making considerable alterations in texts to accommodate them to his own expectations of the genres and his own literary tastes. In the case of *L'Espoir*, the pressure of the deadline and the edginess of the publishers caused Gilbert to enlist the support of a small team, including a typist, to whom he dictated the translation, a co-translator, Alastair Macdonald, who had previously translated *La condition humaine*[43] but who seemed scarcely cognizant of any requirement to complete the project by a given date, and, something which Malraux promised but never delivered, "an airman who can give me help with certain technical terms which baffle me in the French."[44] Gilbert's criterion for good translation is clear from an exasperated letter sent after the translation was completed, where he laments the lack of suitable translation assistance:

> Since leaving London I have been casting round for a collaborator or "ghost", without the least success. Not that there's a shortage of willing volunteers—but I can't find anyone whom I could trust to put in *the amount of time and pain that is needed to get a translation not to read like one*.[45]

Such a domesticating strategy, the anxiety for translations to read like originals and the effort that is required to achieve this, is often seen in early writings on translation.[46] Here, not only does Gilbert wish to erase

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[41] Ragg to Gilbert, 30 November 1937.

[42] Peter Fawcett, "Translation and Power Play," *The Translator* 1.2 (1995): 177–92; "Biggles's Friend André: A study of Malraux in English Translation," *Target* Vol. 13.1 (2001): 103–24.

[43] *La condition humaine* (Paris: Gallimard, 1933) translated as *Man's Fate* (New York: Modern Library, 1934).

[44] Gilbert to Ragg, 13 April 1938.

[45] Gilbert to Ragg, 6 December 1938, emphasis added.

[46] Perhaps the most frequently quoted instance in the Translation Studies canon is John Dryden. In his dedication to his 1697 translation of Virgil's *Aeneid*, he writes "I may presume to say [...] I have endeavoured to make Virgil speak such English as he would himself have spoken, if he had been born in England, and in this present age." John Dryden, "On Translation," reproduced in Rainer Schulte and John Biguenet, eds., *Theories of Translation: An Anthology of Essays from Dryden to Derrida*, eds. Rainer Schulte and John Biguenet (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 17–31.

the trace of the foreign in his translations, he also self-censored the translation of *L'Espoir*, pointing out at a late stage (20 June 1938) that it might be wise to suppress three pages relating to a sexually explicit anecdote in case the whole book were thereby compromised and banned. Routledge agreed.

The title itself posed a serious problem and many alternatives were suggested by translator and publisher: *On Wings of Hope, Battlefront of Hope* and *Hope Embattled* gave way to *Hope of A People*, *The Hope of The People* and then the less political *The Hope of A People*. The final choice was *Days of Hope*, partly as a result of Malraux's abortive alteration of the French title to *Le temps de l'espoir* and also as an analogy to the English translation of Malraux's earlier *Le temps du mépris* (*Days of Wrath*).[47] What these discussions show is that translation is an endless and subjective process. It is open to a multiplicity of factors, some poetic, some ideological. Many micro-level decisions come down to a matter of poetic taste, although they are inevitably underpinned by the translator's individual perception of language. Furthermore, translation is a process that is only arbitrarily ended by the publication of the first edition. Even when the proofs had already gone to the printer, Gilbert was still trying to correct a translation error ("workers with white collars" to "white-collar workers") and relaying Malraux's wishes to alter a chapter heading and to make a one-third page addition towards the end of the book.[48] However, by the time of publication in September 1938 the Spanish Civil War was almost over and the interest of the translation was therefore perhaps less topically political and more lastingly literary.

Case Study 3: Terminology and Political Patronage

The issues that affected Gilbert's translation of Malraux are central to the practice of translation but are difficult to recover. The translation of political concepts and politically sensitive texts are bound to be affected by similar pressures but also are open to more systematically motivated ideological or political factors. Translation of the conceptual lexicon between languages demonstrates some overlap between *Begriffsgeschichte* and the fields of Terminology Studies and Corpus Linguistics which feed into or have been adopted by Translation Studies: whereas *Begriffsgeschichte*

[47] Gilbert to Ragg, 27 July 1938.
[48] Gilbert to Ragg, 3 August 1938 and 26 August 1938.

may be concerned with synchronic and diachronic variation of specific political terms and concepts in a range of source texts, Terminology in Translation Studies is a field with the usually practical purpose of standardizing the use of domain-specific vocabulary to ensure as far as possible consistency of translation in lengthy documents involving a team of translators, terminologists, project managers and so on, or throughout entire organizations, such as the European Commission, which has constructed perhaps the best-known widely available multilingual terminology database, IATE (Inter-Agency Terminology Exchange).[49] Standardization of terms is an attempt to fix the use of a wide range of technical vocabulary, but nevertheless still allows for the addition both of new equivalents, for example in the languages of new entrants or candidate countries to the European Union, and indeed the coining of whole terms for new concepts as they become necessary (e.g. "subsidiarity," "valorization"). Standardization of terminology is also a prerequisite for any attempt at fully automated machine translation, which to be serviceable nevertheless normally still requires considerable pre- and post-editing (controlled language for the input language and substantial manual revision of the output text).[50] Standardization also lies behind other computer-assisted translation tools, such as translation memory systems which search a database of previous translations for segments of matching or near-matching ("fuzzy") source language segments that may be recycled in the document currently being translated.

When there is a lacuna in the conceptual or political lexicon of a language, the translation procedures of borrowing from the source language or translation into a more standard target language form may depend on the general power values exerted by the two languages and cultures and the strategies promoted by any institutions involved. Over the past fifty years the influence and economic power of English has of course grown to the point where it is the international *lingua franca* for so many. In addition, other languages, even major world languages, are increasingly showing interference from English in the importation of technical vocabulary from management, business and information technology in

[49] iate.europa.eu

[50] One exception is the METEO program developed by the Université de Montréal (TAUM group), which, because it is based on a closely defined glossary of terms, is able to translate automatically the Canadian weather-forecast between English and French. See www.msc-smc.ec.gc.ca/contents_e.html.

particular.[51] On the other hand, there are interesting examples of borrowings into English in very specific contexts and junctures. This may be because of a major world event that launches to prominence a new concept associated with a specific political system or culture or that ignites a debate over competing terms: such as *glasnost* and *perestroika* in the Soviet Union of the 1980s and 1990s, *intifada* in the Palestinian state, or *jihad* and *fatwah* in current Islamist contexts. One way of dealing with such terms, which is now commonly adopted in corpus-based approaches, is to search in a representative digital corpus of real texts to see how and when these terms tend to be employed. Although representativeness remains a controversial issue in this field, since the terminology variables between different genres and text types may be significant, electronic corpora have revolutionized the study of language and provide an important corrective to the subjectivity of intuition.[52] One such database is the British National Corpus, a 100 million word sample of the English language used mainly in the United Kingdom and mainly in the years 1985–1995.[53] Interrogating the corpus allows synchronic patterns of use to be ascertained and diachronic changes to be charted. For example, for the period in question, which saw major upheavals in the USSR, it is possible to track the use of Russian loan terms entering the political vocabulary of English. Thus, in the 1980s instances of *glasnost* and *perestroika* first feature English glosses: "*glasnost* (*openness*)" and "*perestroika* (*restructuring*)". Then, as the terms became more commonly accepted, they appear without glosses until finally there appeared a few examples of a creative use in other contexts, demonstrating fuller integration. These wider contexts even include an anachronistic use of *glasnost* in a book on nineteenth-century Russia:

> In effect, the tsar involved the educated community in the making of law. To use the vogue word of the hour, he ran the risk of glasnost.[54]

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[51] See the contributions in *In and Out of English: For Better, For Worse?*, eds. Gunilla Anderman and Margaret Rogers (Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, 2005).

[52] This has been seen to be the main advantage of corpus-based methods since early work on the COBUILD reference dictionaries in the 1980s. See John M. Sinclair, *Corpus, Concordance, Collocation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991).

[53] The full British National Corpus is available from www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk. Limited searches may be conducted online. Another major electronic database is the Collins COBUILD Bank of English at the University of Birmingham, UK: www.collins.co.uk/books.aspx?group=153. It is a monitor corpus, even more ambitious in scope since it is constantly updated and exists in parallel English, French and Spanish versions.

[54] David Saunders, *Russia in the Age of Reaction and Reform 1801–81* (Harlow: Longman, 1994).

But the passing of the political hour may also mean the passing of the political vocabulary of that group. *Glasnost* and *perestroika* have become rather entrenched historical terms and it is a rarity to see their continued use in new creative contexts. A notable exception was the address to the 2004 Barcelona forum, entitled "A New Global Glasnost for the Future," by Michael Gorbachev himself, revealing that such terms may be associated not only with an identifiable political context but form part of the ideological agenda and idiolect of specific individuals. Rather than openness, we are told that *glasnost* is now being used

> as a catchall phrase for all means and methods in the struggle of global awareness. Glasnost is a demanding, long-term process of awakening that inevitably leads to calls for fundamental changes.[55]

But it would seem that this recycling has failed to achieve common currency: *glasnost* has generally been consigned to a specific historical context.

Behind the translation strategy adopted for the lexicon of politics and thought there may also lurk a premeditated language policy. In the Basque country in Spain, for instance, translation is being promoted by the local autonomous government as a means of recovering and reinforcing the Basque language, Euskera, a pre-Romanic language that was banned during the centralist Franco dictatorship of 1939–1975 but which underpins a strong Basque nationalism and desire for independence from the central administration. The language has since been promoted extensively especially within the education, legal and administrative systems of the Basque country. Ibon Uribarri Zenekorta[56] describes how the Basque Ministry of Culture funded and organizing a translation programme, Pentsamenduaren Klasikoak, to translate world literary classics and a hundred major works of philosophy into Basque. The aim behind this is to increase

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[55] Mikhail Gorbachev, "A New Glasnost For Our Future: Starting with a Global Commitment to the Right to Water and Sanitation," address to the World Urban Forum, Barcelona, 13 September 2004, ww2.unhabitat.org/cdrom/wuf/Media_1.html.

[56] Ibon Uribarri Zenekorta, "Eccentric experiences? German Philosophy in Basque Translation," presented at First International Translation Conference, *Translating Voices, Translating Regions*, Rieti, Italy, 2005. See also, "Traducciones de filosofía alemana: el caso de la Kritik der reinen vernunft de Immanuel Kant," in Miguel Angel García Peinado, Nicolás Campos Plaza, Emilio Ortega Arjonilla, Cécile Vilvandre de Sousa, co-ords, *El español, lengua de cultura, lengua de traducción : aspectos teóricos, metodológicos y profesionales* (Fourth International Symposium on Translation, Text and Interferences: University of Castille-La Mancha, 2005), 365–80.

the vocabulary of philosophy and other spheres in Basque and to promote the standardization and the wider use of the Basque language. Twenty-one of the philosophical works selected for translation were originally written in German and some of these are translated via a relay language, either Spanish or English. According to Uribarri Zenekorta, one of the other main problems faced in this programme is the lack of translators with a knowledge of philosophy and the lack of experience in translation among academics specializing in philosophy. Subject specialisms are very important in professional translation; translators must have, or be prepared to acquire, the relevant expertise, sometimes in highly restricted fields. But this Basque translation programme is developing so rapidly that, to date, there has been relatively little co-ordination with regard to terminology. Amidst such "methodological anarchism," Uribarri Zenekorta sees a strong preference not for loan words but for what we might call calqued neologisms that have a Basque root modelled on the German, not the Spanish. An example he gives is the translation of *Gleichzeitigkeit* (simultaneity) where the Basque translation calques each lexical unit: *aldi* for *zeit* (time), *bera* for *gleich* (same) and the suffix *-tasun* for *-keit* (the property of being), to produce *aldiberatasun*. Nevertheless, other translators working into Basque have suggested the opposite, for example, that borrowings from Spanish in the legal field should be accepted as a means of filling gaps in the Basque language and enabling the legal system to function in Basque.[57] It should be pointed out that the situation of Basque is by no means an isolated case: any bilingual or multilingual country needs to face such issues.

Conclusion

The translator is in a double bind, striving to create something new but constrained by the words of the original text and author and by the already existing resources of source and target languages. Translation is an active process of rewriting and creation involving a large number of actors within specific constraints imposed, in part, by the cultural, ideological and political environments in which they operate. Although we try to perceive trends and systems in the linguistic choices, we need to remember that no translator operates totally systematically and objectively, unless

[57] Xabier Mendiguren Bereziartu, "Développement de la traduction en langue basque," *Senez* 24 (2002): www.eizie.org/Argitalpenak/Senez/20021001.

it be a machine, and the machine itself requires post-editing by a human. Politically motivated language policies may try to dictate specific uses; translators such as Stuart Gilbert may have to deal with a text which they find contrary; translation choices may be determined by the pressures of deadline, publishers and external events; and José Rodó's essay for a new American identity may be rewritten by the different hands through which it passes. However, no one can have a stranglehold over use, which is illustrated by the very phenomenon of periodic re-translation for key canonical texts.

The enormous range of work that is being conducted in Translation Studies has moved away from prescriptivism and encompassed a descriptive approach that seeks to identify the intricate interrelation of text, players and language involved in all areas of translation. It has also entered into collaboration with many other disciplines, responding to the complexities of communication in a global world. Translation Studies, for its part, offers the experience of working with linguistic, corpus-based and cultural studies approaches, the metalanguage of translation evaluation and description, the long debates on equivalence and context and norms, as well as a potentially wide range of language-specific specialisms. Although those working primarily on the lexicon of political concepts or on the history of political thought have developed their own methodologies, I believe the incorporation of the metalanguage of Translation Studies and its systematic models of translation assessment may facilitate the building of a comparative corpus of studies across languages, cultures and political systems. When identified, the translation norms in operation may thus lead to a greater understanding of the complex interlingual power play in action in particular socio-cultural, ideological and historical contexts.

ON HISTORY IN FORMAL CONCEPTUALIZATIONS OF TRANSLATION

Anthony Pym

Any multilingual *Begriffsgeschichte* or *histoire des idées* requires some conceptualization of translation, no matter how minimal. If not, how are we to talk about the concepts (or *Begriffe*) or ideas (or *idées*) that come in different words? Some conceptualization of translation might reasonably be sought in the interdiscipline of Translation Studies, taken here as a mostly European set of discourses on the products and processes of translation. That discipline can indeed say something about translation, as we hope to show. Unfortunately, Translation Studies is not currently in any position to supply measures of comparison, or indeed any degree of surety about the distribution of concepts across languages and cultures. We cannot tell anyone that *Begriff* is the equivalent of *idée*, nor that it is a non-equivalent. The reason for this is quite simple. Since concepts of translation are themselves culturally variable, since there are shifts within their own translations, they cannot be used as a yardstick for relations between other concepts. Translation has its own *Begriffsgeschichte*, and possibly a *histoire des idées* as well. Yet how might those histories be written? No matter how frequently we fleetingly attribute equal values to terms like *translation, traduction, Übersetzung* and so on, the only guarantee of consistency is the assumption that they somehow translate each other, over time and across space. One would thus need some vague notion of translation *before* any such terms could be selected for analysis. Such a preliminary opening to the concept—what we are here terming a conceptualization—must somehow precede its historiography, even if only as a quickstep to set things in motion.

Translation Studies offers several ways of doing this. An inductive mode of conceptualization would content itself with intuitively collected historical terms, related in terms of semantic networks or prototypes. There is little to be said about such approaches, which can be neither right nor wrong. Other conceptualizations, however, are more formal in that they seek deductive principles on the basis of which evidence will decide what is or is not a translation. Those approaches are explicit enough to be discussed in terms of right or wrong: there is much to say about them. Here we shall briefly consider three such formalist attempts. We shall then test

those proposals on the basis of several historical cases. The idea of an eternal concept of translation will be challenged, of course. Yet here we are more concerned with the historicity of the formalist project itself. If we are able to say anything at all about translation in the abstract, if we can indeed conceptualize it, does this mean that historicity immediately disappears from our object of knowledge? If not, at what stages, or by which routes, does historical variability emerge?

Three Formal Conceptualizations

Things were not so complicated for the linguistic paradigm that ruled in the 1960s or 1970s. Translation was then defined by equivalence, and the task of Translation Studies was to describe the modalities of that relation. Concepts could be traced across cultural boundaries in accordance with types of equivalence, which were held to be more or less constant. That general mode of thought was strongly marked by comparative stylistics.[1] For example, "Défense de fumer" could be regarded as the functional equivalent of "No Smoking," as indeed it still can be, no matter how different the syntactic structures may be. However, neat formulations of that kind were challenged by the analytical skepticism of W.V.O. Quine, whose thesis of the indeterminacy of translation might allow for variants like "Smoking Prohibited," "Prohibition of Smoking," "Do Not Smoke," "Thank-you for not smoking," and so on (possibly including the defective functionality of "Defense of smoking," which might work for some.)[2] Different translators can and do give different renditions; there is no one-to-one equivalence in the realm of natural languages. More significant for the history of political thought, the variation may be on the level of function as well as form. To take another throw-away example, 'democracy' can mean radically different things in Pericles' Greece, Real Socialism and consumer capitalism, even despite apparent equivalence on the level of translingual morphology. For Quine, the different renditions "stand to each other in no plausible sort of equivalence relation however loose."[3] Equivalence will no

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[1] See Jean-Paul Vinay, Jean Darbelnet, *Stylistique compareé du français et de l'anglais: méthode de traduction* (Paris: Didier, 1958); André Malblanc, *Stylistique compareé du français et de l'allemand: Essai de representation linguistique compareé et etude de traduction* (Paris: Didier, 1958).

[2] Willard Van Orman Quine, "Translation and Meaning" in *Word and Object* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1960), 26–79.

[3] Quine, *Word and Object*, 27.

longer help us decide what is right or wrong in translation. We can only observe the things that translators manage to get away with.

That position does not solve our problem. In order to demonstrate indeterminacy, any analysis has to enlist a series of potential translations, and Quine does not indicate how that might be done. More seriously, his reference to an "equivalence relation however loose" remains intellectually unsatisfying. The loosest definition could indeed hold that all translations are equivalent to each other simply by virtue of the fact that they are called translations. That is the position of the Israeli translation scholar Gideon Toury.[4] We would then have to accept as equivalent the entire history of whatever translators have done with banalities like prohibiting smoking, or indeed with long-drawn aspirations such as democracy. Equivalence, with its implicit idealism of sameness or essential similarity, no longer has sufficient intellectual currency to start up our history.

For Gideon Toury, analysis should begin not from the fact that there are translations in the world (since they are all potentially equivalent to something, each in its own way), but from the *assumption* that such things exist. We should thus start by talking about "assumed translations." These, says Toury, may be identified in accordance with three postulates:

1. The source text postulate, which holds that "there is another text, in another culture/language, which has both chronological and logical priority over [the translation] and is presumed to have served as the departure point and basis for it."
2. The transfer postulate: "the process whereby the assumed translation came into being involved the transference from the assumed source text of certain features that the two now share."
3. The relationship postulate: "there are accountable relationships which tie [the assumed translation] to its assumed original." It is presumably thanks to this postulate that we may talk about translations being more or less literal, function, adaptive, and so on.[5]

If these three postulates are held to be true, then we are dealing with an assumed translation, no matter what the local specific term for it may be.

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[4] Gideon Toury, *In Search of a Theory of Translation* (Tel Aviv: Porter Institute for Poetics and Semiotics, 1980).

[5] Gideon Toury, *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond* (Amsterdam: Benjamins, 1995), 33–35.

The formal conceptualization would thus hope to rise above the problem of how to translate the term 'translation.' Problem solved?

Toury's three postulates would seem to delimit an eternal conceptual space for translation. Is there any history in that space, or is it only for angels? In practice, that space is remarkably broad. For example, it allows a corpus of translations to include 'pseudotranslations,' understood as target-culture texts presented as translations but which are in fact originals (an example would be Ossian, or perhaps *Don Quijote*, which declares itself to be a translation from Arabic.) Toury has a certain penchant for the study of pseudotranslations, since they offer invaluable insight into what translations are expected to look like in different cultures. By allowing false translations to enter the conceptual frame, Toury would seem to move Translation Studies as far as possible from the idealisms of linguistic equivalence. To what might pseudotranslations be equivalent?

Note, also, that Toury's postulates are set up in such a way that translations can be analyzed within just one culture, the target (receptor) culture. In order to understand what translations are doing in that culture, there is no overriding need to compare them with any assumed originals. In this, Toury further reinforced a radical break with the essentialism of equivalence-based studies. There is no question of Translation Studies attempting to judge to what extent all the features of an original have been transferred to a translation. Rather than compare the translation with its source, as was traditionally done, Toury would have us study the way translations operate within their culture. Translations can be compared with other translations, or with non-translations operative within the target culture. The timeless postulates thus further open to a rich and relativist historicity.

Are the three postulates successful? In their own terms, they are undoubtedly good enough for Toury's own historical studies to be set in motion, mostly on the roles played by translation in Jewish history. The conceptualization is nevertheless not without problems. The postulates are hardly elegant: one wonders if the third is really necessary (surely it is implicit in the other two?) The postulates are also willfully non-serviceable for disciplines that would seek precisely to compare concepts across languages (which is possibly one of the few things that any other discipline would ask of Translation Studies.) Finally, they must be complemented by some consideration of exactly who is supposed to be doing all the assuming. To carry out historical research on assumed translations, we would have to locate subject positions for which the three postulates

all hold. Someone in the target culture should actually believe these three things. Or is it enough for the analyst, the historian, to make the assumptions? If so, on the basis of what? Toury has remarkably little to say on the matter.

A second attempt at a formal conceptualization of translation is to be found in the work of the Ernst-August Gutt, who is a linguist engaged in Bible translation projects (much of his work has been done in Ethiopia.)[6] Gutt sets out to apply linguistic relevance theory to translation, focusing on the cognitive processes by which linguistic propositions are linked with contexts. Like Toury, he reduces equivalence to a general condition of all translations; he points out that every translation would logically need its own theory of equivalence. Unlike Toury, however, Gutt is clear about his focus on the receiving subjectivity as the key to his whole conceptualization of translation. He moves in two steps:

1. Translations can be either direct or covert. If they are direct, the receiver knows they are translations (the book says "translated by . . ." on the cover, for example.) On the other hand, if a translation is covert, it might as well not be a translation (much advertising, for example, or indeed television news, is produced by translational processes but is not received as a translation.) Gutt's interest is purely with the first kind, the direct translations.
2. A direct translation "creates a presumption of complete interpretative resemblance." When a translation is received as a translation, the receiver thus presumes to understand what receivers of the original understood.[7]

Gutt is very far from claiming there is any such thing as 'complete interpretative resemblance' on the level of actual linguistic facts. Indeed, he sees texts as no more than sets of "communicative clues" that constantly require interpretation, and there is any number of ways in which those clues might be processed. The amazing thing is not that translations might sometimes lead to exactly the same interpretation (the possibility is by no means excluded—the Bible translator requires a certain idealism),

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[6] Ernst-August Gutt, *Translation and Relevance: Cognition and Context* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991).

[7] Gutt, *Translation and Relevance*, 186.

but that receivers should believe that this can be the case at all. In a sense, translation boils down to a common discursive illusion, a convenient misconception encouraged by certain kinds of texts.

Gutt's conceptualization has the virtue of elegance, and it is happily explicit in its placing of translation in the space of reception. To do history, we would have to locate a series of instances in which receivers have believed in "complete interpretative resemblance" of one kind or another. Then again, what words would those readers have used for this thing? Surely not the words Gutt uses ("complete interpretative resemblance" does not really slip off the tongue). And what criteria would we then use to string together those different words in different languages? Surely we need to know something more about how to recognize this presumption?

Gutt's theory goes on to develop a preference for translations that show themselves to be translations, preferably those that make the reader work to find relations to source-culture contexts. That preference need not concern us here, except perhaps to the extent that it reposes on an ethics of honesty—better the text that shows itself to be what it is. And yet, what particular honesty can there be in any text that presents itself as a translation, when translations, on Gutt's account, are defined by a presumption that is easily misfounded? In the end, this is an elegant theory leading into a strange kind of ethics. And we shall leave it there.

A third attempt to conceptualize translation is in Pym, where the space of a translation is described in terms of two maxims:

1. The maxim of translational quantity holds that a translation represents an anterior text quantitatively. If a translation is longer, the anterior text is presumed to be longer as well.
2. The maxim of first-person displacement holds that the first person ("I") appearing in the translation is the same first person as the anterior text, even when the two texts are held to have been produced by different subjects. In other words, the person who says, "I am translating," as an instantaneous present, cannot be the translating translator.[8]

These two propositions operate as maxims in the Gricean sense. When they are transgressed, specific meanings ("implicatures") are produced

[8] Anthony Pym, "Propositions on Cross-Cultural Communication and Translation," *Target* 16 (2004): 1–28.

and communicated. This is the way some discourses are able to parody or subvert dominant concepts of translation. In our own work, those threshold cases have assumed a certain political importance with respect to the historical roles played by translation (we shall see some examples below.) Transgressions of the maxims would thus reveal the historicity of concepts of translation, in much the same way as pseudotranslations would provide information on culture-specific norms in Toury's approach.

We do not claim any superiority with respect to the previous conceptualizations. Our two maxims would hope to be broadly compatible with Toury's postulates or Gutt's conditions. Our initial purpose was perhaps slightly different: we sought to depend only on features that are available to textual analysis, thus avoiding the need to locate actual historical subjects as receivers. Markers of change in textual quantities (of explicit omission or addition) can be seen by all, as can pronominal structures. By simply looking at texts in these terms, we can see something of what those texts are saying about concepts of translation.

Of course, we do not entirely escape the problems incurred by Toury's or Gutt's approaches. Sooner or later we have to locate exactly who is making presumptions about text length, or for whom the pronominal positions are sufficiently distinct. In the end, translations are translations because someone accepts them as such, and our history has to locate the subject positions from which that acceptance is possible. However, we would hope to use textual analysis to guide us to those positions. Our maxims help us find situations in which the limits of translation are open to dispute, and that is where we find the subject positions. Rather than accumulate evidence of agreement or sameness, as if translation really were the same thing across all cultures, we prefer to start our history from arguments about what is or is not a (good) translation. Such a way of collecting evidence is not only economical; it forces our initial conceptualization of translation to concretize into a series of concepts as we go along.

We have three broadly compatible formal conceptualizations. They go some way toward solving our problem. At the same time, these approaches are all from the same late-twentieth-century Western book culture. They are quite possibly from the one kind of culture that would seek to be as explicit as possible about texts as banal as translations, instinctively focusing on texts as products rather than speech as action, and presuming research methodology to be a problem in the first place. How could such a vision speak to a history of all possible concepts of translation?

Testing the Limits of Translation

Here we seek to test the above approaches on a handful of historical examples. We are not particularly interested in the endless string of metaphors that have been used to describe translation (changing clothes, eating prechewed food, and so on.) The metaphors tend to operate in discourses *on* translations, sometimes in favor of them, more often against. That is quite different from saying what is or is not to be considered a translation. On the other hand, can we so easily overlook the actual terms used to refer to translations? The German compound *Über-setzen* could stir up images of something being taken over and set down, as opposed to the etymology of *trans-lation*, which might suggest a more simple movement across. Then again, etymology is no guide to usage, and the German and English terms could just as easily denote exactly the same concept. Can our conceptualizations overcome such doubts?

Translation Across Time or Space?

One of the Sanskrit terms for translation is *anuvad*, which means, we are told, "saying after, saying again, explaining" (our thanks to Theo Hermans and Harish Trivedi for this example.) If we try to conceptualize that term, the main difference between a translation and its source would be in time, probably with a certain amount of textual expansion (presuming there is explaining to be done). Translation might thus be seen as a process of updating and elaborating. Our current Western terms for translation, on the other hand, seem to privilege movement across space, without significant textual expansion (a translation is one thing, an explanation is another). So are we really talking about the same thing?

Even if interpreted in a radically non-European way, the semantics of *anuvad* would not seem to escape entirely from the net of our three formal conceptualizations. With respect to Gutt, the term would indeed seem to denote a direct translation with "complete interpretative resemblance" (in this, translations and explanations work the same way). As for our own maxims, *anuvad* itself has little information that could seriously challenge expectations about textual quantities or pronominal structures. Nor does *anuvad* entirely bamboozle Toury's three postulates. There is certainly an anterior source, there is something in common between the translation and the source, and there is a patterned relationship between the two (in this case one of sameness plus potential explanation.) One

could nevertheless carp at Toury's use of the term "transfer" (his second postulate is the "transfer postulate") which introduces a dimension not to be found in *anuvad*. To "say after" has quite a different directionality from "transfer" as a lateral movement from source to target. Or does it? What exactly does Toury mean by "transfer"? Try as we might, conceptualization processes cannot arise above the mesh of language, and at this particular point Toury's Western languages would certainly seem to be flavoring his thought.

One might be tempted to say that Toury, along with the entire discourse of 'transfers," is thinking in a Western way, and that *anuvad*, with its non-reference to things moving from source to target, assumes a passivity that is entirely other.

That kind of opposition is to be resisted, for several reasons. First, there is a whole postmodern tradition in Western languages that would argue *against* this particular use of the term 'transfer,' so the problem cannot be the Western languages themselves. Second, for that matter, the Sanskrit term is itself presumably within some kind of Indo-European fold. Third, and more important, if we delve into the bases of Western tradition, we find ideas that would seem quite similar to *anuvad*, and with terms that are nevertheless compatible with Toury's use of 'transfer.'

The medieval Christian tradition tended to conceptualize translation in terms of an idealized hierarchy of languages, with the tongues of revelation (Hebrew, Greek, sometimes Arabic) at the top, the language of science and authorized Biblical translation (Latin) on the next rung, then the vernaculars, and finally the patois. Translation was mostly seen as moving downward on this hierarchy, from a superior to an inferior language, thus requiring explanation and the development of new linguistic resources. The movement down the hierarchy was also a shift from older to newer languages, at least in terms of the medieval conception. This involved a sense of chronological rendition that we have largely lost in our contemporary preconceptions of lateral movements between equally developed languages. Within the hierarchy, the Romance terms for translation were mostly based on *translat-*, from *translatus*, past participle of the standard Latin verb *transfero* (to translate, to carry across, to transfer.) The terms then underwent a major shift in the course of the fifteenth century. In the Hispanic tradition, the anthology of prefaces and theoretical comments compiled by Santoyo reveals the following development: *transportament* / *translacio* (1367), *trasladar* / *traslado* / *trasladaçion* (1415), *trasladaçcion* (1417), *traslaçion* (1428), *traslaçion* / *trasladar* / *traslador* (c.1430), *traduccion* / *traduzir* (1438), *translation* (c.1440), *traduçidor*

(1446), *transportar* / *traslador* (1450), *traslados* / *traducion* (1455). One then reaches a regime of new forms in *traduc-*, which underlies the current verbs *traducción, traduire, tradurre*, and so on.[9]

As is well known, the forms in *traduc-* were largely instigated by Leonardo Bruni, who was using *traduco* and *traductio* in Latin from the beginning of the fifteenth century.[10] Those terms were introduced to refer to a humanist mode of translation focused on rhetoric, on the text as the expression of a coherent subjectivity. In passing, the new terms for translation presupposed that the languages involved were equally able to express style. They thus undermined the medieval hierarchy of languages, allowing for cross-cultural communication between subjects now on the same footing, as if the communication were across space (like a conversation) rather than across time (like a reverence to ancestors.) The new terms have thus accompanied the centuries in which translation was idealized in terms of potential equivalence, albeit without that term.

This potted history hopefully reduces the apparent otherness of exotic terms for translation. The general sense of *anuvad* (Sanskrit also enjoyed a semi-divine status) is not too far removed from the medieval bases of our Western tradition. Modifications can certainly be made to the way we describe our conceptualizations. The entire vocabulary of "transfer" can indeed be questioned—meanings do not move. But we are not rooted to univocal languages, and historical research may thus nevertheless proceed.

The Translation as What I Would Say

Our second case is more directly concerned with the problematic of subjectivity. Wace's twelfth-century *Roman de Brut* can be read as a translation of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniæ*, from which it takes most of its information about the legends of Britain. However, the text is not marked as a translation until the following lines occur, about half way through:

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[9] Julio-César Santoyo, *Teoria y critica de la traducción: Antologia* (Bellaterra: Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, 1987).

[10] Gianfranco Folena, *Volgarizzare et tradure* (Turin: Einaudi, 1991); Anthony Pym, *Negotiating the Frontier: Translators and Intercultures in Hispanic History* (Manchester: St. Jerome Publishing, 2000).

Then Merlin spoke the prophecies
Which you have, I believe, heard,
of the kings who were to come
and who should govern this land.
I do not want to translate [*translater*] his book
since I myself do not know how to interpret it.
I would not want to say anything
unless it were as I myself would say. [11]

In refusing to translate at this particular point, Wace conveniently sidesteps the fact that Merlin was unlikely to have prophesized the Norman kings, who would certainly have been among Wace's receivers (his translation is in Anglo-Norman.) The omission is politically astute. However, in making this remark the translator implicitly says, "I have been (and will be) translating." The lines function as a kind of translator's preface, albeit placed near the middle rather than at the beginning of the text. Is the text then a translation?

For Toury's three postulates, this example presents no particular problem, none the least because the verb *translater* is closer to *transfer* than to most of our contemporary terms for translation (the movement is indeed downward, from Latin to the Anglo-Norman vernacular). Further, Wace's text presents a very clear and specific 'accountable relation,' since here the translator implicitly declares himself to be personally accountable for everything that he does choose to render. That is not generally a responsibility we ask translators to take on in our own day. However, it poses no particular problem for Toury's postulates.

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[11] Dunc dist Merlin les prophecies
Que vus avez, ço crei, oïes,
Des reis ki a venir esteient,
Ki la terre tenir deveient.
Ne vuil sun livre translater
Quant jo nel sai interpreter;
Nule rien dire ne vuldreie
Que si ne fust cum jo dirreie.

Nancy Durling translates the last line as "unless it were just as I should say," introducing a notion of external obligation and reducing the role of the first-person pronoun. Her final comments are nevertheless judicious: "For Wace, translation is a vision of truth which allows the author to add or delete material. It implies interpretation based on the author's own erudition, is suggestively linked to paternity, and is not discussed as a product of patronage." Nancy Vine Durling, "Translation and Innovation in the *Roman de Brut*," in *Medieval Translators and Their Craft*, ed. Jeanette Beer (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 1989), 3, 30. Pym, *The Moving Text: Translation, Localization and Distribution* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2004).

How does Gutt's 'complete interpretative resemblance' fare here? This is more difficult. In stating that he only renders texts that are in accordance with his own disposition, Wace allows that he has omitted other passages, not only Merlin's speech. On this understanding, the presumed interpretative resemblance might be considered complete (in a highly ethical sense) between the translation and its corresponding source-text passages, but not between the translation and its source as a whole. With this proviso, the presumption of complete resemblance should nevertheless hold.

Our own maxims are more seriously in trouble here. The maxim of quantitative congruence is clearly broken, since the translation is marked as being significantly shorter at this point. Yet the transgression is motivated and meaningful, underscoring the mediator's shared responsibility for the translational discourse. The breaking of the maxim itself need not lead to any kind of non-translation for the rest of the text. As for the maxim of first-person displacement, the eruption of the translator's voice in the midst of the translation is a highly unusual transgression, but it does make sense. By definition, the part of the text where Wace speaks in the first person is not translational; it is a meta-translational discourse, and little more than that. Again, the fact that the translator implicitly takes responsibility for the words translated is unusual, but not unaccountable.

The Translation as What I Cannot Say

In 1526 Alonso Fernández de Madrid finished his Spanish version of Erasmus's *Enchoridion*. Even the most cursory inspection will show that this translation is much longer than its original, to an extent that cannot be explained away by quibbles about how one assesses length. Should this obvious expansion create doubts about the translational status of the text? The translator's preface to the work touches all the bases for a translation of its day, finding inspiration in classical fidelity, with references to Saint Jerome and the like.[12] On the basis of the preface, the text does indeed invite assumptions of "complete interpretative resemblance"; it does little to upset any of Toury's postulates (at least not until we actually look for patterned relationships); it satisfies our concerns about pronominal structures, and it might even elude the maxim of quantity, albeit only for as

[12] Julio-César Santoyo, *Teoria y critica de la traducción*.

long as no historical reader was likely to put the source and the translation side-by-side. Unfortunately, one institutional reader was quite likely to do just that. That reader was called the Holy Office, the Inquisition. Institutional attacks on Erasmus had been going on since 1520.

Fernández de Madrid's work looks like a translation and is indeed a translation, in part. The text also adds much material to Erasmus, and omits quite a deal too. The preface, with its claims to fidelity, is a sham (as a general rule, translators' prefaces hide more than they reveal.) Without pursuing the details, let us propose that Fernández de Madrid uses the veneer of translation in order to give his own account of non-conformist ideas, preaching through the foreign persona of Erasmus. Why should he do that? Presumably, it was in order to deny complete responsibility in the case of public dispute. The translator would only be the messenger; the author, distanced, would be the one fully responsible. In this, the expansive translator would rejoin the authors of pseudotranslations (all those translations for which there has never been any original). Whereas Wace only rendered those ideas he was politically able to take responsibility for, Fernández de Madrid might well have chosen the translational form in order to express precisely those ideas for which he was not prepared to take full responsibility.

Both strategies are possible within the space mapped out by our conceptualizations of translation. Their history can be fought out within our project.

Conclusions, Mainly for Historians of Political Thought

Our prime purpose has been to demonstrate that the use of formal conceptualization can allow for considerable variation, and thus historicity. To talk about limits to the space of translation need not preclude many wonderful and varied things from happening on and across those limits.

We would also hope to say something to historians of political thought. The conference in New York in October 2005 demonstrated the extensive and complex body of knowledge that translations retain concerning the way ideas disseminate. From the perspective of Translation Studies, many of the papers presented fascinating insights able to enrich our theories and histories of translation. However, one of the main risks for any cross-disciplinarity on this level must be the frequent assumption that translation is simply what it has always been. Translation is what it has always been, but not simply so. When historians talk about translation, there

are certain aspects that we translation scholars would like to know much more about.

For example, translation concerns texts, not concepts, and those texts must be interpreted in quite specific terms. To see how a concept of translation is operating in any particular circumstance, we need information on the expectations that are created, the quantities involved, and the subject positions occupied. All that is the affair of considerable stretches of discourse.

Similarly, for the formal approaches we have brought together here, the status of a text as a translation is determined in the receptive situation. The historical study of translations must thus seek the receivers for which the translation could be accepted as such. Discursive analysis can take us part of the way there. Empirical histories, however, should be able to turn the subject positions into people.

Further, a history of texts and text receivers would hopefully be able to say something about that most hidden of subject positions, the translator. In principle, translators cannot say "I" within the text of a translation. In practice, their discursive invisibility is fairly easily seen through, allowing for a range of positions with regard to what is said in the translation. Translators can ally themselves with an author, hide behind an author, distance a text, obscure thought, adapt ideas to new receivers, and much else besides. How and why they do this is heavy with consequence for the ways translations have long evaded ideological censors.

Our formal conceptualizations would thus allow considerable space for the historical study of textuality, receptive positions, and the hidden subjectivities of translators. That is from our own agenda, from within Translation Studies. It need not be anyone else's agenda. But if historians can tell us more about those aspects, we promise to listen and take note. Our formal conceptualizations are by no means closed.

REINHART KOSELLECK ON TRANSLATION, ANACHRONISM AND CONCEPTUAL CHANGE

Kari Palonen

"Each translation into one's respective present implies a history of concepts," writes Reinhart Koselleck in his mid-eighties programmatic essay on conceptual history.[1] For Koselleck, the difference between the present and the past time itself requires translation as a condition of understanding the past.

Koselleck's thesis marks a declaration of the broad scope of conceptual history when it is understood not strictly as an academic discipline but in the sense of a broader political and cultural practice. He turns the awareness of the role of conceptual history into a skill required of every translator or interpreter. So far this has yet to be acknowledged in the academic province of translation studies or in the programmatically multi-lingual industries of translation and interpretation, such as the United Nations and especially the European Union.[2]

Conceptual History as Part of Translations

Two distinct conclusions can be drawn from the Koselleckian formula. The first one concerns what is denied by the formula, namely an imaginary limit situation of the simultaneous interpretation, for which there is no need for conceptual history. The ideal of simultaneity refers to the possibility that the translatable and the translated appear in the exact same present, *Gegenwart*, or perhaps more exactly in rhetorical terms, in the same audience. The second conclusion is that the linguistic transfers

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[1] Reinhart Koselleck, "Sozialgeschichte und Begriffsgeschichte,"in *Sozialgeschichte in Deutschland*, eds. Wolfgang Schieder and Volker Sellin, vol. 1 (Göttingen: Vandenhoek und Ruprecht, 1986), 90. The essay is re-printed in *Begriffsgeschichten. Studien zur Semantik und Pragmatik der politischen und sozialen Sprache*, ed. Carsten Dutt (Frankfurt/M: Suhrkamp, 2006), 10. See as well the English language translation, "Social History and *Begriffsgeschichte*," in *History of Concepts: Comparative Perspectives*, eds. Iain Hampsher-Monk, Karin Tilmans, Frank van Vree (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1998), 23–35.

[2] For the EU's translation policies see Peter A. Kraus, *Europäische Öffentlichkeit und Sprachpolitik* (Frankfurt/M: Campus, 2004).

over time always require translation, even within the same language, and conceptual history is an indispensable tool of such an inter-temporal translation. The point is that in order to avoid the pitfall of anachronism, we must engage in conceptual history when speaking about the past to a present audience.

To speak of simultaneous interpretation or translation is in itself a simplification, because there remains per definition a temporal gap between presenting a speech and its interpretation or translation. This is also the case when a speaker recites a written text and an interpreter has prepared a translation that she executes in the same rhythm as the speaker presents the original speech. Even in cases such as this, however, the gap remains. It is not the gap between the *elocutio* of the two oral speech acts, but between the acts of writing and translating a text for the purpose of its presentation to an audience.

Moreover, there exists a second sense according to which even spontaneous speeches, for example a speech given in the parliamentary assembly and its nearly simultaneous interpretation for the same assembly in a different language, require conceptual history. This is the simple rhetorical principle according to which every speech must be adapted to the intended audience, and things which are inherently intelligible in one language cannot be assumed to be so in another. I think this principle is also respected amongst well-established multi-lingual parliamentary audiences in which most of the parliamentarians understand each other's languages, as is the case in Switzerland, Belgium, Canada or Finland. In the Finnish *Eduskunta*, some members, particularly from the Swedish People's Party, even have even been known to alternate between Finnish and Swedish in the same speech, using whichever language best expresses what they are trying to say.

In other words, even the short time-interval between a speech and its translation into another language, is still a significant factor. In fact, the quasi-simultaneous inter-lingual translation refers to the one paradigmatic case of speech acts in which conceptual history is needed, whereas the inter-temporal translation within a language refers to a different and equally relevant paradigmatic situation for practicing conceptual history. The point of Koselleck's cryptic formula can thus be seen in the recognition that the inherent link between conceptual history and translation is present in both situations. In more general terms, every cross-contextual linguistic action requires the application of the distinct translation-related resources of conceptual history, regardless of the character of the contexts under thematization.

Koselleck's own primary interest lay, nonetheless, in the inter-temporal conceptual history within the German language. The programmatic formulae in his early work do not indicate a radical demand for the presence of conceptual history in every translation or vice versa. On the contrary, Koselleck's famous *Sattelzeit* thesis was originally as much focused on the limitations of the need for translation as it was on affirming it. It marked a watershed, since the translation of key political concepts was no longer necessary: "The heuristic principle of the procedure is that such a conceptual change has been realised, above all, during the period from 1750 and 1850. A consequence of this is that in the use of the same words the present content of their meaning remains since the middle of the last century so much constant that no 'translation' is needed any longer."[3]

Koselleck was initially concerned with those concepts whose meanings had changed during the *Sattelzeit*, which is also reflected in the structure of the articles of the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, particularly in the fact that the period after ca. 1850 is mainly discussed only in an *Ausblick*. According to the original program of the lexicon, the history of key concepts after the *Sattelzeit* was of merely registering character.[4] Over the course of the self-acknowledged[5] change in his own understanding of conceptual change, Koselleck also tacitly dropped the thesis of the stabilized meaning of concepts in the post-*Sattelzeit* period as well as the corresponding idea of the availability of the widely shared contemporary use of concepts.[6] As such, it is also possible to see the inherent connection between translation and conceptual history as a radicalized view of the need for translation in the post-*Sattelzeit* period, despite the fact that Koselleck himself

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[3] This and subsequent translations from German to English are the author's. "Das heuristische Prinzip dabei ist, daß ein solcher Begriffswandel sich vornehmlich zwischen 1750 und 1850 vollzogen hat, derart, daß bei gleichen Worten erst seit der Mitte des vorigen Jahrhunderts der heutige Bedeutungsgehalt soweit feststeht, daß es keiner 'Übersetzung' mehr bedarf." Reinhart Koselleck, "Richtlinien für das Lexikon politisch-sozialer Begriffe der Neuzeit," *Archiv für Begriffsgeschichte* 11 (1967): 82. See as well Reinhart Koselleck, "Einleitung" in *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, eds. by Otto Brunner, Werner Conze and Reinhart Koselleck, Bd. I (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1972), xv.

[4] Koselleck, "Richtlinien," 82.

[5] Koselleck, "Some Reflections on the Temporal Structure of Conceptual Change" *Main Trends in Cultural History*, eds. Willem Melching and Wyger Velema (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1994), 7–16; Koselleck, "A Response to Comment on the Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe" in *The Meaning of Historical Terms and Concepts. New Studies on Begriffsgeschichte*, eds. Hartmut Lehmann and Melvin Richter (Washington: German Historical Institute, 1996), 59–70.

[6] Kari Palonen, *Die Entzauberung der Begriffe. Das Umschreiben der politischen Begriffe bei Quentin Skinner und Reinhart Koselleck* (Münster: LIT, 2004), 241–64.

never gave any programmatic consideration to the specific conditions of the conceptual history of more recent times.

Anachronism and the Language of the Sources

It is customary in the Anglophone debate to treat Quentin Skinner as one of the main thinkers warning against anachronisms. In a broader sense, we can trace this criticism to Herbert Butterfield's polemic against the "Whig interpretation of history,"[7] as well as to Robin George Collingwood's insistence, against the historians of philosophy in particular, on the role of shifting questions in the history of thought.[8] Perhaps Skinner's most decisive polemic against anachronism refers to what he calls the "mythology of prolepsis," in particular to the danger of thinking that "the action has to await the future to await its meaning."[9] His main point here is the insistence on the autonomy of action and its marking a point in the contemporary debate against the tendency to subordinate it to the posterior judgment of its significance.[10] In his later work, which focuses on rhetoric, Skinner emphasises that the meaning of the concepts is not the only hermeneutic question, but there is also the dimension of linguistic action which cannot be subsumed to that of meaning.[11]

This Skinnerian insistence on the illocutionary point of speech acts by no means prevents him from speaking about the history of concepts. On the contrary, in his conception, the history of concepts is explicitly expanded to include linguistic action, namely "the history of their acquisition and deployment in argument, the history of what has been done with them, and thus with the changing roles they have played in our culture," as he puts it in the recent formulation of his program.[12]

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[7] Herbert Butterfield, *The Whig Interpretation of History* (1931; New York: Norton 1965).

[8] Robin George Collingwood, *An Autobiography* (1929; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978).

[9] Quentin Skinner, "Meaning and Understanding in the History of Ideas," *History and Theory* 8 (1969): 24.

[10] Skinner, "A Reply to My Critics," in *Meaning and Context*, ed. James Tully (Cambridge: Polity, 1988), 269–270.

[11] Skinner, *Reason and Rhetoric in the Philosophy of Hobbes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1996), 7–8.

[12] Skinner, "On Intellectual History and the History of Books," *Contributions to the History of Concepts* 1 (2005): 34. For a more detailed interpretation see Kari Palonen *Quentin Skinner: History, Politics, Rhetoric* (Cambridge: Polity, 2003), 161–69; and Palonen, *Entzauberung*, 167–79.

Nonetheless, we must be cautious not to overstretch the Skinnerian critique of anachronism. He already distanced himself in the 1970s from E.D. Hirsch's theses on the role of authorial intentions by acknowledging that nobody can intentionally control all the dimensions of meaning involved in a speech act and by stressing the link between intentions and illocutionary acts.[13] More interestingly for the present purpose, Skinner explicitly disputes the thesis presented by many empiricist historians who have warned against anachronisms, namely that scholars should unconditionally adopt the language of the sources. His main target here is one of his recent predecessors as Regius Professor of Modern History in Cambridge, Geoffrey Elton, and his model of the historian as a craftsman. In Skinner's Weberian view, it is always the scholars themselves who pose the questions—"we must learn to do our own thinking for ourselves," as he once put it.[14] Against Elton, he poses the rhetorical question "What might be the point or purpose of studying it at all?"[15]

The critique of anachronism and the consciousness of the limits of this criticism are crucial points about which Quentin Skinner's and Reinhart Koselleck's views, although definitely constructed independently of each other, share strong similarities. Koselleck's point lies in the historicization of the critique of anachronism itself. He offers the famous example of the sixteenth-century Altdorfer painting depicting the battle of Alexander the Great against the Persians. Altdorfer portrayed the Persians very similarly to Turks attempting to conquer Vienna in 1529. Part of the formation of the modern concept of history—or, at least of *die Geschichte* in German—as a collective singular was the insight into its own historicity, and around 1800, the Altdorfer painting would have been denounced as anachronistic.[16]

In the early 1980s, however, Koselleck came to insist that the critique of anachronism only represented half of the picture. He expressed his newly formulated views before an audience of German constitutional historians in rather puzzling terms, including his doubt as to whether it even makes sense to speak of *Begriffsgeschichte*. The target of this criticism was one of the most famous early works of the German *Begriffsgeschichte*, namely

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[13] Skinner, "Reply to My Critics," 269–70.

[14] Skinner, "Meaning and Understanding," 52.

[15] Skinner, "Sir Geoffrey Elton and the Practice of History," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 47 (1997), 310. In addition see Palonen. *Quentin Skinner*, 25.

[16] Koselleck, V*ergangene Zukunft. Zur Semantik geschichtlicher Zeiten* (Frankfurt/M: Suhrkamp 1979), 17–28.

Otto Brunner's *Land und Herrschaft*.[17] The book was first published in Austria after the *Anschluß* in 1939, and its ideological commitments have been one of the main targets of the recent criticism of the Nazi bias among German historians.[18] Koselleck's point, however, is methodological, although one aspect of this is Brunner's lack of distance from the fashionable Nazi thinking of the time.

Koselleck began by accentuating the value of the Brunnerian *Begriffsgeschichte*, in particular his critique of the anachronistic projection of the vocabulary of nineteenth-century constitutional law onto medieval studies.

> He has introduced conceptual history as a methodical vehicle to the traditional historiography of constitutions, in order to open the way to the primary sources detected by the wilderness of the contemporary prejudices of each time. . . . He aims at dispensing with categorical definitions *ex post* in favour of the evidential language of the sources or at relativizing them as prejudices or at least time-bound perspectives. Let's first conceptualize the past as it has conceptualised in its own words.[19]

The parallel to Skinner's critique of Elton is striking. In comparison to the craftsmanship model expressed by Elton, Otto Brunner proposes a purification program aimed at the liberation of the medieval studies on political rule from the ideological vocabulary of the "liberal" constitutionalism of the nineteenth century. Brunner especially rejects the projection of concepts such as the state and the constitution onto the medieval world, as nothing even remotely close to them can be found in the vocabulary of the primary sources.[20] The program of conceptual history à la Brunner radicalises the potential to avoid anachronisms in historiographical interpretations, and Koselleck formulated the point as follows:

> The historical-philological method has thus been given its own right as if it would so far never been done in a sufficient degree. It shall not remain

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[17] Otto Brunner, *Land und Herrschaft*, 2nd ed. (Brünn: Rohrer 1942).

[18] Gadi Algazi, *Herrengewalt und Gewalt der Herren im hohen Mittelalter* (Frankfurt/M: Campus, 1996).

[19] "Er hat die Begriffsgeschichte als methodisches Vehikel in die überkommene Verfassungsgeschichtsschreibung eingebracht, um den Weg zu den Quellen vom Gestrüpp jeweiliger zeitgenössischer Vorurteile freizulegen. . . . Kategoriale Definitionen ex post sucht er durch quellensprachliche Anschaulichkeit wenn nicht überflüssig zu machen, so doch als Vorurteile oder zumindest als zeitgebundene Perspektiven zu relativieren. Begreifen wir erst einmal die Vergangenheit so, wie sie sich selbst sprachlich begriffen hat." In Reinhart Koselleck, "Begriffsgeschichtliche Probleme der Verfassungsgeschichtsschreibung", *Der Staat*, Beiheft 6 (1983), 12–13. Also in Koselleck, *Begriffsgeschichten*, 372.

[20] See Brunner, *Land und Herrschaft*, p. xxii.

> solely a textual criticism but a vehicle of the substantial analysis on the way to the analysis of the contents of texts. In this manner it will be elevated into a conceptual historical instance of control. What has in each case not only been formulated but also conceptualised through which words? Which are the experiences, legal forms, arrangements and rules and to which definite words are they connected in a manner that entire textual genres remain blind without being bound to the concepts, around which they are centered? . . . The applied central concepts . . . regain then back their specific temporal valences, of which the variation until our time is then subordinated to a controlling history of concepts, in order to measure the difference between now and then through re-translation from past to present.[21]

Brunner's critique of the anachronistic projection of modern political concepts onto the medieval world is devastating, but his assumption that doing so allows us to speak of the past as such, independently of the language of the historical debates of his own time, is uncritical. The ideal of the conceptual language of the sources, "*quellengemäße Begriffssprache*," does not allow the historian direct access to "the past as such."[22] On the contrary, it is still the historian who decides about the questions and concepts to be dealt with. Koselleck's point is less a critique of Brunner's definite ideological commitments and more that of the view that a *Historismus* has to historicize its own point of departure.[23] "This refers to a consequent historism that, however, neglects to set its own time-bound historical concepts once more in relation to history."

In his historigraphical program, Koselleck gives the sources "veto power."[24] It is in the establishment of this kind of veto against the anachronistic practices of constitutional historians that Koselleck sees the great value of Brunner's program for medieval historiography. However,

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[21] "Die historisch-philologische Methode ist gleichsam in ihr bisher nie hinreichend wahrgenommene Recht eingesetzt worden, nicht nur Textkritik zu sein, sondern Vehikel der Sachanalyse auf dem Wer der Textinhaltsanalyse. Sie wird so überhöht zur begriffsgeschichtlichen Kontrollinstanz. Was ist jeweils durch welche Worte nicht nur ausgesagt, sondern begriffen worden? In welchen Worten bündeln sich welche Erfahrungen, welche Rechtsformen, welche Einrichtungen und Regeln, so daß ganze Textsorten ohne ihre zentrierenden Begriffe blind bleiben? . . . Die verwendeten zentralen Begriffe . . . gewinnen dann ihre zeitspezifischen Valenzen zurück, deren Wandel zu uns hin dann einer kontrollierenden Begriffshistorie unterworfen wird, um entlang den Rückübersetzungen die Differenz zwischen heute und damals auszumessen." Koselleck, "Probleme," 13; *Begriffsgeschichten*, 372.

[22] Brunner *Land und Herrschaft*, 497.

[23] "Hier handelt es sich um einen konsequenten Historismus, der freilich darauf verzichtet, eigene zeitspezifische Begriffe noch einmal historisch zu relativieren." Koselleck, "Probleme," 13; *Begriffsgeschichten*, 373.

[24] Koselleck, "Archivalien—Quellen—Geschichten," in *150 Jahre Staatsarchive in Düsseldorf und Münster* (Düsseldorf und Münster: Selbstverlag der Staatsarchive, 1982), 35.

again similarly to Skinner's critique of Elton, Koselleck never regards the sources as authorities from which the historians' concepts should simply be borrowed: "A description of the constitutional history in terms bound to the language of sources turns mute, if the past concepts themselves are not translated or redescribed for the present. Otherwise it remains a re-presentation of the text in the old sources in relation 1 to 1."[25]

Or, as Koselleck puts it on another occasion, history occurs either behind or through the sources, but not in them: "The history itself has occurred as if it would been behind the sources, occasionally through the sources but a source cannot ever be history itself."[26] In other words, it is not enough to avoid anachronisms when translating from the present to the past, but this procedure also requires a complementary re-translation from the past to the present. The historian not only engages in a dialogue with the past through her sources, but is also required to connect this dialogue to the debate in her own contemporary context.

The Double Act of Translation

The key heuristic tool in Koselleck's critique of Brunner lies in the demand for a "translation" between the present and the past and vice versa. Both forms of this type of translation occur within the same language, or, where Brunner's medieval sources are concerned, independently of whether the primary sources use the same "natural" language as the historian.

It would be easy to speak of a metaphorical extension of the ordinary meaning of translation to the conceptual transfer over the time within the same language. In Koselleck's case, labelling his use of translation in this context as a metaphor would, however, be misleading. It would be missing the central role that Koselleck attributes to the translation as the very procedure through which concepts can be rendered commensurable with each other over time and thus become potential objects of historiography. It is in this sense that both his critique of Brunner and his thesis of the *Sattelzeit* become more intelligible, and we can refer to all translations as the inter-contextual transfer of concepts, irrespective of whether or not

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[25] "Eine quellensprachlich gebundene Darstellung der Verfassungsgeschichte wird stumm, wenn die vergangenen Begriffe nicht übersetzt oder umschrieben werden. Sonst handelt es sich um eine Textwiedergabe alter Quellen im Verhältnis von 1:1." Koselleck, "Probleme," 1983, 13; *Begriffsgeschichten*, 373.

[26] "Die Geschichte hat sich sozusagen hinter den Quellen ereignet, gelegentlich durch sie hindurch, nie aber ist eine Quelle Geschichte selber." Koselleck, "Archivalien," 31.

the sources and scholar share a common language. As such, the act of translation is not an extraordinary extension of the inter-lingual transfer between languages but an expression of the *Verfremdungseffekt* in general, of the famous figure of Bertolt Brecht's theater program, which Koselleck explicitly applies to conceptual history in the *Einleitung* to the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*.[27]

In the Koselleckian sense, we can speak of translation as a paradigm for the use of the *Verfremdungseffekt* in the inter-contextual transfer. For a scholar who mainly studies sources written in other than her own language and who generally does not write in her native language, this view on translation should be reassuring. In Weberian terms, we could speak of an *Entzauberung* of the act of translation in the sense of its removing many of the magical elements that are involved in it as compared with other inter-contextual transfers.[28] There are no grounds for believing that native speakers would always be the best historians on the sources from a particular language; on the contrary, they may be criticized for often displaying a lack of a sufficient *Verfremdungseffekt* toward their sources. Similarly, there is no reason to believe that linguistic specialists would be better translators of a scholarly text transcending between two contexts than persons acquainted with the specific subject matter at hand.

The very point of Koselleck's critique of Brunner is the claim of a twofold translation between the present and the past. Avoiding anachronism in order to enable a fresh look at the sources is a necessary first step here, but speaking about the past sources requires the additional act of retranslation (*Rückübersetzung*) to the present. You cannot simply apply the archaic expressions found in the older sources when writing in the scholarly language of today, although you can refer to them in order to make a critical point on the contemporary scholarly language. But the act of retranslation requires an explication of past concepts in a manner that can be rendered commensurable with the present-day debates. In this sense, Quentin Skinner's studies on the concept of liberty are exemplary.[29] He thematised a dimension of the concept of liberty that has largely been lost

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[27] Koselleck, "Einleitung," xix.

[28] Max Weber, "Wissenschaft als Beruf (1919)" in *Max-Weber-Studienausgabe* 1/17, ed. Wolfgang Schluchter (Tübingen: Mohr 1994), 1–23.

[29] Skinner, *Liberty before Liberalism* (Cambridge: CUP, 1998); "A Third Concept of Liberty," *Proceedings of the British Academy* 117 (2002): 237–68; "Rethinking Political Liberty," *History Workshop Journal* 61 (2006): 56–70; *Hobbes and Republican Liberty* (Cambridge: C.U.P., 2008).

in the present debate. He reappraises the history of the concept through this dimension and opens up a critical edge to view on the present-day debates without directly committing himself to this neglected view from the past in the contemporary context.

Koselleck's re-examination of his own program of *Begriffsgeschichte* through his critique of Brunner is similar to this, although it contains a different emphasis. Despite the programmatic division of the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* articles into the short pre- and post-*Sattelzeit* sections and the more extensive main section dealing with the conceptual breaks during the *Sattelzeit*, many contributions to the lexicon give to the reader the almost inevitable impression that the authors are dealing with the "same" concept from beginning to end. In this respect, Koselleck has quite clearly changed his mind and speaks in his 1983 article explicitly of a shift from one concept to another within the same vocabulary:

> When we carelessly speak of the history of concepts, so do we mean, exactly formulated, that together with the relationships to reality [Sachverhalt] change also the titles, nominations and meaning of the words, all of which might be transported from the same vocabulary. Similarly it is obviously possible to construct new words in order to verbally catch new states of affairs or even bring them to exist. In such context it may become possible to form new concepts, such as 'state', 'constitution' or 'economy', all of which are fixed with already available words but which as concepts are formed only in the eighteenth century.[30]

The clearest paradigmatic examples of this shift of introducing a new concept within an old vocabulary are Koselleck's article, *Geschichte, Historie*,[31] and his other studies on the formation of the modern concept of *die Geschichte* during the second half of the eighteenth century.[32] His point here is the identification of the singular moment of conceptualization as a more crucial factor in conceptual history than the modification

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[30] "Wenn wir also leichtfertig von Begriffsgeschichte sprechen, so meinen wir exakter definiert, daß sich mit den Sachverhalten auch die Bezeichnungen, Benennungen und Wortbedeutungen ändern, die alle vom selben Wortkörper transportiert werden mögen. Ebenso können natürlich auch neue Worte gebildet werden, um Neuerungen sprachlich einfangen oder gar hervorrufen zu können. Dann mögen neue Begriffsbildungen gelingen wie 'Staat', 'Verfassung', 'Ökonomie', die zwar an überkommenen Worten kleben, aber als Begriffe seit dem 18. Jahrhundert neu sind." Koselleck, "Probleme," 15; slightly modified in *Begriffsgeschichten*, 375.

[31] Reinhart Koselleck, Christian Meier, Odilo Engels, Horst Günther, "Geschichte, Historie" in *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, Bd. 2 (Stuttgart: Klett, 1975), 593–718.

[32] See especially Koselleck, "Historia Magistra Vitae. Über die Auflösung des Topos im Horizont neuzeitlich bewegter Geschichte" in *Zukunft*, 38–66.

of the concept through reception. In order to radicalize this historicity of concepts, which appears to be Koselleck's seemingly paradoxical aim, we must avoid the historicization of everything: "[W]e must then be carefully aware of the difference laying between our present-day definition and the uses of the concept in past time that may be contained in the very same words."[33] In other words, the historicization of the study of concepts requires the identification of analytical categories, as they represent the only possible means of carrying out a re-translation of older sources to the language of present scholarship.

Analytical Categories in the History of Concepts

Koselleck thus distinguishes between source-bound concepts and scholarly categories of knowledge ("quellengebundene Begriffe," "wissenschaftliche Erkenntniskategorien"). Concepts and categories play different roles in the studies:[34] "In the first case, the concepts lending the source-language its shape serve as a means of heuristic entry into a comprehension of past reality. In the second case, the historian makes use of concepts constructed and defined *ex post*, scientific categories applied to the sources without being present within them."[35] His paradigmatic example of this is the introduction of the conceptual pair the space of experience versus the horizon of expectation (*Erfahrungsraum, Ewartungshorizont*); he consciously refrains from asking whether they were part of the contemporary language of the *Sattelzeit*.

As a matter of principle, this type of distinction is highly advisable if one wishes to avoid the pitfalls of conceptual relativism, as Koselleck writes: "The economy of language commands us namely to apply definitions, in which the defining expressions themselves are not permitted to be once more defined or relativized in terms of conceptual history. Otherwise we

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[33] "[W]ir müssen dann auf den Unterschied achten, der zwischen unserer heutigen Definition besteht und der Begriffsverwendung früherer Zeiten, die im selben Worten enthalten sein mag." Koselleck, "Probleme," 45. Not included in *Begriffsgeschichten.*

[34] "Im ersten Fall dienen ihm überkommene Begriffe der Quellensprache als heuristischer Einstieg, die vergangene Wirklichkeit zu erfassen. Im zweiten Falle bedient sich der Historiker ex post gebildeter und definierter Begriffe, wissenschaftliche Kategorien also, die angewendet werden, ohne im Quellenbefund aufweisbar zu sein." Koselleck, *Zukunft*, 350.

[35] Koselleck, *Futures Past. On the Semantics of Historical Time*, trans. Keith Tribe (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), 255.

would be captured with a fatal relativism."[36] Using the same expression both as an historical concept and analytic category in the same text is definitely confusing if the author makes no distinction in the text itself.

The question thus remains whether such a strict distinction can always be made, or whether it itself should be modified and historicized. In other words, the analytical categories may at some point, to use Koselleck's expression, be moved from the metahistorical to the historical level in the course of the research process or the borderlines between the usages may otherwise be ambiguous.[37]

In Koselleck's own vocabulary, the main "hypotheses" for the interpretation of conceptual change in the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*—democratization, temporalization, ideologizability and politicization [*Demokratisierung, Verzeitlichung, Ideologisierbarkeit, Politisierung*]—serve as analytical categories.[38] The question is really the extent to which he manages to retain the categories independently of the histories of democracy, time, ideology and politics, when all of them refer to key concepts that were subject to change during the *Sattelzeit* period. Is it not anachronistic to speak, for example, of democratization and politicization without giving any consideration at all to the conceptual changes which have taken place in the concepts of democracy and politics, as both of them are discussed in the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*? Following Koselleck's critique of Brunner, we can also ask whether by choosing to focus on these specific hypotheses he has failed to historicize them, instead blindly accepting some of the everyday or academic usages of the formative period of the lexicon as metahistorical categories.

By recognizing both the heuristic role of the distinction between historical concepts and analytical categories and the fatal consequences of blurring its borders, the question I would like to focus on is how we should make this distinction. How can we choose analytical categories that are both beneficial in the historical analysis of concepts and separate from the concepts themselves? In addition, can we historicize a particular

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[36] "Die Sprachökonomie gebietet uns nämlich Definitionen vorzunehmen, in denen die definierenden Ausdrücke selbst nicht noch einmal definiert oder begriffsgeschichtlich relativiert werden dürfen. Sonst würde man sich in einem heillosen Relativismus verstricken." Koselleck, "Probleme," 15; *Begriffsgeschichten*, 375.

[37] "Alle metahistorischen Kategorien schlagen im Zuge der Forschung um in historische Aussagen." Reinhart Koselleck, "Über die Theoriebedürftigkeit der Geschichtswissenschaft," in *Theorie der Geschichtswissenschaft und Praxis des Geschichtsunterrichts*, ed. Werner Conze (Stuttgart: Klett, 1972), 12.

[38] Koselleck, "Einleitung."

historical period of this distinction both in the language of the sources and the language of the scholars without considering it in the context of its entire history?

In the following analysis, I will delimit my discussion to the Koselleckian category of politicization. I will confront it with my own long-term work on the conceptual history of politics and on the distinct history of the expression *Politisierung* within the German history of the concept of politics.[39] This is also related to the crucial heuristic problem in my own studies: Is it possible for me, as a conceptual historian of politics, to speak of 'politics' as an analytic category, irrespective of its historical breaks and reconceptualizations?

The Concept of Politics and the Vocabulary of Politicization

Nowadays, the concept of politics and the accusations of and calls for the "politicization" of one thing or another are such frequent elements of everyday speech that it hardly occurs to most users—including politicians and scholars of politics—that they are relatively novel phenomena. Particularly in the Anglophone discourse, questions such as "what is politics?" have barely been posed at all prior to the academization of the study of politics after World War II. For example, the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* never had an entry for "politics."

This refers to the crucial historical point that *tà politikà* referred to the discipline of the *polis*, and in medieval and early modern universities *politica* became an umbrella discipline of government, administration, finances and later of the state. There was no emphasis at all on the question of discerning the "political" aspects of the subject matter of these disciplines. The first English language expressions which could be seen as belonging to the new phenomenon of "politics" or the "political," *policy* and the *politician*, began to appear during the eighteenth and particularly nineteenth century. Here we can detect a phenomenon that is indeed analogous to Koselleck's study of the origins of the collective singular *die Geschichte*. I have referred to this as a "horizon shift" from the discipline of politics to the phenomenon of politics, the latter arising either as a

[39] See in particular Palonen, *Politik als Handlungsbegriff. Horizontwandel des Politikbegriffs in Deutschland 1890–1933* (Helsinki: Societas Scientiarum Fennica, 1985); "Korrekturen zur Geschichte von 'Politisierung'," *Archiv für Begriffsgeschichte* 30 (1989): 224–34; *The Struggle with Time. A Conceptual History of 'Politics' as an Activity* (Münster: LIT, 2006).

distinct sphere or as an activity with qualifications of its own. The conceptualization of politics in terms of the activity-concept in particular took place—quite simultaneously as in Britain and the French- and German-speaking countries—from different perspectives and in different types of sources in the second half of the nineteenth and first of the twentieth centuries.[40] It is only through this process that politics became a central yet controversial *Grundbegriff* in both public and academic debates.

The French jurist Emile Giraud wrote in the 1960s that mixing politics with political science would be analogous to the error of mixing criminality and criminology.[41] This is an indication that the horizon of the discipline-concept of politics has been so completely lost that even a professor in a field close to politics was completely unaware that the alleged "confusion" actually refers to an older conceptual layer. This older tone is still indicated, for example, in Georg Jellinek's reference to pure and applied politics, but the discipline concept had become completely obsolete by the second half of the twentieth century.[42] Within the disciplinary horizon, there is no sense of referring to the politicization of something as such. Nor does it suit the categorical usage of *Politisierung* as a hypothesis on conceptual change in the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*.

The converse side of this is that, in the strict sense of referring to the possibilities of the contemporary agents to use the vocabulary, it is anachronistic to speak of politics in the sense of its being either an activity or even a sphere prior to the transition from the discipline of politics to the phenomenon of politics. It is clear, for example, that Harrington's reference to Machiavelli as the "onely politician" should today be translated as "the only theorist of politics."[43] During a transitional period it is always difficult and frequently impossible to determine emphatically whether a given expression refers to the discipline or the activity.

With Koselleck's critique of Brunner in mind, we should, however, refrain from rushing to denounce the historians of antiquity or the anthro-

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[40] See Palonen, *Struggle*; *Politik*; and *Die Thematisierung der Politik als Phänomen. Eine Interpretation der Geschichte des Begriffs Politik im Frankreich des 20. Jahrhunderts* (Helsinki: Societas Scientiarum Fennica, 1990). See also Ernst Vollrath, "Politik III," in *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie.* Bd. VI (Basel: Schwabe, 1984), 1056–75.

[41] "Confondre politique et science politique serait une erreur analogue à confondre criminalité et criminology." Emile Giraud, "Le droit international public et la politique," *Recueil des cours* 110 (1966): 470.

[42] Georg Jellinek, *Allgemeine Staatslehre* (Berlin: Häring, 1900), 13–19.

[43] James Harrington, *The Commonwealth of Oceana* and *A System of Politics*, ed. J.G.A. Pocock, (Cambridge: C.U.P., 1992), 9.

pologists writing on non-European cultures for their anachronistic use of the term 'politics.' The point is rather to acknowledge that the concept is being used as analytic category, which means that it is referring to the present-day discussions on politics. Nonetheless, the analysis of the vocabularies used by contemporaries would certainly be of primary interest to conceptual historians. Can any "functional equivalents" of our concept of politics be identified in them? Or were the classification of activities, mental categories and distinctions concerning the world so different that no single expression that is analogous to what we refer to as politics in the sense of an activity can be found?

Parallel to Koselleck's view of the formation of a new concept of history, I have come to consider the construction of the activity-concept of politics over the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as a genuine conceptual innovation. I use the metaphor of drawing new conceptual horizons to describe this, and the point is to examine exactly how the temporal character of the activity of politics itself can be characterized.[44] For this purpose, various angles of conceptualization, in rhetorical terms different *topoi*, were constructed as the common *loci* of perspectives on the conceptualization of politics in terms of its being a contingent activity. For example, deliberation, commitment and contestation refer to a set of mutually interrelated but opposed *topoi* which serve as perspectives on distinguishing the genuine political moment in the activity.

The conceptualization of the activity of politics can be constructed as a story of conflicting attempts to speak of the activity by "situating" them within different perspectives of interpretation. Unlike the discourses in more structuralistic approaches, the *topoi* in the rhetorical sense do not aim at subsuming singular views within a broad umbrella but are rather intermediate analytic knot-points that indicate occasions for the further singularization and individualization of the conceptions of politics. The conceptions of individual authors are not "located" within a *topos*, but their conceptions of politics can be analyzed as personalized constellations of both the different *topoi* and their more specific interpretations within each of the *topoi*.

One of the crucial insights I gained while writing *Politik als Handlungsbegriff* was that the expression *Politisierung* was of a relatively recent origin. And I am indebted to Rüdiger vom Bruch's reference to the article by the historian Karl Lamprecht in the *Berliner Tageblatt* on 15 January 1907,

[44] See especially Palonen, *Struggle*, 13–31.

entitled "Die Politisierung der Gesellschaft," for helping me to come to this realization.[45] In this essay, Lamprecht speaks of the increasing use of the expression "the politicization of the society." After searching through my vast collection of sources referring to the conceptualization of politics, I was unable to locate any use of *Politisierung* prior to Lamprecht. Perhaps it was, after all, Lamprecht himself who coined the new noun, although he used it in the rather familiar and harmless sense of the increased interest in politics.[46]

Conceptual history is not etymology, however, and the identification of the first uses of an expression is frequently quite useless. The point was that I found three expressions of *Politisierung* from 1908 with three different meanings. The pedagogue Paul Rühlmann uses it in the same harmless sense as Lamprecht,[47] while the feminist Minna Cauer speaks of *die Politisierung der Frau*, thus rendering certain individuals political.[48] The poet Ludwig Rubiner, for his own part, uses the formula *die Politisierung des Theaters*, thus turning politicization into the demand for the reinterpretation of a phenomenon in political terms.[49] Some years later, another expressionist poet, the jurist Kurt Hiller, combined the Cauer's and Rubiner's uses of the term, demanding that it is rather the politicians who should first politicise themselves.[50] Whereas Lamprecht spoke of *Politisierung* as a mere description of a fact, these speech acts marked a shift to the demand for politicization of both topics and persons.[51]

Both during and immediately after World War I, *Politisierung* became a slogan around which intense controversies brewed regarding both the meaning and the value of the phenomena. The most famous among them was Thomas Mann's anti-democratic pamphlet, *Die Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen*. For him, "Politisierung" was the main accusation in the rejection of the francophone ideal of the *Zivilisationsliterat*, as incarnated by both his brother Heinrich Mann and Kurt Hiller. Another consequence

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[45] Rüdiger vom Bruch, *Wissenschaft, Politik und öffentliche Meinung* (Husum: Mathiesen, 1980).

[46] For a detailed analysis of the article see Palonen, "Korrekturen."

[47] Paul Rühlmann, *Politische Bildung* (Leipzig: Quelle & Meyer, 1908).

[48] Minna Cauer, "Zur politischen Bildung der Frau," *Die Frauenbewegung* 14 (1908): 61–62.

[49] Ludwig Rubiner, "Politisierung des Theaters (1908)," in *Künstler bauen Barrikaden*, ed. Wolfgang Haug (Darmstadt: Luchterhand 1988), 37–38.

[50] "Erst politisiere sich gefälligst der Politiker." Kurt Hiller, "Das Recht über sich selbst und die politischen Parteien," *Zeitschrift für Kriminalpsychologie und Sprachrechtsreform* 7 (1910/11): 648.

[51] See Palonen, "Korrekturen"; *Struggle*, 205–208.

of the rise of the vocabulary of politicization was drawn by Carl Schmitt, who in his essay *Das Zeitalter der Entpolitisierungen und Neutralisierungen* denounced as depoliticization the loss of the unity and sovereignty of the state.[52] For Max Weber these very same phenomena would rather have been expressions of politicization, namely in the sense of the extension of controversiality beyond the traditional public sphere.[53]

In other languages, the rise of the vocabulary of politicization has been even more recent, and the frequency of directly pejorative uses of the expression perhaps more prominent.[54] It is only since the formation of a definite phase of conceptualization of the phenomenon of politics—either as a sphere or as an activity—that it has become possible to speak of politicization as such. Here, the anachronistic projection to the past is again an obvious potential pitfall, and the distinction between the historical and categorical uses is decisive.

Politicization as a Category in the Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe

The German expression *Politisierung* has been highly contested since its inception. Its meaning, range of reference and normative tone are all so controversial that we are always obligated to ask "in which sense" politicization is being used in the actual context. The questions of which broader concept of politics is being referred to, whether the politicization alludes to a qualitative turn or a qualitative increase, or whether it is the activity or the persons that are the subject of the politicization in question should all at least be taken up. Thus, as the history of the expression in German alone is extremely multifaceted and ambiguous, does it make any sense at all to use *Politisierung* as an analytical category of conceptual history, even during the *Sattelzeit* period, when the expression did not yet exist?

In addition, we have to examine how Reinhart Koselleck actually understands *Politisierung* as a category in the *Einleitung* and applies it in the individual articles in the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*. The initial point in the *Einleitung* is to refer to the plural standpoints of writers who use concepts in the sense of polemical counter-concepts ("*polemische*

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[52] Carl Schmitt, "Das Zeitalter der Neutralisierungen und Entpolitisierungen," in *Der Begriff des Politischen* (1929; Berlin: Duncker und Humblot 1979), 79–95.

[53] See the references in Palonen, *Das 'Webersche Moment'. Zur Kontingenz des Politischen* (Wiesbaden: Westdeutscher Verlag 1998), 297.

[54] For France see Palonen, *Thematisierung*, 89–93.

Gegenbegriffe").[55] In other words, in the context of the *Sattelzeit*, the politicization of concepts indicates the newly gained possibility to use concepts as partisan instruments in a struggle.

In post-war European "politics" there existed a strong metonymic tendency to understand "politics" as shorthand for "party politics."[56] To "go into politics" meant joining a party, and to "go out of politics" referred among the partisans to the renunciation of further candidatures in elections. The sphere concept of politics is predominant in this tendency to identify "politics" with "party politics." The tone of the activity refers to *parteiisch* or *Parteiung*, to taking a partisan standpoint as opposed to the struggle between definite parties. When Koselleck identifies *politisch* with *polemisch* in the *Einleitung* use of *Politisierung*, it is this nuance that he evokes, and the application of the narrower meaning does not makes sense when speaking of a period in which the election of candidates to parliament by organised parties did not yet exist in Germany.

This general reference to a partisan standpoint is also clear in the article on progress, in which Koselleck regards the turn of progress into a party or action concept.[57] The novel nuance of partisanship is also obvious when he mentions that the concept of the state has become politicised.[58] Through moves of politicization, the concepts of progress and the state themselves became partisan concepts to be used by one side or "party" in the actual controversy and in a derogative manner by the opponents of this "party."

In other contexts, Koselleck attributes a different nuance to politicization. This is especially the case with the politicization of the concept *Volk*. He refers to a number of German compounds including the *Volk*—*Volksgeist, Volksküche, Volksarmee*—referring to the different ideological groups attempting to get the "people" on their side with the use of such compounds.[59] All of these expressions refer to politicization in the sense

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[55] Koselleck, "Einleitung," xiii.

[56] This was already indicated in the Weimar Era. See for example Erich Winkler, *Gesetze der Politik* (Jena: Zwing, 1930).

[57] "Fortschritt . . . zum Partei- und Aktionsbegriff." Reinhart Koselleck, Christian Meier, "Fortschritt," in *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, Bd. II, 352.

[58] ". . . insofern die gesellschaftlichen Verhältnisse, die in ihn eingehen, zunehmend absorbiert werden zugunsten eines genuin herrschenden Staates, der . . . zum Selbstzweck wird." Reinhart Koselleck, Werner Conze, Götz Haverkate, Diethelm Klippel, Hans Boldt, "Staat und Souveränität," in *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, Bd. VI, 3.

[59] Reinhart Koselleck, Fritz Gschnitzer, Karl Ferdinand Werner, Bernd Schönemann, "Volk, Nation, Nationalismus, Masse," in *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*. Bd. VI, 148.

of a partisan nuance, whereas they simultaneously attempt to reduce this very nuance insofar as they appeal to the broadly valued concept of "the people," *Volk*. The irony of Koselleck's view lies in the illustration of the limits of such an inclusion, that is, in the persistence of the partisan connotation within the appeal to the people. No historically-minded reader could fail to recognise that *Volksküche* was a favorite expression of the Nazis, although *Volksarmee* was the army of the DDR. Here, politicization thus refers to the partisan application of a shared concept with a highly contested meaning and range of reference.

The various nuances of the Koselleckian applications of *Politisierung* in the lexicon tend to be covered by the partisan or polemical instrumentalization of concepts in contemporary controversies. Although Koselleck's examples are illustrative, we still may ask why he chose the expression *Politisierung* over *Polemisierung, Parteilichkeit* or, perhaps most exactly referring to the historically novel uses of concepts, *Verparteilichung*. There is, of course, no major problem with using *Politisierung* in this definite categorical sense when referring to the period around 1800, when the expression *Politisierung* did not yet exist.

Politisierung *as a Category*

One of the difficulties associated with the categorical use of *Politisierung* à la Koselleck lies in the fact that his interpretation of the concept takes up only a fragment of the everyday and academic uses of the expression. Nothing prevents it from being used in the sense in which it is applied in the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, although doing so would cause us to immediately ask: "politicization in which sense?" In all likelihood, Koselleck's choice of this formula was based on the post-war historical constellation, in which a relatively unproblematic use of both *Politik* and *Politisierung* was possible. This was definitely not the case in the Weimar republic, nor has it been the case since the mid-sixties, when, in the wake of the student and other movements, the controversies on *Politisierung*—as a complaint, a demand and a neutralised category—have been actualised. Simple Internet searches for *Politisierung* and the corresponding expressions in other West European languages illustrate how lively such controversies still are to this day.

As a conceptual historian of the activity-concept of politics, I do not object to the categorical uses of the polit-vocabulary. I have also sketched historical ideal types on the basis of the differentiations in the use of

politics, taking politicization and politicking as the main figures and polity and policy as stabilised borderline cases.[60] Koselleck's central thesis on the move from the metahistorical to the historical level can be reinterpreted in this sense.

If politics refers to contingent activity, politicization refers to marking something as contingent, as "playable." That is, the opening up of new *Spielräume*—or rather *Spielzeiträume*—lies at the very core of its meaning. Moving past the recognition of contingency as the first level of politicization, we encounter the principle of contestability—that is, the possibility to question something as the next layer of politicization.[61] Controversiality, which is the actual contestation, is the more explicit form of politicization and thus represents the next level. According to Koselleck, the basic concepts are "both controversial and contested,"[62] and here we can differentiate between the temporal layers of politicization by distinguishing contingency, contestedness and controversiality from each other.[63]

The result is that it is possible to speak of politics and politicization both as a subject of historical study or an analytical category in political theorising or historical analysis. The point is to require that scholars clearly mark the distinction between the two types of conceptual use. Conceptual historians seldom encounter such distinctions in their sources and are consequently required to explicate if and how this distinction has been made in the texts they are analysing. In my recent study on the history of the concept of politics, I distinguish my use of 'politics' in the categorical sense either by using quotation marks or other grammatical means in order to distinguish it from the conceptions of politics under study.[64]

The second point is that the choice of categories has in itself been carried out at least in part throughout history. Categories cannot be used for the study of periods or sources in which the categories themselves are immediately a part of the conceptual controversy. In this sense, the categories should be sufficiently formalistic in the Koselleckian sense of opposing possible to actual histories.[65]

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[60] See Palonen, "Introduction: From Policy and Polity to Politicking and Politicization," in *Reading the Political*, eds. Kari Palonen and Tuija Parvikko, (Helsinki: Finnish Political Science Association, 1993), 6–16; Palonen, "Four Times of Politics," *Alternatives* 28 (2003): 171–86.

[61] See Melvin Richter, "Conceptualizing the Contestable. 'Begriffsgeschichte' and Political Concepts," in *Die Interdisziplinarität der Begriffsgeschichte*, ed. Gunter Scholtz (Hamburg: Meiner, 2000), 135–44.

[62] Koselleck, "Reflections," 64.

[63] See Koselleck, *Zeitschichten. Studien zur Historik* (Frankfurt/M: Suhrkamp, 2000).

[64] See the subtitle for Palonen, *Struggle*.

[65] See Koselleck, "Theoriebedürftigkeit."

TRANSLATION AS CULTURAL TRANSFER AND SEMANTIC INTERACTION: EUROPEAN VARIATIONS OF *LIBERAL* BETWEEN 1800 AND 1830

Jörn Leonhard

Avoiding the Semantic Nominalism of Political Languages: Translation and Comparative Semantics

Ideologies, Clifford Geertz once remarked, are cognitive maps "of problematic social reality."[1] The semantic variations of political and social key concepts in particular contexts represent, like a map, different historical landscapes, based on specific experiences of the past and expectations of the future. Maps imply travel, and travelling in the landscape of ideologies implies contact between speakers, the transfer of interpretative knowledge and hence the semantic transformation of concepts as they are used in arguments. All these elements underline the importance of translational processes for any understanding of semantic change. Every translation involves a conceptual movement between the translatable and the translated, and indeed translation can be described not only as a metaphor, but as a method of semantic analysis. From this perspective, translations have both a diachronic and a synchronic dimension: they stand behind conceptual changes over time, from past past to past present, but they also represent the synchronic export and import of concepts and of their semantic structure between languages and vocabularies, thus reflecting the transfer of hermeneutic knowledge needed to articulate them in discourse.[2]

A comparative history of concepts brings together both dimensions of translation by stressing the diachronic change over time and the synchronic variations of semantic structures. The former points to translations in one national language community, the other to contact and translation within and between different national languages. If taken together, the

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[1] Clifford Geertz, "Ideology as a Cultural System", in *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 220.

[2] See Jörn Leonhard, "Von der Wortimitation zur semantischen Integration: Übersetzung als Kulturtransfer," in *Werkstatt Geschichte* 48 (2008): 45–63.

comparison not only focuses on isolated conceptual histories, but also on processes of semantic transfer and interaction as well as on conceptual overlap.

Two hermeneutical problems are involved here, which the semantics of *liberal/liberalism* can help to illustrate. First, many comparative studies still tend to equate the meaning of the ideological semantics of *liberalism* in different countries, as if it meant basically a similar canon of ideas, movements, or parties. They do not take into consideration the distinct contemporary meanings of *liberal* in different historical contexts. The neglect of this semantic aspect results in a trap of semantic nominalism, i.e. the unconsidered transfer of a concept's semantics from the contemporary political language of one country to the political discourse of another. This implicit equation of contemporary meanings in different contexts conceals an important focus of experiences and expectations, in other words the possibility of replacing the category of universal European liberalism with a spectrum of distinct histories of contemporary meanings of *liberal*. This is in contrast to a traditional history of ideas approach which would point to the singular of *European liberalism*, quasi "distilled" from the realm of ideas to which *liberalism* could be applied *avant la lettre*, i.e. before the concept actually existed in contemporary political discourse.[3] Yet the semantics of political concepts are not the same in different countries. Different contexts point to the problem of how distinct experiences of the past and past expectations of the future were translated into distinct political and social discourses, and how that process was stimulated by the import, export, and translation of foreign concepts and their semantic fields. In other words, it is not possible to sum up the meaning of French *libéralisme*, German *Liberalismus*, Italian *liberalismo* and English *liberalism* in a universal concept of *European Liberalism*. Behind linguistically "equal" or "similar" words lie essentially different experiences, interests and expectations.

Second, there is what may be called a translational circle. The results of a comparative semantic analysis need to be re-translated into a language. Theoretically a researcher in such a situation would need a meta-language in order to avoid this problem of *Rückübersetzung*, such as a meta-theory

[3] See Jörn Leonhard, *Liberalismus. Zur historischen Semantik eines europäischen Deutungsmusters* (Munich: Oldenbourg Verlag, 2001), 47, 66, 83; Leonhard, "From European Liberalism to the Languages of Liberalisms: The Semantics of *Liberalism* in European Comparison," in *Redescriptions. Yearbook of Political Thought and Conceptional History* 8 (2004): 17–51.

which in other comparative analyses serves as a *tertium comparationis*, for example modernization theories in social history. However for comparative semantics, there is no such meta-language. Since there is no easy solution to this problem, the historian needs at least to be aware of it.[4]

Against this background, this paper seeks to illustrate the importance of translational processes for comparative semantic analyses in two parts: first, two ideal-type models are presented, which have been developed on the basis of the semantics of *liberal/liberalism* in European comparison, one focusing on the semantic transformation of concepts, the other concentrating on translation as a selective export and import of interpretative knowledge. Second, some exemplary elements of the translational processes that influenced the emergence of *liberal* as a political key concept in early nineteenth Europe are analyzed in order to illustrate the importance of translations for semantic change.

Differentiating the Sattelzeit: *Stage-Models of Semantic Transformation and Translation*

On the basis of such a comparative analysis of semantics it is also possible to differentiate Reinhard Koselleck's concept of the saddle epoch (*Sattelzeit*).[5] According to this model a universal semantic change, based on processes like the democratization of concepts, took place between 1750 and 1850 and resulted in modern concepts in political and social vocabulary. In this paper, however, it is argued that only comparison allows identifying the specific rhythms of conceptual change and thus the

[4] See Reinhart Koselleck, Ulrike Spree and Willibald Steinmetz, "Drei bürgerliche Welten. Zur vergleichenden Semantik der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft in Deutschland, England und Frankreich," in *Bürger in der Gesellschaft der Neuzeit*, ed. H.-J. Puhle (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 199), 14–58, esp. 22. See in addition Javiér Fernández Sebastián and Juan Francisco Fuentes, "Conceptual History, Memory, and Identity: An Interview with Reinhart Koselleck," in *Contributions to the History of Concepts* 2 (2006): 111–112; *Vocabulaire européen des philosophies. Dictionnaire des intraduisibles*, ed. Barbara Cassin (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 2004).

[5] Reinhart Koselleck, "Richtlinien für das Lexikon politisch-sozialer Begriffe der Neuzeit," *Archiv für Begriffsgeschichte* 9 (1967): 81–99; Koselleck, "Einleitung," in *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe. Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland*, eds. Otto Brunner, Werner Conze and Reinhart Koselleck, Vol. 1 (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1972), xiii–xxvii. For a general overview on the perception of *Begriffsgeschichte* see Willibald Steinmetz, "Vierzig Jahre Begriffsgeschichte–The State of the Art," in *Sprache—Kognition—Kultur. Sprache zwischen mentaler Struktur und kultureller Prägung*, ed. Heidrun Kämper and Ludwig M. Eichinger (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2008), 174–97.

life-cycle of concepts in different countries. There was no single period in which European vocabularies became modern, but rather particular paths with different connections, relations and overlapping between the semantics of key political concepts. Both models try to take these premises into consideration. The first describes the diachronic transformation of a concept's semantics, consisting of four stages. Its function is to identify the moment when translations can actually influence conceptual change and semantic transformation.

1. The pre-political stage of semantics: In the case of *liberal*, this is the stadium dominated by the pre-1789 uses of *liberal* or *liberality* in the different contexts. As in the case of Immanuel Kant's "*Liberalität der Denkungsart*"[6] or Sieyès' "*education libérale*"[7] of the Third Estate in France the concepts reflected an enlightened educational ideal without a fixed political or social meaning.
2. A fermentation of traditional and new semantic elements, caused by new political, social and cultural experiences, newly articulated interests and new expectations. Pre-political and politicized meanings were now beginning to overlap. This process started with the invention of the *idées liberals* in France in 1799 and their subsequent translation into *liberale Ideen* in Germany and *idee liberali* in Italy,[8] but also with the emergence of *liberales* and *serviles* as party names in Spain and the export of this nomenclature to other European countries.
3. The politicization of concepts as controversial through changing connotations of traditional concepts and the development of new concepts: In this phase, speakers attempted to structure the semantic field by canonic definitions and semantic clarity, relying on a number of key experiences and expectations. This is the stadium in which the import of concepts such as the French *idées liberals* created a framework for the articulation of new experiences and stimulated conceptual debates, thereby testing the semantic field.
4. The ideological polarization and development of bipolar or multi-polar semantic structures: The focus was now on an antagonistic structure of

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[6] Immanuel Kant, "Kritik der Urtheilskraft, 1. Theil: Kritik der ästhetischen Urtheilskraft," in Immanuel Kant, *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. Königlich Preußische Akademie der Wissenschaften, vol. V (Berlin: Reimer, 1913), 268.

[7] Emmanuel Sieyès, "Qu'est-ce que le tiers état? (1789), précédé de l'Essai sur les privilèges." *Édition critique avec une introduction par Edme Champion* (Paris: Société L'historie de la Revolution Francaise, 1888), 42.

[8] See for example, Paolo Vergani, *Le Idee Liberali. Ultimo rifugio dei nemici della religione e del trono* 3rd ed. (Torino: Pietro Giuseppe Pic, 1821).

semantics, resulting in a wider field of political and social nomenclatures and their use in arguments. In the case of liberal, the semantic field became defined by symmetric counter-concepts such as *radical, conservative*, or later *socialist*.

Translation processes between national languages played a fundamental role in the second and third stages, when the semantic structure of a concept is still relatively fluid and open. In this phase the transfer of concepts and their translation served as a stimulating catalyst for politicized discourses. A very good illustration of this constellation is Rolf Reichardt's reconstruction of a virtual library of French-German translations between 1770 and 1815, a quantitative analysis which documents the importance of translations in the politicization of German concepts and discourses through the translation of French texts. It also underlines the growing importance of journal and newspaper articles in this context, especially during the 1790s:

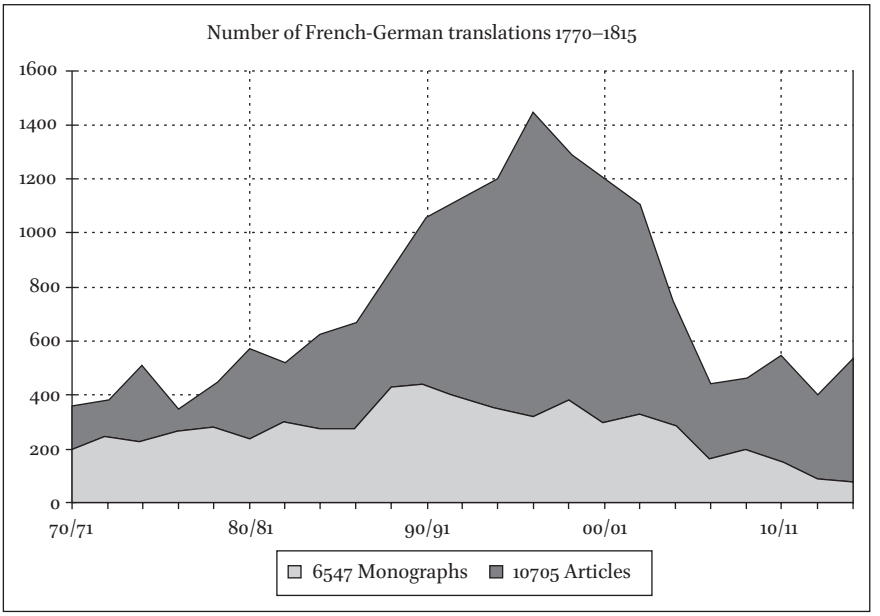

Fig. 1: A Franco-German Library of Translations, 1770–1815[9]

[9] Figure after Rolf E. Reichardt, *Das Blut der Freiheit. Französische Revolution und demokratische Kultur* (Frankfurt/Main: Fischer, 1998), 292.

Conceptual translations presuppose a cultural transfer of concepts that have gained at least a certain degree of universal meaning, before they can be integrated into national discourses. That was the case with the French political connotation of *libéral* and the Bonapartist *idées libérales* after 1799 in particular. The export of *libéral* and its translation became a dominating feature in early nineteenth century German and Italian political discourses. The following figure shows the number of monographs containing *liberal* in the main or sub-title between 1801 and 1880 in European comparison. Again, the quantitative analysis underlines the pioneering role of France as a laboratory of political and social language in the early nineteenth century. The export of French concepts and semantic fields to other continental societies was a dominating feature before 1830, especially with regard to the German and Italian states.

Following from this quantitative analysis, the second model tries to identify different stages in the translation between national languages and vocabularies, thereby differentiating various functions of the translational process:

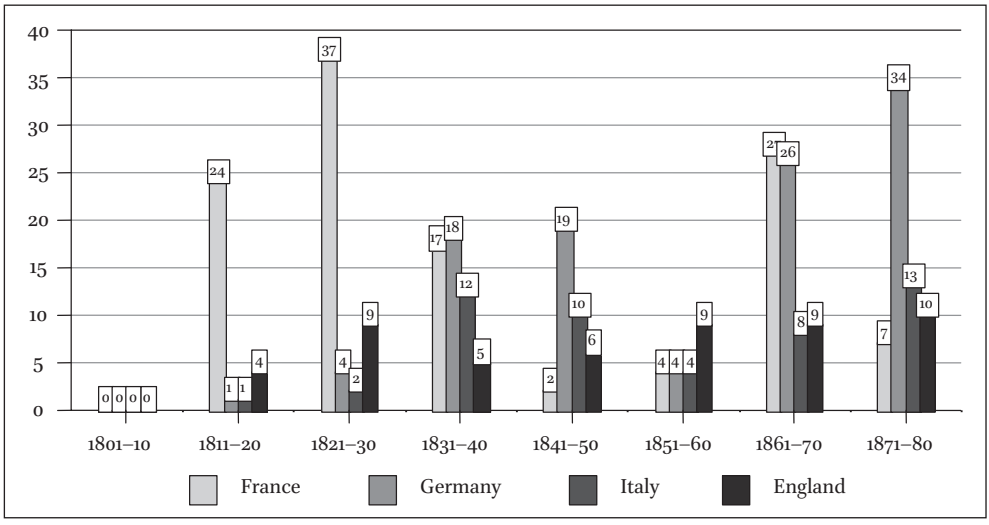

Fig. 2: Monographs containing "liberal" in title/subtitle in European comparison, 1801–1880[10]

[10] Leonhard, *Liberalismus*, 573.

1. Imitative translation of characteristic French expressions or texts taken from newspaper articles, essays, or entries from contemporary dictionaries: This type of translation usually reflected the direct impact of foreign impressions on a speaker, for instance a German writer travelling to revolutionary Paris and reading political journals there. In this early stadium, there was a characteristic lack of differentiating commentaries which could relate foreign concepts and their semantics directly to the speaker's own political or social context. German Jacobins travelling to Paris translated *principes libéraux* as *liberale Prinzipien*, but focused on the contemporary French context, not on the possibility of applying the concept to the German political situation.[11]
2. Adaptive translation: On the basis of imported foreign concepts, selected semantic elements were applied to a different social and political context. In this phase, the selection of semantics was directed by the specific experiences, interests and expectations of the perceiving speakers. Although it still reflected the foreign origins, the concept's original connotation changed. The French *idées libérales* were not only imitated by *liberale Ideen* or *idee liberali* but the translation was applied to the political experiences and constitutional as well as national expectations in Germany and Italy.
3. Discursive integration: In this phase, concepts and their semantic structures, which were now applied to the different political and social contexts of the importing society, were integrated into a society's discourse. This is documented by the emergence of encyclopedic entries of *liberale Ideen*, for instance in the Brockhaus edition of 1817, without any reference to its French origin but with particular references to the German political and constitutional context.[12]

Many objections against evolutionary types and organic patterns of this sort can also be directed against both models. Their primary function, however, is to provide a heuristic instrument in the analysis of a particular concept. What is intended here as well is a stimulus for a broader debate about ways to differentiate Koselleck's paradigm of a *Sattelzeit* between 1750 and 1850. From that perspective, we may also ask whether parts of

[11] See for example Konrad Ferdinand Oelsner's letter dated 10th May 1797, quoted in Klaus Deinet, *Konrad Engelbert Oelsner und die Französische Revolution. Geschichtserfahrung und Geschichtsdeutung eines deutschen Girondisten* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1981), 285.

[12] [F.A. Brockhaus], *Allgemeine deutsche Real-Encyclopädie für die gebildeten Stände. Conversations-Lexicon*, Vol. v, 4th edn. (Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1817), 674–75.

these models can be applied to other processes of conceptual change. The aim should be to overcome isolated national histories of concepts by a focus on cultural transfer and semantic interaction between political languages, an entangled history which reflects the synchronic variations of the past.[13]

Universalization and National Application: Translating liberal *in Early 19th-Century Europe*

The importance of translational processes for conceptual change can be illustrated by the comparative semantics of *liberal* in the early nineteenth century. On the European continent, Napoleonic expansionism led to a direct confrontation with the French *idées libérales* as Napoleon's programmatic formula of the results of 1789. In his Proclamation of the 18th Brumaire 1799, justifying the coup d'état, Bonaparte's *idées libérales* originally stood for a defensive strategy to safeguard the revolution's legacy by ending both political instability and social anarchy: *"Les idées conservatrices, tutélaires, libérales, sont rentrées dans leurs droits par la dispersion des factieux qui opprimaient les conseils, et qui, pour être devenus les plus odieux des hommes, n'ont pas cessé d'être les plus méprisables."*[14] Napoleon's invention of the *idées libérales* became part of his short-lived but influential imperial ideology. As the *"héro des idées liberals"* he proclaimed to be both the only legitimate heir of 1789 and the only *garant* of the revolution's positive achievements, as incarnated by the *Code Civil* and the idea of the nation's sovereignty.[15] By referring to the imperial understanding of the *idées libérales*, Napoleon thus claimed to fulfill the revolution's original and legitimate objects. On the other hand, turning the transpersonal principle of the *idées libérales* against Napoleon's military despotism after 1810 integrated the opposition of the *libéraux* around Benjamin Constant and Madame de Staël.[16] This explained why the *idées libérales* could

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[13] See Steinmetz, "Begriffsgeschichte," 175–77.

[14] "Proclamation du général en chef Bonaparte." Le 19 brumaire, 11 heures du soir, in *Le Diplomate. Numéro xvi, Tridi 23 Brumaire, an VIII de la République française* [13th November 1799]; see also P.J.B. Buchez and P.C. Roux, *Histoire parlementaire de la Révolution française ou journal des assemblées nationales depuis 1789 jusqu'en 1815*, Vol. xxxviii (Paris: Paulin, 1838) 257.

[15] [Bourrienne], *Mémoires de M. de Bourrienne, ministre d'état; sur Napoléon, le directoire, le consulat, l'empire et la restauration*, Vol. iii (Paris: Ladvocat, 1829) 28.

[16] See Xavier Martin, "Libéral/Illibéral. Sur l'emploi de ces mots dans les *Travaux préparatoires du Code civil* (1801–1804)," in *Dictionnaire des Usages socio-politiques (1770–1815), vol. ii: Notions-concepts* (Paris: INALF, 1987), 45–53.

survive the Emperor's defeat in 1815. By means of discursive export and penetration, by 1815 the *idées libérales* had become a universal concept for continental authors. In Germany and Italy it was possible to distance them from the Napoleonic origin and use them to articulate new constitutional, social and national expectations.

Whereas the English denomination of parties had originated in the seventeenth century and immunized English political discourse against continental imports, which meant that *liberal* was only slowly and reluctantly integrated into an already existing political nomenclature, in Germany the semantic import of *liberal* coined by the French Revolution and Napoleon was essential. In the member states of the Confederation of the Rhine a new language policy was directed by the French authorities, through which the *idées libérales* and the *constitution libérale* found their way to German journals and newspapers. The *idées libérales*, first formulated by Bonaparte in his Proclamation of the 18th Brumaire 1799, and after 1815 translated into *liberale Ideen* now indicated the overall demand for both national unity and constitutional progress in Germany. German authors looked at French debates, but their translation changed from a mere imitation of the concept to its application to the particular German situation. An excellent example in this context is Johann Christoph von Aretin's adaptive translation of a contemporary French article on *Les idées libérales* published in 1814.[17] In his translation, Aretin applied the French concept to his own German background and the political and national situation of the German states at the end of the Napoleonic Wars.[18] He gave particular attention to the constitution as the incarnation of a new balance between monarchy and people. But whereas the French text spoke of *"civilisation"* as the main criterion behind liberty, Aretin used the German *"Bildung"* which had a much more socially exclusive meaning. Also, the concept of *"nation"* had very different connotations in France and Germany at that time. Whereas French semantics oscillated between the nation's revolutionary sovereignty and the nation as represented by the constitutional monarch, the German expectation was to establish a constitutional nation-state which by 1815 already existed in France:

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[17] "Les Idées liberals," in *Le Nouvelliste Français ou Recueil Choisi de Mémoires No. xii* (Pesth: 1815), 273–82.

[18] [Johann Christoph Freiherr von Aretin], "Was heißt Liberal? Zum Theil mit Benützung eines französischen Aufsatzes in dem *Nouvelliste francais*," in *Neue Allemannia* 1 (1816): 163–75.

"Eine Verfassung ist liberal, wenn sie der Nation nicht nur alle Gattungen von Freiheit gewährt, deren ihr Bildungsstand fähig ist, sondern auch die Freiheit unter den Schutz der edlen und großmächtigen Gesinnungen stellt. Wesentliche Bestandtheile einer solchen Verfassung sind daher gegenseitiges Zutrauen der Regierung und der Regierten, ehrenvolle Auszeichnung des Verdienstes und des Talents, Wohlwollen gegen alle Menschen ohne Unterschied des Standes und des Bekenntnisses".

"Une constitution libérale non-seulement donne à une nation tous les genres de liberté que son état de civilisation admet, mais elle met encore la liberté sous la sauvegarde des sentiments nobles et généreux. La confiance mutuelle du gouvernement et du peuple, les égards dus au talent et à la vertu, la bienveillance envers les nations étrangères, font parties de toute constitution libérale".[19]

Similarly different connotations lie behind the concept of *gouvernement/Regierung*. Whereas the French author explicitly acknowledged the existence of an institutionalized opposition in parliament, Aretin could only focus on public opinion as a source of political legitimacy and an instrument with which to counterbalance the dangers of despotic rule. Here the different constitutional developments and experiences in both societies became apparent:

"Eins der ersten Kennzeichen einer liberalen Regierung ist, daß sie öffentliche Verhandlungen über die den Staat und das Volk zunächst angehenden Gegenstände gestattet. Mit der Verhandlung wird auch der Widerspruch zugelassen. Jede liberale Regierung erlaubt also die Kritik ihrer Verfügungen: ja sie wünscht sie sogar, einmahl weil die freie Discussion allein dem Volke seine politische Freiheit beweist, und dann, weil sie die Regierung von dem Zustand der Volksstimmung unterrichtet, und ihr Gelegenheit giebt, jene ungeheure moralische Kraft, genannt öffentliche Meinung, zu leiten und in Bewegung zu bringen; ein Vortheil, den der Despotismus gänzlich entbehrt".

"Un des premiers caractères d'un gouvernement libéral, c'est de provoquer une discussion publique sur toutes les questions qui intéressent l'État et la nation. Mais admettre la discussion, c'est admettre la contradiction; or la contradiction habituelle, en fait de politique, est ce qu'on nomme opposition. Tout gouvernement libéral admet donc une opposition; il y a plus, il la désire, d'abord parce que l'existence bien manifeste d'une opposition peut seule constater l'existence de la liberté politique, ensuite parce que les débats entre les ministres et l'opposition signalent les erreurs où les premiers ont pu tomber, éclairent le gouvernement sur la situation de l'esprit public, et fournissent l'occasion de diriger, d'exciter et de mettre en mouvement l'opinion, cette force morale incalculable dont le despotisme se prive lui-même".[20]

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[19] Aretin, "Liberal", 170; "Les Idées liberals", 278–79.
[20] Aretin, "Liberal", 171; "Les Idées libérales", 279–80.

The import of the new concept also provoked resistance, reflecting the change from politicization to ideological polarization: For Metternich and the German Confederation this concept could only denote a revolutionary direction. Public confidence in the "*Liberalität der Regierung*,"[21] the government's liberality, for instance during the Prussian reform era or in the South German constitutional states of Baden, Württemberg and Bavaria, became more and more disillusioned after the reactionary change in the political atmosphere following the murder of August von Kotzebue and the Carlsbad Decrees in 1819/20. When it became clear that there would be no further constitutional progress and no parliaments in the single German states, *liberal* changed into an opposition-label, thus defining the progressive and backward forces in society. Now the use of the term reflected the deepening gap between state and society, for which there was no equivalent in the history of the English concept *liberal*. At the end of the 1820s, *liberalism* in Germany signified an uncontested belief in the progress of reason while the restorative governments represented backwardness and out-dated forces in history. The *liberal party* stood for a *movement party* (*Bewegungspartei*)—a symbol of natural progress in history.[22]

Translations from French to German in that period meant an ongoing, implicit confrontation with France. In contrast to the optimistic self-estimation of what *liberal* should stand for, early definitions of *liberal/liberalism* in Germany reflected a specific uncertainty about the political and social implications of a concrete program. According to most contemporaries "*wahrer Liberalismus*," true liberalism had to be defended against radical forces in the tradition of the French revolutionary terror.[23] At least until the French July Revolution of 1830 the history of *liberal* in Germany was at the same time a history of interpreting the French Revolution and its consequences in the German states. In Britain on the other hand the delayed and reluctant import of the new concept pointed back to the experiences of the seventeenth century and the existence of premodern party names, at least until the early 1830s. In the British case one is confronted with a complex translation from W*hig* to *liberal*.[24] From

[21] "Über Völkerbestimmung", in *Allemannia* 7 (1816), 51–52.

[22] See for example Theodor Mundt, *Moderne Lebenswirren* (Leipzig: Reichenbach, 1834), 33.

[23] See Wilhelm Traugott Krug, *Der falsche Liberalismus unserer Zeit. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Liberalismus und eine Mahnung für künftige Volksvertreter* (Leipzig 1832).

[24] Leonhard, " 'True English Guelphs and Gibelines': Zum historischen Bedeutungs- und Funktionswandel von *whig* und *tory* im englischen Politikdiskurs seit dem 17. Jahrhundert", in *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* 83 (2002): 175–213.

this point of view, the history of *liberal* also stood for the different duration of distinct *Ancien régimes*, reflecting different *Sattelzeiten.* In France, Germany and Italy, this was directly or indirectly marked by the period between 1789 and 1815, whereas Britain's *Ancien régime* only came to an end in the course of the 1830s.

France was not the only birthplace of the new concept: Again it was through a complex process of translations that Spanish *liberales* influenced the modernization of other European vocabularies. The political meaning of *liberal* as a party denomination originated from the first Spanish constitution of 1812. The adherents of this new constitution called themselves *liberales* and spoke of their opponents who supported the principles of absolute monarchy as *serviles*.[25] It was with regard to the political situation in Spain that the new political adjective *liberal* found its way into the English political vocabulary. The British example illustrates the limits of translations and the factors that shelter a political discourse against conceptual export from outside. The British import of the Spanish concept was a negative semantic adaptation. In 1816 Lord Castlereagh thought of a purely revolutionary party in the tradition of the French Jacobins when he spoke of the Spanish *liberales*, although their origin had been the fight against French occupation during Napoleon's reign.[26] Until 1818/19, English authors made use of the new political concept *liberal* very often in the foreign spelling to describe the domestic political situation of continental countries, thereby underlining the un-English origin of the new political concept. But when speaking of British politics, authors continued to refer to the historical party names *Whig* and *Tory* or *radical* which had originated from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

The British example illustrated an imitative, not an adaptive translation, which postponed discursive integration for a long time. The continental context dominated the meaning of *liberal* when being used in English political texts until the period after 1815. Only very reluctantly did *liberal* appear after 1815, indicating a changing tone in British politics. In 1816 Robert Southey spoke for the first time of the "*British 'liberales'*," thus mixing the Spanish spelling of the party name with an application to the English political scene and stigmatizing a political opponent by the use

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[25] See Juan Francisco Fuentes and Javier Fernández Sebastián, "Liberalismo," in *Diccionario político y social del siglo XIX espanol*, ed. Javier Fernández Sebastián and Juan Francisco Fuentes (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 2002), 413–28.

[26] "Speech of 15th February 1816," in *The Parliamentary Debates from the Year 1803 to the Present Time*, First Series, vol. 37 (London: T.C. Hansard, 1820), 602.

of the continental adjective.[27] For many Tory authors, *liberal* served as a negative label with which they could relate their opponents to the revolutionary experiments in France, Spain, Italy or Greece. To them, *liberal* represented Jacobin terror and Napoleonic despotism under the guise of an apparently progressive label. Thus, in the British case, the import of *libéral* or *liberales* for a long time meant a confrontation with continental revolutionary experiences, provoking discursive resistance.

Only reluctantly the un-English connotation of *liberal* was overcome, making the semantic application of the new concept to English politics possible. An important catalyst for the integration of *liberal* into the English political vocabulary was the founding of Leigh Hunt's Journal *The Liberal, or Verse and Prose from the South* in 1822, a short-lived but influential literary journal of the Byron-circle which contained articles by Byron and Shelley, often in a critical if not opposing tone, dealing not just with the political developments in the South of Europe but also criticizing the politics of George III and Lord Castlereagh. Its title already anticipated its program: The South of Europe with its revolutionary movements for national independence and political liberty, such as in Greece, constituted the background. Yet in the preface of the first edition Leigh Hunt also pointed to the traditional meaning of *liberal* in the context of classical education, thus relating the political implications to the ideal of Roman and Greek literature as the framework of humanity and political liberty.[28] It is significant that in the course of the public controversy about the new journal the opponents reacted to its title by publishing a satirical antidote: *The Illiberal, or Verse and Prose from the North.*[29]

The end of the Napoleonic wars in 1815 marked the end of internal political abstinence in British politics. The blockade of any open and public debate about reform, which had been defended until 1815 with reference to the necessary concentration of the national forces in the fight against France, was lifted. This shift of political attention from foreign affairs to domestic problems provided a fertile ground for the semantic transformation of *liberal* from an apparently un-English adjective with revolutionary

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[27] *The Life and Times of Henry, Lord Brougham*, vol. 2 (London: William Blackwood, 1871), 325.

[28] [Leigh Hunt], "Preface," in *The Liberal, or Verse and Prose from the South*, Vol. 1 (London: John Hunt, 1822), viii–ix.

[29] [William Gifford] *The Illiberal! Verse and Prose from the North!! Dedicated to My Lord Byron in the South!! To be continued occasionally!! As a supplement to each number of 'The Liberal'* (London 1822).

and continental implications into an integral concept of the English political language, especially for the reform-oriented Whigs inside and outside parliament. This included a new context in which the foreign concept's translation helped to develop a new framework for discourses of political reform. The changing atmosphere of public opinion, now considered an important factor in the nation's political life, was reflected by the slow adaptation of the imported concept *liberal*. A quotation from Robert Peel's letter to John Wilson Croker in 1820 marks this moment of the semantic process: "Do not you think that the tone of England—of that great compound of folly, weakness, prejudice, wrong feeling, right feeling, obstinacy, and newspaper paragraphs, which is called public opinion—is more liberal—to use an odious but intelligible phrase, than the policy of the Government? Do not you think that there is a feeling, becoming daily more general and more confined—that is independent of the pressure of taxation, or any immediate cause—in favour of some undefined change in the mode of governing the country?"[30]

In 1827, Henry Brougham, a leading member of the moderate Whigs among the Edinburgh Reviewers, reflected on the *"State of parties"* since the beginning of the 1820s. He made extensive use of *liberal* to denote a new principle in British politics. Behind the progress of *liberal opinions* he identified a new concept of foreign policy, advocating national independence abroad and opposing the restorative objects of the Holy Alliance. Already before the transformation of the traditional party names *Whig* and *Tory* into *Liberal* and C*onservative*—a long-term semantic process which was not completed until the 1840s—Brougham concluded that the main ideological antagonism in British politics could no longer be expressed by traditional political labels. These party names had either originated from the seventeenth century and thus reflected the factions of the Civil War (*Court* versus *Country*), the political antagonists of the Glorious Revolution (*Whig* versus *Tory*) or they indicated the aspirations of the Stuarts (*Loyalist* versus *Jacobin*) during the eighteenth century or, pointing to the continent, the new party names coined in the course of the French Revolution: "A new casting also of political sects has taken place; the distinctions, and almost the names, of Loyalist and Jacobin, Whig and Tory, Court and Country Faction, are fast wearing away. Two

[30] Letter of Robert Peel to John Wilson Crocker, 23rd March 1820, in *The Correspondence and Diaries of the Late Right Honourable John Wilson Crocker*, Vol. 1, ed. Lewis J. Jennings (London: John Murray, 1884) 155–56.

great divisions of the community will, in all likelihood, soon be far more generally known; the Liberal and the Illiberal, who will divide, but we may be sure most unequally, the suffrages of the Nation."[31] Unlike most continental party names, which originated from the post-1789 period, *liberal* as a post-revolutionary concept in Britain can only be interpreted with regard to the ideological polarization since the absolutist experiments of the seventeenth century, pointing to a distinct British *Sattelzeit*. This distinct genealogy was reproduced in subsequent pre-modern party-names which did not have any equivalents in continental discourses.

Conclusion: Translation as Cultural Transfer and Semantic Interaction

The French stimulus of the *idées libérales* was fundamental to the development of new political and social concepts in Germany and Italy in the 1820s and early 1830s. In addition, the intensified debates about the French *Charte Constitutionnelle* of 1814 as a *constitution libérale* and the polarization between *ultra* and *libéraux* popularized these new concepts well beyond France. Translations of the French import in Germany and Italy changed from imitation through application and adaption to discursive integration.

In contrast to Germany or Italy, where the direct import of the *idées libérales* resulted in translations and direct applications of the French concept to identify and formulate the demands for national unity and constitutional reforms after 1815, the confrontation with the new concept in Britain took a different path. For a long period, the new political adjective was used with reference to the Spanish *liberales* or the French *libéraux*, to describe the political situation in continental countries. Only after 1815 the Tories' use of *liberal* as a derogatory label for their political opponents and the Philhellene movement contributed to a wider diffusion of *liberal*. However, for a long time *liberal* retained an un-English tone because it represented political movements and groups in countries other than Britain. Only after 1820, when the reform oriented Whigs of the *Edinburgh Review* accepted the new concept as a term with which to label their own position and political strategy, *liberal* for the first time became a positive and progressive semantic indicator in English political language, replacing

[31] [Henry Brougham], "State of Parties," in *Edinburgh Review* 46 (1827): 431.

the traditional semantic oppositions between *Court/Country, Whig/Tory* and *Jacobin/Loyalist.*

A focus on comparison and transfer makes the different *Sattelzeiten* of European concepts and vocabularies more visible, reflecting distinct rhythms and cycles of past experiences and expectations as they were stimulated and catalyzed by the export and import of foreign concepts. These experiences and expectations could not be translated easily, but rather led to complex confrontations with otherness. Translations reflected processes of selective perception stimulating cultural transfers and allowing the articulation of new political and social premises. To the historian, translations serve as a seismographic indicator of how past contemporaries articulated their past pasts and their past futures. Friedrich Nietzsche once stated that a concept which contained in itself a whole history, evaded definition—*"only that which has no history is definable."*[32] However, history necessarily implies translation, whether diachronic or synchronic. The historian, who starts travelling in the landscapes of past experiences and expectations, is well advised to remember that as a traveler he will be dependent on translations. Hermeneutic dictionaries must be part of his vade-mecum, if he does not want to become lost in translation. Travelling implies contact and confrontation, comparison and change of perspectives. Uncertainty leads to questions not asked before.

[32] Friedrich Nietzsche, "Zur Genealogie der Moral, Zweite Abhandlung: 'Schuld,' 'schlechtes Gewissen,' Verwandtes," *Sämtliche Werke. Kritische Studienausgabe*, Vol. V, ed. Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari (1967; Munich: DTV, 1993), 317.

BODIN AS SELF-TRANSLATOR OF HIS *RÉPUBLIQUE*: WHY THE OMISSION OF "*POLITICUS*" AND ALLIED TERMS FROM THE LATIN VERSION?

Mario Turchetti

Jean Bodin's *Six Books of the Republic* (1576) was arguably the single most important work of political and legal philosophy produced in the sixteenth-century, and the greatest contribution to these subjects by any French Renaissance author.[1] Although virtually all research on this work has been confined to the original French edition, subsequently many times reprinted. I believe that the time has come to read the French text side-by-side with the Latin translation made ten years later in 1586 by the author himself. Despite the fact that the organization of government, or politics (*la politique*) occupies the central, although not exclusive, place in both versions, the Latin translation never uses *politicus* in any of its substantive or adjectival forms, not even as the equivalent for the French adverb *politiquement.* This is all the more remarkable given the crucial part played by the *République* in the creation of modern political language.

Here I wish to call attention to Bodin's self-translation in order, first to emphasize, and then seek to understand, his decision to use a set of Latin terms that bypass the vocabularies hitherto used to designate everything political in both French and Latin. So far as I know, the terminological differences between Bodin's two versions have not been previously noticed, even by Bodin specialists. In order to bring my discoveries to their attention, I concentrate, in this short paper, on identifying such differences of terminology between these two treatises, rather than attempting to choose among the possible reasons for them. My own detailed explanation of variations in the terms used in the two versions will be found in the bilingual critical edition of the *Six Books of the Republic*, which will print the two texts, side by side, that I am preparing for publication. Other students of Bodin can be counted on both to assess my theories and to propose alternatives to them.

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[1] For an introduction to Bodin's life and work, see my article, published in the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Stanford University, 2010), also available online: http://plato.stanford.edu/.

French or Latin?

Why did Bodin choose French for the first edition of the *République*? In my view, his immediate purpose was to aid the French monarchy in restoring peace. The Latin edition had another goal: to enable Bodin to reach a wider and more intellectual audience, European in scope. In 1576, after more than a decade of civil wars in France, which was still being buffeted by "the storm that torments the ship of state," Bodin wrote:

> For my part, having nothing better to offer, I present here my discourse *On the Republic*, in the vernacular (popular) language.
>
> I do so in part because the wellsprings of the Latin language, already [nearly] exhausted, will dry up completely, if the barbarism of the civil wars continues; in part, so as to be better understood by all 'natural' Frenchmen, that is, by those who have the desire and will to see this Kingdom restored to its original splendor, flourishing again in arms and in its laws. [First dedication in French to Du Faur de Pibrac, 1576].

In other words, Bodin wished to speak to the "natural" French, those who both loved their country and feared that in this period of hostility, Latin would soon be forgotten and its sources dispersed, as had occurred during the barbarian invasions. But why did he decide to translate his work into Latin, a task he must have begun almost immediately after the appearance of the French version? Here again, Bodin furnished an answer in his own words. These are cited from Bodin's Latin preface of 1584, passages to which Anglophone readers have not previously had access.[2]

> Because I wanted to be understood by everyone, and especially by the nobility, which in our country has also been very influential [and perhaps also ignorant of Latin], I thought that I should first use the "langue populaire." The rivers of Latin have been polluted by the civil wars, as have the smaller streams and their very sources. Nor had I originally thought that I would write again in Latin at a later date, for it did not occur to me that I might have the time required to weave the second cloth a second time.

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[2] These passages were not included in the fragments of Bodin's dedication translated in 1962 by Kenneth McRae in his reprinting of Knolles's edition of 1606: *The Six Bookes of a Commonweal. Written by J. Bodin, a famous lawyer, and a man of great Experience in matters of State. Out of French and Latin Copies, done into English by Richard Knolles* (London: Impensis G. Bishop, 1606). This edition was reprinted in 1962, "corrected and supplemented in the light of a new comparison with the French and Latin texts" with an introduction by McRae. Jean Bodin, *The Six Books of a Commonweal*, ed. K.D. McRae (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1962).

In his dedication, Bodin added two further reasons for doing the Latin translation. The first and more basic, he wrote, was:

> The dignity of the argument requires the splendor of Latin to evoke its true nobility. On the one hand, the Romans were almost the only people to exalt the rights of the sovereign of the State over those of natural and paternal love; on the other, the Romans granted allies and foreigners the same rights as those of Roman citizens. By this linkage, they established the idea that everyone shared a common humanity and culture.

Here is the "universal humanism" Bodin believed should be made known to the public made up of all thinking persons in Europe. These were the values of the *respublica civilis et Christiana*, best represented by France, in Bodin's view, the most admirable of the world's kingdoms.

Bodin's final reason for believing that the *République* should be translated into Latin derived from his realization that even educated Englishmen had difficulty in understanding the original text in French. He had become aware of this after a voyage to England.

Whatever the reasons for Bodin undertaking this vast project of self-translation, analysis of the differences between the French and Latin texts can be invaluable to those seeking to understand the development of his political thought. By specifying the many modifications, additions, deletions, and altogether new arguments and explanations that appeared in the Latin text ten years after the publication of the French, significant differences can be detected. At the same time, the two texts often complement each other, because of the added clarity brought to many passages by Bodin's fuller exposition in Latin of points made more briefly or ambiguously in French. Perhaps it was this aspect of the Latin version that led Richard Knolles to conflate it with the French, when in 1606 he presented the text he called a translation into English of the *République*, a decision I regard as justified because of the greater intelligibility of the two texts when thus combined.

It must be stressed that Bodin was both aware of the vocabulary he developed, and proud of the distinctions in political language he devised to communicate the discoveries and improvements upon the ancients he considered himself to have made in the *République*. In his dedications, he claimed to have investigated in detail "many political questions," dealt with all too briefly by Plato and Aristotle in their "political discourses." Consequently, Bodin regarded himself as revealing for the first time "the sacred mysteries of political philosophy." These had been profaned by authors who unfortunately provided malefactors with "the opportunity to trouble and

overturn states with good governments." Ignorance of the crucial truths of political philosophy had led to fatal errors in actual practice.

On the same page of Bodin's first dedication to Du Faur de Pibrac in his 1576 French edition of the *République*, he used the term "politique" four times as an adjective. How did he render it in the Latin version? Whereas we do not hesitate to use the same "polit" root as an adjective in phrases such as "political science" and "political philosophy," Bodin, as has already been noted, never resorted to the noun, adjectival, or adverbial equivalents of "political" in his Latin translation of the *République*.

In French, he did so more than fifty times, while in Latin, he used this root only when translating the titles or subject matter of works by Plato and Aristotle, *Politeion, Politike.* Otherwise, Bodin used either synonyms or paraphrases. These usages emerge clearly from what he regarded as the utopias of Plato and Thomas More. Wishing to keep his distance from them, Bodin wrote in French: "We do not wish to design a republic in theory only, . . . but to follow as closely as possible the best political laws and rules of the most flourishing cities and commonwealths" (I, 1 ed. 1599, p. 4). In Latin, these "political rules" become the *optimas quasque civitatum florentissimarum leges* (ed. 1620, p. 5). This shows that the term "political"—far from its meanings in Machiavelli—here has very positive and constructive connotations. In a subsequent passage, it is rendered by a virtual paraphrase alluding to the best possible laws of the most prosperous cities.[3] In the same chapter, "political actions" in French is turned into Latin as *publicae actiones.*

In Chapter III of the French version, Bodin writes: "Yet let us leave moral discourse to the philosophers and theologians, and take up what is political, the power of the Husband over the Wife."[4] The Latin version reads: *quod huius quaestionis proprium est, de imperio mariti adversus uxorem.*[5] Here the power of husbands over wives is treated positively, as like that of the commonweale or republic in being "a lawfull or rightfull government."[6]

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[3] In his English version of these lines, Knolles did not use the adjective "political." Rather he translated the French equivalent of "political rules" as "The best laws and rules of the most flourishing cities and Commonweals." Thus while translating Bodin's Latin text, Knolles was also consulting the French version, from which he took the expression "without effect or substance."

[4] Translated by the author from the 1599 French edition, p. 20.

[5] This is from the Latin edition of 1622, p. 23. In the Knolles edition, p. 15, the English word "political" is again absent. It has been replaced by "civil policie."

[6] In the Knolles edition, p. 1, the first chapter deals with "the principal end of a well ordered Commonweale."

It is in Chapter V that Bodin describes tyrants as following a policy, the rules of which prescribe that they treat their subjects so as to make them "soft and pliable" (French edition, p. 65). This is altered in the Latin by the addition of the word "cruelty," thus both clarifying the means used by tyrants to achieve their goal of subduing their subjects and adding to the rhetorical force of Bodin's statement: *cum tyrannorum decretis nihil ad subditorum animos frangendos efficacius sit crudelitate* (Latin edition, p. 68). Here again Bodin uses his self-translation as an opportunity to rethink his original statement in French and to enrich it by adding an additional element to his Latin paraphrase.[7]

As for Bodin, there were many other occasions when he refrained from using Latin equivalents for "*le politique*" (French edition, p. 70). This is rendered as *Prudens legislator* (Knolles, p. 45, "wise law giver"). "Un traict de maître politique si sagement qu'il n'y eut personne qui s'en remua" became *prudentia sine seditione gestum est*, (Knolles, p. 48, "so great matter was without sedition done"). "Philosophe politique" was reduced to *Philosophi* (Knolles, p. 45, "politicall philosopher").

A few more salient phrases are also treated in the same way. "Les anciens et sages politiques" (French edition, p. 610) become *tum philosophi tum historici* (Latin edition, p. 703). Here Bodin is adding his opinion that historians as well as philosophers can contribute to political wisdom, a view by no means self-evident. Another amplification in the Latin occurs in Bodin's description of Augustus: "Ce grande Auguste en prudence politique" (French edition, p. 613) becomes *Quis item Augusto rerum maximarium usu ac prudentia comparandus* (Latin edition, p. 706). Here Bodin specifies the qualities that made Augustus incomparable, a paraphrase that says more than the original, and says it better.

Particularly informative is the Latin rendition of "les sciences politiques" (French edition, p. 671). While Knolles (p. 550) adds little by calling them "the politike sciences," Bodin's Latin reads: *Artes vero imperandi ac civitatis moderandae* (Latin edition, p. 777). This is to assert that there are "Means of knowing how to govern a city with moderation."[8] By using six Latin words for the original two in French, Bodin adds both eloquence

[7] Knolles' s rendition follows the French version: "Considering that the tyrants hold it for a rule in policie, that one cannot be too severe unto his subjects so to keep them low and obedient." (Knolles, p. 44). In his translation, Knolles is concerned to follow Bodin's thought closely. In achieving his faithful rendition, he does not invariably make use in English of the term "political" as the equivalent of Bodin's French "politique."

[8] Translation by the author.

and precision. He makes clear that for him, "la politique" carries positive and constructive connotations. This was not always the case for other European intellectuals, who, beginning in the 1580s, debated about how to define "Reason of State." Botero proposed "the knowledge of the means (*notizia de mezzi*) apt to found, preserve, and enlarge a dominion so established."[9] Generations of readers would ask: good means or bad? Or could there be both a good and a bad Reason of State? Bodin's Latin text inadvertently responded to this question. At the height of the debate in 1621, Ludovico Zuccolo, by his positive use of the term "political," confined Reason of State to good states, "whereas in bad states (*Repubbliche prave*), which do not aim at what is political, Reason of State cannot be said to play any part in politics."[10] With these writers, the word "politics" regained a positive meaning.

Another change in Bodin's two translations further illuminates what Bodin meant by "politique." This shift is best illustrated by putting the French text side by side with the Latin:

(French edition, p. 691:)	(Latin edition, p. 802:)
Aux peuples du milieu la qualité de Jupiter et de Mercure, propre aux gouvernements Politiques: ce qui a une merveilleuse convenance au corps humain, qui est l'image du monde universel, et de la République bien ordonnée.	Media gens Jovis ac Mercurii dotes ad imperandum, ad judicandum, ad agendum, ad eloquendum, ad quaestum faciendum adepta, contemplationem respuit: postrema Lunae et Martis, id est, venationis, militiae.

After having thus explained that the people of the North, governed by the Moon, Mars, and Diana, are pushed toward war and the hunt; while those of the south, governed by Venus, are inclined toward contemplation and love, Bodin then fixes his attention on the inhabitants of the middle regions. Governed by Jupiter and Mercury, it is they who possess the proper qualities for "gouvernements politiques." The Latin text specifies these "capacities (*dotes*) for commanding, judging, acting, speaking effectively, and engaging in commerce." Five verbs in Latin are used to designate the five qualities that serve to construct and maintain a society.

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[9] Giovanni Botero, *Della ragione de Stato* 1589, ed. Luigi Firpo (Torino: UTET, 1948). For comparisons, see Mario Turchetti, *Tyrannie et Tirannicide de l'Antiquité à nos jours* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2001), 486.

[10] Sources and discussion in Turchetti, op. cit., 495.

In a later passage, Bodin discusses those "Maîtres politiques" (French edition, p. 903), who like the wisest Roman emperors, attained a great age, "l'extreme vieillese." In his Latin version, this passage is expanded to read: *Principes illi qui . . . tanta cura, studio, solicitudine, labore, industria moderati sunt* (Latin edition, p. 1052). Here six words in Latin are employed to render the single French word "politique." This extended paraphrase in translation enables the reader to understand better what Bodin originally meant to convey by "politique": to govern with diligence, application, solicitude, work, and ceaseless activity.

At the summit of this highly ennobling vision of the role played by politics, Bodin places the figure of the Eternal, God, the father. "Ce grand politique et gouverneur de tout le monde" becomes *antiquissismus ille imperiorum ac civitatum temperator Deus*. God, from time immemorial, has controlled the empires and republics of this world. By this analogy, politics, understood as ruling properly, has been assigned the highest possible place.

(French edition, p. 763:)

Et ne faut pas douter que ce grand politique et gouverneur de tout le monde, ainsi qu'il a donné á toute chose son contraire, qu'il n'ait aussi permis les guerres, et inimitiez entre les peuples, pour chastier lesuns par les autres, et les tenir tous en crainte.

(Latin edition, p. 884:)

Nec dubium est quin antiquissimus ille Imperiorum ac civitatum omnium temperator Deus non modo singula singulis contraria, sed etiam populis quisbusque adversarios excitarit, ut aliorum opibus alios ulciscatur, ac periculorum metu omnes in officio contineat. . . .

The French and Latin versions of Bodin's great work are complementary. Each work helps explain the other, thus providing invaluable clues to what the author intended to say at two different moments of his thought. Bodin's ideas become fully comprehensible only after reading his work in both languages, preferably aside-by-side. Henceforth research on Bodin must be judged by whether both versions have been used in conjunction with each other.

Why did Bodin not use politicus-a-um *and its cognates in his Latin translation?*

The reasons for Bodin's studied refusal to translate the French word "politique" are to be found in developments central to the high culture of his time. The French Renaissance revered the *studia humanitatis*: its

humanism called for a return *ad fontes*, to classical sources so as to recover the elegance of classical Latin. Cicero and Seneca, the two great Roman masters of law and political philosophy, had not used either the word *politicus*, or any of its derivations.

Only towards the beginning of the twelfth century, did the word "politicus" enter the vocabulary of the learned. It did so via the works of John of Salisbury, Albertus Magnus, and most significantly, through the translation into Latin of Aristotle's *Politics* by William of Moerbecke (c. 1260). Thomas Aquinas, relying on Moerbecke's translation, then systematically inserted the word *politicus* into his discussion of Aristotle's classifications of regimes, and the forms of governments. Most major theorists after Aquinas followed him in this usage, as did Giles of Rome, Nicole Oresme in France, and John Fortescue in England. This development has been charted in part by Nicolai Rubenstein.[11] Rubenstein emphasizes the growing use of the term "political" in vernacular languages during the sixteenth century: in Italian by Nicolo Machiavelli; in French, by Claude de Seyssel; and in English, by Gabriel Harvey. However, Rubenstein fails to register the conspicuous decline in uses of *politicus* in works on this subject written in Latin, which was still the dominant language os scholarly discourse.

Why this marked downturn? This occurred because fifteen century Italian humanists, led by Leonardo Bruni, had rejected "politicus" in their new Latin translations of Greek classical theorists, particularly of Aristotle's works on politics and ethics. "Politicus" was regarded by Bruni as insufficiently noble, that is, because it was not used by either Cicero or Seneca. Bruni systematically replaced "politicus" by the Latin *civilis.* The Greek adjective, "politicos," was derived from the Greek *polis*. Since its Latin equivalent was *civitas*, the correct adjective, Bruni insisted, was civilis. "Politicus," was a medieval barbarism. Thus Bruni's Latin commentary on Book I., Chapter 1, of Aristotle's *Politics* reads:

> Greci πολιτείαν nostri civilitatem et rempublicam dicunt. Libri πολιτικῶν id est (fere greca voce) politicorum: latine dici possunt libri civilium et libri rerum publicarum / sed de rebus civilibus et de rebus publicis / quemadmodum dicimus Platonis, / Xenophontis / Ciceronis libros de republica. Et plurative politicorum id est de rebus publicis nuncupatur (Annotationes, A iij r).[12]

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[11] "The History of the Word "Politicus" in Early-Modern Europe," in *The Language of Political Theory in Early-Modern Europe*, ed. Anthony Pagden (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 41–57.

[12] (*Aristotelis*) *Politicorum libri octo; commentarii* (*Jacobi Fabri Stapulensis in eosdem*)*; Economicorum duo; Commentarii* (*Fabri*)*; Hecatonomia septem; Economicarum publicarum*

After two centuries of decline in the standards applied to Latin usage, as exemplified by the spread of the term *politicus*, Bruni was saying, we, the more enlightened souls of the fifteenth century can now cease using this word and return to the pure Latin of Cicero, who had used the word *civilis*. Πολιτεία should be rendered henceforth by *civilitas* and *respublica*, and by *praecepta circa rempublicam*. In his Latin version, which targeted learned readers outside France, Bodin both bowed to the humanist consensus throughout Europe, and took the occasion to present the last phase in the development of his political theory, which despite its increasingly philosophical and religious emphases, nevertheless advocated toleration as state policy when opinion was divided in matters of faith.[13]

How did this affect Bodin's positive attitude towards politics, defined above as ruling with moderation? After the emergence and discussion of Machiavelli's books in the sixteenth century, particularly in France, the word "politique" acquired negative connotations not previously associated with it. Many pamphlets of the 1580s linked "Machiavellians, heretics, and politiques." Many historians, after attributing the creation of the so-called "Parti des Politiques" to the religious conflicts of the Wars of Religion, have gone on to describe Bodin as a member and intellectual founder of this party. In fact, as I argue elsewhere, since such a party never existed, Bodin cannot be said to have used "politique" in the sense implied by the name given to this group.[14]

Conclusion

To track Bodin's uses of the term politique is to provide one demonstration of the relationship I have established between the French and Latin versions of his *République*. In my view, both the Latin translation and the French original are equally indispensable to the understanding of Bodin's theory. As self-translator, he interpreted his role as adding to, amending, and, above all, clarifying to posterity the complex theories he intended to pass on. To achieve such a heightened understanding of this work, it must

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unus; Explanitones Leonardi (*Aretini*) *in Oeconomica duo, Apud Parisos: primaria superiorum operum edito typis absoluta prodiit ex officina H. Stephani, 1506.*

[13] Kenneth McRae, introduction to *The Six Bookes of a Commonweal*, A12–13.

[14] M. Turchetti, "Une question mal posée: l'origine et l'identité des Politiques au temps des guerres de Religion," in *De Michel de l'Hopital à l'édit de Nantes. Politique et Religion face aux Eglises*, ed. Thierry Wanegelen (Clermont-Ferrand: Presses Universitaire Blaise-Pascal, 2002), 358–90.

be published side-by-side in both languages. Once an edition of this kind becomes available, it may safely be predicted that there will be a revival of interest in this great political theorist, whose achievement has been obscured by the absence of an adequate bilingual and critical edition.[15]

[15] While the preparation of just such a Bodin edition under my direction is already under way, potential readers may wish to examine an exemplary trilingual edition of Hobbes's *Leviathan*, ed. Raffaela Santi (Milan: Bompiani, 2001). The English text is on the left-hand side of the page, while the Italian translation is on the right, and the Latin is at the bottom of the page in lieu of footnotes.

TRANSLATION AS CORRECTION: HOBBES IN THE 1660S AND 1670S[1]

Eric Nelson

I

In August of 1658 the philosopher and physician Samuel Sorbière wrote to urge Hobbes to introduce his *Leviathan* to "the groves of Latium"—in other words, to translate the work into Latin.[2] Sorbière, who had himself translated Hobbes's *De cive* into French a decade earlier, would, as it turned out, have to wait a further ten years before Hobbes finally acceded to his request. The eventual occasion was the projected release of a collected edition of Hobbes's Latin works by the Amsterdam publisher Johan Blaeu. Sorbière took it upon himself to act as Hobbes's agent with the press, and in January 1664 reported to Hobbes that "M. Blaeu tells me in a letter that he will start printing your works this month."[3] In July of that same year, however, Sorbière again wrote to Hobbes, this time imploring him "to add your Leviathan" to the collection. "You should make a Latin translation of it," he wrote, "or at least allow him [Blaeu] to have one made by that learned man who has translated many of Lord Chancellor Bacon's works" (the Dutch scholar Isaac Gruter).[4] Hobbes at long last accepted Sorbière's advice and began to prepare the text himself. The project evidently took him a considerable amount of time. In December 1667, three full years after Sorbière's letter, Blaeu's son Pieter wrote to Hobbes expressing relief that he had at long last "completed two-thirds of that book (you know which), and that you are working on it for two hours every day, and hoping to finish it, with, God's help, by Easter."[5] Hobbes seems to have met this last deadline, and his *Opera philosophica quae*

[1] I am grateful to James Hankins, Kinch Hoekstra, Noel Malcolm, Quentin Skinner, and Richard Tuck for many helpful comments on material that appears in this essay. I am also indebted to my co-panelist Julian Franklin, and to numerous participants in the 2005 conference, for an engaging discussion of its themes.

[2] *The Correspondence of Thomas Hobbes*, ed. Noel Malcolm (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 499.

[3] Ibid., 586.

[4] Ibid., 619.

[5] Ibid., 695.

latine scripsit omnia was finally released in 1668, complete with a new Latin version of his English masterpiece.

The Latin *Leviathan* has long been of special interest to scholars, chiefly because it was the medium through which important continental philosophers—such as Spinoza and Leibniz—were introduced to Hobbes's fully developed civil science.[6] But while scholars have been unanimous in their high regard for the text's significance, they have been less certain of exactly what *sort* of text it is. In particular, it has become commonplace to suggest that the Latin *Leviathan* is not, properly speaking, a translation at all. A number of different arguments have been advanced in support of this view, the most sweeping of which was first offered by Zbigniew Lubiénski almost seventy-five years ago, and has more recently been defended at length by François Tricaud.[7] Tricaud argues that a close analysis of the Latin text reveals that it was written (for the most part) *before* the English edition of 1651. The general pattern, he notes, is for the Latin to contain a shorter, more compact version of paragraphs present in the English text, indicating, on his account, that the latter was an elaboration of the former.[8] He also argues that several passages in the Latin version contain chronological statements which make no sense given the conditions of 1668, but which make abundant sense given the circumstances of the 1640s.[9] The implications of this hypothesis, if correct, would be quite significant: we would have to become accustomed to viewing the English *Leviathan* as a later version of a Latin original, rather than the other way around.

As it happens, however, there is no compelling reason to accept Tricaud's analysis. The fact that the Latin text is generally more compact than the English tells us absolutely nothing about the question of priority.[10] The English could be an elaborated version of the original Latin, or the

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[6] Spinoza did, however, know Hobbes's *De cive* (1642) long before composing the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* (1670); moreover, although he did not read English—and therefore could not have read *Leviathan* in the original—he was close friends with the man who translated it into Dutch (1665–7). So it is quite possible that he was familiar with the arguments of *Leviathan* before he read the Latin version (1668). See Noel Malcolm, *Aspects of Hobbes* (Oxford: O.U.P., 2002), 47, 390–2.

[7] Zbigniew Lubiénski, *Die Grundlagen des ethisch-politischer Systems von Hobbes* (Munich, 1932); Hobbes, *Léviathan*, ed. and trans. François Tricaud (Paris, 1971). For another endorsement, see F.C. Hood, *The Divine Politics of Thomas Hobbes: an Interpretation of Leviathan* (Oxford: O.U.P., 1964).

[8] Tricaud, xxii.

[9] Ibid., xxv.

[10] Tricaud concedes this point (xxiii).

Latin could be a condensed version of the original English. So the entire burden falls squarely on the small number of passages in the Latin text which, according to Tricaud, situate it in the 1640s rather than the 1660s. But here again the argument is unpersuasive. Of the four passages he identifies, not one of them includes a 1640s chronological reference that is not itself present in the 1651 English text—making it entirely possible that Hobbes was simply translating his own English in 1668. Indeed, one of Tricaud's examples seems to point unmistakably in this direction. In chapter 18 of the English *Leviathan*, Hobbes writes that, but for false opinions concerning the possibility of a divided sovereignty, "the people had never fallen into this Civill Warre . . . which [has] so instructed men in this point of Soveraign Right that there be few now (in *England*) that do not see, that these Rights are inseparable, and will be so generally acknowledged, at the next return of Peace."[11] Tricaud makes much of the fact that, in the Latin version, Hobbes likewise writes of how full sovereign prerogatives will "be publicly recognized as soon as peace has returned" (*et publice agnituri sint, simul atque redierit pax*)—a clear reference to an ongoing war which had, of course, ended eight years before the release of the Latin version.[12] Yet since, as we have just seen, precisely the same phrase appears in the English text, no conclusion can be drawn as to which came first. What *is* revealing, in contrast, is the reference to "*this* civil war" in the previous sentence of the English version; in the Latin, Hobbes writes instead of the civil war "which followed" (*quod sequutum est*), which might well be regarded as a concession to the changed political reality of the late 1660s.[13] All of these observations—together with the fact that nothing in Hobbes's correspondence or biographical writings suggests the existence of an early Latin manuscript—should cause us strongly to doubt Tricaud's hypothesis.

But Tricaud's conjecture has not by any means been the only, or even the dominant reason scholars have offered for their view that the Latin *Leviathan* is not really a translation. They have focused, rather, on the indisputable fact that it is a very different text from its English counterpart. It is, according to a representative statement by A.P. Martinich, "the

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[11] Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. Richard Tuck, rev. ed. (Cambridge: C.U.P., 1996), 127.

[12] Quotations from the Latin *Leviathan* are taken from Hobbes, *Opera philosophica quae latine scripsit omnia*, ed. William Molesworth, vol. 3 (London, 1841).

[13] One could, of course, claim that Hobbes altered this detail while preparing his early Latin manuscript for publication twenty years later—but one cannot treat *both* correct and incorrect chronological details as evidence of early composition.

fourth version of [Hobbes's] political theory," alongside *The Elements of Law, De cive*, and the English *Leviathan*.[14] In this Martinich is certainly correct. There are entire sections of the Latin text which do not appear in the English, and vice versa.[15] The most substantial of these is the lengthy appendix to the Latin which, like a series of other texts Hobbes composed in the 1660s, aims to answer charges of heresy that had been brought against him. But that is by no means where the differences end. There is also a large set of cases in which Hobbes chose to excise material from the English version in a clear attempt to mute its religious heterodoxy. A paragraph from chapter 41 of the English, for example, claims that "Our Saviour . . . both in Teaching and Reigning, representeth (as Moses did) the Person of God; which God from that time forward, but not before, is called the Father; and being still one and the same substance, is one Person as represented by Moses, and another Person as represented by his Sonne the Christ."[16] This passage, which seems to incorporate Moses into the Trinity—or at the very least to suggest that Moses bore the person of God in precisely the same manner as Jesus—is completely absent from the Latin, as is a similar passage from chapter 16.[17] Also eliminated is a massive section of chapter 47, sharply criticized by Clarendon,[18] in which Hobbes had warmly greeted the demise of episcopacy and presbyterianism in Interregnum England, and its replacement with "the Independency of the Primitive Christians."[19] In its stead, Hobbes included in the Latin version a lengthy summation welcoming the Restoration of the realm's "legitimate king."[20]

All of these excisions reflect Hobbes's deep anxiety over his safety during the 1660s, a period in which Parliament's Atheism Bill (which had been written with Hobbes specifically in mind) was under intermittent consid-

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[14] A.P. Martinich, *Hobbes: A Biography* (Cambridge: C.U.P., 1999), 352.

[15] The study of the relationship between the English and Latin versions will shortly be revolutionized by the appearance of Noel Malcolm's bilingual edition of *Leviathan* (forthcoming from The Clarendon Press, Oxford).

[16] Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 338.

[17] See Hobbes, *Opera*, 357. The relevant passage from chap. 16 reads as follows: "The true God may be Personated. As he was; first, by *Moses*; who governed the Israelites, (that were not his, but Gods people,) not in his own name, with *Hoc dicit Moses*; but in Gods Name, with *Hoc dicit Dominus*. Secondly, by the Son of man, his own Son, our Blessed Saviour *Jesus Christ* . . ." (Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 114).

[18] See Edward Hyde, *Brief View*, 308–9.

[19] Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 479. For the significance of this passage, see Jeffrey Collins, *The Allegiance of Thomas Hobbes* (Oxford: O.U.P., 2005).

[20] Hobbes, *Opera*, 509.

eration. But they were by no means the only sorts of textual changes that Hobbes incorporated into the Latin *Leviathan*. There were, in addition, numerous shifts in emphasis and argument designed to tighten his prose and answer objections. For instance, one prominent complaint about the English *Leviathan* had concerned the historicity of the state of nature. François Peleau, one of Hobbes's correspondents, had reported back to Hobbes in November 1656 that "I am being hounded with syllogisms designed to prove to me that the state of nature in the strict sense (such as you show it to be in your Politics) has never existed in the world."[21] Hobbes replied to this query (or others like it) by making a substantial modification to a key passage in chapter 13 ("Of the Natural Condition of Mankind"). In the English version, Hobbes had observed that "it may peradventure be thought, there was never such a time, nor condition of warre as this [i.e. the war of all against all in the state of nature]; and I believe it was never generally so, over all the world."[22] By 1668, however, Hobbes had clearly come to regret the concession, and, in the Latin version, replaced it with the following passage: "But someone may say: there has never been a war of all against all. What! Did not Cain out of envy kill his brother Abel, a crime so great he would not have dared it if there had at that time been a common power which could have punished him?"[23] Scholars have observed that this is a surprising claim, since Cain was evidently living under a power capable of punishing him—namely God, who promptly did so.[24] Indeed, this may well have been the passage Leibniz had in mind two years later when he wrote in a letter to Hobbes that "given the existence of a ruler of the world, men cannot live in a pure state of nature outside all republics, since God is the common monarch of all men."[25] Nonetheless, this is a clear case in which Hobbes significantly departed from the English text to strengthen his case in the Latin.

Hobbes also clearly came to feel that he had let slip some indiscreet comments on the subject of monarchy in the English *Leviathan*, which he wished to withdraw in the Latin. The most substantial of these was

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[21] Hobbes, *Correspondence*, 331.

[22] Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 89.

[23] Hobbes, *Opera*, vol. 3, 101. "Sed omnium in omnes, inquiet aliquis, bellum nunquam erat. Quid, nonne fratrem suum Abelum invidia interfecit Cain, tantum facinus non ausurus, si communis potentia, quae vindicare potuisset, tunc extitisset?"

[24] See Richard Tuck, *The Rights of War and Peace: Political Thought and the International Order from Grotius to Kant* (Oxford: O.U.P., 1999), pp. 137–8; and Helen Thornton, "Cain, Abel, and Thomas Hobbes" *in History of Political Thought* 23 (2002): 611–33.

[25] Hobbes, *Correspondence*, 717.

the "Review, and Conclusion" of the English text, in which Hobbes had notoriously advocated "engagement" and obedience to the Parliamentary regime, provoking outrage and charges of opportunism from his former royalist allies. Hobbes's decision to eliminate this discussion from the Latin version was a matter of simple prudence in the face of the Restoration. But the translation also provided him with a welcome opportunity to alter and refine specific arguments about monarchy that he had offered in the English version. In chapter 19, for example, the English records that "in Monarchy there is this inconvenience; that any Subject, by the power of one man, for the enriching of a favourite or flatterer, may be deprived of all he possesseth; which I confesse is a great and inevitable inconvenience."[26] The notion that such cruel expropriation was an "inevitable" feature of monarchy was evidently one that Hobbes very much wanted to dispel in 1668. In the Latin version, he accordingly replaced this passage with the following observation: "in monarchy there is this inconvenience: that the monarch, to enrich some friend, can deprive a good citizen of all his property; nevertheless, we do not read that this has ever been done."[27]

A similar instance occurs in chapter 35, entitled "Of the Signification of the Kingdom of God." In the English version, Hobbes attempts to show that the phrase "kingdom of God" refers in the Bible, not to the world to come, but rather to the commonwealth of the Hebrews, "wherein God was king" (274).[28] He defends this claim with a three-paragraph discussion of a key passage in 1 Samuel: "when the Elders of Israel . . . demanded a King, Samuel displeased therewith, prayed unto the Lord; and the Lord answering said unto him, *Hearken unto the voice of the People, for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them*. Out of which it is evident that God himself was then their King."[29] Later on, Hobbes adds that the prophets foretold the restoration of God's kingdom. He characterizes God's promise as follows: "I will reign over you, and make you to stand to that Covenant which you made with me by Moses, and brake in your rebellion against me in the days of Samuel, and in your election of another King." In short, Hobbes defends his claim that "the kingdom of God" refers to God's civil sovereignty over Israel by reading

[26] Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 121.

[27] Hobbes, *Opera*, vol. 3, 144. "in monarchia incommodum quidem est, ut possit monarcha ad ditandum amicum aliquem fortunis omnibus bonum civem, quod tamen nunquam factum legimus, spoliare."

[28] Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 282.

[29] Ibid.

I Sam. 8:7 to mean that, when the Israelites asked for a mortal king, they were in fact deposing God as their temporal ruler.

By the time he came to write the Latin *Leviathan*, however, Hobbes had clearly come to regret this entire line of argument. It was, he now realized, disconcertingly similar to the anti-monarchical argument advanced John Milton and other republican authors in the 1650s. Writing in the *Pro populo anglicano defensio* of 1651, Milton had glossed the same Biblical passage as follows:

> God indeed gives evidence throughout of his great displeasure at their [the Israelites'] request for a king—thus in [I Sam. 8] verse 7: "They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them, according to all the works which they have done wherewith they have forsaken me, and served other gods." The meaning clearly is that it is a form of idolatry to ask for a king, who demands that he be worshipped and granted honors like those of a god. Indeed he who sets an earthly master over him and above all the laws is near to establishing a strange god for himself, one seldom reasonable, usually a brute beast who has scattered reason to the winds. Thus in I Samuel 10:19 we read: "And ye have this day rejected your God, who himself saved you out of all your adversities and your tribulation, and ye have said unto him, Nay, but set a king over us"... just as if he had been teaching them that it was not for any man, but for God alone, to rule over men.[30]

In this new and deeply radical exegesis, Milton argued that, in asking for a mortal king, the Israelites had committed the sin of idolatry—they had chosen to bow down to a flesh and blood man, rather than to God.[31] He restated this position in *The readie and easie way* (1659), arguing that "God in much displeasure gave a king to the Israelites, and imputed it a sin to

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[30] "Passim enim testatur Deus valde sibi displicuisse quod regem petissent. ver. 7. *Non te sed me spreverunt ne regnem super ispos, secundum illa facta quibus dereliquerunt me & coluerunt Deos alienos*: ac si species quaedam idololatriae videretur regem petere, qui adorarise, & honores prope divinos tribui sibi postulat. Sane qui supra omnes leges terrenum sibi dominum imponit, prope est ut sibi Deum statuat alienum; Deum utique haud saepe rationabilem, sed profligata saepius ratione brutum & belluinum. Sic I Sam. 10.19. Vos sprevistis Deum vestrum qui ipse servat vos ab omnibus malis, & angustiis vestris, cum dixistis ei, regem praeponens nobis... plane ac si simul docuisset, non hominis esse dominari in homines, sed solius Dei" (Milton, *Pro populo anglicano defensio* (London, 1651), 66–7). The English translation is taken from *Complete Prose Works of John Milton*, vol. 4, Don Wolfe, ed., Donald Mackenzie, trans. (New Haven, 1966), 369–70.

[31] For Milton's derivation of this revolutionary argument from rabbinic sources, and Hobbes's reaction to it, see Eric Nelson, "'Talmudical Commonwealthsmen' and the Rise of Republican Exclusivism" in *The Historical Journal* 50 (2007), 809–835; cf. Nelson, *The Hebrew Republic: Jewish Sources and the Transformation of European Political Thought* (Cambridge, MA, 2011), 23–56.

them that they sought one."[32] Human kingship, on this account, is a sinful usurpation of God's throne. He alone is "our true and rightfull and only to be expected King, only worthy as he is our only Saviour, the Messiah, the Christ, the only heir of his father."[33]

It was precisely because Hobbes's reading seemed to flirt so dangerously with this revolutionary position that chapter thirty of *Leviathan* drew such intense criticism from royalists. Robert Filmer, for example, attacked Hobbes's analysis directly in his 1652 *Observations Concerning the Originall of Government*: "I do not find," he observed, "that the desiring of a king was a breach of their contract or covenant, or disobedience to the voice of God. There is no such law extant."[34] Clarendon was even more insistent in his review of the English *Leviathan*: "We are not oblig'd," he wrote, "nor indeed have any reason to believe, that God was offended with the Children of Israel for desiring a King, which was a Government himself had instituted over them."[35] Hobbes evidently came to appreciate the danger of this bit of Biblical criticism, and cut the entire discussion from the Latin text.[36]

All of these examples, and dozens more like them, make clear that the Latin *Leviathan* is not what we today would consider a translation. It includes a great deal of material that is not present in its English counterpart, and deletes an equally substantial amount of material that is. Hobbes's mission was one of correction; he took the opportunity provided by the publication of his Latin works to strengthen the case he had laid out in 1651. Accordingly, he excised erroneous statements, or statements

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[32] *Complete Prose*, vol. 7, 360–1.

[33] Ibid., 374.

[34] Robert Filmer, 'Observations concerning the originall of government' in *Patriarcha and other writings*, Johann Sommerville, ed. (Cambridge, 1991), 196.

[35] Edward Hyde, earl of Clarendon, *A brief view and survey of the dangerous and pernicious errors to church and state, in Mr. Hobbes's book, entitled Leviathan* (Oxford, 1676), 74.

[36] Hobbes, *Opera*, 294-8. Hobbes cuts similar material from chap. 38, where the English version records that God was king in Israel "till in the days of Samuel they rebelled, and would have a mortall man for their King, after the manner of other Nations" (Cf. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 309; *Opera omnia*, vol. 3, 329), and where it has "in the time before the Jews had deposed God" (Cf. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, p. 314; *Opera omnia*, vol. 3, 324). He also tellingly alters a passage in chap. 36: where the English version has "after the people of the Jews, had rejected God, that he should not reign over them," the Latin substitutes the vague phrase "after the Israelites had relieved themselves of the divine yoke" (*postquam autem jugum Dei excusserant Israelitae*) (Cf. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 294; *Opera omnia*, vol. 3, 306). Hobbes did not, however, remove all traces of this earlier reading. See, for example, *Opera omnia*, vol. 3, 95.

which he now feared would tend to promote rebellion, and reformulated many of his key arguments to make them more persuasive. But, assuming we can agree that the Latin *Leviathan* does not fall under *our* definition of a translation, the next question to ask is whether Hobbes himself regarded it as a translation. When he was composing the Latin *Leviathan*, did he think he was engaged in the act of translation, or in a project of some other kind? As it happens, this is a question we can answer in Hobbes's case because of the presence of a control in the experiment. Soon after he finished the Latin *Leviathan*, Hobbes embarked upon the longest single literary project of his lifetime: a complete English translation of the Homeric poems. This massive work, which Hobbes completed only three years before his death, gives us a perfect point of comparison: a text which Hobbes certainly considered to be a translation, undertaken at precisely the same stage of life. An examination of this text yields the startling conclusion that Hobbes's practice as a translator in *The Iliads and Odysses of Homer* was identical in all important respects to his practice in the Latin *Leviathan*. His aim was, once again, to correct his source: to remove its indiscretions and ensure that it taught the essential moral value of obedience to sovereigns. It is to that later project that I now want to turn.[37]

II

For Hobbes, the chief virtue of an epic poem, or indeed of any sort of discourse, was "discretion"—an understanding on the part of the individual of what is appropriate for different "times, places, and persons' together with 'an often application of his thoughts to their End; that is to say, to some use to be made of them."[38] In the case of epic poetry, the aim was didactic: "by imitating humane life, in delightfull and measur'd lines, to avert men from vice, and encline them to virtuous and honorable actions."[39] Poetry, in short, should teach moral virtue. Given this understanding, it should not surprise us that Hobbes regarded Homer as a very dangerous author. The great bard had, first of all, posed as a conduit for divine revelation, anxious

[37] My analysis of the Homer translations is drawn largely from the General Introduction to my recent edition of the text. See Eric Nelson, ed., *Thomas Hobbes: Translations of Homer*, 2 vols., The Clarendon Edition of the Works of Thomas Hobbes (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 2008), vol. 1, xii–xci.

[38] Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 51.

[39] Hobbes, "Answer to Sir William D'Avenant's Preface Before *Gondibert*" in Sir William Davenant, *Gondibert,* ed. David F. Gladish (Oxford: O.U.P., 1971), 45.

to have his poems "passe for the word of God, and not of man; and to be hearkened to with reverence."[40] Moreover, Homer had not been familiar with the true principles of moral philosophy, and accordingly had littered his poems with numerous statements undermining the obedience of subjects to their sovereigns.[41] Homer's sixteenth and seventeenth-century interpreters had then gravely compounded these indiscretions, fashioning a Renaissance Homer who had himself become a rival Sovereign, teaching a corrupt civil science to his unwitting subjects. Hobbes saw it as his task to undo this damage, to tame the Homeric poems and make them safe for philosophy. In pursuit of this object, Hobbes routinely departed from Homer's Greek and from previously published translations and commentaries in order to bring the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* into alignment with his views on politics, rhetoric, aesthetics, and theology. The translations therefore constitute a revealing window onto the philosophy of the late Hobbes—but they are no more or less translations than the Latin *Leviathan*.[42]

Take, for example, the subject of rhetoric. Hobbes had long held that rhetoric was inherently perverse because of its fundamental indifference to the truth and its long record of inflaming passions and encouraging rebellion. Accordingly, since the role of poetry was, in Hobbes's view, to teach moral virtue, any praise of rhetoric appearing in an epic poem would violate the cardinal principle of "discretion"—that is, the appropriate tailoring of all elements of the text to its end, the inculcation of virtue. Hobbes therefore takes square aim at those passages of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*

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[40] Ibid.

[41] Hobbes agued repeatedly that he himself had been the first to discover the true principle of moral philosophy. As he put it in *Leviathan*, "neither *Plato*, nor any other Philosopher hitherto, hath put into order, and sufficiently or probably, proved all the Theoremes of Morall doctrine, that men may learn thereby, both how to govern, and how to obey" (Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 194).

[42] The literature on Hobbes's Homer translations consists of no more than five published articles. See Jerry Ball, 'The Despised Version: Hobbes's Translation of Homer' in *Restoration* 20 (1996): 1–17; Paul Davis, 'Thomas Hobbes's Translations of Homer: Epic and Anticlericalism in Late Seventeenth-Century England' in *Seventeenth Century* 12 (1997): 231–55; Eleni and Ion Kontiados, "'Ο Thomas Hobbes ὡς μεταφραστὴς τοῦ Ομήρου" in *Parnassos* 8 (1966), 277–99; A.P. Martinich, 'Hobbes's Translations of Homer and Anticlericalism' (a reply to Davis) in *Seventeenth Century* 16 (2001): 147–57; and G.B. Riddehough, 'Thomas Hobbes' Translations of Homer' in *The Phoenix* 12 (1958): 58–62. Davis also has a fine chapter on Hobbes's Homer in his unpublished doctoral dissertation, to which I am greatly indebted: Paul Davis, "The 'Imaginary Resistance' of Dryden's Virgil," Ph.D. diss., University of Cambridge, 1996), 33–85; and Luc Borot has printed a critical edition of Hobbes's prefatory essay to the translations: see Borot, 'The Poetics of Thomas Hobbes by Himself: An Edition of his Preface to his Translations of Homer' in *Cahiers Elisabéthains* 60 (2001): 67–82.

which had served for centuries to underwrite the image of *Homerus Orator*, Homer the teacher of rhetoric. In Book Ten of the *Institutio oratoria*, the most widely read handbook of classical rhetoric, Quintilian declares Homer to be "the model and origin of every department of eloquence" (*omnibus eloquentiae partibus exemplum et ortum dedit*) and "supreme not only in poetic but in rhetorical excellence."[43] The most prominent locus of rhetorical training in the Homeric poems is, for him, "book nine [of the *Iliad*], containing the embassy of Achilles" which exhibits "all the arts of forensic and deliberative rhetoric."[44] At this point in the story, Achilles has decided to boycott the Greek offensive in response to Agamemnon's provocations, and Odysseus and Phoenix are dispatched to change his mind. Phoenix, Achilles's former tutor, appeals to their shared past:

> Peleus the aged horseman sent me forth with you on that day when he sent you from Phthia to Agamemnon a mere child, who knew nothing of yet of the joining of battle nor of debate where men are made preeminent. Therefore he sent me along with you to teach you all of these matters, to make you a maker of speeches and a doer of deeds (*Il.* IX. 438–444).[45]

The diptych in this passage could hardly be more pronounced: men win glory in war (πόλεμος) and while debating in the assembly (ἀγορέων); accordingly, Phoenix's mission was to teach Achilles to be a "maker of speeches" (μύθων ῥητῆρ) and a 'doer of deeds' (πρηκτῆρά ἔργων).

Even in antiquity this passage had already become a *locus classicus* for the tradition of viewing Homer as a teacher of the rhetorical arts, and it remained so throughout the Renaissance. Homer's sixteenth and seventeenth-century translators were, accordingly, quick to emphasize this theme when rendering Phoenix's remarks. Hugh Salel, for one, has Phoenix say in his French translation that he was sent to make Achilles

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[43] Quintilian, *Inst. or.* 10.1.47. "Hic enim . . . omnibus eloquentiae partibus exemplum et ortum dedit." See Quintilian, *The Orator's Education*, ed. and trans. Donald A. Russell (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001).

[44] "nonne vel nonus liber, quo missa ad Achillem legatio continentur [and the debate scene in Book II] sententiae omnis litium atque consiliorum explicant artes?"

[45] "σοὶ δέ μ' ἔπεμπε γέρων ἱππηλάτα Πηλεὺς/ ἤματι τῷ ὅτε σ' ἐκ φθίης Ἀγαμέμνονι πέμπε/ νήπιον, οὔ πω εἰδόθ' ὁμοιίου πολέμοιο,/ οὐδ' ἀγορέων, ἵνα τ' ἄνδρες ἀριπρεπέες τελέθουσι./ τοὔνεκα με προέηκε διδασκέμεναι τάδε πάντα,/ μύθων τε ῥητῆρ' ἔμεναι πρηκτῆρά τε ἔργων." English texts from the *Iliad* not attributed to early-modern authors are taken from *The Iliad of Homer*, trans. Richmond Lattimore (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951). Occasionally (as in this case) I have modified Lattimore's translations; where this is done, it is duly noted.

an "Orateur parfaict." Against this backdrop, Hobbes's rendition is truly remarkable:

> When you to Agamemnon first were sent,
> You were a child, and understood not war,
> *Unable to say clearly what you meant*,
> Which the first principles of honour are.
> And by your father I was with you sent,
> To show you how you were to speak and do.[46]

Hobbes has jettisoned the Greek text and two centuries of exegesis in order to replace Homer's perfect orator with his own discreet hero; the educated man is to be taught not the tropes of rhetoric, but rather "to say clearly what you mean." Recall that this was Hobbes's position as far back as *De cive*. Rhetoric was, for Hobbes, the degenerate practice of making "*good* and *evil, profitable* and *unprofitable, honest* and *dishonest*, appear to be more or less than indeed they are."[47] It was to be contrasted with the true art of discourse, the only aim of which is to provide "an elegant and clear expression of the conceptions of the mind."[48] The latter is indeed "the first principle of honour."

Hobbes intervenes in this manner whenever Homer's reverence for the rhetorical arts is on display. In Book III of the *Odyssey*, for example, Nestor recognizes Telemachus as Odysseus's son because of his rhetorical skill: "I look at you and a sense of wonder takes me./ Your way with oratory [μῦθοί]—it's just like his—I'd swear/ no young man could ever speak like you [ἐοικότα μυθήσασθαι]" (*Od.* III. 124–5).[49] George Chapman's version moves in the predictable direction: "Your speech puts on his speeche's ornament,/ Nor would one say that one so young could use/ (Unlesse his son) a Rhetorique so profuse."[50] John Ogilby, whose edition of the poem came out in 1665, writes similarly that "Thou look'st so like and speak'st so like thy Sire./ Nor need thy Blushes thee excuse as young,/ Who hast his

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[46] My italics. All quotations from Hobbes's Homer are taken from Nelson, ed., *Thomas Hobbes: Translations of Homer*. This passage appears on vol. 2, 72.

[47] I have taken the translation of Hobbes's Latin from Charles Cotton's English edition of 1651, reprinted in Hobbes, *Man and Citizen* (*De Homine and De Cive*), ed. Bernard Gert (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1991), 231. For Cotton's authorship of this version (published under the title *Philosophicall Rudiments concerning Government and Society*), see Noel Malcolm, *Aspects of Hobbes* (Oxford: O.U.P., 2002), 234–58.

[48] Hobbes, *Man and Citizen*, p. 253.

[49] "ἦ τοι γὰρ μῦθοι γε ἐοικότες, οὐδέ κε φαίης/ ἄνδρα νεώτερον ὧδε ἐοικότα μυθήσασθαι." I have modified Fagles's translation here.

[50] *Chapman's Homer*, ed. Allardyce Nicoll, 2 vols. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1956) 2: 47.

Eloquence and Silver Tongue."[51] Hobbes's Nestor, on the other hand, says nothing about the "ornaments" of speech or "silver tongues"; he simply tells Telemachus that "hearing you speak your mind,/ And steadfastly your person looking on,/ Much respect for you in myself I find."[52] Once again, the great virtue is to "speak one's mind," to "say clearly what one means." An even more notable instance occurs in Book VIII of the *Odyssey*. Here Odysseus has just been taunted by an ill-mannered Phaeacian, and he replies with forceful disdain:

> . . . You do not speak nicely, my friend.
> You, you're a reckless fool—I see *that*. So,
> the gods don't hand out all their gifts at once,
> not build and brains and flowing speech to all.
> One man may fail to impress us with his looks
> but a god can crown his words with beauty, charm,
> and men look on with delight when he speaks out.
> Never faltering, filled with winning self-control,
> he shines forth in the assembly and people gaze
> at him like a god when he walks through the streets
> (*Od.* VIII. 166–73).[53]

This, again, is the standard Homeric vision: the virtue of a man is found in physical prowess and in eloquence. In addition to martial valour, there is the "flowing speech" (ἀγορητύν) that shines forth in the assembly (ἀγορεύει). The word translated here as "flowing speech" is, in fact, cognate with the word "assembly"; that is, it refers to eloquence in public deliberation. Indeed, Chapman's version has Odysseus say that it is "pleasing speech" which makes men "shine/ in an assembly with a grace divine,"[54] and Ogilby likewise records that lackluster "outward parts" are compensated for by "Eloquence and nobler Arts." Hobbes, unsurprisingly, will have none of this:

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[51] John Ogilby, *Homer, his Odysses* (London, 1665), p. 29. Here the *versio latina* is more subdued. Stephanus, for example, has: 'Siquidem tu vere/ Ilius filius es admiratio me tenet aspicientem./ Profecto enim sermones similes, neque tu diceres/ Virum juniorem, usque adeo similia loqui'. See *Homeri Odyssea, Cum interpretatione Lat. ad verbum* (Amsterdam, 1650), 59.

[52] Hobbes, *Translations of Homer*, vol. 2, 32.

[53] "ξεῖν', οὐ καλὸν ἔειπες. ἀτασθάλῳ ἀνδρὶ ἔοικας./ οὕτως οὐ πάντεσσι θεοὶ χαρίεντα διδοῦσιν/ ἀνδράσιν, οὔτε φυὴν οὔτ' ἄρ φρένας οὔτ' ἀγορητύν./ ἄλλος μὲν γὰρ εἶδος ἀκιδνότερος πέλει ἀνήρ,/ ἀλλὰ θεὸς μορφὴν ἔπεσι στέφει, οἱ δέ τ' ἐς αὐτὸν/ τερπόμενοι λεύσσουσιν. ὁ δ' ἀσφαλέως ἀγορεύει/ αἰδοῖ μειλιχίῃ, μετὰ δὲ πρέπει ἀγρομένοισιν,/ ἐρχόμενον δ' ἀνὰ ἄστυ θεὸν ὥς εἰσορόωσιν." I have modified Fagles's translation here.

[54] *Chapman's Homer*, vol. 2, 136.

> My friend, such words are *indiscreet* and ill.
> The Gods the gifts as they see fit divide.
> To one, of beauty they deny the grace,
> *But give him language steady and discreet*,
> Whereby he honour'd is i' the' public place,
> And men gaze on him going in the street.[55]

Hobbes has turned this passage into a meditation on the central virtue of epic poetry, "discretion." Where Homer had "flowing speech" crowned with "beauty" (μορφή) and uttered by a "godlike" man, Hobbes has "language steady and discreet" (a contrast with the "indiscreet" author of the taunt), and completely elides the thought that the orator is like a god. Once again, discretion replaces rhetoric in Hobbes's epic, and his Alcinous ends the episode by declaring that Odysseus's virtue could only be derided by "those that nothing say discreetly can."[56]

An interesting corollary to this rule is that Hobbes takes evident delight in accentuating the failures of public debate—that is, revealing the perversity of rhetoric. This pattern emerges clearly from his treatment of the frequent "council" scenes in the poems. In Book VIII, for example, the bard Demodocus recounts the response of the Trojans to the arrival of the Trojan Horse: "Now it stood there looming/ and round its bulk the Trojans sat debating./ clashing [ἄκριτα πόλλ'ἀγόρευον]" (*Od.* VIII. 505–6).[57] Chapman translates the verse straightforwardly: "where sate all arew/ Their Kings about it, many counsels given/ How to dispose of it."[58] Ogilby likewise writes simply that the Trojans "consulted" on what to do next.[59] Hobbes, however, adds a line of his own:

> The Trojans sitting round about debate,
> *And many a foolish speech they uttered*,
> And on three points they there deliberate,
> And *voted* what the Gods determined.[60]

There is nothing at all in the Greek or in previous translations about "foolish speeches" or "voting." Hobbes has imported these ideas in order to render deliberation and public decision-making ridiculous. The Trojans,

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[55] My italics. Hobbes, *Translations of Homer*, vol. 2, 100.
[56] Ibid., 102.
[57] 'ὣς ὁ μὲν ἑστήκει, τοὶ δ' ἄκριτα πόλλ' ἀγόρευον/ ἥμενοι ἀμφ' αὐτὸν'. I have modified Fagles's translation here.
[58] *Chapman's Homer*, vol. 2, 146.
[59] Ogilby, *Homer his Odysses*, 110. Stephanus is consistent here (see *Homeri Odyssea*, 220).
[60] My italics. Hobbes, *Translations of Homer*, vol. 2, 109.

after all, decide to bring the horse into the city walls, thus sealing their doom. Once again, rhetoric is shown to be a colossal failure.

The issue of rhetoric is, then, a dominant concern for Hobbes, but his translations are equally committed to a rehabilitation of the Homeric heroes. His view, once again, is that poetry should teach virtue, and that, as a result, its heroes should function as moral exemplars. Achilles was notorious for his indiscretion, but it is, unsurprisingly, the figure of Agamemnon who receives the bulk of Hobbes's attention. The French Jesuit René Rapin spoke for many scholars when he complained that Agamemnon behaves "with much pride and impiety" (*beaucoup d'orgueil & d'impieté*) in the *Iliad*.[61] Hobbes could not, of course, rescue Agamemnon completely without altering the course of the plot (if Agamemnon did not take Briseis away from Achilles, we wouldn't have much of a story). But there were clearly areas where Hobbes felt that intervention was both possible and necessary. Agamemnon, after all, was a king, and no discreet epic should ever provoke sedition by speaking ill of monarchs. In this respect, Hobbes acted quite early, offering an extraordinary translation of one of the most famous verses in the entire poem. In Book I, the Greeks are suffering from a plague, and the seer Chalchas is asked to explain why the gods have sent it. His answer will implicate Agamemnon, so he is understandably nervous:

> . . . I believe I shall make a man angry who holds great kingship
> over the men of Argos, and all the Achaians obey him.
> For a king when he is angry with a man beneath him is too strong,
> and suppose even for the day itself he swallow down his anger,
> he still keeps bitterness that remains until its fulfillment
> deep in his chest. (*Il.* I.78–82).[62]

The second half of this passage cries out to be read as a pronouncement on the character of kings, and, accordingly, it became a *locus classicus* for the nature of kingly 'wrath' (χόλος). To take just one example, it makes a

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[61] René Rapin, *Comparaison des poëmes d'Homere et de Virgile*, 3rd edn. (Paris, 1664), 73. The contrary view was also occasionally expressed. Spenser, for example, writes in "A Letter of the Authors expounding his whole intention in the course of this worke" (a preface to the *Faerie Queene*) that Homer "in the Persons of Agamemnon and Vlysses hath ensampled a good gouernour and a vertuous man, the one in his Ilias, the other in his Odysseis." See Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, ed. A.C. Hamilton (London: Longman, 1977), 737.

[62] "ἦ γὰρ ὀίομαι ἄνδρα χολωσέμεν, ὃς μέγα πάντων/ Ἀργείων κρατέει καί οἱ πείθονται Ἀχαιοί./ κρείσσων γὰρ βασιλεὺς ὅτε χώσεται ἀνδρὶ χέρηι./ εἴ περ γάρ τε χόλον γε καὶ αὐτῆμαρ καταπέψῃ,/ ἀλλά τε καὶ μετόπισθεν ἔχει κότον, ὄφρα τελέσσῃ,/ ἐν στήθεσσιν ἑοῖσι."

prominent appearance in Nicholas Coëffeteau's *A Table of Humane Passions* (1621). In the chapter 'Of Choler', Coëffeteau writes as follows:

> . . . men of authority and command, will have such as are subject to their government, honour them with service. And if their inferiours faile to yeeld them the honor which they think is due unto them, they cannot endure this injury, but fall into a rage, which makes them to seeke all occasions to punish this contempt. And therefore it was truly said, That the indignation of a King is great and fearefull; for when as a great king is incensed against any one that is not of his quality, although he temper and moderate his *choler* for a time, yet he smothers it in his brest, and is never satisfied untill hee hath made him feele the effects of his power, that durst presume offend him.[63]

The second half of this passage is a straightforward quotation of the verses we are considering. *Iliad* I.80 had, in short, become a proof text for much that republicans dreaded about monarchy.

Chapman wrote a dedicatory poem to Coëffeteau's treatise,[64] and this forceful reading of the verse comes through powerfully in his translation. Indeed, since Chapman explicitly used the Achilles/Agamemnon quarrel as an analogue for the dispute between Elizabeth I and his own patron, the Earl of Essex, it is not difficult to understand why he was so anxious to emphasize the dangers of royal wrath:[65]

> . . . I well conceive
> That he whose Empire governs all, whom all the Grecians give
> Confirm'd obedience, will be mov'd—and then you know the state
> Of him that moves him. When a king hath once markt for his hate A man inferior, though that day his wrath seems to digest Th'offence he takes, yet evermore he raked up in his brest
> Brands of quicke anger till revenge hath quencht to his desire
> The fire reserved.[66]

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[63] Nicolas Coëffeteau, *A Table of Humane Passions, With their Causes and Effects. Written by ye Reuerend Father in God F.N. Coeffeteau, Bishop of Dardania . . . Translated into English by Edw. Grimeston Sergiant at Arms* (London, 1621), 569–70. The text was originally published in French the previous year.

[64] See Colin Burrow, *Epic Romance: Homer to Milton* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1993), 212.

[65] Ibid., 214–17.

[66] *Chapman's Homer*, vol. 1, 26. Portus's Latin is consistent here: "Profecto enim puto virum aegre laturum, qui magnum in omnes/ Argivos habet imperium, ei obediunt Graeci./ Potentior enim rex est cum irascitur viro inferiori,/ Nam etsi iram retinet, ut ad finem perducat,/ In pectore suo" (*Homeri Ilias, id est, De rebus ad Trojam gestis* (Cambridge, 1648), 5).

Chapman has added the imagery of "brands" and "fire" to amplify what is already present in the verse. Ogilby's translation is similarly on point:

> It will offend Him who the Army sways,
> Whom all the Camp as Generall obeys.
> When Kings with meaner Persons are displeas'd,
> Though for the time their Anger seems appeas'd,
> Yet they within revengefull Rancour hide.[67]

Ogilby also supplies an explanatory note in the margin: "Great ones are, for the most part, sad Remembrancers, and having *plumbeas iras* [oppressive furies], conceale their wrath but till they can wreak it, dissembling the injuries they receive but to return them with interest."

Seen in this context, Hobbes's version is astonishing:

> Of all the Greeks it will offend the best;
> Who though his anger for awhile he smother,
> Will not, I fear, long time contented rest,
> But will revenged be some time or other.[68]

Hobbes has simply cut the central line. Verse eighty, which begins "For a king is too powerful" (κρείσσων γὰρ βασιλεὺς), and which turns this passage into a generic statement about kings and kingship, is not allowed to survive. What remains is a mild anxiety directed at Agamemnon per se, rather than kings in general. And that anxiety is greatly mitigated by Hobbes's use of the epithet "best" to describe Agamemnon—an epithet which is absent from the text, and which in Homer is usually reserved for Achilles, "the best of the Achaians" (ὁ ἄριστος Ἀχαιῶν). Hobbes's reasons are clear. He had written in a 1650 essay on epic poetry of "the uncomlinesse of representing in great persons the inhumane vice of Cruelty,"[69] and "Cruelty" is defined in *Leviathan* as a violation of the law of nature characterized by "revenge without respect to the Example, and profit to come . . . glorying in the hurt of another, tending to no end."[70] Surely such an injunction directed at "great persons" would apply *a fortiori* to the entire class of kings. If the purpose of epic is to teach moral philosophy, and if the highest requirement of moral philosophy is obedience to sovereigns, then for an epic to demonize the institution of monarchy is about as indiscreet as one could get.

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[67] Ogilby, *Homer his Iliads*, 6.
[68] Hobbes, *Translations of Homer*, vol. 1, 6.
[69] *Gondibert*, 53.
[70] Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 106.

An equally powerful example occurs in Book XIX of the *Iliad*. Here, Odysseus is negotiating a truce between Achilles and Agamemnon, and he sets out his proposed terms (speaking first to Achilles):

> And by this let the spirit in your own heart be made gracious.
> After that in his own shelter let him appease you
> with a generous meal, so you will lack nothing of what is due you.
> And you, son of Atreus, after this be more righteous to another
> man. For there is no fault when even one who is a king
> appeases a man, when the king was the first to be angry (*Il.* XIX.178).[71]

Once again, we have a general statement about kingship: when a subject has been denied what is due him (δική), "one who is a king" (βασιλῆα) should conciliate (ἀπαρέσσασθαι) the wronged man. Chapman, unsurprisingly, makes a great deal of this passage:

> And last, tis fit he should approve
> All these rites at a solemne feast in honour of your love,
> That so you take no mangl'd law for merites absolute . . .
> And thou, Atrides, in the taste of so severe an end,
> Hereafter may on others hold a juster government.
> Nor will it ought empaire a king to give a sound content
> To any subject soundly wrong'd.[72]

Clearly thinking of the wronged Essex, Chapman cuts the opening injunction directed at Achilles ("let the spirit in your own heart be made gracious"), and intensifies the language of "injustice" ("mangl'd law," "juster government," "soundly wrong'd"). In this respect, he is adopting the vocabulary of the *versio latina*, which likewise speaks of Achilles's "iuris mutilum" and the "iniuria" suffered by the king's subject.[73] Ogilby follows suit:

> When thou art thus appeas'd, (what is but right)
> He to a sumtuous Feast shall thee invite.
> And last, *Atrides*, if advise I may, Ponder thy Words, thy Actions better weigh.
> That Prince deserves no Blame, who low descends
> Any whom he hath wrong'd to make amends.[74]

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[71] "καὶ δὲ σοὶ αὐτῷ θυμὸς ἐνὶ φρεσὶν ἵλαος ἔστω./ αὐτὰρ ἔπειτά σε δαιτὶ ἐνὶ κλισίῃς ἀρεσάσθω/ πιείρῃ, ἵνα μή τι δίκης ἐπιδευὲς ἔχῃσθα./ Ἀτρεΐδη, σὺ δ' ἔπειτα δικαιότερος καὶ ἐπ' ἄλλῳ/ ἔσσεαι. οὐ μὲν γάρ τι νεμεσσητὸν βασιλῆα/ ἄνδρ' ἀπαρέσσασθαι, ὅτε τις πρότερος χαλεπήνῃ."

[72] *Chapman's Homer*, vol. 1, 396.

[73] Portus has "Atque tibi ipsi animus in praecordiis mansuetus fit:/ Ac deinde te convivio in tentoriis oblectet/ Opiparo, ut ne quid iuris mutilum habeas./ Atride, tu vero deinde aequior & in alium/ Eris nequaquam enim reprehendendum *est*, regem/ Virum privatum placare, quando quis prior iniuriam fecerit" (*Homeri Ilias*, 559).

[74] Ogilby, *Homer his Iliads*, 418.

Hobbes's response to all of this is predictable:

> And you [Achilles] *your anger henceforth bridle must*.
> And you, Atrides, feast him like a friend.
> And for hereafter learn to be more just,
> *Nor think't a shame for men their faults to mend*.[75]

Hobbes restores and intensifies Odysseus's scolding of Achilles, replacing the muted "be gracious" (ἵλαος ἔστω) with "your anger henceforth bridle"; and he completely eliminates the thought that kings have a responsibility to appease wronged subjects.[76] It is, after all, a central commitment of Hobbes's political theory that sovereigns cannot "injure" their subjects in any way. Hobbes injects this view into the poems on numerous occasions: in *Iliad* I, for example, Nestor says to Agamemnon, "You, good man that you are, do not take the girl [Briseis] away, but let her be" (*Il.* I.275).[77] Hobbes renders the verse as follows: "Atrides, take not from him, *though you can*,/ The damsel which the Greeks have given him."[78] Hobbes insists that Agamemnon has it in his authority to take whatever he wants away from Achilles. As Hobbes explains in *Leviathan*, sovereigns can violate the laws of nature (they can be "iniquitous"), but they cannot "injure" those whom they rule.[79]

But Hobbes does not only defend the prerogatives of monarchy by strategic deletions; he also periodically inserts his own verses into the poems to make familiar points about his civil science. Consider, for example, a passage from Book XI of the *Odyssey*, in which Homer records an unexceptional exchange between his hero and Alcinous, the king of Phaeacia. Odysseus has just paused in the midst of his narration of the *nekia*—his encounter with the shades of Tiresias and the great Argive heroes—and his royal host, deeply impressed by the tale he has just heard, offers him splendid gifts:

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[75] My italics. Hobbes, *Translations of Homer*, vol. 1, 313.

[76] It is perhaps uncharacteristic that Hobbes retains even the thought that Agamemnon should "learn to be more just," when he could have substituted a less juridically charged term (e.g. "righteous"). That said, it is worth recalling that, in Hobbes's political theory, "justice" refers to one of the laws of nature (i.e. the requirement to keep bargains covenants), which Agamemnon has violated (see Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 100).

[77] "μήτε σὺ τόνδ' ἀγαθὸς περ ἐὼν ἀποαίρεο κούρην,/ ἀλλ' ἔα . . ." I have modified Lattimore's translation here.

[78] My italics. Hobbes, *Works*, vol. 10, 6.

[79] Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 108–110, 148. It is worth noting that in Divus's Latin version (reproduced in Lectius) the word "iniuria" is actually used in the translation of *Iliad* XIX. 182–3: "non quidem enim quicquam vituperabile est, regem/ virum privatum placare, quando quis prior iniuriam fecerit." The impact of this version on Chapman's rendering is clear.

> Our guest, much as he longs for passage home,
> must stay and wait it out here till tomorrow,
> till I can collect his whole array of parting gifts (*Od.* XI. 350–2).[80]

Odysseus responds with mannered thanks, making light of the delay:

> Alcinous, majesty, shining among your island people,
> if you would urge me now to stay here one whole year
> then speed me home weighed down with lordly gifts,
> I'd gladly have it so. Better by far, that way.
> The fuller my arms on landing there at home,
> the more respected, well received I'd be
> by all who saw me sailing back to Ithaca (*Od.* XI. 355–61).[81]

With that fairly banal reflection on the popularity that comes with bearing gifts, the intermezzo ends and Odysseus returns to his story. Unsurprisingly, this passage attracted hardly any notice in the first two centuries of Homer's English reception. In Hobbes's version, however, the repartee between Odysseus and his host takes on an entirely new significance:

> Let not the stranger till to-morrow go;
> Till we prepare our gift he must remain . . .
> To whom the wise Ulysses thus replied:
> Renown'd Alcinous, that reignest here,
> Though a whole year you should command my stay,
> It will not trouble me. Nay, that I'd chuse,
> Since you intend to send me rich away:
> For I am sure I shall no honour lose
> By coming richly home. *Kings that have store*
> *Of wealth, are better commonly obey'd,*
> *And by their subjects are respected more,*
> *Than those whose treasuries and chests are void.*[82]

Hobbes remains largely faithful to the Greek throughout the first half of this passage, and certainly has a warrant in the original for employing the language of "respect" (the Greek adjective αἰδοιότερος). But at the end he has simply grafted on to Homer's verses an excursus of his own composition on the theme that kings are not obeyed unless their treasuries are

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[80] "ξεῖνος δὲ τλήτω μάλα περ νόστοιο χατίζων/ ἔμπης οὖν ἐπιμεῖναι ἐς αὔριον, εἰς ὅ κε πᾶσαν/ δωτίνην τελέσω."

[81] "Ἀλκίνοε κρεῖον, πάντων ἀριδείκετε λαῶν,/ εἴ με καὶ εἰς ἐνιαυτὸν ἀνώγοιτ' αὐτόθι μίμνειν/ πομπήν τ' ὀτρύνοιτε καὶ ἀγλαὰ δῶρα διδοῖτε,/ καί κε τὸ βουλοίμην, καί κεν πολὺ κέρδιον εἴη/ πλειοτέρῃ σὺν χειρὶ φίλην ἐς πατρίδ' ἱκέσθαι. καί κ' αἰδοιότερος καί φίλτερος ἀνδράσιν εἴην/ πᾶσιν, ὅσοι μ' Ἰθάκηνδε ἰδοίατο νοστήσαντα."

[82] Hobbes, *Translations of Homer*, vol. 2, 151. The italics are mine.

full—a theme which he had placed at the very center of his account of the Civil War in *Behemoth* and elsewhere.[83]

III

We see then a fundamental continuity between Hobbes's practice in the Latin *Leviathan* and his practice in *The Illiads and Odysses of Homer*. He regarded each text as a source of civic instruction, and therefore took it upon himself to ensure, insofar as he could, that each would clearly and convincingly demonstrate the virtue of obedience to sovereigns. He saw no value at all in replicating errors for the sake of "faithfulness to the original." Indeed, we should notice that, implicit in his practice, there is an assumption that he is serving the interests of his author, whoever it is. Homer, he makes clear, did not fully understand the principles of civil science; he himself, however, is privy "to all the Theoremes of Morall doctrine."[84] By correcting Homer's indiscretions, he is therefore acting on his behalf. Recall that, on Hobbes's account, people find themselves on the side of sedition only through ignorance.[85] Had Homer known the full truth, he would have made the very same corrections Hobbes had now made on his behalf—just as the Hobbes of 1668 had been eager to correct his earlier self. The fundamental principle underlying all of this is both strident and surprising: it is that faithful translation, as we understand it, is immoral. It can never be right to propagate what is contrary to the demands of peace—whether in own's own voice or in the voice of another. The translator ought, therefore, to be a rescuer of texts, one who saves past authors from their own indiscretions. Hobbes saw himself as just such a translator.

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[83] The most similar version is that of Ogilby: "... far better 'twere for me,/ With coffers full my Native Land to see;/ They then would all me love and honour more./ Subjects contemn their Princes when grown Poor" (see Ogilby, *Homer, his Odysses*, 153). However, not even Ogilby introduces the question of "obedience"; indeed, it is worth noting that "obey'd" rhymes only weakly with "void." The word choice was not determined here by metrical considerations. For Hobbes on money and the Civil War, see, for example, Hobbes, *Works*, vol. 6, 166.

[84] Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 254

[85] Ibid., 201–213.

TRANSLATING THE TURKS

Peter Burke

This essay is part of a broader project on what I call the "cultural history of translation" in early modern Europe, examining the translation of foreign languages as an example of the translation of foreign cultures, using the term 'cultural translation' in the sense given it by Malinowski, Evans-Pritchard and other anthropologists and thus including the translation of political regimes, from democracy to despotism.[1]

The Turks, more exactly the Ottoman Empire, have been chosen as a problem for early modern translators because they offered an example of what we might call the "familiar exotic;" alien in language, religion and regime but situated partly within Europe (including as they did what we call Greece, Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia and much of Hungary).

What follows is concerned with the cultural translation of the Turks by western travelers writing in their own language, and also with the translations of those translations into other languages, especially Latin, Italian, French, English, German, and Dutch (I am not competent to discuss books on the Turks written in Polish or Hungarian).[2] In Spanish, relatively little on the Turks appeared in print at this time, whether original works or translations.[3] However, a number of translations remained in manuscript, together with one fascinating sixteenth-century text, the *Viaje de Turquía*. Scholars are still discussing who wrote the *Viaje* and whether it represents first-hand observation or should be treated as a work of fiction based on secondary sources.[4]

The problem for all the writers discussed here was that of deciding which technical terms to translate (and how) and which were better left

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[1] *The Translation of Cultures*, ed. T.O. Beidelman (London: Tavistock, 1971); Frederic Schaffer, *Democracy in Translation: Understanding Politics in an Unfamiliar Culture* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press 1998).

[2] In Polish there was Marcin Paszkowski, *Dziejie Tureckie* (1615) and in Hungarian Miklós Zrinyi, *Az török Áfium* (1660–1). On Poland, see Jerzy Nosowski, *Polska Literatura Polemiczno-Antyislamistyczna* (Warsaw: Academy of Catholic Theology, 1974).

[3] Giovio's book on the Turks appeared in Spanish in 1543 but it is a rare book with only one edition; Sagredo's history was published in Spanish translation in 1684.

[4] Jeremy Lawrance, "Europe and the Turks in Spanish Literature of the Renaissance,'" in *Culture and Society in Habsburg Spain*, ed. Nigel Griffin (London: Tamesis), 17–34.

in the original Turkish. When their books were translated into other languages, translators had to make the same decision, crucial for what Mel Richter calls the "processing" of new ideas.

In early modern Europe, let us say from 1453 to 1789, the Ottoman Empire and Turkish culture were translated in two very different ways. On one side we see the persistence of traditional stereotypes. On the other, we find examples of a fresher vision, generally the result of direct observation at close quarters. Some individuals combine or at any rate juxtapose schematic and fresh perceptions.

Stereotyping the Turks

The stereotyped ways in which western Europeans viewed the Ottoman Empire in the early modern period are well known. They form a sub-set of the discourse of "orientalism" described by Edward Saïd nearly thirty years ago, though with more emphasis on cruelty and less on passivity—unsurprisingly enough, since the Turks conquered and colonized Eastern Europe, not the other way round.[5] This section can afford to be brief since the political ground has been well covered in classic studies by Richard Koebner, Mel Richter, and more recently by Lucette Valensi.[6]

The medieval stereotype of Muslims as "the scourge of God," "the enemy of the Cross," "perfidious infidel," and/or "the new barbarian" was carried over to the Ottomans.[7] After 1453, there was greater emphasis on Turkish cruelty. Thus both Cambini and his translator emphasize the "unspeakeable crueltie" of Mehmed II, while Grafton's chronicle notes "the abominable and cruel slaughter of children" when Constantinople was taken.[8]

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[5] Carlo Dionisotti, "La Guerra d'Oriente nella letteratura veneziana de Cinquecento," in *Geografia e Storia della letteratura italiana* (Turin: Einaudi 1967), 201–26.

[6] Richard Koebner, "Despot and Despotism," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 14 (1951): 275–302; Melvin Richter, "Despotism," *Dictionary of the History of Ideas*. 2 vols. (New York, 1973) 1: 1–18; Lucette Valensi, *Venise et la Sublime Porte: la naissance du despote* (Paris: Hachetta, 1987); Valensi, "The Making of a Political Paradigm: the Ottoman State and Oriental Despotism," in *The Transmission of Culture in Early Modern Europe*, eds. Ann Blair, Anthony Grafton (Philadelphia, 1990), 173–203. See also Joan-Pau Rubiés, "Oriental Despotism and European Orientalism: Botero to Montesquieu," *Journal of Early Modern History* 9 (2005): 109–80.

[7] Robert Schwoebel, *The Shadow of the Crescent: the Renaissance Image of the Turk* (Nieuwkoop: B. de Graaf, 1967), 147; see also Almut Höfert, *Den Feind beschreiben* (Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 2003).

[8] Grafton quoted in Schwoebel, 13; Andrea Cambini, *The Originall of the Turks*, trans. John Shute (1562; rpr. Amsterdam, 1970), 19b, cf 32a, 55a.

What was new at this time was the emphasis on the Ottoman political regime. Five keywords in different languages recur to describe this regime: 'tyranny,' 'despotism,' 'absolutism,' 'slavery' and 'lordship.'

In the first place, the Ottoman Empire was often described in moralizing terms as a 'tyranny.' For instance, a German song of 1542 describes the saving of the land from "Brand/und mörder des Tyrannen," while a song of 1598 describes the manner in which "der Grausam Feind" "schrecklich Tyrannisieret."[9] The former neutrality of Venetian ambassadors to the Ottoman Empire was replaced by more critical references to tyranny in the reports of Navagero (1553), Cavalli (1560), Garzoni (the 1570s) and Bernardo (1592). In his essay "Of Nobility," Francis Bacon remarked that a monarchy without a nobility "is ever pure and absolute Tyranny, as that of the Turks," an insight into the importance of mediating institutions that would later be developed by Montesquieu and Tocqueville.

In the second place, despotism. The concept of the 'despot,' still neutral in some sixteenth-century references to the *dispotto* of Serbia (a technical term) was changing. The uses of the term 'despot' or 'despotic' by Venetian ambassadors (Venier c.1582, Botero 1591, Capello 1634, Foscarini 1637) were becoming pejorative, moving towards an idea of oriental despotism that was explicitly formulated by Boulanger (1761) and Quesnay (1767).[10]

Thirdly, absolutism, what the Venetian Venier called *assoluto dominio* and the Englishman Paul Rycaut (in his *Present State of the Ottoman Empire*, 1667) "absoluteness." Rycaut was followed by his Italian and French translators, who wrote respectively of "una potenza totalmente assoluta" and "une puissance tout-à-fait absolue." In seventeenth-century France, the phrase *pouvoir absolu* was generally a neutral one, but in other mouths or pens the word 'absolute' was usually pejorative (perhaps this was the reason that Rycaut's Dutch translator avoided the term and wrote instead about "complete power," *volkome macht*.) By the late seventeenth century the image of absolute Ottoman power was well enough established to be a basis for comparison. The British ambassador to the Netherlands, Sir Henry Sidney, described the power exercised by the burgomaster of Amsterdam, Gillis Valckenier, by saying that "the Great Turk hath no more absolute domination and power over any of his countrymen than he hath in Amsterdam."

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[9] Şenol Özyurt, *Die Türkenlieder und das Türkenbild in der deutschen Volksüberlieferung* (Munich: Fink Verlag, 1972), 124, 126.

[10] Richter, "Despotism"; Valensi, *Venise*.

Closely associated with despotism was the idea that the subjects of the sultan were 'slaves' a term used, for instance, by the Venetian ambassador Morosini in 1585, long before Montesquieu wrote of the "esprit de servitude" in Asia. The term 'slave' may have come into use to translate the Turkish *ghulam*, the word that the sultan's subjects used about themselves, but for western writers and readers the associations of 'slave' were classical, translating *servus*, and pejorative. The use of the term probably illustrates what linguists call "convergence," in this case between *ghulam* and *servus*.[11]

Finally, there was the idea of the sultan as the lord or owner of all the land in the empire, as the French traveller François Bernier explained when comparing the empires of the sultan, the shah and the Mughals.[12] For this reason he was known as *il grande signore* in Italian and *le grand seigneur* in French, while Jean Bodin wrote of *monarchie seigneuriale*. In English, Hakluyt and others took over the Italian term, writing "the Grand Signor." *Signore* or *seigneur* was originally a feudal term, showing that westerners had recourse to their own past in order to describe an unfamiliar form of monarchy.

It is worth noting that the title of the Polish and Russian translations of Paul Rycaut's book on the Ottoman Empire was *Monarchia Turecka* (referring to what the author called "The Turkish Polity"). The problem for us today (or for this writer at least) is to know what the associations of the term *monarchia* were for Polish and Russian readers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, a time when the Poles lived in a noble republic with a royal figurehead and the Russians under an 'autocrat.'

Pejorative stereotypes influenced some translations of texts concerned with the Turks. For instance, the English translator of Giovanni Botero's *Relationi universali* rendered the phrase *principi orientali* as "barbarous princes."[13] When Francesco Guicciardini's history of Italy was translated into German, the author's "crudeltà più che barbara" became "mehr denn Türckische tyrannei und grausamkeit," an apparently gratuitous but also a revealing expansion of the phrase.

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[11] Richter, "Despotism"; Valensi, *Venise*.

[12] François Bernier, *Etats du grand Mogol* (Paris, 1670).

[13] Quoted in Joan-Pau Rubiés, *Travel and Ethnology in the Renaissance: South India through European Eyes, 1250–1625* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 296n.

Close Encounters of a Linguistic Kind

A different style of translating the Turks was based on relatively close encounters and on more or less first-hand information.

Authors published in the west in this period who offered first-hand accounts of the Ottoman Empire included George of Hungary (c.1422–c.1502), who spent twenty years in the empire as a captive; Theodoros Spandouginos or Spandounes, a Greek nobleman who lived for a time in Ottoman Istanbul in the late fifteenth century and knew Turkish; Giovanni Antonio Menavino (c.1500–c.1550), a Genoese who had been captured at the age of twelve and brought up in the household of the sultan; the Italian traveler Benedetto Ramberti (1503–44); Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq, a Netherlander, imperial ambassador to the Porte from 1555 to 1562; and Paul Rycaut, an Englishman of Flemish descent who lived in Istanbul and Smyrna (Izmir) from 1661 to 1678, as consul or secretary to the ambassador (incidentally, he was a translator himself, from the Spanish). George of Hungary's book had at least eleven editions in the original Latin and seven in German. Busbecq was translated into Czech, German, Spanish, French, Dutch and English, and Rycaut into French, Dutch, German, Polish, Italian and Russian.[14]

Other texts have a good deal to say about the Turks in the course of narrating the history of western Europe, as in the case of the history of his own time written by the bishop Paolo Giovio, and the histories of Venice by the patricians Pietro Bembo (written in the sixteenth century) and Battista Nani (written in the seventeenth). Giovio, who sometimes practised what we would call "oral history," made a point of speaking to some Turks to gather material for his history. He also published a book about the origins of the Ottoman Empire. Bembo's Latin text was translated into Italian, Giovio's into French, Italian, Spanish, German and Dutch, while Nani's Italian text was turned into French and Dutch.

The problem for all these writers and their translators was what to do with Turkish words for culturally specific items, whether they were unique to the Ottoman Empire, like 'spahi,' or found elsewhere in the Muslim world ('vizier,' for instance). There were medieval precedents for some of

[14] On George of Hungary see, J.A.B. Palmer, 'Fr. Georgius de Hungaria', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 35 (1951–2): 44–68; On Busbecq, Zweder von Martels, *Augerius Ghislenius Busbecquius* (Groningen, 1989); On Rycaut, Sonia P. Anderson, *An English Consul, Paul Rycaut* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989).

their problems, going back to the time of the Crusades, but relatively few Arab terms passed into the written languages of the West (how people spoke in Outremer is another matter, but this is not recorded). The word *cadi*, for instance, came into French c.1230 and into Latin c.1250. *Soldanus* and *sultanus* occur in Latin c.1118, while 'soldane' is recorded in English in 1297 and 'dragoman' in the fourteenth century. The term 'janissary' was current in French (*jehanicere*) and Italian (*giannizzero*) in the later fifteenth century.

Latinizing the Turks

Writing in Latin posed particular problems. Writers about the Ottoman Empire in Latin chose between two opposite strategies. The first was that of classicizing. The humanist Bembo, for instance, was a disciple of Cicero who was prepared to lose specificity in order to be elegant and to write what he called a "pure" Latin, like his master. Hence Bembo calls the Turkish galleys *biremes*, the spahis *equites*, the admiral of the Turkish fleet *prefectus classis Thraciae* and the sultan *Regem Thracium*.[15]

Giovio offers a less extreme case of the classicizing tendency. In his pages Sultan Selim becomes "Selymus Turcarum imperator," while the janissaries are sometimes described as "praetoriani milites."[16] Even Busbecq occasionally classicizes and refers to *equites, centuriones, tribuni, praefectus, templum*, and *Turcarum imperator*.[17]

The alternative strategy was that of exoticizing or "foreignizing," as Lawrence Venuti calls it.[18] George of Hungary, for instance, regularly uses Turkish terms and glosses them in Latin; *meschit* (mosque) as *templum, talismanlar* (the *ulema*) as *sacerdotes, dervislar* (dervishes) as *monachi, sanjakbeylar* (sanjak beys) as "duces sive satrapae," and *bassae* (pashas), with more difficulty, as "consiliarios, seu cancellarios, aut potius secretarios."[19]

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[15] Pietro Bembo, *Historia Veneta*, 1551, new edn Venice 1611, 176, 340.

[16] Paolo Giovio, *Historia sui temporis*, ed. Dante Visconti and T.C. Price Zimmermann (Rome: Libreria dello Stato, 1957–85), 249, 279. On Giovio, see T.C. Price Zimmermann, *Paolo Giovio* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995).

[17] Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq, *Legationis turcicae epistolae quatuor* (Frankfurt, 1595).

[18] Lawrence Venuti, *The Translator's Invisibility* (London: Routledge, 1995).

[19] George of Hungary, *De turcarum moribus* (c1480: new edn, Wittenberg, 1562). In this and some other editions the work is ascribed to 'Bartholomeus Georgieviz' (otherwise known as Bartol Đurđević), c.1510–63, a Croat who was another ex-prisoner of the Turks. On this confusion, Palmer, "Fr. Georgius de Hungaria."

The prevalence of foreignizing among writers of classical Latin might be linked to the increasing interest in foreign manners and customs shown by Europeans from the sixteenth century onwards. It is worth noting that Jean Bodin criticized Bembo for using the phrase *Regem Thracium* to describe the Sultan. Giovio sometimes foreignizes, writing of "Ianizarorum pedites," "Othomani" or "Mamaluki," or he combines the two solutions, as in the case of the phrase "equitum praefectis (quos *Sanzacos* vocant)."[20] As for Busbecq, although he writes in good humanist Latin he makes use of a considerable number of Turkish words, especially for institutions, adding Latin terminations in many cases and often explaining the terms: *Bassa*, for instance, *Caddy* (judge), *Caravansarai*, *Chiausi* (messenger), *Dervis*, *Divanum* ("locus concilii"), *Dragomanus* ("sic illi interpretem vocant"), *Gianizarii, Imaret, Mameluci, Singiaccus, Visirius*.

A similar solution was adopted by the Nuremberg patrician Jacobus Geuder when he translated the Italian Giovanni Tommaso Minadoi's history of the war between the Turks and the Persians. After hesitating over place names such as "Babilonia (quae hodie Bagadat dicitur)," he opted for keeping technical terms like *Caddi, Calif, Deftadar* (as he spelled them) and so on. Translating the Frenchman Antoine Geuffroy's account of the Turkish court, Geuder followed a similar principle, although he gave some Turkish words Latin inflections—*Odabasii, Tymariolzi*, and so on.

Vernacularizing the Turks

In the case of the vernaculars, domestication was less prevalent than in the case of Latin, although a few translators were supporters of linguistic purism. For example, Nani's history of Venice was translated into Dutch by the printer Willem Blaeu. As a poem prefaced to the translation notes, Blaeu was concerned with "pure Dutch" (*zuiver Duits*). He consciously avoids the French and other words that were commonly used in Dutch in his time to refer to ambassadors, captains, commanders and so on, preferring "Gezant" to "Ambassadeur" and "Hoofdman" to "Capitein." So too he writes of the Turkish emperor ("Kaizer der Turken"), rather than the sultan, and the "King" of Persia rather than the Shah, "De Koning van Persie."[21] Glazemaker, the translator of Rycaut, was also something of a purist who preferred compounds of simple Dutch words to borrowings

[20] Giovio, ed. Visconti, Zimmerman, 279, 265, 423, 275.
[21] Battista Nani, *Historie der republyke van Venetie*, trans. Blaeu (Amsterdam, 1685).

from Latin or French. For Glazemaker, "maxims," for instance, are *Grontregelen*, while "circumcision" is *besnijdernis*.

However, even in the sixteenth century, foreignizing was the dominant mode of vernacularizing the Turks. Take the case of the history of the Ottoman Empire written in Italian by Andrea Cambini, and of its translation into English in 1562. Despite his reference to "Baiazithe the prince of the turkes," the English translator, like the original writer, uses a number of key Turkish terms: *aga*, for instance, *pasha, janissaries, cadi* (with a marginal note, "an officer that determineth differences"), "hys palace called *seraglio*," and *sanzachi*.[22]

Again, when Giovio wrote his "commentaries" on the Turks in Italian, he left a number of key terms in Turkish, among them *aga, bassa, bellerbei, caripici* (doorkeepers), *sangiacchi, solacchi* (archers) and *timariotti* (tenants of land on the condition of doing military service). Giovio's book was one of the best-known accounts of the Turks in the sixteenth century, with at least eight Italian editions and translations into Latin, German, English and Spanish.[23] Menavino, who showed a particular interest in Turkish customs, gives the Turkish titles for many civil and military office-holders, from *defterdar* to *spahi*, as well as a number of religious titles, including cadi, dervish, imam, muezzin and mufti.[24]

In other words, like later anthropologists and for similar reasons (though less self-consciously and less systematically), some westerners who were particularly well acquainted with the institutions of the Ottoman Empire decided to leave key political and religious terms in the original language.

In the seventeenth century, foreignizing becomes still more obvious. Nani, for instance, generally respects cultural specificity. He often uses technical terms without glossing them, perhaps because his target audience is the Venetian elite—*bassà, divano, gianizzeri, sangiaco, seraglio, visir*.[25] Only the more unusual words are explained: "*Coza* (è questo il precettore del Rè)"; "*Caimecan* (è questo il luogotenente del primo Visir)" (501); or "con espresso Corriero i Turchi lo chiamano *Olacco*."[26] Translating

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[22] Andrea Cambini, *Origine de' Turchi* (Florence, 1529) trans John Shute as *The Originall of the Turks* (1562; rpr Amsterdam 1970), 38a, 41a, 42b, 43a, 52°, 52b, 55b, etc.

[23] Paolo Giovio, *Commentarii* (1531). I have used the Venice, 1541 edition.

[24] Giovanni Antonio Menavino, *Costumi e la vita de Turchi* (1548). I have used the Florence, 1551 edition.

[25] Battista Nani, *Historia della Repubblica Veneta* (1662; new edn. Venice, 1686), 213–4, 251–2, 501–2, etc.

[26] Nani, *Historia*, 214, 501, 507.

Nani, Blaeu retains a series of Turkish names and titles: *Defterdar, Dervis, Divan, Janitzers or Janitsaaren, Muftie, Spahies, Serrail, Vizier*. He follows Nani in explaining a few terms: "Mufti or High Priest of the Turks" (*Opperpriester der Turken*), "Kadileschier . . . that is, judge of disputes" (*Rechter der twistzaaken*), "Chiekaja . . . or superintendent of the armoury" (*Opziender van het Wapenhuis*).[27]

Where Nani viewed the Ottoman Empire a potential enemy, and gave particular attention to its armed forces, Rycaut saw the empire from within, as a merchant and diplomat interested in peace and trade. He was somewhat ambivalent about the culture of the Ottoman Empire and as we have seen, he sometimes employed the stereotypes of Turkish superstition, violence, cruelty, servitude and tyranny.[28]

On the other hand, the dedication to Rycaut's *Present State* called the Turks "men of the same composition with us," so that they "cannot be so savage and rude as they are generally described." He noted the danger of "contempt of the Turk," of treating them as "barbarous." Indeed, echoing Montaigne, he wrote of the "prejudice" of treating as barbarous whatever is "differenced from us by diversity of Manners and Custom, and are not dressed in the mode and fashion of our times and Countries."

In the context of the translation of regimes, Rycaut's first book, concerned with the "Maxims" of the "Turkish Polity" is of particular interest. The author reveals an interest in political generalization (citing Tacitus, Machiavelli and Bacon), but he is also concerned with cultural specificity. As he puts it, "The Constitution of the Turkish Government being different from most others in the World, hath need of peculiar Maxims and Rules, whereon to establish and confirm itself."

For this reason Rycaut uses many Turkish terms, explaining them in the text or margin as he goes. Some of these terms are religious (*mufti, gaur, seglo, mullah, dervish, hoja, imam, wakf*), some are military (*Bectas Aga, Baltagees, Jebegees, Spahees*) and a high proportion are political and administrative terms (among them *Bey, Beglerbeg, Defterdar, Divan, Hazodabashi, Kadi, Kul, Pasha, Pashalik*). This use of Turkish technical terms was generally followed in the French, Italian and Dutch translations.

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[27] Battista Nani, *Historie der Republyke van Venetie*, trans. Willem Blaeu (Amsterdam, 1685).

[28] Paul Rycaut, *The Present State of the Ottoman Empire* (London, 1667).

Direct Translation

The translation of books from Turkish into western languages (and vice versa) was rare in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. One of the rare exceptions was the *Annals* [*Tac al-Tevarikh*, literally "The Crown of Histories"] of Khojah Efendi [also known as Sa'duddin Bin Hasan Can, 1535–99] which were translated into Latin, German and Czech in the author's lifetime and into Italian and English later. In the case of the Latin translation by the German humanist Johannes Leunclavius, the translator chose to be useful rather than elegant, and so to use terms like *Bassa, Genizari, Sangiacus and Vezir*, inflecting them as if they were Latin.

The English translation of Khoja Efendi was made by the clergyman William Seaman, who had served as an embassy chaplain in Istanbul and translated the New Testament into Turkish. Despite the interest in missionary activity revealed by his Bible translation, Seaman did not domesticate the text. He retained the system of dating by the year of the Hegira (adding the year of Our Lord), left technical terms such as *sanjak bey* or *bassalik* in the original language, filled up his margins with Turkish words in the Arabic script, and went so far as to retain the term "unbelievers" to refer to Christians.

What is more, in the preface, Seaman justified his approach in words which may remind modern readers of Friedrich Schleiermacher's famous formulation of the translator's task, taking the reader to the text rather than vice versa, or as Seaman puts it, "desiring rather a little to change our propriety to fit theirs, than much to alter their phrase to put it in ours."

Consequences

Translation has often enriched what Lydia Liu calls the "host language."[29] In the case studied here, Turkish contributed to the enrichment of the early modern European language of politics, especially in its English, French, Italian, German and Dutch varieties. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the first example of the term 'despot' in English and the second example of the term 'janissary' both come from John Shute's translation of Cambini's history of the Turks—and there are at least three

[29] Lydia H. Liu, *Translingual Practice: Literature, National Culture and Translated Modernity—China, 1900–1937* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), 26–9.

more examples that the *Dictionary* misses: *Aga, Cadi*, and *Seraglio*. The use in English of Italianate forms such as *bascia, dispotto, giannizari, seraglio, gran signor* suggests that the Turkish terms reached English via Italian, probably through Venice, a major centre of translation in the sixteenth century. Curiously enough, a few keywords, notably *devşirme* and *medrese*, were not taken over, even though travel literature, from George of Hungary onwards, was making the institutions to which they refer familiar to Western readers.

The alternative to borrowing Turkish words was to attempt to find equivalents or analogies with western institutions. The reading of the Ottoman Empire through ancient Roman spectacles was noted above, especially the many references to the janissaries as praetorian guards. Explanations of Turkish words were often given, as we have seen, in terms of contemporary western institutions from monks to secretaries. Again, Rycaut commented that *Beglerbegs* "may not unaptly be compared to Arch Dukes in some parts of Christendom."

It is important to note that analogies were sometimes reversed. The domestication of foreign words allowed some westerners to view their own culture through eastern spectacles. The classic case of this kind of reversal is of course Montesquieu's *Lettres Persanes* (1721), but the tradition goes back much further, as references to the "great Khan" of Verona (*Cangrande della Scala*) in Dante's time remind us. In the middle of the seventeenth century, during the rebellion known as the Fronde, the terms *despotique* and *tyrannique* were applied to the French monarchy.[30] In the early eighteenth century the Duc de St-Simon described Louis XIV (in his then unpublished memoirs) as an oriental ruler, while St-Pierre's *Polysynodie* (1718) referred to Colbert's *visirat* or *demi-visirat*. The description of a burgomaster of Amsterdam as a Dutch version of the Grand Turk has already been quoted. A more elaborate example, in my view at least, is François Bernier's *Etats du grand Mogol* (1670), in which a description of India implies a critical view of the regime of Louis XIV.[31]

One of the most effective means of cultural translation, helping readers to understand cultures that are different from their own, is actually the refusal to translate culturally specific terms. This refusal may not always

[30] Koebner, "Despot and Despotism," 293.

[31] Peter Burke, "The Philosopher as Traveller: Bernier's Orient," in *Voyages and Visions: Towards a Cultural History of Travel,* ed. Jaś Elsner and Joan-Pau Rubiés (London: Reaktion, 1999), 124–37.

have been a sophisticated one, though it surely was in the case of Rycaut and some other writers quoted above. On occasion, resistance to translation have been no more than a means of evading problems. All the same, the consequence of this decision was to encourage readers to be more aware of the existence of alternative cultural systems, in the political domain and elsewhere.

TRANSLATING THE VOCATION OF MAN: LIANG QICHAO (1873–1929), J.G. FICHTE, AND THE BODY POLITIC IN EARLY REPUBLICAN CHINA*

Joachim Kurtz

The history of political and social concepts in modern China is to a large degree coterminous with the history of the translation, appropriation and, in some instances, "creative transformation" (Lin Yü-sheng) of Western-derived notions. With very few exceptions, the terms in which Chinese political and social discourses have come to be articulated were coined as translations of occidental concepts, borrowed either directly from European languages or, more often, by way of Japanese mediation. From its inception in the second half of the nineteenth century, the process from which the new Chinese terminologies emerged involved multiple authors, languages, registers, texts, genres, media, interests, beliefs, and routes of transmission. Negotiations, even of individual terms, inevitably proved to be contested; semantic transparency, to borrow Douglas Howland's useful term,[1] more often than not remained elusive for decades.

Disentangling the multi-layered translation process from which the new, and for some time considerably fluid, terminological repertoire emerged is an indispensable part of any attempt to write the *Begriffsgeschichte* of modern and contemporary China. Still, for the purposes of the history of concepts the utility even of the most comprehensive lexical data[2] is by nature limited. Reconstructions of the lexical surface of translated texts are most valuable in the early stages of intercultural encounters. The signifiers chosen to convey foreign meanings are of greatest interest as long as their definitions, and basic contents, have not been established in their

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[1] Douglas R. Howland, *Translating the West: Language and Political Reason in Nineteenth-Century Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press 2002), 5–6.

[2] Cf. Michael Lackner, Iwo Amelung and Joachim Kurtz (2001), *WSC-Databases: An Electronic Repository of Chinese Scientific, Philosophical and Political Terms Coined in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century* (Accessed http://mcst.uni-hd.de/search/searchMCST_short.lasso).

new discursive environment. In this brief transitory moment, the choice of lexical replicas can indeed determine the understanding of the notions they are enlisted to represent.[3] For readers in late nineteenth-century China who were not familiar with the occidental concept of the 'nation,' for instance, it certainly made a difference whether the notion was presented in the guise of the word *minzu* 民族, 'a people's lineage,' or *guomin* 國民, 'a state's citizens,' to cite but two out of more than a dozen competing renderings of the Latin *natio* and its European offspring. Yet, the more accustomed readers became to the new notion and its conflicting interpretations, and the more they became aware of its systematic value in the wider context of competing political theories, the less inclined were they to 'infer meaning from looking at the characters' (*wang wen er sheng zhi* 望文而生知) chosen to represent it, as one commentator observed already in the 1910s.[4] Once a notion was accepted into the Chinese conceptual repertoire, the lexical replicas that initially may have influenced its understanding were quickly relegated to their usual role as arbitrary, and semantically more or less neutral, semiotic shells.

Tracing the creation of a viable lexicon, while necessary, can therefore be no more than a prelude, or at best an overture, toward a history of social and political concepts in modern China. Most concepts were fully brought to life only after the initial stage of the reception process was completed. In the ensuing period of naturalization, translation continued to play a decisive role, at least on the basic level of the text. In the early years after the fall of the Qing empire in 1911, the more and more natural use of formerly new terms and notions inspired Chinese scholars to take greater liberties in their appropriations of foreign thinkers and adapt the latters' ideas more radically to indigenous contexts. A striking example is a free adaptation of ideas derived from J.G. Fichte in a long essay written in 1915 by Liang Qichao 梁啟超 (1873–1929), one of the most prolific and creative Chinese writers of the early twentieth century.[5] While ignoring

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[3] Cf. Michael Lackner, Iwo Amelung and Joachim Kurtz, eds., *New Terms for New Ideas: Western Knowledge and Lexical Change in Late Qing China* (Leiden: Brill 2001); and Michael Lackner and Natascha Vittinghoff, eds., *Mapping Meanings: The Field of New Knowledge in Late Qing China* (Leiden: Brill 2004).

[4] Zhang Shizhao 章士釗, "Lun yiming" 論譯名 (On Translation Terms), *Minli bao* 民立報, May 17, 1912. See my "Coming to Terms with Logic: The Naturalization of an Occidental Notion in China," in Lackner, Amelung, Kurtz, *New Terms for New Ideas*, 147–176, especially 168–169.

[5] For the most recent assessment of Liang's significance in modern Chinese intellectual history, cf. Joshua A. Fogel, ed., *The Role of Japan in Liang Qichao's Introduction of Modern*

much of the "letters" in his text of departure, Liang captured the "spirit" of Fichte's popular writings so well that his adaptation set the tone for a century of unbroken Chinese fascination with this most problematic icon of German nationalism. The present essay aims to reconstruct Liang's translation of this "spirit" in the emerging language of modern Chinese nationalism and to identify the main themes that inspired Liang and his many adepts to repossess Fichte's ambiguous legacy. Following a brief review of the political and ideological contexts in which Fichte was discovered in China, I discuss Liang's adaptations of key terms in Fichte's prescription for a modern "body politic" and outline the parallels that Liang and others saw between China's post-imperial predicament and the threats to Germany's sovereignty against which Fichte formulated his program of national and individual self-assertion. I then trace how Liang Qichao appropriated Fichte as an advocate of a metaphysically charged "view of life" that is presented as the best possible "guiding ideology" for a rejuvenated China. By uniting the pursuit of happiness with the cultivation of an ethical self that, if guided properly, devotes its efforts unconditionally to society and state, Liang's Fichte resolved tensions between progress and morality that all modern nations had to confront. Finally, I examine Liang's blueprint for a new division of labor in an ideal "body politic," which promised to restore the privileged position that the scholarly elite seemed to have lost with the demise of the imperial order.

Fichte to the Rescue

Liang Qichao discovered Fichte in an historical moment characterized by unprecedented gloom among his scholarly peers. The initial years of the Chinese Republic did not fulfill any of the hopes that had fuelled the political engagement of the intellectual elite in the waning years of the imperial era. The weakness of Republican institutions and the limited role granted to the self-declared wardens of a 'modern' or 'civilized' (*wenming* 文明) outlook generated wide-spread frustration. The domestic crisis was exacerbated by outside pressures. Japan's infamous "21 Demands" that were aimed to secure Japanese control over Shandong, Manchuria, Inner Mongolia, much of China's southeastern coast, and the industrial belt along the Yangzi river, posed a serious challenge to China's political

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Western Civilization to China (Berkeley: Institute of East Asian Studies, Center for Chinese Studies 2004).

sovereignty and territorial integrity.[6] The powerlessness of the Republic to refute these thinly veiled imperialist claims created a sense of utter desperation and further increased the lingering, if irrational, fear of an "extinction of the Chinese race."[7] Confidence in the new state dwindled rapidly. A number of senior scholars, among them former champions of institutional reform such as Kang Youwei 康有為 (1858–1927) and Yan Fu 嚴復 (1853–1921), advocated a restoration of the monarchy in order to overcome the weakness of the Republican government. Their deliberations were exploited by President Yuan Shikai 袁世凱 (1859–1916), who used them to foster his own imperial ambitions, and consequently incited bitter public debates. The revolutionaries of 1911 feared their legacy would be squandered and vehemently opposed any attempt to revive traditional ideas and institutions. Moderate forces, united in the Progress Party (*Jinbudang* 進步黨), also rejected any suggestion of a renewed change in the form of government.[8] Liang Qichao, the *spiritus rector* of the *Jinbudang*, argued that changes in the 'state body' (*guoti* 國體) were historically linked to revolutionary movements and had inevitably led to chaos and a further weakening of the nation in which they occurred. Successful government, according to Liang, had little to do with the "outer form" of the state. More importantly, the existing structure needed to be filled with an appropriate 'body politic' (*zhengti* 政體).[9] In order to establish a viable body politic, Liang argued, China needed to promulgate an effective constitution binding rulers and ruled and, most importantly, cultivate a new understanding of the relation between individual and society.[10] An ideal model for the latter he found in Fichte, a thinker that had attracted little interest in China prior to the outbreak of World War I.[11]

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[6] Cf. Immanuel C.Y. Hsü, *The Rise of Modern China*, 4th edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1990), 494–495.

[7] Cf. Maurice Meisner, *Li Ta-chao and the Origins of Chinese Marxism* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press 1967), 18–20.

[8] Cf. Joseph R. Levenson, *Liang Ch'i-ch'ao and the Mind of Modern China*, 2nd edition (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press 1959), 174–175.

[9] Cf. ibid., pp. 179–181; Philip C. Huang, *Liang Ch'i-ch'ao and Modern Chinese Liberalism* (Seattle: University of Washington Press 1972), 129–130; and Wen-shun Chi, *Ideological Conflicts in Modern China: Democracy and Authoritarianism* (New Brunswick: Transaction 1986), 51–54.

[10] Cf. Liang Qichao 梁啟超, "*Da Zhonghua* fakanci" 大中華發刊詞 (Preface to the First Edition of *The Great Chung-Hwa Magazine*), *Da Zhonghua* 1, no. 1 (January 1915): 1–2. Reprinted in Liang Qichao, *Yinbingshi wenji* 飲冰室文集 (Complete Works from the Ice-Drinker's Studio), ed. Lin Zhijun 林志鈞 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju 1990 [1936]), vol. 33, 83–84.

[11] For a general overview of the Chinese reception of Fichte in twentieth-century China, see my "Selbstbehauptung mit geliehener Stimme: J.G. Fichte als Redner an die chine-

Liang Qichao advocated this model in an essay entitled "Critical Remarks on Fichte's Theory of the Vocation of Human Life" (Feisidi rensheng tianzhi lun shuping 菲斯的人生天職論述評), written in February and March 1915, a time, as he alerted his readers, overshadowed by "alarming diplomatic negotiations between China and Japan." The article was published in two installments in his new journal *Da Zhonghua* 大中華 (*The Great Chung-Hwa Magazine*) in March and April of the same year.[12] A third part that Liang announced for the June edition (II: 15) never appeared, most likely due to the political turmoil following Yuan Shikai's recognition of the "21 Demands" on May 9 and the conclusion of a treaty further strengthening Japanese influence in China on May 25. Already in late April, Liang had learned that, despite repeated declarations to the contrary, Yuan was determined to restore the imperial order and usurp the throne.[13] He therefore concluded that the time for the exchange of scholarly arguments had irrevocably passed. While maintaining formal relations with the Yuan administration, he joined a conspiracy to depose of the would-be emperor and defend the Republican "state body" by force.[14]

Although the essay in which Liang Qichao introduced his Fichtean ideas exerted no influence on the political developments it had been conceived to prevent, it is of considerable interest to students of modern Chinese intellectual history. On the one hand, the essay occupies a unique position in Liang Qichao's monumental work. Liang had not written anything based explicitly on the ideas of an occidental thinker since his early enthusiasm for all things Western had subsided in 1903/04. One

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sische Nation." In *Selbstbehauptungsdiskurse in Asien: China—Japan—Korea*, ed. Iwo Amelung, Matthias Koch, Joachim Kurtz *et al.* (Munich: Iudicium 2003), 219–242, especially 221–227.

[12] Liang Qichao, "Feisidi rensheng tianzhilun shuping" 菲斯的人生天職論述評 (Critical Remarks on Fichte's Theory of the Vocation of Human Life), *Da Zhonghua* 1, no. 4 (April 1915): 1–11 (Part I); and *Da Zhonghua* 1, no. 5 (May 1915): 1–15 (Part II). Quotations from this essay will be indicated henceforth with reference to part and page number (I: x or II: x) in the body of my paper. An incomplete reprint of Liang's essay is in *Yinbingshi wenji* 32, 70–88. On *Da Zhonghua*, cf. Tse-tsung Chow, *Research Guide to the May Fourth Movement. Intellectual Revolution in China, 1915–1924* (Cambridge/Mass.: Harvard University Press 1963), 27. Liang's role in this journal is discussed in Ding Wenjiang 丁文江 and Zhao Fengtian 趙奉田, *Liang Qichao nianpu changbian* 梁啓超年譜長編 (Expanded Annalistic Biography of Liang Qichao) (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe 1983), 702–703.

[13] Cf. Ding Wenjiang and Zhao Fengtian, *Liang Qichao nianpu*, 714–716.

[14] Cf. Huang, *Liang Ch'i-ch'ao*, 131 and Dong Fangkui 董方奎, "Liang Qichao zai fandui 'Ershiyi tiao' douzheng zhong de aiguo yanxing" 梁啓超在反對"二十一條"鬥爭中的愛國言行 (Liang Qichao's Patriotic Words and Deeds in the Struggle Against the '21 Demands'), *Huazhong shifan daxue xuebao* 4 (1984): 47–52, especially 47–49.

reason for this abstinence was a sobering trip to the United States that had significantly dampened his admiration for the West's political institutions and social customs.[15] Moreover, with the increasing visibility of the revolutionary movement during the first decade of the twentieth century, advocating Western ideas was almost inevitably received as "radical propaganda"—an impression that Liang wished to deflect after abandoning his early revolutionary inclinations in favor of a gradualist position.[16]

Liang's discovery and introduction of Fichte did not mark a return to his youthful radicalism. On the contrary, in Fichte Liang eventually found a Western thinker whose ideas allowed him to combine some of the early beliefs he continued to cherish with insights that brought him to advocate more conservative positions in the realms of culture, state, society, and education during his later years. His work on Fichte thus foreshadowed a renewed turn in his thinking that led him to retire from political office in the 1920s and devote his attention entirely to academic pursuits, most prominently the reconstruction of ancient China's intellectual history.[17] At the same time, the essay underlines that Liang's later views must not be seen as an abrupt departure from the ideas that had shaped much of his political activities. Rather, his Fichtean ruminations reveal a genetic connection between his late, culturally conservative views and some of the more liberal ideas he had formulated around the turn of the century.

A second reason why Liang's essay is of interest is that it presaged the *leitmotifs* that have guided the remarkable Chinese fascination with Fichte until today. While not satisfying even the most modest standards of accuracy, as even his political followers were ready to admit,[18] Liang was able to identify the key themes that Chinese scholars came to admire in Fichte in the course of the twentieth century. Although Liang's influence as a public intellectual had declined considerably by 1915,[19] he

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[15] Cf. Xiaobing Tang, *Global Space and the Nationalist Discourse of Modernity. The Historical Thinking of Liang Qichao* (Stanford: Stanford University Press 1996), 137–141 and Doc C. Price, *Russia and the Roots of the Chinese Revolution, 1896–1911* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press 1974), 129–131.

[16] On the first "turn" in Liang's thought, cf. Huang, *Liang Ch'i-ch'ao*, pp. 84–111 and Levenson, *Liang Ch'i-ch'ao*, 155–169.

[17] On Liang's efforts to reconstruct China's 'national heritage' (*guogu* 國故) in the 1920s, cf. Levenson, *Liang Ch'i-ch'ao*, 193–218. See also Tang, *Global Space*, 174–223. On the first indications of Liang's second 'turn' in 1915, cf. Ding and Zhao, *Liang Qichao nianpu*, 730.

[18] Cf. He Lin 賀麟, *Wushi nian lai de Zhongguo zhexue* 五十年來的中國哲學 (Chinese Philosophy of the Past Fifty Years) (Shenyang: Liaoning jiaoyu chubanshe 1989 [1947]), 88.

[19] On Liang's influence in the various stages of his political and academic career, cf. Zhang Pengyuan 張朋園, *Liang Qichao yu Qingji geming* 梁啟超與清季革命 (Liang

thus managed once again to anticipate the inclinations of his much more thoroughly Western-trained successors. With his path-breaking essay on Fichte, Liang Qichao proved one last time the syncretistic genius that made him one of the most influential minds of modern China.

Term Questions

Liang's pervasive influence on the Chinese reception of Fichte is especially astonishing in view of the fact that he never came in direct contact with any of Fichte's writings. Although he claimed to base his essay on an unspecified edition of Fichte's *Popular Works*, he worked in fact from Japanese, the only foreign language he was able to read.[20] (His reluctance to reveal his source may have been reinforced by his disappointment with Japan's hostile policies.) His text of departure was a book entitled *Ningen tenshokuron. Jinsei kaisetsu* 人間天職論：人生解説 (On the Vocation of Man in the World: Life's Solution) whose three parts comprised complete Japanese versions of three of Fichte's minor works: Part I was a rendition of *Einige Vorlesungen über die Bestimmung des Gelehrten* (The Vocation of the Scholar); Part II of *Vom Wesen des Gelehrten* (On the Nature of the Scholar and Its Manifestations), and Part III of *Die Bestimmung des Menschen* (The Vocation of Man).[21] The individual titles were not translated but only indicated in *katakana* transcription in translator Sugitani Taizan's 杉谷泰山 (1867–?)[22] short preface that praised the collection as offering a philosophical guide to human happiness, similar in its usefulness to a work he had adapted earlier, Arthur Schopenhauer's *Aphorismen zur Lebensweisheit* (Aphorisms on the Wisdom of Life). Liang, however, used Sugitani's collection not so much as a manual for individual bliss but to promote an utopian conception of interpersonal morality, embedded

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Qichao and the Late-Qing Revolution) (Taibei: Zhongyang yanjiuyuan jindaishi yanjiusuo 1964), 320.

[20] Cf. Huang, *Liang Ch'i-ch'ao*, p. 143; Price, *Roots of the Chinese Revolution*, 34–35.

[21] Johann G. Fichte, *Ningen tenshokuron. Jinsei kaisetsu* 人間天職論：人生解説 (On the Vocation of Man in the World. Life's Solution), trl. Sugitani Taizan 杉谷泰山 (Tokyo: Hakubunkan 1906). English versions of all three texts can be found in *The Popular Works of Johann Gottlieb Fichte*, trl. William Smith, 2 vols. (Reprint Bristol: Thoemmes Press 1999 [1848]).

[22] Cf. Christopher Ives, "The Mobilization of Doctrine. Buddhist Contributions to Imperial Ideology in Modern Japan," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 26, nos. 1–2 (1999): 83–106; 97.

in a "view of life" with spiritual implications, that he made out to be the best remedy to cure the crisis of China's body politic.

While Liang did not indicate his source, he was straightforward about the liberties he took in his adaptation of Sugitani's text: for the sake of readers' "convenience," he writes in his introduction, he decided to make a "critical selection from more than one" of Fichte's books. Nor did he "necessarily" heed "wording and structure" of the originals. And, in order to "expand" upon Fichte's insights and "relate" them to the present, he added some opinions of his own. His justification was the intention to spare his audience the "intricacies" of Fichte's philosophical theories while sharing his invaluable "practical instructions." (I: 3)

Quite naturally, the resulting essay bore little resemblance to any of Fichte's works. Almost none of Liang's deviations had their roots in lexical difficulties. One reason for the relative smoothness with which Liang adapted the key terms in what he selected from Fichte's Japanese versions was that even the originals involved only a limited amount of technical terminology. In his popular writings Fichte consciously avoided the idealist jargon crowding his scholarly works. The basic ethical and political terms that were central to Fichte's teachings, and were faithfully represented in Sugitani's Japanese translation, such as 'morality' (*daode* 道德), 'happiness' (*xingfu* 幸福), 'individual' (*geren* 個人), 'self' (*ziji* 自己), 'state' (*guojia* 國家), 'society' (*shehui* 社會), 'rights' (*quanli* 權利), 'obligation' (*yiwu* 義務), 'value' (*jiazhi* 價值), 'freedom' (*ziyou* 自由), 'equality' (*pingdeng* 平等), 'free will' (*ziyou yizhi* 自由意志), 'class' (*jieji* 階級) or 'division of labor' (*fenye* 分業), had already more or less stable equivalents in both Japan and China by the time Liang published his essay. The same was true for the few epistemological terms on which Fichte relied in his argument: neither the replicas for 'mind' (*jingshen* 精神), 'matter' (*wuzhi* 物質), 'reason' (*lixing* 理性), 'idea' (*guannian* 觀念), 'sensation' (*ganjue* 感覺), 'ideal' (*lixiang* 理想), or 'identity' (*yizhi* 一致), nor those for more particularly Fichtean (and Kantian) notions, such as 'ego' (*wo* 我 or *ziwo* 自我), 'non-ego' (*feiwo* 非我), 'outside world' (*waijie* 外界), 'substance/noumenon' (*benti* 本體) or 'self-consciousness' (*zijue* 自覺) seemed to cause Liang any trouble, and he was apparently also confident that his audience was sufficiently familiar with them so that no further lexical explanations were required.

Of course, the relative ease of Liang's terminological adaptations did not guarantee an adequate representation of all these notions. But it does suggest that we must look elsewhere for the roots of conceptual dissonances. The only major exception in Liang's, and Sugitani's, text is the use

of the term *tianzhi* 天職 (J. *tenshoku*) for Fichte's 'Bestimmung.' Fichte deliberately exploited the double meaning of the German 'Bestimmung' as 'destiny' and 'determination.' Like the English 'vocation,' from which they were probably derived, the Japanese and Chinese renditions, which could be retranslated as 'heavenly duty,' capture only one of these aspects and, more importantly, insert a sense of predetermined 'obligation' into a notion originally rooted in the autonomy of reason.

If there are terminological problems in Liang's essay, they are, somewhat ironically, related to the fuzziness of the traditional terms he used in his comparative explanations of Fichte's finer philosophical points. Rather than help his readers situate Fichte's ideas in more familiar contexts, as Liang intended, his unfounded equations of traditional Chinese and modern Western notions confused at least those with a more deeply rooted grounding in the classical canons. Many of his contemporaries complained that Liang, despite his widely acknowledged erudition, made very peculiar uses of Buddhist and Confucian terms in his writings.[23] Having devoted much of his life to propagating "new knowledge" and defining the ideals of a "civilized" modern polity, his early immersion in Buddhist studies and his classical training had faded considerably by 1915,[24] and this was revealed in the shakiness of some of his bolder comparisons. Although not entirely without precedent, his identifications of Fichte's 'conception of the outside world' (*waijie zhi guannian* 外界之觀念) with the 'six roots [of perception]' (*liugen* 六根) in Buddhist epistemology or the philosopher's notions of the 'rational' and 'sentient ego' with the Song-Confucian concepts of the 'moral' (*yili zhi xing* 義理之性) and 'psychophysical nature' (*qizhi zhi xing* 氣質之性) were more than far-fetched. (I: 8–9) Still, even if these and similar examples point to a certain fluidity in his terminology, I would argue that, on the whole, Liang handled the lexical transfer of Fichte's key terms well enough in his adaptation to render the "term question" largely insignificant.

As such, Liang's piece is a representative, if early, example of a text produced in the second stage of the Chinese appropriation of Western thought. Drawing confidently on the political and philosophical vocabulary created since the turn of the century, Liang's adaptation attempts to

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[23] See Pascal M. d'Elia, "Un maître de la jeune Chine: Liang K'i-Tch'ao," *T'oung-pao* 18, nos. 4–5 (1917): 247–294; especially 268–71, 279–81 and 294.

[24] Liang himself was not unaware of this fact, at least in respect to Buddhism, cf. Noriko Mori, "Liang Qichao, Late-Qing Buddhism, and Modern Japan," in Fogel, *Liang Qichao*, 222–246; 246.

translate in addition to key notions less tangible aspects, such as Fichte's distinctive rhetoric of immediacy, and create a shared context in which all these elements might appeal to his audience.

Sharing a Sense of Emergency

Liang opens his essay with a brief biographical sketch that introduces what were to become two consistent features in the works of Chinese Fichteans: the insistence that China's contemporary crisis was similar to, if not quite as acute as the state of emergency the philosopher faced in occupied Berlin, and the belief, or rather hope, that scholarly intervention modeled on Fichte's example was the most effective way to overcome seemingly insurmountable obstacles. Liang pioneered this trope, based on unknown sources, by highlighting Fichte's contribution to Germany's much-admired national recovery in the nineteenth century. Claiming to quote the British historian William H. Dawson, Liang declares that "everyone who is at all familiar with Europe's historical heritage" knows that the founders of modern Germany were not Frederick the Great, Bismarck, or Kaiser Wilhelm II, but four "wise men": the "poetic heroes" Goethe and Schiller and the "philosophers" Kant and Fichte. (I: 1)[25] Through their innovative plays and poems, Schiller and Goethe had brought about an 'inner transformation' (*ganhua* 感化) of the German citizenry that was indispensable to the formation of a modern nation-state. Fichte and Kant, for their part, had aroused their compatriots to determined action through their 'ideal morality' (*lixiang daode* 理想道德). (ibid.) What the heroes of German literature and philosophy had thus achieved through their joint interventions reflected a key tenet of Liang's own political philosophy: the belief that the creation of 'new citizens' (*xin min* 新民) was the indispensable foundation of national salvation.[26]

According to Liang, Fichte's contributions to this end by far outweighed those of his contemporaries. Although his influence as a philosopher could not compare with that of Kant and Hegel, Fichte surpassed both in his effects on the "course of the world and the hearts of the people." Liang found two reasons for Fichte's unprecedented powers to mould

[25] In fact, William Harbutt Dawson, an historian of economics, does not attribute any particular significance to poets or philosophers, neither in the work to which Liang presumably refers (*The Evolution of Modern Germany*, London: Fisher Unwin 1908) nor in any other text I have been able to consult.

[26] On Liang's conception of the 'new citizen,' cf. Huang, *Liang Ch'i-ch'ao*, 36–67.

'new citizens.' First, while "the ideals that Fichte taught were exceedingly lofty," he never failed to stress the 'determination to act' (*lixing* 力行). His words were "as deep as they were heartening. With every sentence he strengthened the people's sense of responsibility and fortified their self-confidence." (I: 1) Secondly, Fichte was able to "move" and "shake" the Germans "to the core" because he exemplified his beliefs through his courageous deeds in the time of the countries' most dire national crisis.

Liang's description of this crisis unmistakably resonates with China's predicament in 1915 and with Biedermeier legends suggesting that "it was Fichte who defeated Napoleon":[27]

> After the death of the Prussian King Frederick the Great at the end of the eighteenth century, the despicable practice of absolutism was continued. The people suffered greatly and had no means to make ends meet. The political situation declined, and so did social discipline. In the West, [Prussia] was threatened by a strong neighbor that it feared like the devil: France. In 1807, Napoleon's powerful forces marched with their leader into the heart of Berlin. Scholars and commoners alike were imprisoned; farms and fields devastated. Even the honor of Queen Louise was almost tainted. Prussia's fate in those days was indeed hanging by a thread. In view of this situation, it is surely not necessary to mention the misery of the smaller states. The 25 [correct: 35, JK] states that make up the so-called 'German Federation' today were far from their present prosperity and divided; at that time they served as mere fiefs for Napoleon's retired officers. (I: 1–2)

According to Liang, the German citizens of that period were as desperate as his Chinese compatriots in 1915—until the day, that is, when Fichte burst onto the scene:

> What can an exhausted and demoralized populace do in times of a desparate national crisis? Among the so-called 'German folk' (*Rierman minzu* 日耳漫民族) all distinctions between rich and poor, noble and ordinary, cultivated and rustic, capable and negligent were abandoned. The only thing everyone felt was concern about the fall of the nation and the fear of slavery; all were equally distraught and indulged in self-pity. Suddenly, however, one man stepped up who awakened the people from their nightmare and cured the latent disease that paralysed them, who struck at the root of all their desparation and sadness and led [the nation] into a bright and glorious future: this man was none other than Fichte. (I: 2)

Unlike his Chinese scholarly peers who gave in to the general desperation surrounding them, Liang claimed, Fichte recognized the national

[27] Fritz K. Ringer, *Die Gelehrten: Der Niedergang der deutschen Mandarine 1890–1933* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta 1983 [1969]), 111.

crisis as an opportunity to prove his theoretical insights in practice and offer guidance to people of lesser talents. The book documenting this most commendable attitude—the *Addresses to the German Nation* (*Gao Deyizhi guomin* 告德意志國民)—continued to govern "the minds of all Germans today just as it did one century ago." According to Liang, many countries had already appropriated the 'divine force' (*shenli* 神力) of Fichte's *Addresses* and he was therefore certain that Fichte's teachings and courageous actions could also empower Chinese intellectuals to overcome their own and their country's misery and find a new personal and corporate vocation in this effort.

Liang's readiness to praise a philosopher as an exemplary national hero is indicative of a significant shift in the self-understanding of the Chinese intellectual elite in the early years of the Republic. In the final years before the collapse of the traditional order, both reformers and revolutionaries had reserved their greatest admiration for iconic Western statesmen such as George Washington, Napoleon, Peter the Great, or "Blood-and-Iron" chancellor Bismarck. Scholars, even those who initiated "spiritual revolutions" with far-reaching practical consequences as, for instance, Martin Luther or Francis Bacon, had commanded far less respect. In a time of violent political and social change, intellectual brilliance did little to capture the imagination of impatient scholarly minds yearning to replace the much-despised imperial ruling class. Only after the failure of the Republic had illustrated that actual power continued to rely on force instead of lofty ideals and aspirations, did the insight sink in that the revolution had simultaneously destroyed the traditionally elevated status of the intellectual elite. In time, this sobering realization led some to look more closely into the lives and opinions of European scholars who, like Fichte, had faced similar challenges of redefining their roles in society and state.

The adaptation of Fichte's response to this challenge was the implicit aim guiding Liang's essay. While his introduction suggested he would base his version of this response on the *Addresses to the German Nation* in hopes of transferring their "divine force" to Republican China, Liang had to confess that, "much to his regret," he had not been able to acquire a copy of that miraculous book (most likely for the simple reason that there was as yet no Japanese rendition).[28] Instead, he presented "useful

[28] Cf. Madenokōji Michimune 万里小路通宗, "Fuihite—Nihon ni okeru bunken ni tsuite" フイヒテ：日本における文献について (Fichte: Writings in Japan), *Shiritsu daigaku toshokan kyôkai kaihô* 76 (2001): 42–45.

instructions" culled from Fichte's "popular lectures" that he combined into a detailed prescription for a healthy Chinese body politic and the intellectuals' place within it.

Borrowing A New View of Life

In fact, unbeknownst to Liang, these "popular lectures" were much more congenial to his objectives and beliefs than the *Addresses* could have been. Drawing on the *Vocation of Man* and the *Lectures on the Vocation of the Scholar* Liang was able to construct a spiritual foundation for his political prescriptions which addressed existential anxieties that had come to haunt many of his peers in their vain searches for a viable new order. By framing this foundation in a holistic 'view of life' (*renshengguan* 人生觀) Liang anticipated a train of thought that found its most forceful expression in the debate on 'science and the philosophy of life' (*kexue yu renshengguan* 科學與人生觀) in the early 1920s and continues to shape Chinese thought on the relation of politics and morality until today.[29]

Liang outlines his version of such a spiritual foundation in a section of his essay entitled "On the Doubtful Question of Human Life" (*Rensheng zhi yiwen* 人生之疑問) that is vaguely inspired by the first chapter ("Doubt") in Fichte's *Vocation of Man*.[30] However, Liang addresses this "doubtful question" on a different level than Fichte and with very different intentions. For Fichte, the question "Who am I?" is primarily an epistemological issue. His doubts extend to the question of what humans can know about themselves and the world around them; for him, ethical considerations are, and can only be, a secondary concern.[31] Liang's approach is the direct opposite and reveals a profound indifference to epistemological limitations that characterizes much of modern Chinese philosophical

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[29] On the debate about science and the philosophy of life, cf. Danny D.Y. Kwok, *Scientism in Chinese Thought 1900–1950* (New Haven: Yale University Press 1965), 135–60; and Charlotte Furth, *Ting Wen-chiang: Science and Chinese Culture* (Cambridge/Mass.: Harvard University Press 1970), 94–135. Although these and other commentators hold that the 'problem of life' reached Chinese discourse not until the 1920s under the influence of European vitalism, Liang Qichao had already begun to discuss this question in 1904. See his "Yu zhi sishengguan" 余之死生觀 (My View of Life and Death), reprinted in *Yinbingshi wenji* 17, 1–12.

[30] Cf. Sugitani, *Ningen tenshokuron*, 141–170.

[31] Johann Gottlieb Fichte, *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. Immanuel Herrmann Fichte (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter 1971), vol. 2, 169–198. Cf. Walter Schulz, *Johann Gottlieb Fichte. Vernunft und Freiheit* (Pfullingen: Neske 1962), 12–18.

discourse. His exclusive foci are the ethical and religious aspects of the problem of identity. The uncertainties he voices on behalf of his scholarly peers are not based in doubts about the conditions of the possibility of knowledge, i.e., "What can I know?," the first of the three famous questions addressed by Immanuel Kant in his three *Critiques*. Rather, his doubts reflect more narrowly the loss of certainty with regard to Kant's second and third questions, "What shall I do?" and "What may I hope?"

According to Liang, the loss of certainty after the demise of the traditional order has ethical, spiritual, and political implications that cannot be separated. He concedes that the moral and spiritual crisis that continued to deepen during the early years of the Republic is primarily an individual concern. By undermining the foundations of all social relations and thus leading to unprecedented conflicts of loyalty, however, it unavoidably affects state and society as a whole. In a moving *cri de coeur* about the "meaninglessness" of life in his troubled times Liang bemoans that "those who constantly waver between affirmation and doubt will inevitably lose the courage to strive for the good and neglect their commitment to virtue." Such moral failure apparent in endless deliberations about to whom a person owes unconditional loyalty—to "family, relatives and friends," "state and society," or only "his/herself"?—has led the Chinese elite and the fledgling Republic into "an abyss of utter misery." (I: 4) Even if humankind has failed to agree on a definitive solution to the "question of human life," it is necessary to select a viable answer to live by. Little does it matter whether this solution satisfies philosophical standards of "right" and "wrong." In view of China's present crisis, all that counts is that each and every individual chooses an answer and selects a set of specific 'obligations' (*yi* 義) from among the many possible loyalties to which s/he will then devote all energies. (I: 4–5)

Liang had a very clear idea of the solution to the "question of human life" for all those who shared his concern about China's national crisis. He situates this answer in relation to the views of three factions that, according to him, have dominated discussions about the "problem of life" throughout Chinese and European history. Adherents of the first group hold that life is absolutely meaningless. They are indifferent toward "all things that humans value," in particular toward "scholarship, morality, reputation and success as well as state and society." From their indefensible belief that "good and bad, praise and blame" are all the same, they infer that they are entitled to pursue their selfish interests at the expense of others. Inevitably, such selfish indifference invites a self-destructive 'hedonism' (*lelizhuyi* 樂利主義) of the kind that marked the waning years of the Roman Empire and the European *fin-de-siècle*. In China, this

attitude has historically been associated with Daoism but, according to Liang, it is exerting a uniquely pervasive influence in the present age of uncertainty. (I: 5–6; II: 1)

The second faction is united in its belief that human life is sinful. Liang subsumes all religions under this rubric but dwells in particular on the practical shortcomings of Buddhism. For Liang, the Buddhist view of life is so far removed from popular customs that it leads humans astray instead of guiding them in their daily actions. Although paying his respects to the "lofty ideals" of "grace and wisdom" and Buddhism's "undoubtedly noble intentions" Liang insists that, when assessed from a "vulgar perspective," religious escapism only exacerbates worldly suffering. (I: 6–7)

The only "useful" answer is provided by the third faction whose representatives include the Stoics, Mozi 墨子 (Mo Di 墨翟, 4th cent. BC) and, more recently, Fichte. By arguing that human life has indeed a purpose these thinkers point to a "vocation" that provides hope to troubled individuals and reminds them at the same time of their ethical obligations. In their teachings, the 'sense of duty' (*yiwuxin* 義務心), on which every healthy body politic relies, is derived from the certainty that each individual is part of a morally and spiritually meaningful order, and it is just this certainty that post-imperial China most sorely needs.

Inferring general rules, or a 'guiding ideology' (*zhuyi* 主義), from this insight, Liang argues, requires to specify whether the goal toward which each life is directed is an "individual" or "universal" objective, and to define the precise contents of the obligations that are implicit in everyone's vocation. Liang suggests "perfect answers" to both questions in a theory of the relation between individual and society extracted from chapters one through three of Fichte's *Lectures on the Vocation of the Scholar*. Based on lengthy theoretical deliberations on the "vocation of individual life," Liang outlines his idea of the citizens' "heavenly duties" towards society and sketches the blueprint of an ideal body politic in which individuals contribute to the common good in accordance with, and to the best of, their innate abilities. (In a brief note Liang himself indicates that the missing part three of his article would have culminated, like Fichte's lectures, in a celebration of scholars as natural teachers and leaders of their less enlightened compatriots.)

Reconciling Morality and the Pursuit of Happiness

The first step in Liang's argument, the definition of the vocation of the individual, is the most difficult for him. On the one hand, it is impossible

to adapt Fichte's notion of the 'ego' without touching upon the philosopher's basic epistemological tenets.[32] On the other hand, Liang has to convince his readers that it is possible, and in fact desirable, to found a theory of the common good on 'egoism' (*weiwozhuyi* 為我主義), an attitude traditionally condemned in Chinese thought as the epitome of immorality.

Liang addressed this second difficulty first. Disregarding the moral sensibilities of his audience, he states categorically that whoever wants to understand his true vocation needs to accept a fundamental, if seemingly disturbing, fact of life: humans are born 'for themselves' (*weiwo* 為我), live "for themselves," and will only act in their own interests. Even our obligations 'toward others' (*weiren* 為人) are in the final analysis nothing but obligations "toward ourselves." (I: 7) Liang was of course well aware that this brazen statement was diametrically opposed to traditional morality. Yet, in his view the old ethics had nothing to offer a world governed by the Darwinian law of the "survival of the fittest." By locating the foundation of morality in the 'mandate of heaven' (*tianming* 天命) or 'nature' (*ziran* 自然), and thus beyond human reach, traditional ethics condemned humankind to passivity and apathy, i.e., exactly to those characteristics that not only Liang, but also more radical thinkers such as Chen Duxiu 陳獨秀 (1879–1942) and Li Dazhao 李大釗 (1888–1927), two co-founders of China's Communist Party, regarded as the root of the Republic's continuing weakness.[33]

The attitude propagated by Fichte was directed against just these dangerous traits. According to Liang, Fichte argued that "the ego equals heaven and must therefore always subdue nature and never give in to it." This attitude, which permeated Fichte's philosophy as much as his life, betrayed a 'spirit' (*jingshen* 精神) that lifted and sustained human "self-confidence" to an unparalleled degree. (I: 10) For Liang, this spirit was the most important ingredient of the "modern ideology" that China so desperately needed. Fichte refuted the static ideal of "tranquility" that had been cherished by Chinese philosophers since the Song and Yuan dynasties with the dynamic view of a world in which "all living things are constantly in motion." This insight in turn led him to replace ideals of compliance and retrospection that resonated with traditional Chinese thought with an unbending 'progressivism' (*jinquzhuyi* 進取主義). (I: 11)

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[32] Cf. Peter Rohs, *Johann Gottlieb Fichte* (Munich: Junius 1991), 48–52.

[33] Cf. Maurice Meisner, "Li Ta-chao," in *Vom Konfuzianismus zum Kommunismus. Von der Taiping Rebellion bis zu Mao Tsetung*, ed. Peter J. Opitz (Munich: List 1969), 149–186; 150–154.

Although some passages in Fichte's works seem to anticipate evolutionary ideas,[34] and the Japanese translation mentions the terms 'development' (J. *hattatsu* 発達) and 'progress' (J. *shinpō* 進歩),[35] there is no evidence of a comprehensive social Darwinian world-view in either version. Liang's insertion of Darwinian terms and ideas, which corresponded to his earlier beliefs,[36] reinforced his reversal of traditional morality. If not only nature but also the pre-moral relations among humans are governed by the laws of the "struggle for survival," then the roots of morality must be located in the only realm where these laws do not apply. According to Liang Qichao's Fichte, this realm was the realm of "reason," or the "rational ego," and this was consequently the starting point of his entire philosophical edifice.

Liang's pragmatic introduction of this "rational ego" confirms his indifference toward the transcendental context in which Fichte situates this notion. For Liang, the rational ego is of interest only inasmuch as it can be exploited to validate ethical conclusions about man's "vocation," first as an individual and then in his interactions with others. As a result, he reduces Fichte's quite complex determination of man as "self-governing rationality" (*sich selbst bestimmende Vernünftigkeit*) to a straightforward argument recalling traditional Confucian attempts to define 'human nature' (*xing* 性). Since humans are distinguished by their rational capacities, he explains, it is their duty to realize the demands of reason against all obstacles. This includes the obligation to live by the maxims of the "moral law," not due to outside pressures but out of free insight into its necessity, and thus to manifest through practical action in the outside world the "free will," on which all moral action depends. The crucial difference between Confucian and Buddhist theories and Fichte's conception is that the latter recognizes the usefulness of both the rational and the sentient ego as well as the "ego" and the "non-ego." Confucians have consistently denied any positive function of the senses while Buddhists understood the "non-ego" invariably as a source of "pollution" and thus as a potential threat to the physical and moral integrity of the "ego." Fichte accepted that the "non-ego" could harm the "ego" but insisted that it could

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[34] Fichte, *Sämtliche Werke* VI, 318–319, and *Sämtliche Werke* II, 265–266. On the origin and reception of these ideas, cf. the essays in a special issue of *Fichte-Studien* 3 (1991), *passim*.

[35] Sugitani, *Ningen tenshokuron*, 33.

[36] James R. Pusey, *China and Charles Darwin* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press 1983), 254–316.

be equally benificial. In the same vein, he taught that the senses should not be condemned but rather be put to good use according to the directions of reason. (I: 8, 10)

Liang admired this conception as a thoroughly "modern" view of the relationships between ego and non-ego as well as reason and sensation. In contrast to traditional Chinese thought, Fichte saw both aspects as being linked in dynamic interaction. In order to prevent the ego from being "enslaved by the outside world" or reason being blinded by sensual desires, humans had to strive incessantly to ensure that "the ego is always in control of external things and never controlled by them" and that "the ego exploits the outside world to the fullest." (I: 9) Conceived in this manner, the "realization of reason" that Fichte defined as man's "first and most important obligation to himself" appears as a necessary condition for the gradual progress not only of morality but also of individual happiness. In Fichte's view of the vocation of life, as portrayed by Liang Qichao, moral action is identical with the pursuit of happiness. His theory should therefore be called the 'doctrine of the unity of morality and happiness' (*fude heyi zhuyi* 福德合一主義). For Liang, this unity is the most fascinating of Fichte's insights because it allows to combine two aspects whose apparent incompatibility had been the subject of extensive controversy in China since the turn of the century: the moral demands of traditional Chinese thought and the emphasis on individuality and progress that presumably lay at the heart of the Western strength. In Liang's translation Fichte's doctrine appeared as a way to overcome the complacency of the old ethics and at the same time tame the excesses of an ethically blind belief in material progress.

Shaping the Body Politic

After this abstract introduction to the theoretical subtleties of Fichte's popular works, Liang is finally in the position to develop the "practical instructions" he promised his readers at the outset. His main concern is to outline which conclusions his theoretical foundation warrants in regards to an ethically acceptable and spiritually as well as politically satisfying conception of an ideal body politic.

As in his conception of the vocation of individual life, Liang starts by defending Fichte's reliance on "egoism" to promote 'altruism' (*weitazhuyi* 為他主義). Pointing to the pragmatic success of the philosopher's teachings as exemplified by Germany's rise from the ashes, he praises Fichte

as the rare mind building his theories on the realities of interpersonal relationships instead of propagating illusive ideals. (II: 1) By integrating selfish impulses into his conception of the "unity of happiness and morality," Fichte empowered individuals to follow the right path in their pursuit of personal goals.[37] This same principle governs his theory of society as the "relations of rational beings unto each other." An ideal body politic, defined as a society of individuals striving to realize their potential as rational beings, will inevitably tend toward the ultimate goal of humanity: the complete harmonization of human reason. (II: 2)

The philosophical basis of this optimistic view of society is the mutual recognition of humans as rational beings possessing a free will. It is this capacity that distinguishes the individuals with which the "rational ego" comes into contact in its dealings with the "non-ego" from the "manifold things." Acknowledging that other humans are 'of the same kind' (*tonglei* 同類) and have the same ability to decide their course of action in a given situation free from necessary laws or other "outside forces" naturally leads to a sense of community. In this community the self and others "of the same kind" are linked in a dynamic interrelationship mirroring that between reason and sensation. Consequently, no one is able to realize their aspirations without cooperation and support from others; each individual is equally dependent on society. Not striving to make the greatest possible contribution to this "body" is thus not only unreasonable but self-defeating.

Neither in his original nor in Sugitani's translation does Fichte suggest that the state has any role to play in this process. In a notable deviation Liang nonetheless insists that, according to Fichte, the state commands "completely sincere affection" of all its citizens because it represents the "highest form of a particular society." (II: 4) Only by relying on the state's mediation can individuals hope to realize their natural desire to live up to their ideals. Once they acknowledge this fact, constant progress toward their common goal is guaranteed by another non-Fichtean idea, the law of evolution, which in Liang's version acts as an invisible hand guiding the realization of human reason.

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[37] Liang found a similar unity of individual and social aspirations in John Stuart Mill's *On Liberty* as translated by Yan Fu. Cf. Douglas Howland, *Personal Liberty and Public Good: The Introduction of John Stuart Mill to China and Japan* (Toronto, Buffalo and London: University of Toronto Press 2005), 127–131.

How so? While all humans share the desire to realize their potential, there are gradual differences in strength and ability. The more talented members of society, and especially those who are better educated, feel a "natural obligation" to guide the efforts of those with lesser abilities and 'make them more like themselves' (*tonghua* 同化). The result is a process of constant mutual interaction that, according to Liang, is governed by incessant competition between the minds of the self and others. And since in this competition 'the strong' inevitably 'defeat the weak' (*yousheng liebai* 優勝劣敗, Liang's Japanese-derived term for the German rendition of the "survival of the fittest" as "das Recht des Stärkeren"), "society is moving every day in the direction of the good, without even being aware of it." (II: 6)

Liang admonishes his scholarly peers to play a more active part in supporting this natural process but cautions them at the same time to respect the "free will" of others and never try to force their insights upon them. Instead of depleting their powers by trying to suppress the stubborn resistance of the unwilling, the scholarly class must rely on their skills to bring about the "inner transformation" of other members of the society. While governed by the law of evolution, interpersonal relations must be shaped by mutual support and guidance in order to facilitate progress on the path toward the individual and collective realization of human reason.

In Liang Qichao's adaptation, Fichte's view of society thus appears as a complex fabric—Liang offers Buddhist-inspired metaphors such as "10,000 mirrors reflecting one another," "10,000 threads tied to one other in one net," "10,000 wheels driving one another," or "10,000 waves rousing one another" (II: 9)—in which all members are linked in interdependent relationships governed by the force of universal reason and the shared desire to realize rational ideals. The harmonic interplay of all parts of this organistic body politic is secured by mutual respect growing from the recognition that each individual will act in accordance with the moral law as per the inevitable insight into its rational necessity. This mutual respect, however, does not imply the absence of social 'classes' (*jieji* 階級).[38] According to Liang, Fichte identified two interrelated origins of classes: on the one hand, there are "natural classes" based on different physiological and mental abilities. On the other, classes are also a "social necessity":

[38] The shift from Fichte's German *Stände* to the anachronistic 'classes' is already made in Sugitani's Japanese version. Cf. Sugitani, *Ningen tenshokuron*, 21–25.

> A society that relies exclusively on individual efforts is incapable of gaining all benefits from the features of the natural world. But if everyone commits to this [effort] and all collectively take possession of the natural world's benefits that individuals cannot draw by themselves, then all these benefits can be stored collectively and given back to the individual via a mediator. As soon as there is a society, then, individual gains become the collective gains of all humanity, and the capital of earlier generations turns into the inherited capital of the present generation. Nothing could be more productive than this. (II: 11)

Classes are vital for this effort because, Liang argues, the shared profit of any society is proportional to the degree of the 'division of labor' (*fenye* 分業) reflected in its organization. Ideally, and this is a distortion of Fichte's original text and intention that Liang inherits from Sugitani's Japanese version,[39] societies should be structured as military organizations. In its "struggle with nature" on which all human culture is built, every society needs to "unite its troops" and "devise its own strategy." In the ensuing battles,

> [V]ictories by individuals are victories for society as a whole. The masses are encouraged to forge ahead boldly following these individuals and seize the right moments to destroy and suppress the enemy. Every trooper of the societal army will be able to develop and use his individual talents to overcome the enemy and achieve his goals. If someone has an asset that can be multiplied, the whole army will profit. Society as a whole will achieve unprecedented triumphs, and the bounty will be the shared property of the entire army. (II: 13)

Individuals have more to gain from participation in this societal army than worldly riches: devoting their lives to the common enterprise will also enable them to understand that their seemingly "insignificant bodies" continue the works of previous generations, and this in turn will infuse them with the certainty of being a link in the chain of the universe's "unending history." As such, they will regain the confidence that human life has "meaning" and "value" and realize that their contributions will ensure nothing less than humanity's collective immortality.

With this grand declaration, that echoes, intuitively as it were, Fichte's well-known pathos of total identification, Liang's portrait of an ideal body politic comes to an abrupt end. In the missing conclusion to his essay, Liang would probably have balanced this rather combative outlook with a tamer defintion of the social obligations of the scholar. In all likelihood,

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[39] Sugitani, *Ningen tenshokuron*, 35; cf. *Sämtliche Werke* VI, 55–56.

if we indulge for a moment in further speculation, Liang would have imagined the vocation of the scholar as that of a selfless guardian of moral values whose impartial advice was heeded by all other "classes," irrespective of their actual powers. Yet, by abandoning his account of Fichte's 'practical instructions' in favor of joining a plot to assassinate the President-*cum*-Would-Be-Emperor Yuan Shikai, Liang himself illustrated just how little hope there was for such a blueprint to become reality in early Republican China.

Concluding Remarks

Deprived of its conclusion, Liang's vision for a revitalized body politic remains a torso. Yet, the outlines of what he had in mind are clear: an organistic society whose members are united in their awareness of an unprecedented crisis that demands the most determined action if the "extinction of the race" is to be prevented. Liang wasted no time defining the common good, perhaps because it was too obvious that the China of his day needed nothing more than a stable polity. After the failure of institutional reform, he was once again convinced that only a new "spirit" could save the country from disintegration. The reflexive call for a transformation of the populace remained a constant temptation, not only for Liang, but for Chinese intellectuals of all ideological persuasions throughout the twentieth century, and Fichte proved to be among the favorite foreign inspirations for such demands. Rather than create an environment in which the desired transformations could take place, Chinese Fichteans, beginning with Liang Qichao, placed the burden of change entirely on their already hard-pressed audiences.

To his credit, Liang presented a comparatively mild version of this trope. His call to duty is well-balanced with promises of both worldly rewards and metaphysical salvation, and the Fichtean spirit he propagates is far less violent than adaptations published in the 1930s and 1940s. In view of the limited access he had to Fichte's work and the liberties he took with what little he saw, Liang captured those elements of this spirit that appealed to him surprisingly well. Although his text does not qualify as a translation in any strict sense, he managed to convey an image of the philosopher and some of his basic intuitions that was not entirely unrelated to readings of Fichte in contemporary Europe and especially Japan. His usage of technical terms corresponded with by-then accepted usage and interfered only in very few cases with the representation of Fichtean-

inspired concepts. Liang managed to translate these notions into a context that made them relevant for his audience. Most importantly, he succeeded in recreating the "style" in which these concepts could be presented most forcefully. Maybe intuitively, but more likely perhaps because there is indeed a genetic connection between political concepts and their rhetorical representation that transcends individual languages, Liang grasped and skillfully adapted Fichte's pathos of immediacy and rhetoric of total identification. What this striking achievement suggests, it seems to me, is that a truly transnational *Begriffsgeschichte* may profit from an inventory of these connections and their specific appropriations in diverse discursive contexts.

What is the significance of Liang's encounter with Fichte in modern Chinese intellectual history? As indicated above, the article points to a significant second turn in Liang Qichao's thinking. Many of Liang's early ideas, which are often all too readily called "liberal," resurface in his Fichtean ruminations: the call for a new, more dynamic citizenry, the insistence on the necessity of a strong and centralized state, the inversion of rights and obligations, as well as the belief in linear progress, a social-darwinist world-order, and an "invisible hand" that guides human societies toward an ultimately blissful goal, all find a place in his essay. Yet, they are upstaged by a set of new notions that seem to be aimed at taming the excesses of an exclusively "modern" world-view. The failure of the young Republic, Japan's betrayal of Chinese reformers' trust, and the outbreak of World War I had amplified Liang's lingering suspicions about the ethical deficits of modernity as he had come to understand it. The attempt to unite rigorous moral convictions with the pursuit of individual happiness that he took to be the core of Fichte's theory of man's vocation provided him with a blueprint promising the best of both worlds—and more than that: in addition to offering a way to domesticate the indispensable spirit of "progressivism" in the larger framework of an higher ethical purpose, it enabled him to address the existential disorientation among his peers by linking current political concerns to unfulfilled metaphysical yearnings. The infusion of this existential dimension into political discourse was perhaps the most prescient insight in Liang's adaptation. It foreshadowed key issues brought to the fore in the debate on science and the philosophy of life in the early 1920s which in turn configured battle lines along which a considerable portion of modern Chinese political philosophy is articulated until today.

THE PUBLIC LIMITS OF LIBERTY: NAKAMURA KEIU'S TRANSLATION OF J.S. MILL

Douglas Howland

Nakamura Keiu (1832–1891) was a central figure in the intellectual transition from the Tokugawa shogunate (1603–1867) to the modern Japanese state created during the Meiji period (1868–1912). He was a student of both Confucianism and Dutch Learning, and was one of those who led the way in studying English after the U.S. Expedition to Japan in 1853. He was sent to study in England between 1866 and 1868, and upon his return to Japan immediately after the Meiji restoration, he withdrew to Shizuoka, where he translated into Japanese what are his best known works: Samuel Smiles's *Self-Help* (as *Saikoku risshi hen*) and J.S. Mill's *On Liberty* (as *Jiyū no ri*). Both were quite popular—*Jiyū no ri* was reportedly read by the entire generation of educated Japanese who came of age during the Restoration, and *Saikoku risshi hen* remained in print until the 1920s—and both helped to spread the Western ideas of individuality, self-reliance, and liberty.[1]

Nakamura's contemporaries were intensely interested in *Jiyū no ri* for a number of reasons. First was its reference to the foundational "Charter Oath" decreed by the Meiji emperor at the start of the restoration, which declared the set of principles which guided the samurai oligarchy responsible for the new government. The Oath included broad injunctions to "establish deliberative assemblies," to "unite officials and commoners in administering the affairs of state," and to "seek knowledge throughout the world" so as to "strengthen the foundations of imperial rule."[2] Nakamura intended his translation as a contribution to Japanese examinations of the

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[1] On Nakamura Keiu, see Douglas Howland, *Personal Liberty and Public Good: The Introduction of John Stuart Mill to Japan and China* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 26–35, 61–62; Earl H. Kinmonth, "Nakamura Keiu and Samuel Smiles: A Victorian Confucian and a Confucian Victorian," *American Historical Review* 85 (1980): 535–556; and Sarah Metzger-Court, "Economic Progress and Social Cohesion: Self-Help and the Achieving of a Delicate Balance in Meiji Japan," *Japan Forum* 3.1 (1991): 11–21. In Japanese, see Takahashi Masao, *Nakamura Keiu* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 1966); Ogihara Takashi, *Nakamura Keiu kenkyū: Meiji keimō shisō to risōshugi* (Tokyo: Waseda Daigaku shuppanbu, 1990).

[2] "Charter Oath," in *Japan: A Documentary History*, ed. David J. Lu (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 1997), 307–308.

political forms of Western countries; because the publication of *Jiyū no ri* coincided with the Meiji government's mission to the United States and Europe in 1871—a delegation instructed, among other things, to conduct general investigations of Western institutions—Nakamura anticipated that his translation would grant his readers some understanding of Western political thought and would inspire discussion of these matters so crucial to the future of Japan.[3]

In the second place, Mill's book addressed a key tension at the heart of the Japanese project of social and political reconstruction: the extent of popular participation in political processes. Although the Charter Oath encouraged the creation of a less exclusive government, the Meiji oligarchy intended to extend political participation not to all the people but to primarily the ranks of the former samurai and the new bourgeois elite of entrepreneurs. A majority of Japanese historians interpret formative documents like the Charter Oath as a commitment to the participation of hitherto disenfranchised or lower-ranking samurai in policy decisions, and expressly on the basis of a new principle: political participation should follow not from ascribed conditions like birth or status, but according to the principle of ability or merit. However defined, ability would serve to identify those acceptable to the oligarchy for political participation. Accordingly, Nakamura's translation encouraged new principles of liberal thought, in that it argued for the promotion and protection of individual freedoms and rights, but it simultaneously reinforced a longstanding restriction of political participation in Japan, on the same grounds that Mill himself described in *On Liberty*: education and the development of rational thought were prerequisite.

Apart from these two points of resonance among contemporary readers, Nakamura's translation of Mill attempted to resolve a profound tension in *On Liberty*. On one hand, Mill's essay endorses a theoretical individuality which assumes that the individual is the basis of society, rather than the alternative position that society is natural and organic, with each individual a component of society. On the other hand, *On Liberty* acknowledges the practical principle of inequality that not all individuals are equally committed to intellectual advancement—hence, Mill turned to the genius as the agent of progress. In his translation, Nakamura undertook

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[3] Nakamura Keiu, *Jiyū no ri* (Suruga: Kihira Keiichirō, 1871), repr. in *Meiji bunka zenshū*, vol. 5, *Jiyū minken hen* (Tokyo: Nihon hyōronsha, 1927), 6. Hereafter *JYNR*. In point of fact, *Jiyū no ri* actually appeared in February 1872, being the twelfth lunar month of Meiji 4 (1871); see Takahashi, *Nakamura Keiu*, 103, 286.

to resolve this tension. First, he modified Mill's theoretical individuality by equating society and government in the ideal social unit of the village, so that the individual and his social and political existence coincide. In this circumscribed social setting, each person can fulfill an integrated existence as both autonomous individual and self-governing member of society. Second, Nakamura minimized Mill's practical inequality by suggesting an alternative form of intellectual advancement: the search for religious truth, a task that demanded neither intellectual superiority nor public debate. Nakamura emphasized the liberty of the Christian to maintain his private faith and gave precedence to the interior space of freedom of conscience as a space protected from government interference and public morality.

If Nakamura's translation of *On Liberty* was a painstaking effort to render Mill's argument into Japanese, Nakamura's additions to Mill, particularly those regarding village society and Christianity, began to restrain Mill's theory by placing public limits on liberty and individuality. As a result, Nakamura made Mill's theory better cohere with Japanese government needs at a time of massive social and political transformation.

Society and Government in the Japanese Village

The most striking idiosyncrasy in *Jiyū no ri* is that Nakamura does not consistently differentiate between 'society' and 'government.' He persistently simplifies Mill's text in Japanese by interchanging *seifu* ('government' or 'administration') and a host of translation terms for society. These include: those active interactions of people understood by the term 'sociality' (*kōsai*); concrete associations such as clubs, companies or societies (*kaisha*, *nakama*); conceptions akin to the public (*kōshō*) or the whole group (*sōtai*); and, quite simply, the people (*jinmin*) and specific affiliations that people can assume, such as parties, sects, churches, and so on. Nakamura also refers to the people's division into classes, including a Confucian conception of the 'four classes' (officials, farmers, artisans, merchants) and less formal notions of higher and lower, rich and poor, noble and mean. Most of these terms are equated with *seifu* at one point or another.[4]

[4] *Seifu* referred to the council chamber within Edo Castle or the Imperial Palace in Kyoto; by metaphorical extension, it came to mean the Council of State (which met in the chamber) and in turn 'government' generally. On the background of translation words for society, see Florian Coulmas, "Language Adaptation in Meiji Japan," in *Language Policy*

Yet Mill himself does not consistently name the force that so threatens the freedom of the individual. In *On Liberty*, he most often writes 'society,' but he occasionally uses 'mankind,' the 'public' and 'public opinion,' the 'government,' and the 'state.' Given his analysis of the threat to individual liberty, it is clear that the middle class who constitute 'society' are the fundamental problem facing the individual, for they authorize the government—through representative institutions—to interfere with an individual's liberty. If Nakamura does not differentiate between society and government, this is because no abstract concept for 'society' existed for Japanese thought during most of the nineteenth century. But his deliberate and persistent conflation of society and government demonstrates that he conceives the problem of the human exercise of authority over one's fellows as essentially the problem of governmental exercise of authority over its subjects. Nakamura resembles Hegel's eighteenth-century burgher who experiences the externality of the state as a subject of the prince, but who has not yet arrived at the political consciousness of a citizen, where universal and particular interests are synthesized. The burgher sees that the government subjects him, but he has not yet seen his own role as a citizen in a burghers' government, where he might synthesize his particular interests with those of the whole.[5] To Nakamura, interference with individual freedom is necessarily governmental interference, and accordingly, the variation among his translation words for society is symptomatic of his effort to explicate Mill's charge that 'society' interferes with individual freedom.

One of Nakamura's important additions to Mill's original helps to clarify the issues here—an extended analogy that is meant to illustrate Mill's concept of civil liberty in the nation by means of a Japanese village setting. In urging readers to "imagine the entire country as a single village," Nakamura imagines a natural village community and economy, a legal and spatial setting in which the parts equal the whole. His particular village embodies both liberal and Confucian concepts: it is an egalitarian village in which there is no significant division between rich and poor, a peaceful society whose exemplary morality "rightly accords with natural principle," and a pure democracy in which all households collectively

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and Political Development, ed. Brian Weinstein (Norwood, NJ: Ablex, 1990), 69–86; and Douglas Howland, *Translating the West: Language and Political Reason in Nineteenth-Century Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002), 153–171.

[5] G.W.F. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, trans. T.M. Knox (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957), x–xi, 110, 123.

make village decisions.[6] In the manner suggested by Rousseau's *Second Discourse*, this ideal political order is a small community in which political participation is a condition of living within the community. Nakamura retains the Confucian's pragmatic understanding of the purpose of the polity—it is intended to benefit the well-being of all the people—but he overrules the social hierarchy that Confucians assumed as an aspect of the natural order. In this village, the people have relinquished their dependence on the master and have become independent and self-determining, according to natural principle.

Nakamura negates social hierarchy by means of two key translation words that create the new distinctions at the heart of Mill's liberal theory. The first of these, *ken*, encompasses our concepts of power, privilege, authority, and right; it originally meant a balance scale, the act of judgment, and thus the power or authority to judge. *Ken* is best construed as authority and hence a legal right or privilege.[7] The context which *ken* supplies for Nakamura's discussion of rights is the Tokugawa background of legal claims to guild monopolies and land tax revenues, sanctioned by the authority of shogun or local daimyo. In a process of substitution, the power and authority of the former master give way to the rights of the commoners' households and are transferred to that social group as the self-governing political community. The group's self-determined purposes and interests displace the master's power to command others; debate and collective decision-making among the unified whole replace the unilateral decisions of the authoritative master. To recall John Locke's myth of the development of civil society: in so consciously representing itself as a political association and assuming an official capacity to act as a body, the village or 'social group' empowers itself to act as a government.

In addition to negating social hierarchy, Nakamura's second key translation word, *nakama-renchū*, subversively challenges Mill's liberal theory. In the logic of Mill's text, *nakama-renchū* could be understood as 'society,' but I would retranslate it more narrowly as 'social group' so as to stress the concrete and face-to-face nature of Nakamura's exemplary village. Nakamura employs *nakama-renchū* to refer to both the power exercised over an individual and the social group—or government—that exercises such power. By thus conflating power, society, and government, Nakamura

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[6] Nakamura, *JYNR*, 7–8.

[7] For an explication of the meanings of *ken*, see Howland, *Translating the West*, 124–129.

closes the theoretical circle of pure democracy. Government becomes the social group, where it was once the master, and society becomes government, in the political self-representation of the 'social group' constituting the village. This political manifestation of the social group confers upon itself the right to safeguard the entire village by providing for village affairs through taxation and the adjudication of criminal cases.

Nakamura has effected a significant alteration of liberal theory, which comes better into focus by comparison to Alexis de Tocqueville. Where Tocqueville describes the creation of 'general government' as the union of individuals to form a sovereign authority and hence a people who can choose representatives, Nakamura bypasses sovereignty and representation.[8] The 'social group' simply usurps the power of the sovereign in the name of self-government—as took place in the Meiji Restoration with the overthrow of the shogun. Since society and political authority overlap in a homologous space, resistance to tyranny becomes a secondary concern. Nakamura imagines that liberal society is open, inclusive, and egalitarian, and that the social group as government will simply choose to limit its power, since all are bound by a common goal, their collective well-being. As an elucidation of civil liberty, Nakamura's confidence rests on the unspoken guarantee of a right to participate.

But he ignores a classic analysis of state and civil society merely implicit in *On Liberty*. Rejecting the formulation of Locke and Rousseau, who emphasized the social contract as the occasion that differentiates civil society from the state of nature and thereby gives birth to the state, Mill seems to assume instead the analysis of Scottish philosopher Adam Ferguson, developed further by Hegel in his *Philosophy of Right*, which foregrounds civil society as the mediation between humankind and the state. Although both approaches, social contract and civil society, were based on the experience of the English Revolution as a bourgeois political movement in which the self-appointed representatives of civil society rose against the tyranny of the king's unrestricted state, Ferguson and Hegel are uninterested in the question of the origin of political legitimacy in nature, and reflect instead on structural points of mediation between humankind and government: institutions of civil authority like the police and civil service; the corporations to which one chooses to belong and

[8] See Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, ed. J.P. Mayer and Max Lerner, trans. George Lawrence (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), 335.

which organize particular interests or needs as universal and abstract rights; and the representative institutions of constitutional government.[9]

Although Nakamura acknowledges the institutions of civil authority and corporations to which Mill makes reference in *On Liberty*—he translates many examples of associations, companies, parties, churches, and guilds—he lacks both a developed theory of constitutional law and a grasp of the representative processes that theoretically mediate political society and state and legitimize such law. The problem here is not so much that Nakamura fails to understand the concept of representative institutions, but that the important distinctions which they mediate are simply in abeyance in his version of the text. So, for example, Mill describes in *On Liberty* the development of 'constitutional checks' in ancient society as the means "by which the consent of the community . . . was made a necessary condition . . . to the governing power." In translation, Nakamura renders these 'constitutional checks' as 'regulations and orders' (*ritsurei*)—necessarily authoritative acts of rule that constitute a collective means by which people could limit the power of a ruler. Indeed, constitutional government is in part a usurpation of the privileges of monarchy, but the procedure of consent so critical to Mill's argument is absent in Nakamura.[10] So, for example, Mill's mention of 'popular institutions,' representative bodies elected by the people so as to constitute a government, is translated by Nakamura as 'discussion government' (*gisei*), a general public forum rather than a specifically representative institution. Such translation choices omit the role of citizenship that theoretically embodies the political expression of civil society.[11] Nakamura lacks first-hand experience and abstract understanding of civil society—which his analogy is in part meant to explicate. The people do not move to restrict the power of the master; they replace him in a rupture of historical continuity.

In short, Nakamura's harmonious village is not an appropriate analogy for Mill's 'society.' Mill understood society as a place of differentiation and the debate critical to representative institutions. Although Nakamura's village does illustrate a political principle raised with the Meiji

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[9] Adam Ferguson, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society*, ed. Fania Oz-Salzberger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 7–24, 131–141; Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, 122–155. Tocqueville too saw the basis of civil society in political associations; see *Democracy in America*, 225.

[10] John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty*, in *The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill*, vol. 18, *Essays on Politics and Society*, Part 1 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977), 217–218; Nakamura, *JYNR*, 8.

[11] Mill, *On Liberty*, 219; Nakamura, *JYNR*, 9.

restoration—that administration of the affairs of the new state would be more inclusive, extending to members of all classes and embracing public discussion—the very concreteness of Nakamura's village imposes conceptual limitations. The pure democracy of the discrete village setting, which assumes the full participation of all residents, precludes both a need and an occasion for representation. Without the concepts and vocabulary for the representative institutions that mediate society and government, Nakamura cannot think beyond a closed circle of society, government, and the power to rule. If each member of the village is a 'master with legal right,' which is simultaneously considered a 'right to liberty,' Nakamura implies that the power to rule is the freedom to make laws that both coerce the ruled and restrict the rulers. He rests confident that such a law-making community will choose a self-imposed limit on its power, because the well-being of all is both the condition and the goal of political action.

But what of Mill's concern with the 'tyranny of the majority'? In the absence of constitutionalism and representative government, which are the individual's sole collective recourse to tyranny, the problem of the 'tyranny of the majority' can be understood as only a conflict over power—between a majority and a minority which are not amenable to institutional forms of representation and which drift conceptually from people to social groups and to government. In paraphrasing Mill, Nakamura's innovative solution is to 'harmonize' and to encourage cooperation between people and government.[12] The individual must struggle to maintain his independence in the face of the group, who have an absolutely legitimate claim to power and political authority. As Nakamura seems to conclude in his village analogy, if some individual finds his or her free action obstructed, the guiding principle of political process is nonetheless the well-being of the whole. An excess of governmental power may be declared an obstacle to any member's freedom of action, but the main criterion for governmental self-limitation is, after all, that goal of safeguarding the entire village. Nakamura has created an impossible context for individual liberty—a situation we will see again with his introduction of Christian love and his emphasis on moral conscience.

Again, the problem is not that Nakamura misunderstood or mistranslated *On Liberty*. Rather, my purpose here is to disclose the limits of Nakamura's discussion of liberal theory in 1871: without an expression for

[12] Nakamura, *JYNR*, 10. Cf. Mill, *On Liberty*, 219–220.

'society,' how much could he express? As a first and formative step into liberal theory, *Jiyū no ri* was limited by the capacity of Japanese language and political discourse to encode new abstractions. An abstraction like 'society' is, after all, a difficult concept in any language, and Mill's own usages of society demonstrate connotations that indicate multiple references like the masses, the middle class, or Mill's educated peers. Whether we understand Nakamura's multiple terms for 'society' as metaphors for the English word, or Mill's 'society' as a metaphor for these several terms, the fact remains that translation proceeds necessarily through metaphorical extension of meaning, by trial and error, quite like the fundamental habit of expanding vocabulary within one's own language.[13] Where Mill stressed the fact that society often presents an obstacle to individual freedom, Nakamura made sense of that tension by imagining the process by which the society represented in a self-sufficient village freely managed its affairs as a popular government. In the late Meiji period, there was no concept for 'society' in Japan, only nation and family, so that an individual's private concerns were separated from both the public realm and political life.[14]

The Personal Liberty of Christian Conscience

In addition to Nakamura's conflation of society and government in *Jiyū no ri*, which obviated the individual's need for representation, Nakamura's second significant emendation of Mill's book minimized the practical inequalities among individuals by proposing an alternative model for intellectual advancement. Rather than engage individuals in a search for truth that demanded intellectual superiority or public debate, Nakamura proposed a search for religious truth, which he underscored by several additional references to religion and to Christian liberty and love. Alongside the epigraph by Wilhelm von Humboldt in Mill's original, which speaks to "the absolute and essential importance of human development in its richest diversity," Nakamura added a second epigraph by Francis Bacon: "A little philosophy inclineth man's heart to atheism; but depth in

[13] See Roman Jakobson, "On Linguistic Aspects of Translation," in *On Translation*, ed. Reuben A. Brower (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959), 232–39.

[14] See Irwin Scheiner, *Christian Converts and Social Protest in Meiji Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970), 121.

philosophy bringeth men's minds about to religion."[15] Nakamura would have us understand that the man who commits himself most deeply to the search for truth will arrive at God's truth about the Messiah. His translation of Mill, in part, recommended Christianity in an effort to circumscribe Mill's presentation of liberty.

To Nakamura and his generation, Christianity was above all an alien ideology that had served to define the Westerners as a group beginning in the sixteenth century and, after 1639, had been ruthlessly prohibited by the Tokugawa shogunate. After the restoration of 1867, Nakamura understood that Christianity in Japan was an obstacle to the kind of liberty that Mill advocated, and he implicitly recognized that Mill's own objections to Christianity were a useful forum within which to advocate the freedom of thought that would necessarily include a tolerance for faith in Christianity. Nakamura himself was publicly baptized on Christmas day 1874—proof that if Japanese were to understand and accept Mill's libertarian position on the freedom of individual thought and expression, they would have to curtail the long-standing ban on Christian belief among Japanese individuals.[16]

As readers of *On Liberty* are well aware, Mill was not enthusiastic about Christianity. He made repeated reference to the intolerance of the Christian majority among Britain's middle class and insisted that freedom of religion must become one of several correctives against the tyranny of the majority.[17] But at the same time, Mill did not reject Christianity outright. His commitment to a dialectic search for truth encompassed religious truth; if he singled out Calvinism expressly to criticize the dangers of its excessive teaching of obedience, or sabbatarian legislation as an infringement on individual liberty, he also cited the case of Jesus as an outstanding example of the superior individual whose message of truth was ruthlessly suppressed by hostile contemporaries, and the case of Luther as an example of how an initially persecuted doctrine can in time and for some become truth.[18]

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[15] Nakamura, *JYNR*, 3.

[16] On Nakamura's turn to Christianity, see Kobayashi Toshihiro, *Meiji zenki shisō* (Tokyo: Sanwa shobō, 1988), 118–121, 128; Maeda Ai, *Bakumatsu—Ishinki no bungaku* (Tokyo: Hōsei daigaku shuppankyoku, 1972), 271–274; and Takahashi, *Nakamura Keiu*, 63–71.

[17] Mill, *On Liberty*, 235–241, 254–257.

[18] Mill, *On Liberty*, 235–236, 238–239, 265–266. See also Eldon J. Eisenach, "Mill and Liberal Christianity," and Robert Devigne, "Mill on Liberty and Religion: An Unfinished Dialectic," both in *Mill and the Moral Character of Liberalism*, ed. Eldon J. Eisenach (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998), 191–229 and 231–56.

All of this is apparent in Nakamura's translation, but it is overlaid with a series of additions that so extends the possibilities in Mill as to begin to transform the argument of *On Liberty*. Nakamura sought to stress the freedom of religion as a fundamental principle of Westernized society, and Christianity as a central example of individual freedom. In comparison to his many translation words for 'society,' his remarkably consistent translation of liberty and freedom as *jiyū* reproduces what we find in Mill: liberty is presented as a balance of forces; it is the limit placed on a ruler's privilege and power as the people establish the alternative rule of law. Liberty is thus both principle and right, and can be specified as a set of plural liberties: of judgment of right and wrong; of taste and occupation; of friendly assembly; of thought, of speech or discussion; of publishing; of religion; of action.

But Christianity was for Nakamura the quintessential form of freedom and it plays a central role in his elaboration of the theme of human and institutional limits. He was not much interested in Christianity and human equality; rather, he invokes civil law and Christian love to rein in the threat of selfish and egotistical behavior connoted in Mill's theory of liberty and Japanese conceptions of liberty generally.[19] In a preface to Mill's chapter "Of the Liberty of Thought and Discussion," Nakamura again quotes Francis Bacon to point out the difference between God's limitless love for man and man's limited institutions: just as God loves all men without limits, so we too should love God and all men without limits. But human capacity is limited, and hence man's control over other men is rightfully limited, and the boundaries we rightly place on our individual freedom deserve diligent maintenance.[20] In his "Introduction" to *Jiyū no ri*, Edward Warren Clark, Nakamura's friend and spiritual counselor, spoke of liberty in terms of Christian responsibility for self-development and self-enforced limits: true liberty is not license or total independence, which enslaves the soul, but liberty from sin in the interests of a self-development to the glory of God.

Accordingly, Nakamura supports Mill's insistence upon a 'living belief.' Mill praised "the great writers to whom the world owes what religious liberty it possesses" for having "asserted freedom of conscience as an indefeasible right."[21] And he warned against the dangers of hypocrisy: the

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[19] See Howland, *Translating the West*, 94–107.
[20] Nakamura, *JYNR*, 18.
[21] Mill, *On Liberty*, 222.

Christian who gives homage to certain standards in religion may very well give his real allegiance to the worldly life. Hence Mill and Nakamura promote the need for free discussion of religious truth in order to test belief. After all, Christian morality, its laws and rituals, have changed considerably over the centuries.[22] For Mill, the goal for those individuals committed to religious truth is identical to our collective goal of political truth, both of which demand the maintenance of liberty of discussion.

The problem of moral authority, however, that Mill discloses in *On Liberty* persists in Nakamura's translation in a new form. Given the conviction with which individuals maintain religious faith, and given the propensity for that religious faith to inform public standards of morality, there is always a danger that a self-righteous 'moral majority' will establish laws which either prescribe its religious truths for others or proscribe the public debate over religious truth. The close relationship between religion and morality is problematic when matters of faith become authoritative grounds for judging the moral value of the actions of non-believers. Hence Nakamura cannot escape from engaging the problem of authoritative standards for public morality. If anything, he complicates the problem by foregrounding the development of the individual's moral conscience as a primary solution. On one hand, as Mill had asserted, the principle of liberty insists upon freedom of thought and discussion in order to debate the truths that inform the laws that we establish; on the other hand, Nakamura's new endorsement of personal obedience to that law and the personal development of Christian love and moral conscience creates a new tension. As Ogihara Takashi put the point, Nakamura's notion of truth is substantive and unitary, since the goal represents a common point to which we all aspire, while for Mill, truth is fragmentary, partial, and plural, a perpetually constructed object of debate and cooperation.[23] For Nakamura, then, the individual becomes the site for an internalized debate over the moral authority of law: in the event that one's social obligation to obey the law overrules one's liberty of belief, what are the consequences for freedom of discussion or freedom of religion? Individual liberty retreats from the public arena of debate to the private and interior space of thought and belief.

In other words, the tension that Nakamura feels between public morality and the possibility of alternative private morals could be resolved by

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[22] Ibid., 247–248, 254–255; Nakamura, *JYNR*, 33–36, 40–41.
[23] Ogihara, *Nakamura Keiu kenkyū*, 256–259.

splitting the two: publicly, one conforms to the public standards; privately, one holds one's own beliefs according to liberty of conscience. Where Mill is comfortable to challenge the authority of public standards—indeed, *On Liberty* can be read as a manifesto in favor of the individual's variance from public morality—Nakamura hesitates to fully endorse this position.

In developing his argument for liberty of thought and discussion, Mill is clear that this human activity ensues in a public and social setting. Thought is concretized in beliefs and opinions and is brought forth in speech, whereupon individuals contend over the validity of their beliefs. Where Mill occasionally makes references to 'mind' and its intellectual operations (the human faculties of perception, judgment, and so on), Nakamura invests in terms from Confucian teachings that point to the interiority of the individual, like the 'human heart-and-mind' and the 'spirit' or 'soul.' Both Mill and Nakamura, for example, describe an individual's engaging in the self-correction of error by weighing and comparing others' opinions with one's own; the goal of this activity is the establishment of truth. For Mill, this self-correction occurs in tandem with public debate; Nakamura adds, however, that the 'human heart-and-mind' turns to goodness and corrects mistakes: the personal practice of the self works its effects in the public sphere, as public morality advances.[24] Nakamura emphasizes at the outset that liberty is key to self-development; in translating and expanding upon Mill's epigraph from William von Humboldt's *The Sphere and Duties of Government*, he adds: liberty is something for "all people to obtain and thereby develop their talents and natures."[25]

Critical to both Mill's and Nakamura's explanation of the advance of truth is the interpretation of experience. Mill again treats this as a largely public activity with social consequences: one learns through observation and conversation to judge whether another's experience is pertinent to oneself, and then chooses a mode of action, all of which is an exercise in the education or development of the human faculties. By contrast, Nakamura emphasizes the internal orientation of such interpretation, for internally perfected individuality is manifested outwardly for others to observe and to take note. Here and elsewhere, Nakamura's vocabulary for morality and metaphysical principles like truth and understanding is largely borrowed from Confucian teachings. This language stresses, in the first place, the public and social nature of morality itself, defined as 'the way

[24] Compare Mill, *On Liberty*, 231–232, and Nakamura, *JYNR*, 21–22.
[25] Nakamura, *JYNR*, 1.

of humanity' (*sedō*) or as the "fundamental human relations" (*jinrin*)—a concept that denotes the natural hierarchies of age, gender, and status.[26] In the second place, Nakamura's Confucian terminology stresses the centrality of moral instruction to education, and the role of the perfection-seeking conscience (*ryōshin*) in moral self-criticism and improvement. And indeed, we have contemporary accounts from a number of Nakamura's peers, reporting that their engagement with *Jiyū no ri* took the form of a fascinated, self-transforming reading.[27]

This is not to argue that because of his choice of translation terminology, Nakamura is necessarily bound to the Confucian project of self-rectification through personal reflection (as was Yan Fu, Mill's translator in China).[28] Rather, Nakamura has discovered in Mill an interiority that takes precedence in belief and self-improvement: the spirit's talent and ability, which is expressed in experience and can be extended by religious instruction.[29] Hence, in addition to valuing Christianity for its centrality to arguments about the liberties of thought, religion, and discussion, Nakamura found in Christianity an expression of individual liberty that highlighted an interiority answerable directly to God, and potentially out of reach of society or government. Nakamura would have us believe that liberty is most pertinent for religious salvation. God grants each of us liberty and a measure of talent and ability, and the responsibility of each of us is to develop that liberty, talent, and ability in order to liberate the spirit and thus to live as moral testimony for others.

The difficulty with Nakamura's position is that we are left ambivalently between the centrality of 'character' in Mill's original argument, and the importance of 'conscience' in Nakamura's interpretation. Both Mill and Nakamura present character as an essential sign of 'different experiments of living.' Both discuss character as a balance of impulses and self-control; both denigrate mindless imitation, adherence to old forms, and self-indulgence; and both praise love of virtue and stern self-control. In Nakamura's rendition, the fundamental nature of individuality is the free expression

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[26] On the Confucian elements in Nakamura's liberalism, see Ogihara, *Nakamura Keiu kenkyū*, 117–122, 130–34.

[27] See Shimoide Junkichi's account of Kōno Hironaka, in "*Jiyū no ri* kaidai," in *Meiji bunka zenshū*, vol. 5, *Jiyū minken hen* (Tokyo: Nihon hyōronsha, 1927); and Ōkubo Ichiō's personal story in his preface to Nakamura, *JYNR*, 5.

[28] On Yan Fu's Confucian revisions of *On Liberty*, see Howland, *Personal Liberty and Public Good*, 82–84, 96–99.

[29] Nakamura, *JYNR*, 33, 46.

of character.[30] But in the face of Mill's absolute commitment to the freedom of any individual to behave as eccentrically as he would (within the limits of public safety), Nakamura balks and turns to the individual's moral conscience, introducing a prior principle of Christian love and harmony that deserves to be perfected through the individual's project of self-development.

The problem, left unresolved in Mill, remains this tension between public morality and individual conscience. As scholars such as Irwin Scheiner have demonstrated in their accounts of the development of Christianity and social protest in the Meiji period, the debate between character and conscience in Japan was dominated by the state. If religion and morality are the basic influences on human character (especially as they were linked in the newly constructed imperial state religion of Shintō), one might remain always within national traditions or priorities. The danger of the individual's conscience as a source for moral authority is its relation to eternal truth, unmoored from any specific social system: the individual is inherently free from social norms and structures.[31] The Christian activist Ebina Danjō declared that once he had found a personal relationship with God and welded his faith and his inner self, he realized the authority of his conscience.[32] But Japanese critics of Christianity would ask: Is the good citizen a loyal one or a moral one? Are public moral values derived from the individual conscience or from the state—or some other public ethical sphere? The problem that a Christian posed to the Japanese state is evident in the career of Niijima Jō, who wrote of his transformation in the U.S. as a student during the 1860s; he discovered an internal, personal freedom that made him no longer a slave to the Japanese government. He had earlier gleaned from Francis Wayland the point that secular progress depends on the cultivation of conscience, and once he became a Christian, realized that self-reform is the key to social reform, since the individual is bound only to and by God.[33] In other words, Japanese tolerance of Christianity promised to subvert the group differences once constructed around Christian beliefs, which defined Christian Westerners as

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[30] Mill, *On Liberty*, 260–263; Nakamura, *JYNR*, 44–48.

[31] Scheiner, *Christian Converts and Social Protest*, 160, 165–166. Scheiner's analysis deals especially with the psychological dimensions of conversion to Christianity, invoking alienation and the impact of modernization on the individual, as with the analyses of Max Weber and Robert Bellah.

[32] F.G. Notehelfer, *American Samurai: Captain L. L. Janes and Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 192–193.

[33] Scheiner, *Christian Converts and Social Protest*, 153–154, 159, 182–183.

alien and thus invoked some alternative Japanese grouping. By the 1890s, Japanese unsympathetic to Mill or Nakamura, those nation-builders desiring to construct some positive Japanese identity in an analogous fashion around a set of beliefs, found this subversive potential of Nakamura's Mill quite threatening and worked to confine Christian conscience to its internal liberty of faith, by demanding a public manifestation of civic morality.[34] Accordingly, Nakamura's Christianity had far less influence than his presentation of liberty.

In conclusion, when Nakamura endorsed Mill's project of a liberal society that would be based on individual liberty and rights, he attempted to go a major step further than Mill. If Mill found sufficient guarantee of the public good in each individual's effort to better himself and in the principle of tutelage exercised by those of superior education and intellect, Nakamura attempted to circumscribe the individual so as to limit his capacity for selfish and harmful behavior: both by foregrounding the well-being of the community as the condition and goal of individual liberty, and by introducing Christian love and conscience as checks on our treatment of others in the community. These were significant emendations of Mill's argument that conditioned the reception and development of liberalism in Japan.

[34] See ibid., 188–247; and Takeda Kiyoko, "Japanese Christianity: Between Orthodoxy and Heterodoxy," in *Authority and the Individual in Japan: Citizen Protest in Historical Perspective*, ed. J. Victor Koschmann (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1978), 82–107.

ON TRANSLATING DURKHEIM

Steven Lukes

In this essay I shall address two intimately related questions concerning translation. They both concern the range of permissible or legitimate translations. The first concerns what lies within that range. How—that is, on what grounds—do we determine which translations are acceptable? And the second concerns what defines the limits of that range. How do we determine which translations are not going to pass muster? Both these questions concern standards: that is what tests must a translation pass to be deemed legitimate, on the one hand, or illegitimate, on the other? I shall address these questions by looking at the specific case of English translations of some central works of Emile Durkheim and in particular I shall focus on his masterpiece, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life.*

But as a way of approaching these questions, I first want to say something about the various ways in which particular translations can go wrong, or at least mislead. What are the typical ways in which we recognize a given translation to be defective? In his fascinating discussion of Weber and the 'iron cage' Peter Baehr has suggested four.[1] First, there are straightforward cases of "simple incompetence, rendering terms incorrectly, eliding them or omitting them altogether"—errors due to "simple and ubiquitous human failings: carelessness, negligence, rashness."[2] To this list we should surely add ignorance and stupidity. The first English translations of *The Division of Labour* and *The Rules of Sociological Method* abundantly exemplify this first category.[3] An appendix to my doctoral thesis on Durkheim consists in a list of some of the most egregious examples including the most egregious, namely, the omission in that English edition of *The Rules*

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[1] Peter Baehr, *Founders, Classics, Canons: Modern Disputes over the Origin and Appraisal of Sociology's Heritage* (London: Transaction, 2002), 183–204.

[2] Baehr, *Founders, Classics, Canons*, 186–87.

[3] Emile Durkheim, *The Division of Labor in Society*, trans. G. Simpson (New York: Macmillan, 1933); *The Rules of Sociological Method*, trans. S.A. Solovay, J.H. Meuller, ed. G.E.G. Catlin (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1938).

of an entire paragraph crucial to the argument of chapter 1 ("What is a Social Fact?"), which, so far as I know, passed unnoticed by readers.[4]

Baehr's second category involves "something deeper and more sociologically problematic: an inability to understand, or at least convey, the conceptual matrix in which the original terms are located."[5] This, as he remarks, can involve "pulling a work into an interpretive orbit that disturbs the original constellation of themes idioms and emphases."[6] Baehr gives the example of Parsons's radically downplaying Weber's emphasis on psychological *Antriebe* in his translation of *The Protestant Ethic*. An obvious example concerning Durkheim, discussed by Robert Jones and Douglas Kibbee, is the ubiquitous (and probably unavoidable) practice of translating Durkheim's injunction to study social facts *comme des choses* as an injunction to consider them as 'things.' The flat term 'things' altogether fails to capture the cluster of ideas that '*choses*' conveyed to Durkheim and his contemporaries. As Jones and Kibbee point out, Durkheim's phrase is to be understood in the context of the Third Republic's admiration of German education (they cite Jules Ferry's remark that *'La leçon des choses* [*c'est*] *à la base de tout'*) and Durkheim's expressed hope that emulating the German special social sciences could encourage the French to treat philosophical questions according to the methods of the positive sciences. They would then be ready to acknowledge that 'things,' "whether human or physical, are irreducibly complex," that "simple conceptual combinations" could no longer be mistaken for reality itself, and that education '*à l'école des choses*' was "the only education adequate to the moral and spiritual needs of the Third Republic," inducing in pupils "a pronounced feeling for the collective life, for its reality and its advantages." Durkheim, in short, was seeking to replace the language of Cartesian rationalism with the "more inductive, more experimental lexicon of German empiricism—one that emphasized complexity over simplicity, the concrete over the abstract, inductive over deductive, and so on." With this new perspective on social facts, the French would come to see that society was not reducible to its component parts, that it was not merely an idea but "a moral power more elevated than ourselves." In short,

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[4] Steven Lukes, "Emile Durkheim: an Intellectual Biography" (Ph.D. diss., Oxford University, 1968).

[5] Baehr, 187.

[6] Baehr, 187–8.

Durkheim's injunction expressed his "search for an ideal worthy of veneration by the 'new man' of the Republic."[7]

Baehr's third type of translational deficiency involves "an underestimation of the literary qualities and philosophical allusions of the author's texts." Weberian examples are Parsons's rendering of Goethe's 'elective affinities' as 'correlations' and of Nietzsche's 'last men' as 'the last stage' of cultural development. Durkheim's style is less hospitable to literary allusions than Weber's, but in various instances his philosophical allusions and implications have got lost in translation. A very telling case of this is the very title of the book on religion, where what is at issue is central to the philosophy of science, namely: what counts as a proper explanation. As Karen Fields shrewdly observes '*élémentaire*' means either 'elementary' or 'elemental' and she gives a good set of reasons for preferring 'elemental,' but for the fact that the book's existing title had become so much part of its life in English. Her exposition of these reasons is worth quoting at length. She writes:

> The question is not right or wrong translation but the scope each alternative leaves for right or wrong understanding. On the one hand, 'elementary' will do in some respects; think of the concept 'elementary particles,' defined as being the smallest and most fundamental particles known. On the other hand, in day-to-day usage, 'elementary' has a diminutive and vaguely dismissive connotation and sets up the same potential problem for some readers as 'simple.' Consider Sherlock Holmes's 'Elementary, my dear Watson,' or consider the charge, 'You just don't seem to get the most elementary points,' which means the easiest or simplest—addressed by a scold to a dimwit. Durkheim means 'simplest' as well, but (in addition to the other considerations already referred to) he means it as particle physicists mean it, scientists who assuredly mean things that challenge the intellect. He seeks to explore building blocks of human social life, as physicists explore building blocks of matter. 'Elementary' is suitable only if used in a restricted sense that is not altogether Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's and not at all the scold's. In a sense, Durkheim was attempting in his study what the Curies were attempting in their labs.
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> Durkheim's 'simplest' forms are indispensably part of the most complex. Alternatively, they can be thought of as atoms and compared to the chemical substances that make up the periodic chart, the elements. The *formes* that he discovers in this particular study are the elements to be found in the makeup of the religions he thought of as more *complexes* or as 'higher' in an evolutionary sense. Durkheim is interested in 'a fundamental and

[7] R.A. Jones and D.A. Kibbee, "Durkheim, Language and History: a Pragmatist Perspective," *Sociological Theory* 11 (1993): 161, 165, 163, 166, 167.

> permanent' aspect of humanity and in its 'ever-present source,' which can be discerned if studied in what he takes to be its *elemental* forms. Whatever those forms are (and I now paraphrase a physicist), they have an underlying identity that persists despite unceasing change and limitless diversity. Moreover, as in the physicist's search for elementary particles, the question of chronological origin is related and yet separable. So if we understand the phrase *formes élémentaires* in that way, we need not get bogged down, as some have, in the notion that Durkheim made the error of thinking totemism brought him to origins in a chronological sense. Instead we can take him at his word.[8]

Elsewhere, Karen Fields gives another striking example of this kind of deficiency, showing how and why all previous translators have totally failed to understand how and why all previous translators have totally failed to understand a passage that probably held "no obscurity at all for those of Durkheim's original French audience who had attended a *lycée*."[9]

> Rien ne vient de rien. Les impressions qu'éveille en nous le monde physique ne sauraient, par définition, rien contenir qui dépasse ce monde. Avec du sensible, on ne peut faire que du sensible; avec de l'étendu, on ne peut faire de l'inétendu.[10]

Fields convincingly argues that Durkheim is here invoking Descartes' distinction between *res cogitans* and *res extensa* in order to contrast what is real but imagined, and thus without extension, and what is materially or physically real. She plausibly observes that the former embraces the words *moral, idéal, spirituel, social, sacré, conscience*, and *représentation*.[11]

The fourth way, according to Baehr, in which translations can prove defective is in failing to register 'the total configuration' of the target author's language, which, moreover, may only become apparent as 'new perspectives' are trained upon it.[12] The Weberian examples he cites are *Lebensführung, Sinnzusammenhang, Arbeitsverfassung* and *Gehäuse.* The Durkheimian examples I suggest are the linked oppositions 'sociology/psychology,' 'social/individual,' 'moral rules/sensual appetites,' 'concepts/

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[8] Karen E. Fields, introduction to *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, by Emile Durkheim, trans. K. Fields (New York: Free Press, 1995), lix–lx.

[9] Karen Fields, "What Difference Does a Translation Make? *Les formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse* in French and English," in *The Cambridge Companion to Durkheim*, eds. J.C. Alexander, P. Smith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 164.

[10] Emile Durkheim, *Les Formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse* (Paris: F. Alcan, 1912) pp. 321–2.

[11] Fields, "What Difference Does a Translation Make," 174–77; see also Fields, "Durkheim and the Idea of Soul," *Theory and Society* 25 (1996): 193–203.

[12] Baehr, 188.

sensations,' 'sacred/profane.' In the introduction to my book on Durkheim, I suggested that these dichotomies are all in certain ways isomorphic, deriving from and explained by the basic and multiple dichotomy between the social and the individual.[13] One key text for understanding this conceptual architecture is his essay on "The Dualism of Human Nature."[14] Defective translation—or, at any rate, defective understanding arising from reading English renderings—results from assumed connotations attaching to these terms that are absent from Durkheim's French originals. So, for example, for Durkheim, the antonyms of *moral* refer to the biological, physical and sensual. As Fields, once more, correctly observes, for Durkheim

> 'moral' is real but not material. 'Good' is often not its synonym; together with 'spiritual,' 'social' and 'mental' often are. 'Individual' stands with the antonyms of 'moral' because Durkheim's 'individual' denotes the body, its drives and appetites, its sensory apparatus—in short our body considered as being distinct from our human being.[15]

This latter he tends to speak of as the 'person'—a usage followed in a famous essay by Marcel Mauss.[16] So it is 'the person' that is the sacred object of what he called the religion of 'individualism.' That term itself has sharply different connotations in French, where it is standardly pejorative, and in English, where it is not.[17] Thus Durkheim's idea of a socially cohesive 'religion of individualism' appropriate to modern times has an air of paradox in the French language that is absent in English. Moreover, for Durkheim, what is moral is social, public and shared, varying with time and place and is not "private, with its origin in some mysterious somewhere in the depths of the physical individual, as our commonsense usage suggests."[18]

Notice that these four failings of translation are all historicist failures of faithfulness to the original text. The first, we might say, consists in mistaking what Austin called locutionary acts: the translation gets either the sense or the reference of the author's words wrong, or both. The second

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[13] Steven Lukes, *Emile Durkheim: His Life and Work: A Historical and Critical Study* (New York: Harper and Row, 1973), 1–36.

[14] Emile Durkheim, *Emile Durkheim on Morality and Society*, ed. Robert N. Bellah (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973).

[15] Fields, introduction to *Elementary Forms*, lv.

[16] Marcel Mauss, "Une catégoire de l'esprit humain: la notion de personne, celle de 'moi,' un plan de travail," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 68 (1938): 263–81.

[17] Steven Lukes, *Individualism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1973).

[18] Fields, introduction to *Elementary Forms*, iv.

mistakes the author's illocutionary acts: misunderstanding or failing to register what Durkheim was doing in writing of *choses*. The third seems to be a wider or deeper version of this: partly grasping but mainly failing to grasp, and thus distorting the author's intended meaning. And the fourth, similarly, misfires by failing to signal a wider semantic field distinctive of the author's structure of thought, which consists in a web of intricately interconnected synomyms and antonyms. And all these failings (or at least the latter three) are in large part due to the difficulty of being, in these ways, faithful to the original in English.

But, I now want to ask: is faithfulness to the original the only test that a legitimate translation has to pass? And what does it involve anyway? I am going to suggest that there is a plurality of such tests and that, moreover, they are, in interesting ways, interdependent.

At this point in my argument I shall (perhaps controversially) simply assume a version of Quine's thesis of the indeterminacy of translation: that there are no uniquely correct translations between languages, in the strong sense that there is no objective matter to be right or wrong about where the meaning of words is concerned and that to aim at the correct translation is to pursue a mistaken ideal.[19] In the face of this situation, Quine and others, notably Donald Davidson and Richard Grandy, have proposed various strategies, known as principles of interpretive charity, to deal with the problem. Of these, Quine's own is the crudest. He proposes what he calls the commonsense maxim of translation that "assertions startlingly false on the face of them are likely to turn on hidden differences of language" and that "one's interlocutor's silliness, beyond a certain point, is less likely than bad translation—or, in the domestic case, linguistic divergence."[20] Davidson's version is subtler: he proposes that we should 'optimize' agreement by making most of our interlocutors' utterances come out as true and most of their inferences as rational.[21] Grandy, in my view, improves on this by proposing, with his so-called 'principle of humanity', that we should assume basic similarities of relations between beliefs, desires and the world between ourselves and those we are translating and should prefer attributing explicable falsehoods to mysterious

[19] W.V.O. Quine, *Word and Object* (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1960).

[20] Quine, *Word and Object*, 59.

[21] Donald Davidson, "On the Very Idea of a Conceptual Scheme," *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association* 47 (1974): 5–29.

truths.[22] But all three charity strategies are suggested ways of excluding possible candidates from counting as legitimate translations.

But let us start from the other end. Which candidates are to be included? It is obvious that we have different goals and interests when we interpret and when we translate and, in particular, when we translate the texts of classic sociologists. Here, once more, I shall refer to Peter Baehr's very helpful discussion in his book *Founders, Classics, Canons.* Discussing the understanding of classic texts, he discusses different positions that have been developed and revised: specifically three groups—those in the camps of 'presentism' and of 'historicism' and positions that have arisen from critiques of historicism. What I draw from this discussion is that there are alternative tests a translation (interpretation) can be required to pass (which, in each case, it may do more or less well).

One is to interpret them from our own current vantage point, as contributing to contemporary social scientific practice or present-day debates, as when Marx and Weber are seen as conflict theorists, or as when Durkheim's theory of suicide is considered, as it often is, alongside other competing explanations of current statistics, operationalizing its variables (anomie, egoism and so on) and abstracting from its contextual specificities (diagnosing the pathologies of *fin-de-siècle* France). An interesting instance of such translation/interpretation is given by Robert Merton's celebrated conversion in his "Social Structure and Anomie" of Durkheim's anomie into his own version of anomie as the socially-structured incapacity to attain the culturally valued success ethic in 1930s America—a neat reversal of Durkheim's concept's original meaning of anomie as the social condition inducing the malady of infinite aspiration. But this too is, I would claim, legitimate translation.[23]

An interesting, and more complex, instance of presentist-motivated translation shows how present-day assumptions can, when deployed in translation, surprise us by illuminating the historical meaning of a text or passage. An example is given by Karen Fields in her discussion of how to translate a passage in which Durkheim explains his strategy of studying the simplest case available, in order to uncover the fundamental sources or 'elements' of religious life. His own enterprise is, she writes, like that of a doctor seeking to uncover the cause of a delusion. Her claim is that

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[22] Richard Grandy, "Reference, Meaning and Belief," *Journal of Philosophy* 70 (1973): 439–52.

[23] Robert Merton, "Social Structure and Anomie," in *Social Theory and Social Structure* (New York: Free Press, 1957).

Durkheim's French passage seems reminiscent of Freud, while Joseph Swain's 1915 translation is not. The Swain translation is as follows:

> In order to understand an hallucination perfectly, and give it its most appropriate treatment, a physician must know its original point of departure. Now this event is proportionately easier to find if he can observe it near its beginnings. The longer the disease is allowed to develop, the more it evades observation [*au contraire, plus on laisse à la maladie le temps de se développer, plus il se dérobe à l'observation*]; that is because all sorts of observations have intervened as it advanced, which tend to force the original state into the background [*qui tendent à refouler dans l'inconscient l'état original*], and across which it is frequently difficult to find the initial one.[24]

Her own translation is decidedly, for us, an unambiguous improvement:

> To understand a delusion properly and so be able to apply the most appropriate treatment, the doctor needs to know what its point of departure was. The event is the more easily detected the nearer to its beginnings the delusion can be observed. Conversely, the longer a sickness is left to develop, the more the original point of departure slips out of view. This is so because all sorts of interpretations have intervened along the way, and the tendency of those interpretations is to repress the original state into the unconscious and to replace it with other states through which the original one is sometimes not easy to detect.[25]

Durkheim, so far as we know, did not know of Freud, and yet Fields's version is not only more accessible to us but may well also be historically more appropriate, for, as Fields writes,

> there is good reason to think that Durkheim know of the celebrated work being done in the 1880s at the Hôpital Salpêtrière in Paris by Jean-Martin Charcot, Freud's predecessor in the study of hysteria, and of the huge controversy about that work in the mid-1890s. . . . Present in the passage is the notion that today we term 'screen memories', which is generally credited to Freud, not Charcot. The plot thickens when we realize that Freud certainly knew of and cited Durkheim's work (including *Formes*) in his 1917 paper, 'The Return of Totemism in Childhood.' In this way, correcting Swain's inaccuracies can add nuance to a scholarly question.[26]

Those in the historicist camp require of translations that to be legitimate they be faithful to the original text. But how is this test of legitimacy to

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[24] Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, trans. Joseph Ward Swain (London: Allen and Unwin, 1915), 7. Quoted in Fields, introduction, liii.

[25] Durkheim, *Elementary Forms*, trans. K. Fields, 6–7.

[26] Fields, introduction to *Elementary Forms*, liii.

be administered? Do we mean faithful to the author's meaning understood as illocutionary intent (to which he has privileged access) or to what we can take him to have been *doing* (which he may not have adequately understood, and which we may claim to understand better in the light of hindsight). Furthermore, as the example just cited shows, hindsight can sometimes reveal historical truths that a strictly historicist approach would conceal. The examples I discussed earlier of inadequate Durkheim translations were all failures to pass the historicist test.

Finally there are the intermediate positions, developed in reaction to historicism, of which the most interesting is perhaps Rorty's idea of 'rational reconstruction,' involving imaginary conversations with our predecessors, who are assumed to respond to our criticisms and suggestions, in which Durkheim becomes, so to speak, our contemporary as we seek to articulate our projects to his and to justify both accordingly. As we argue with 'him' and criticize his arguments and claims, he becomes "our contemporary, or our fellow citizen, or a fellow member of the same disciplinary matrix."[27] We converse, so to speak, with an educable Durkheim. From this standpoint, the question of what a text means is not reducible to an author's statements but is rather a question of "*our* interests and purposes"—subject, we might add, to certain limits set by a historicist interpretation.[28] Of course at a certain point (which?) our educable Durkheim ceases to be Durkheim. Jones and Kibbee comment that on Rorty's view, therefore, a text "will have as many meanings as there are contexts in which it might be placed" and there will be "at least as many 'Durkheims' as there are schools of contemporary sociological theory."[29]

But this sounds dangerously like 'anything goes.' So it leads me to my final question, namely how to define the limits of legitimate translation. This is where I think the strategy of the charity principles comes in. For when interpreting and translating a social and political thinker like Durkheim, we have to assume that his texts will meet certain standards of reasoning and that some attributions will count against our translations. But which? We could say: those which, in Quine's words, have him asserting what is "startlingly false" or would manifest "silliness."[30] Better to say,

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[27] Richard Rorty, "The Historiography of Philosophy: Four Genres," in *Philosophy in History*, eds. R. Rorty, J. Schneewind, Q. Skinner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 51–52.

[28] Jones and Kibbee, 157.

[29] Jones and Kibbee, 157, 156.

[30] Quine, 59.

I think, with Grandy, that when faced with attributions which have Durkheim asserting something that is, not just *prima facie* but on reflection, indefensible, then, unless his asserting it is explicable, that too should count against the translation. In order to make this point, I would like to conclude with a real and up-to-date example of a controversial interpretation of Durkheim where what is at issue is a proposed translation which fails the Grandy test.

Professor Anne Rawls has recently published a book, *Epistemology and Practice: Durkheim's* The Elementary Forms of Religious Life, which is a detailed chapter-by-chapter commentary on Durkheim's book.[31] Some years ago she published in the *American Journal of Sociology* an article, "Durkheim's Epistemology: The Neglected Argument," which was in turn criticized by Warren Schmaus to which she in turn replied.[32] Her case is that the *Formes* has been radically misunderstood by every single one of its interpreters: that it is essentially an argument (that is, she claims, convincing and important) for the social origins of the categories of the understanding (time, space, classification, force, cause and totality), an epistemological argument about the nature of mind and the origins of human reason, not a study in the sociology of knowledge, that the categories "enter the minds of individual persons during enacted practice in such a way as to be empirically valid": that is during religious rites they are "perceived through a different faculty of mind, an emotional faculty" and thus that the argument "explains the relationship between perceptions, ideas, and external reality in such a way that key thoughts and concepts can be shown to bear a valid and true relationship to an external reality, which in this case consists entirely of social forces." In short, the "moral forces generated by enacted practice are internalized as categories." Durkheim, supposedly, offers us "an empirical explanation of the origin of the categories" and by empirical origins he means "origins in shared enacted practices." So, for instance and in particular, "social practices are empirical, are perceived, and can furnish an empirically valid origin for the concept of causality." The category of causality originates in imitative rites

[31] Ann W. Rawls, *Epistemology and Practice: Durkheim's Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (Cambridge: C. U. P., 2004).

[32] A. Rawls, "Durkheim's Epistemology: The Neglected Argument," *American Journal of Sociology* 102 (1996): 430–82. Warren Schmaus, "Rawls, Durkheim and Causality: a Critical Discussion," *American Journal of Sociology* 104 (1998): 872–86. A. Rawls, "Durkheim's Challenge to Philosophy: Human Reason Explained as a Product of Enacted Social Practice," *American Journal of Sociology* 104 (1998): 887–901.

that "make and reinforce the feeling of the causal efficacy of the totem" and "quite literally make and remake the moral community": thus the "causal relation is a social force available in direct perception." In sum, her argument is that

> Durkheim's discussion of 'feelings' and 'internal states' as a basis for knowledge, which has been disparaged as bad crowd psychology, in fact constitutes an argument of some consequence. Feelings of well-being and moral force are one of the results of totemic rituals that give rise to the category of causality. The causal efficacy of the ritual is perceived directly as a feeling of moral unity.[33]

Criticizing this argument, Schmaus concludes that Professor Rawls

> never actually showed that social practices "produce" the categories. In fact, . . . they presuppose them. What those practices produce, at best, are collective representations that fulfill the functions of the categories. When she says the categories 'come into being to fulfill the social need,' this can mean only that certain collective representations were selected because they served these categorical functions.[34]

Therefore, at best Durkheim only succeeds in explaining the universality, inescapable authority and functional necessity of the categories and the ways they are represented (for instance in different cosmologies).

Schmaus goes further in offering an explanation of Durkheim's excessive claims, suggesting that he "carried over in his sociology" the assumption made by the French *spiritualiste* philosophers "that we can introspect causal powers and nor merely their effects or causal relations."[35] In his criticism of Rawls's argument Schmaus repeats what all the critical commentators, including the present author, on this part of Durkheim's theory, except Professor Rawls, agree upon: that, in his vaunting ambition for sociology's explanatory powers, he here went too far, making claims that cannot be intelligibly sustained.[36] He wanted to provide a sociological alternative to Humean empiricism and Kantian apriorism, by giving a sociological account of the form in which knowledge is elaborated, that is the categories or 'fundamental notions' which seem to us as inseparable from the normal functioning of the intellect. But if that account was to be causal, then it could not succeed for the reason suggested by Schmaus.

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[33] Rawls, "Durkheim's Epsitemology," 437, 442, 445, 449, 450.
[34] Schmaus, 885.
[35] Schmaus, 880.
[36] Lukes, *Durkheim: His Life and Work*, 448.

Long ago, in 1924 William Dennes wrote: "Durkheim's theory of the origin of the categories depends upon his ambiguous conception of mind. If he takes mind in the Kantian sense, the sense usual in epistemology, as the subject's system of cognitive faculties, it is ridiculous to say that the categories of mind are in any sense transferences from social organization."[37] In his introduction in 1963 to Durkheim and Mauss's *Primitive Classification* Rodney Needham wrote: "If the mind is taken to be a system of cognitive faculties, it is absurd to say that the categories originate in social organization . . . Different peoples conceive space and time differently, but no comparative study of their concepts can yield the origin of the categories of space and time; they classify by different principles, but in no circumstances can the study of these show how the faculty of classification itself originated."[38]

Dennes and Needham were right and Durkheim in this claim overreached himself. He did, in his more ambitious moments, make it (as when he wrote of the categories having a 'social origin' and being 'social caused') but he was also aware—or, we might say, in the spirit of Rorty, latently or potentially aware, of its unsustainability. Now, as it conveniently happens, Professor Rawls in her subsequent book has herself proposed a test of translation, in which she claims that alternative translations will reflect acceptance or rejection of her interpretation (and enthusiastic endorsement) of Durkheim's indefensible argument. The question at issue is: did Durkheim hold that the concept of causality has always constituted 'an element of ordinary thought?' In a key passage concerning mimetic rites, Durkheim writes:

> *Mais nous n'avons pas à nous demander pour l'instant si elle* [the principle of causality] *est fondée ou non dans la réalité : il nous suffit de constater qu'elle existe et qu'elle la toujours constitué un élément dans la mentalité commune . . .*[39]

Swain and Fields translate this last phrase respectively as "an element of ordinary mentality" and "an element of ordinary thought." Now, Rawls claims that this reading poses a problem for her thesis that Durkheim claimed causality to have a social origin:

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[37] William Dennes, "The Methods and Presuppositions of Group Psychology," *University of California Publications in Psychology* 6 (1924): 1–182.

[38] Rodney Needham, introduction to *Primitive Classification*, by E. Durkheim and M. Mauss (London: Cohen and West, 1963.)

[39] Emile Durkheim, *Les Formes élementaires de la vie religieuse: le système totémique en Australie* (Paris: Alcan, 1912) p. 519.

> There is an ambiguity in the French at this point that may have caused some translation difficulties. Durkheim used the French word 'commune' where the translators have used the word 'ordinary' in the English. The word commun in French can mean 'ordinary.' The feminine case of the word is commune. In this sentence the feminine case is called for. However, the word 'commune' in French, spelled with an 'e' can also be a different word, from commun, carrying a sense of communal, or shared living, or thinking. The question is whether or not Durkheim intended the feminine of commun, or the word for collective, commune. It is my sense that Durkheim did not mean to say that causality had always been an element of ordinary thought. He meant that it had always been an element of common, or communal thought. . . . The substitution of the word 'ordinary' for commune, with regard to human mental equipment in this sentence, supports the interpretation of Durkheim as a rationalist, who believed in underlying innate categories of the understanding. It sets up a claim that contradicts Durkheim's own clearly stated argument that causality has a social origin.[40]

In this debate Professor Rawls's proposed translation has Durkheim making claims that Dennes calls "ridiculous" and Needham "absurd." I prefer to say that they are startlingly implausible, if not 'silly,' and moreover that her proposed translation of *mentalité commune*, offered in support of her case, is also implausible. As for her argument that Durkheim was no rationalist, I observe that, in the Preface to the *Rules* Durkheim wrote that the only designation he accepted was that of "rationalist." My case, concerning Professor Rawls's interpretation and proposed translation of Durkheim is therefore this. Indeed the historicist Durkheim did rashly make indefensible claims about the social origin of the categories. In the spirit of Grandy's principle of humanity, we can explain these claims in terms of his vaunting ambition to explore to the limit the explanatory potential of sociology, his polemical disposition and, following Schmaus, his mistaken view inherited from the *spiritualists.* And the Rortian, rationally reconstructed Durkheim can easily be brought to see the folly of making such claims, which do, indeed, contradict very many passages in the texts, including the one just cited, when properly translated.

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[40] Rawls, *Epistemology and Practice*, 238–39.

TRANSLATING WEBER

Keith Tribe[1]

> It ["Class and Status"] has never been published in English and is not included in part one of W und G, which Parsons of Harvard has translated and is now in English press. The son of a bitch translated it so as to take all the guts, the radical guts, out of it, whereas our translation doesn't do that![2]
>
> After all, one could 'translate' W into New Republic style, or even New Yorker style (has not Mr. Lasswell done so?), but we should honour neither Weber nor ourselves by doing it that way. I like it a little clumsy here and there. Maybe W. didn't etch so much as block out in charcoal; and in any event it looks better in English if one doesn't use too fine an acid.[3]

Max Weber became a "founding father of sociology" in the 1940s, with the publication in English of three books: Gerth and Mills' *From Max Weber* (1946); Talcott Parsons' *Theory of Social and Economic Organization* (1947); and Edward Shils and Henry Finch's *Methodology of the Social Sciences* (1949). These writings provided a foundation upon which the post-war social sciences were constructed around the action frame of reference and "value-freedom." The idea that this canonical reputation is a posthumous construct has been broadly accepted since the 1980s; there is however no detailed discussion of the reception process that might turn this proposition into a narrative possessing nuance and depth.[4] The origin of this process is nonetheless clear: during the later 1940s American social

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[1] This essay draws upon, and elaborates, arguments developed elsewhere: "Translator's Appendix to Wilhelm Hennis, *Max Weber's Science of Man* (Newbury: Threshold Press, 2000), 205–16; "Max Weber's 'Conceptual Preface' to *General Economic History*: Introduction and Translation," *Max Weber Studies* Beiheft I (2006): 11–38; and "Talcott Parsons as Translator of Max Weber's Basic Sociological Categories," *History of European Ideas* 33 (2007): 212–33.

[2] C. Wright Mills to Dwight Macdonald, 10 October 1943, in *C. Wright Mills. Letters and Autobiographical Writings* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 52.

[3] C. Wright Mills to Hans Gerth, Greenbelt, Maryland c. October 1944, in *C. Wright Mills*, 72.

[4] Lawrence Scaff has clarified considerably the activity of Frank Knight, Edward Shils and Hans Gerth during the later 1930s in translating sections of Weber's work. See his "Weber's Reception in the United States, 1920–1960," in *Das Faszinozum Max Weber. Die Geschichte seiner Geltung*, eds. Karl-Ludwig Ay, Knut Borchardt (Konstanz: UVK, 2006), 55–89. Table 2 on p. 89 lists the mimeographed translations made for the use of students in Madison and Chicago.

scientists, prominent among them Talcott Parsons, turned away from social theory's classical foundations in politics and economics and sought to rebuild the social sciences around sociology, cultural anthropology and social psychology. These three fields were linked together in Harvard's Department of Social Relations, implicitly reconfiguring a conception of civil society articulated in terms of markets and power towards a social, non-economic conception of society.[5] This new conception of the social sciences was quickly accepted—for example, the *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie* was founded in 1948. Six years later it became the *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie*.

Max Weber clearly belongs to the classical tradition of politics and economics; but his deployment by Americans as a modern "social theorist" ensured that he has subsequently been understood as a "founding father of modern sociology"—although so far as his formal university appointments go, he was always an economist, and in any case the German sociology of the 1920s and 1930s took little from him.[6] The image of Weber as a liberal, value-free social scientist is a resilient one, as Fritz Ringer's recent account testifies.[7] If nothing else, Ringer's book demonstrates that Weber's post-war reception in the English language has shaped the understanding even of those who have always been able to read Weber in German. This understanding presumes that Weber was a sociologist, primarily interested in how we might best understand social action and institutions; that in Wilhelmine Germany he was a liberal, and that his early death robbed Germany of a prominent political personality; that his principal work began in recovery from the mental breakdown he suffered in the years following 1898; and that the two *Protestant Ethic* essays from 1904–1905 clearly mark the new departure, opening out themes that, together with the "methodological" essays that closely followed, would develop until his death in 1920. For many years Reinhard Bendix's *Max Weber. An Intellectual Portrait* (1959) remained the only accessible

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[5] See Arthur J. Vidich, "The Department of Social Relations and 'Systems Theory' at Harvard: 1948–50," *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society* 13 (2000): 607–48; and more generally Howard Brick, "Talcott Parsons's 'Shift Away from Economics,' 1937–1946," *Journal of American History* 87 (2000): 490–514.

[6] I have elaborated both of these points in "A Lost Connection: Max Weber and the Economic Sciences," in *Das Faszinosum Max Weber*, 313–29; and the "Translator's Introduction" to Wilhelm Hennis, *Max Weber: Essays in Reconstruction*, trans. Keith Tribe (London: Unwin Hyman, 1988), 2–5.

[7] Fritz Ringer, *Max Weber. An Intellectual Biography* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004). See my review of Ringer's text in *Journal of Modern History* 78 (2006): 697–8.

discussion in any language of Weber's "early work"; and the second posthumous translation into English from his writings prior to 1900 was not published until 1979, exactly thirty years after the first.[8]

The problem of "Max Weber in English" is not just the usual story about translations of variable quality; it is as much to do with the *selectivity* with which translations have been made, and the manner in which a relatively limited corpus of his work has been exposed to translation and retranslation. Scanning through the translations and selections listed below in the appendix, it quickly becomes clear that there is a great deal of repetition and duplication, with very limited account taken of writings lying outside a "standard view." It cannot be denied of course that some of the earlier work does not readily lend itself to translation. The thousand-odd pages of his 1892 *Verein* report on East Elbia;[9] another thousand pages of the writings on the Bourse;[10] these are closely argued technical works of interest today mainly to agrarian and financial historians respectively. But it was these works on which Weber's professional reputation was founded, firstly as a pre-eminent analyst of rural structure and labour migration, secondly as Germany's leading financial economist. It was the latter reputation which got him the chair in Freiburg, not the former. The significance of these works for an understanding of Weber's writings as a whole is hidden from Anglophone readers. Discussion of remuneration in kind and coin, the social forces driving migrant labour, or the legal framework of a stock exchange, has no obvious purchase for discussion of "social theory"; but to be unaware of its existence has grievous consequences. A different perspective upon the same problem is highlighted by Hinnerk Bruhns, whose recent essay reveals that from first to last Weber retained a strong interest in economic history and ancient civilisation, rather than this being another "early" interest that gives way to his "mature," "sociological" vision.[11]

The selectivity with which Weber has been translated into English supports a perspective upon his significance for the social sciences which is

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[8] See my translation of "Developmental Tendencies in the Situation of East Elbian Rural Labourers," *Economy and Society* 8 (1979): 177–205.

[9] *Die Lage der Landarbeiter im ostelbischen Deutschland* (*1892*), ed. Martin Riesebrodt, Max Weber *Gesamtausgabe* I/3 (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1984).

[10] *Börsenwesen. Schriften und Reden 1893–1898*, ed. Knut Borchardt with Cornelia Meyer-Stoll, Max Weber *Gesamtausgabe* I/5 (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 2000).

[11] Hinnerk Bruhns, "Max Weber's 'Basic Concepts' in the Context of his Studies in Economic History," *Max Weber Studies* Beiheft I (2006): 39–69.

now largely discredited.[12] But Max Weber has not himself suffered intellectual relegation along with 1950s systems theory and structural functionalism. Nor has his reputation as a "bourgeois Marx" suffered from the recent decline of interest in Karl Marx.[13] Weber has survived, and is currently the object of reassessment and renewal, in contrast to the status of Karl Marx, where scholarly interest is very slight, notwithstanding the need for a radical reappraisal of his writings. The argument that American social scientists deployed their version of Max Weber as an instrument of legitimation has been readily accepted, linking up with *ad hoc* criticism of Talcott Parsons that began in the later 1960s. Argument for close attention to Parson's actual translation practice has however only been made very recently.[14] But at least Parsons was a consistent translator of Weber; some tendentious translation practice can be identified, but the chief problem here lies in his own prose, and the ends it served. Parsons' translations are indeed a model of clarity and good practice when set alongside the "methodological" essays included in the Shils and Finch collection. When in 2003 I retranslated the essay on objectivity the dreadful prose and inconsistent translation of the existing version led me forcibly to the conclusion that, despite its fame, no English reader could have ever subjected this essay to a close, systematic reading; for surely, over the fifty years since its original appearance, somebody would eventually have been driven to remark on how poorly Weber drafted the essay. But Weber never was a poor writer, just a rather difficult one.

Elaborating the problem of selective translation from an author's works would however lead us inexorably into that history of the social sciences within which Weber plays a part, a substantial project upon which no-one seems to have yet embarked. That path cannot therefore be taken here. However, listing the translations into English and identifying the composi-

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[12] A seminal reorientation, although one which explicitly redirected the reader to earlier German writers such as Karl Löwith, Albert Salomon and Siegfried Landshut, was introduced in the early 1980s by Wilhelm Hennis. See his *Max Weber's Central Question* (Newbury: Threshold Press, 2000) which is a new edition of his 1988 *Max Weber: Essays in Reconstruction*.

[13] For the "Marxist" critique see Herbert Marcuse, "Industrialization and Capitalism," *New Left Review* no. 30 (1965): pp. 3–17, reprinted in *Max Weber*, ed. Peter Lassman (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006): 115–29. Marcuse cultivated a reputation as a radical critic of "bourgeois" social science, and this essay demonstrates just how shallow the foundation for such a reputation always was.

[14] Lawrence Scaff, "The Creation of the Sacred Text: Talcott Parsons Translates *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*," *Max Weber Studies* 5 (2005): 205–28; Tribe, "Parsons as Translator" op. cit.

tion of readers and collections does provide an elementary foundation for understanding of the reception process; and the chronology and content for Weber translation into English can be studied in the appendix to this paper. Two general points emerge clearly: that the selections originally made by Gerth and Mills in the early 1940s[15] persist through subsequent readers, drawing heavily upon *Economy and Society* and the sociology of religion; and that there is a surprising number of more obscure pieces scattered through journals and some readers, but which have been studiously ignored in the reception process. One of the "collections" included here is of course Weber's *Economy and Society*. That Part II is a patchwork of several translated texts becomes quite plain, unintentionally but accurately reflecting its actual origin in sets of unrelated manuscripts stitched together by Marianne Weber and Melchior Palyi. "Economy and Society" will not appear in the *Gesamtausgabe* as "a book," but rather a series of linked dissertations, for whose text the editors have moreover gone back to the original published form, placing to one side the shaping and polishing of this monument carried out by Johannes Winckelmann over four subsequent editions.

What, then, besides consideration of which texts are selected, is the problem in translating Max Weber? Weber wrote very precisely, but densely. He set no great store by style. He had a slash and burn approach to his work: he got an idea, read furiously upon it, wrote it up, at some point broke off,[16] checked the proofs—and then discarded the manuscripts as so much waste paper. From those occasions upon which his lectures

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[15] See for an interesting account of this collaboration G. Oakes and A.J. Vidich, *Collaboration, Reputation, and Ethics in American Academic Life. Hans H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999). The working relationship of Gerth and Mills was not an easy one, especially since Mills did not read German; Gerth made the translations, Mills 'Englished' them, then Gerth checked to see whether Mill's editing accurately conveyed the original sense. Mill also acted as literary agent and project manager, later putting Gerth's lecture notes together to create the Weberian textbook *Character and Social Structure* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1954). Mills was certainly a young man in a hurry, but Gerth was no paragon either. In his partnership with Martindale, translating the writings on religion, Gerth treated Martindale in the same high-handed way that Mills had treated Gerth. Although Gerth was supposed to check Martindale's translations, it turned out that he got his wife Hedwig to do this, giving the text only a final check. See Don Martindale, *The Monologue: Hans Gerth (1908–1978), A Memoir* (Ghaziabad: Intercontinental Press, 1982), 113ff.

[16] Wilhelm Hennis has drawn attention to the number of occasions when an article of Weber's ends with "to be continued," without there ever being any continuation. These asides, together with related comments in the text of *Economy and Society*, are simply airbrushed out of the existing translations, so that an English reader can gain no clear idea of the way in which his works do, or do not, link together.

and addresses were recorded, either by students or stenographers,[17] it is plain that he was a lucid talker. The same cannot be said for his writing. Modern German writing increasingly draws upon spoken idiom, as English has always done, but this is still not considered good form for German academic writing. "Proper" academic writing of Weber's time disregarded the finer points of readability—and in any case Weber as a trained lawyer would also have absorbed the lawyerly disdain for style as so much window-dressing overlaid upon the "real" substance of a text.[18] German grammar allows a writer to construct sentences like Russian dolls without any loss of precision, and Weber exploited this to the full. He did make heavy use of emphasis, visual cues across the page which help the reader pick up the thread. It can take some time to disentangle the meaning of a Weberian sentence. Once this meaning has eventually been identified, there is usually however little ambiguity or obscurity.[19] As a rule of thumb, at the end of a normal working day a translator of Max Weber will be content with the completion of one thousand words (English); it is slow work.[20] I will come back to the issues surrounding the different approaches to the translation of Weber's German prose into contemporary English; but first I will deal with specific conceptual and semantic points that arise in particular texts.

The "Conceptual Preface" to the *General Economic History*[21] presents a complex summary of the economic terminology employed in the book and which is also related to the conceptual structure of *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft* Part One Chapter Two. Here we immediately stumble upon the different etymologies for "economy" in German and English, and which renders clear translation from German to English usage so problematic. The two languages share a Greek root in *oikonomia*, the form of organisa-

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[17] For example, in proceedings of the Protestant Social Congress, or the German Sociological Society; his own surviving lecture notes seem to be uniformly scrappy. See the collection of headings and points for the lecture "Politics as a Vocation" in Max Weber *Gesamtausgabe* Bd. I/17, 25–33.

[18] A view which does not survive modern linguistic analysis—see the arguments presented in A.M. Devine and Laurence D. Stephens, *Latin Word Order. Structured Meaning and Information* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

[19] Some passages do remain extremely enigmatic; but close reading of his work reveals remarkable consistency in the way that he deployed concepts and terminology.

[20] Parsons started work revising the drafts he had from Alexander Henderson for *Economy and Society* chapters 1 and 2 in late June 1939, and finished off the translation from scratch of chapter 3 and the very brief chapter 4 in early September. Either Parsons had a very robotic home life, or his revisions to the Henderson drafts were less extensive than he suggested in his correspondence with the publishers.

[21] Translated in *Max Weber Studies* Beiheft I (2006): 23–38.

tion of a household involving both a conception of order, and a structure of authority, in which the head of the household ensures that everything is in its proper place, and that the subsistence of the household is annually secured through the activities of household members. *Oikonomia* is therefore distinct from trading, which involves no moral order, and which provides no political model.[22] The sense of internal order persisted into the eighteenth century, so that François Quesnay could unselfconsciously move from writing about "animal œconomy" (the internal organisation of mammals) to "political œconomy" (the internal organisation of states);[23] and this latter usage persisted in English up to and including Adam Smith, Book IV of his *Wealth of Nations* (1776) being headed: "Of Systems of political Oeconomy."

This usage was followed in the German language, *Ökonomie* being used as a strict equivalent for *œconomy* in English, *œconomie* in French. But parallel to this there developed a German usage around the term "Wirt," linked to the conception of *Haus* and elaborated in a neo-Aristotelian *Hausväterliteratur* of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. The *Landwirt* is the farmer; and his lands are governed by the same principles exposed in Aristotle and Xenophon. And so, as classically elaborated in Otto Brunner's essay "Das 'Ganze Haus' und die alteuropäische 'Ökonomik',"[24] the *Wirt* is conceived as the head of a household whose order is conceived in terms of *Ökonomie*.[25]

But what then happens is that the same idea of household and household activities can be expressed by a *Fremdwort*—*Ökonomie*—and also

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[22] See William James Booth, "The Political Economy of the Ancient Household" in his *Households. On the Moral Architecture of the Economy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), 34–93; and Otto Gerhard Oexle, "Zur Wortgeschichte von οἰκονομία" in "Wirtschaft", *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, eds. Otto Brunner, Werner Conze, Reinhardt Koselleck Bd. 7 (Stuttgart: Klett Cotta, 1992), 513–550.

[23] "Essai physique sur l'œconomie animale" (extract) in F. Quesnay, *Œuvres économiques completes et autres texts*, eds. Chrisine Théré, Loïc Charles, Jean-Claude Perrot (Paris: Institut National d'Études Démographiques, 2005), 5–60; and generally Philippe Steiner, *La science nouvelle de l'économie politique* (Paris: PUF, 1998).

[24] Originally published 1957. Reprinted in *Neue Wege der Verfassungs- und Sozialgeschichte* (Göttingen: Vandenheock und Ruprecht, 1980), 103–27. See also my discussion of these points in *Governing Economy. The Reformation of German Economic Discourse 1750–1830* (Cambridge: CUP, 1988), 50–51.

[25] Note that in English this usage of "house" persists only in respect of aristocratic families, denoting a particular lineage—or alternatively as the "House of Fraser". But the German for being "at home" is *zu Hause*, since there is no German equivalent for the English domestic usage of "home"; a *Heim* is a "home" in the institutional sense (for orphans, for those socially excluded in one way or another), while *Heimat* is a locality, not the domicile of an individual.

a root German word—*Wirtschaft*. For most of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries they mean the same thing; but later sometimes not, since there is in the very early nineteenth century a conceptual change which is signalled through variant usage. By the 1820s it was possible to deploy *Volkswirtschaftslehre*, *Nationalökonomie* and *Politische Oekonomie* to denote distinct objects of knowledge in a domain undergoing profound conceptual change; but they were also employed synonymously by some writers. Later, Carl Menger laid out his distinction between theoretical and descriptive economics by calling the former *Nationalökonomie* and the latter *Volkswirtschaftslehre*.[26] Such fine distinctions cut no ice with Schmoller, and the entire history of the *Methodenstreit* can be read out of this disagreement over taxonomy. This brief excursion into conceptual history should at least make it clear that when Weber uses the verb *wirtschaften*, this cannot simply be translated as "to economise," since in English this is now only understood in the sense of parsimony in the selection of means to fulfil given ends. Weber uses *wirtschaften* in the sense that Menger and other Austrian economists used it, to denote activity geared to the maintenance and reproduction of an economic agent—gainful activity. Hence this activity can be done well or badly, but the latter sense does not fit with English usage of "uneconomic." In addition to this, the noun *Wirtschaft* does not necessarily mean "the economy," but rather an economic unit—hence *Hauswirtschaft*, *Dorfwirtschaft*, *Stadtwirtschaft*, and of course *Volkswirtschaft*—respectively house, village, town and national economy.[27] Furthermore, this means that Weber's use of "economic action" is always specific to the institutional framework within which it takes place—for example, house, village, town or nation.

In his "Conceptual Preface" Weber also makes a fundamental distinction between householding (*Haushalt*) and exchange (*Erwerbswirtschaft*). An *Erwerbswirtschaft* is literally an "acquisitive economy," where gainful exchange is dominant. It seems relatively unproblematic to translate this with "exchange economy," hence countering subsistence to exchange activity, until we realise that Weber uses the concept of *Verkehrswirtschaft* for the idea that market exchange dominates an economy. *Verkehr* denotes communication, traffic, intercourse—the idea of economic organisation

[26] Carl Menger, *Untersuchungen über die Methode der Socialwissenschaften, und der Politischen Oekonomie insbesondere* (Leipzig: Duncker und Humblot, 1883), 7 and Appendix II. See as well my *Strategies of Economic Order. German Economic Discourse 1750–1950*, new edition (Cambridge: C.U.P., 2006), 77–8.

[27] Plus of course an inn or similar place where one could find food and drink.

governed by networks of exchange and communication. This cannot translate simply be translated as "market economy," since Weber could have used the word *Marktwirtschaft*, but did not. Hence in my translation of the "Conceptual Preface" I translated *Verkehrswirtschaft* with "commercial economy," using the sense of commerce rather than that of market.

These are generic problems of translating German economic terminology into English, the problem with Weber being that he developed fine semantic nuances and employed them with striking consistency. This has to be observed in translation, but the connectedness of such concepts can too easily disappear if care is not taken to find English equivalents whose relations one with another can be likewise made plain.

A different kind of problem arises with key terms in Weber's conceptual *instrumentarium* that cannot easily be translated in one word, and so difficulties arise when seeking consistency across different textual contexts. *Lebensführung* is a central idea: a way of consciously conducting one's life that can however only be translated with the much less pithy "conduct of life." Furthermore, *Lebensführung* can be made manifest in *Lebensstil*, the relation between the two German terms being clear. But if the latter is translated with "lifestyle" part of this impact is lost, since today that idea carries the implication of a life lived externally through objects and services, detached from the inner life which is the essence of *Lebensführung*. The inner worldly connotation of *Lebensführung* has a clear relation with two other critical concepts, *Gesinnung* and *Beruf*, hence linking the argument of *Protestant Ethic* to "Politics as a Vocation." What in the former is a calling, is in the latter a vocation—although it should also be said that in German "Beruf" is the generic term for "occupation" when one fills out official forms. *Gesinnung* involves the idea of inner conviction or disposition, and, taken together with *Lebensführung* and *Lebensstil*, also capture the essence of Weber's deep interest in religiosity, a concept which as Peter Ghosh points out is suppressed by Talcott Parsons' translation of the *Protestant Ethic*.[28] The distinction is an important one since Weber, not himself a religious man, was interested in the "spirit" of religion, how faith translated into "action." And quite how far Weber can be mistranslated and misunderstood is evident from the distance between the 'general theory of action' that Parsons sought to develop, and the concept of *Lebensführung*, which is the kind of 'action' that Weber had in mind. Quite

[28] Peter Ghosh, "Some Problems with Talcott Parsons' Version of 'The Protestant Ethic'," *European Journal of Sociology* 35 (1994): 106.

obviously there can be no 'general theory of *Lebensführung*," for such conduct is the product of a historically-specific ethic, which is precisely the theme of the *Protestant Ethic*, the book that Parsons translated.

A final example in this brief review of key Weberian concepts concerns that of *Stand*. Chapter Four of *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft* is devoted to "*Stände und Klassen*". §3 opens as follows, for the time being not seeking to translate the key term:

> *A ständisch situation* shall mean a typified and effective affirmation of a positive or negative privilege with regard to social *estimation*, based upon:
> a) the manner in which life is led, hence
> b) a formal approach to learning, and thus
> α) an empirical or:
> β) a rational *doctrine*, and possession of the corresponding forms of existence;
> c) the prestige of lineage, or of occupation.[29]

Parsons renders this passage as follows:

> The term of 'social status' will be applied to a typically effective claim to positive or negative privilege with respect to social prestige so far as it rests on one or more of the following bases: (a) mode of living, (b) a formal process of education which may consist in empirical or rational training and the acquisition of the corresponding modes of life, or (c) on the prestige of birth, or of an occupation.[30]

Evidently there is a problem with Parsons' general approach to translating Weber, which will be discussed below; but the immediate issue here is whether "status" adequately conveys the sense of *Stand*. Parsons does observe that this is "perhaps the most troublesome single term in Weber's text."[31] He notes that it refers to particular groupings of persons, but does not consider quite why it is that "status group" fails to entirely capture the sense of the German term.

Here again, the answer lies in conceptual history. In English usage the language of class has long since overlaid the social distinction implied by *Stand*. But *Stand* is still used in Germany, more or less neutrally, as a form

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[29] My translation of Max Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschhaft*, fifth revised edition, ed. Johannes Winckelmann (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1976), 179. The layout used here is Weber's.

[30] Max Weber, *Theory of Social and Economic Organisation* (New York: Free Press, 1966), 428.

[31] Weber, *Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, 347 n. 27.

of social classification—the *Mittelstand*, the *Beamtenstand*. This is an echo of earlier usage predating the nineteenth-century language of class and which, when it is translated directly into English, appears as "estate"—the "Third Estate" of the Estates General of 1789, for example. Such usage is however only intelligible in this specific context, having long since died out in contemporary English. To render this term into meaningful English we need therefore to ask ourselves what the *Stände* were, so that we might light upon a term or phrase in modern usage which conveys the sense of the original German—or, indeed, simply leave it untranslated and footnoted, as a last resort.

In early modern Germany the *Stände* controlled the right to taxation, so that a monarch seeking to raise money had first to reach agreement with the different *Stände*. Early modern England had no such equivalent—the right to taxation ran through parliament, which, although assuming different forms through the centuries, combined territorial and social representation in the Commons and Lords respectively, "houses" on an equal footing since the early fifteenth century. Hence the idea that power lay in the hands of specific, non-territorial social groups was simply inconceivable. Confirmation can be found in Shakespeare's history plays—what plagues Henry VI is his inability to maintain a stable position beyond the conflict of the houses of York and Lancaster, not that he falls victim to social alliances transcending family and lineage. None of the playwrights of the later sixteenth and early seventeenth century England—Marlowe, Jonson, Shakespeare—thought about power in this way. So our problem is that the social distinction implied by *Stand* has no conceptual corollary in modern English, for since early modern times society has not been organised in this way. We must also pay attention to modern usage: "status" is today far too diffuse an idea to convey the precise sense of social positioning that *Stand* implies. It is therefore arguable that a better translation would be "rank," which in English has a suitably archaic feel when used in its non-military sense, but which has a wider contemporary meaning. This would render the opening of Weber's definition above as: "*Rank* shall mean a typified and effective affirmation of a positive or negative privilege . . ."; and the chapter title would become "Ranks and Classes."[32] This would seem to capture Weber's German rather better.

[32] And which would bring this usage into line with that of John Millar: *The Origin and Distinction of Ranks* (1779).

From the above comments it should be apparent that satisfactory translation of Weber is more a "conceptual act" than a merely linguistic exercise, as Peter Ghosh has argued.[33] He also notes that it is in addition a "historical act," more generally, translation of Weber has to make use of conceptual history to place his text with respect to those from which he borrowed, with which he argued, or which he simply took for granted—the translator has to recreate the conceptual field against which the text works so that it might properly be placed, as a contemporary reader would have been able to place it. This also applies to the existing translations—Parsons' understanding of Weber was heavily indebted to von Schelting, and so his own translations should in turn be read not against Weber, but against von Schelting's interpretation of Weber.[34]

Our problem with Parsons is that he placed Weber in respect of his own understanding of the contemporary social sciences, and not Weber's own understanding of his discursive context. Parsons' lengthy introduction to *Theory of Social and Economic Organization* refers at no point to writings contemporary with Weber—the discussion of economics makes no use of contemporary economic writing, and the discussion of political structures likewise fails to mention any of Weber's sources. It is also evident from Parsons' footnotes that he failed to appreciate the structure of the text he was working with, systematically and relentlessly constructing from the most basic concepts of action and understanding an account of social, economic and political "orders and structures." These are the two main flaws in his approach to the work, rather than any specific mistranslation.

There are however cases where Parsons' translation directly leads a reader astray, as in his insistence in qualifying Weber's use of "meaning" as "subjective meaning." If we consult Roth and Wittich's edition of *Economy and Society* we find that they consistently qualify *sinnhaft* (approximate 'of meaning') as 'subjective.' In this they follow Parson's original usage in *The Theory of Social and Economic Organisation*.[35] Weber uses the term

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[33] Peter Ghosh, "Translation as a Conceptual Act," *Max Weber Studies* 2 (November 2001): 59–63.

[34] See Alexander von Schelting, *Max Webers Wissenschaftslehre. Das logische Problem der historischen Kulturerkenntnis. Die Grenzen der Soziologie des Wissens* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1934).

[35] *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization* is a translation of Part I of *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*, edited by Parsons. Compare the relevant passages on p. 6 of *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft* with p. 101 of *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, and p. 13 of *Economy and Society*. Parsons' appends several long footnotes elucidating his translation

in arguing that an action which is subjectively meaningful is also potentially 'objectively' intelligible, the importance being not the fact that an action is *subjectively* meaningful and hence potentially intelligible (i.e. having a meaning which is hidden from us because of its essentially personal nature), but that it is subjectively *meaningful*, and hence potentially intelligible (it has meaning for the subjects and therefore is in principle accessible.)[36] Weber's argument contrasts human action, meaningful because of the human capacity to reflect on and direct behaviour purposively, with the action of cells and other lower forms of life which certainly 'behave,' but not consciously—there is no meaning in their action because they do not, as organisms, 'mean to do' anything. Consequently we simply observe a sequence of events, rather than seek to understand the purposive meaning with which the action of a human is endowed. In this the 'behaviour' of organisms has as little 'meaning' as a chemical reaction. And in this distinction there is also embedded that between the human and the natural sciences, a distinction to which Parsons did not subscribe, but to which Weber did.

There are other, less critical, problems with the way Parsons presented Weber. My own translation of Chapter Four §3. above reproduces the text in the way that Weber laid it out—Weber saw these pages through the press and so we might assume it was laid out the way that he wanted. Parsons suppresses the emphases, collapses the listing, and invents a subheading: "Social Strata and their Status" for this paragraph. In fact the first three chapters of *Economy and Society* take the form of numbered propositions (in large typeface) which are then elucidated in numbered paragraphs in a smaller typeface. Parsons abolished this distinction, partly

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practice, and notes initially that *Sinn* is translated as 'meaning,' together with its variations such as *sinnhaft*, *sinnvoll*, and *sinnfremd* (p. 88 n. 3). On p. 93 he renders *sinnfremd* as 'devoid of subjective meaning,' properly noting that 'meaningless' would be an inappropriate translation (n. 8). But the translation he offered confirms the point made here: that, for Weber, meaning was necessarily subjective, qualification of any kind implying that there might exist something which was objectively meaningful. Parsons believed this, for him this was a level of understanding accessible through "science"; but this is his own idea, not Weber's.

[36] Some years ago when walking my Border Collie on Worcester racecourse she often played with another Border Collie. My dog was obsessed with crows; the other one with seagulls. One fixed on black birds; the other on white birds. Quite plainly, each dog saw something that drew its attention; but what this was no-one will ever know. But while it is impossible to understand why each made this choice, there was clearly some consistent meaning attached to black or white birds which set them chasing them off. Their response showed that they "meant to do" something. While dog thoughts are inaccessible to us, they do have thoughts, and attach meaning to them.

it seems because he did not recognise this conventional relationship between definition and exposition. It is therefore no longer possible to appreciate that paragraphs immediately following his own subheadings should be treated as propositions which are then systematically elucidated in the following discussion.

In addition to this, he sought to clarify Weber by circumlocution, generally extending the original text by up to one third. The outcome is generally to render Weber more, rather than less, murky. Take this example:

> Alle Deutung strebt, wie alle Wissenschaft überhaupt, nach "Evidenz".[37]

My own version of this echoes Weber's pithiness:

> All interpretation seeks evidentiality—this is common to all the sciences.

Parsons' version runs as follows:

> All interpretation of meaning, like all scientific observation, strives for clarity and verifiable accuracy of insight and comprehension.[38]

Here "of meaning," and "and verifiable" are simply redundant, while "insight and comprehension" subjectifies something that is not, in Weber, subjective—there has to be someone to have this insight and comprehension. Parsons is right to avoid translating the line as "All interpretation seeks evidence," even though it might seem the obvious choice. But his way around the problem—that what an English reader thinks "evidence" refers to is not what Weber had in mind—does if anything make things worse. "Evidenz" carries the meaning of "obviousness, self-evidence"; here equivalent to the English usage "evident." This shares a root with "evidence" of course, but this contiguity would not normally strike an English speaker when using the words, in the same way that homophones are unambiguously used and understood by English speakers. To compensate for this, English speakers use the apparently redundant construction "self-evident".[39] For an English speaker "evidence" used on its own has primarily legal and scientific connotations, and in both senses there is an initial lack of "obviousness" in quite what something might be evidence for. This can be confirmed by a simple thought experiment: if we translate into German "the police are seeking evidence" we get "die Polizei sucht nach

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[37] *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*, 2.

[38] *Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, 90.

[39] As for example does Martin Luther King in the filmed version of his "I Have a Dream" speech.

Beweismitteln", not "die Polizei sucht nach Evidenz," which could be "the police are looking for the obvious."

The point of translation is to render a text accessible in another language, and the final resort of a translator is to reflect on ordinary usage in the target language, as in the example just given. Languages do not map neatly one-to-one, either at the level of concept or of idiom, and making an author understood in a different language will necessarily involve some adjustment, rephrasing, and imagination. This much is common to all translation, 'scientific' or 'literary.'[40] A fresh translation of an older text presents an opportunity to renew it, and the target readership is not necessarily a unitary one. John Rutherford's recent translation of *Don Quixote* is a case in point. His object is to place the reader as much as possible in the position of a reader of Cervantes' time, employing modern idiom to make it as intelligible to a modern reader as it was to a Spanish reader of the early seventeenth century. Sancho Panza comes out of this treatment especially well, recalling Roy Kinnear's part in Richard Lester's film of *The Three Musketeers*.[41] Another recent translation takes a different route, the translator inserting comments and explanations directly into the text. This is clearly very useful for the scholar, but very off-putting for the common reader.[42] This divergence in target readership does not apply to Weber of course, since there is a certain unity in the motivation of his readers, whatever their level. Besides this fact that the readership for any given text is not necessarily uniform, language-use does alter over time and plays a significant role in the need for periodic review of translation practice.

Peter Ghosh's recent "retranslation" of the St. Louis address demonstrates this point.[43] This was first published in English in 1906, but the German text from which the translator worked has not survived. Republished in *From Max Weber* in a revised version, this was then translated

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[40] See the recent interesting discussion of this in relation to *War and Peace* and the novels of Orhan Pamuk: Ángel Gurría Quintana, "Literary Licence," *FT Magazine* 21/22 October 2006, pp. 26–7.

[41] Roy Kinnear (1934–1988): his Wikipedia entry describes him as often playing a "chubby and jocular figure," but added to this was the sense of endlessly being casually put upon by someone else. It is also worth noting that Roy Kinnear did in fact play Sancho Panza in a stage production.

[42] See John Rutherford's review in *Times Literary Supplement* (9 April 2004): pp. 30–31.

[43] Peter Ghosh, "Max Weber on 'The Rural Community': A Critical Edition of the English Text," *History of Eurpean Ideas* 31 (2005): 327–66.

by Hans Gerth back into German.[44] Despite being included in the first and most accessible Weber reader, and of course the fact that it had in principle been accessible to English readers since 1906, the text has never received the attention it deserves, possibly in part because Seidenadel's translation was literal and hence rather wooden. Ghosh turns this to his advantage, having noticed that while literal, the translation was also consistently literal, so that it was possible to infer that when Seidenadel writes "undertaker" the original sense was "entrepreneur," or that when he uses "working forces" Weber had written *Arbeitskräfte* which Ghosh then rewrites as "labour power."[45] Ghosh has therefore produced a revised translation of a text neither he nor anyone has seen since 1905 by relying upon the literality of the translation to make educated guesses about the original. As Ghosh argues in the accompanying commentary, this strategy clarifies the St. Louis Address considerably and is an occasion to emphasise the importance of this work both in itself, and because of its timing—delivered between the two essays on the Protestant Ethic, it is one of the earliest pieces 'after the break' that Weber's breakdown represented.

'Modernising' a text in one way or another is however no certain path to greater readability or accessibility, as a final example demonstrates. During the later 1940s Churchmen in England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland decided that a new translation of the Bible should be made "in the language of the present day." The New Testament of the New English Bible was published in 1961, with an introduction which outlined how the work of translation had sought "to use the idiom of contemporary English to convey the meaning of the Greek."[46] Rigid adherence to the original framework, and the rote substitution of one word for another, were eschewed. The principles rehearsed here will be familiar from any discussion of translation practice. What, however, of the result? Take I Corinthians 10: 26. In 1526 William Tyndale rendered this as:

> For the erth is the lordis, and all that therein is.

The King James Authorised Version, which is otherwise mostly Tyndale, chose to revise this passage:

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[44] Max Weber, "Kapitalismus und Agrarverfassung," *Zeitschrift für die gesamte Staatswissenschaft* Bd. 108 (1952): 431–52. The *Geamtausgabe* ignored this text and printed a revised version of Seidenadel's original in Bd. I/8, 73–89.

[45] Both examples from Ghosh, " 'The Rural Community'," 329; *Gesamtausgabe* edition, 73–4.

[46] "Introduction" to the *New English Bible. New Testament* (London: C.U.P., 1961), viii.

> The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof.

This is rather more satisfactory than Tyndale, for it has a rhythmic balance; Tyndale as it were switches from 4/4 to 6/8, although an argument could be made that this itself lends emphasis to the meaning. What of the New English Bible?

> . . . for the earth is the Lord's and everything in it.

Here the metre simply stumbles to the end of the line, enhancing rather than moderating the bathos in the choice of words. All these passages "say the same thing," but no modern reader would be in any doubt of what the Authorised Version meant; while in any case the 'modern' version is inexact—surely it should strictly be 'on,' rather than 'in?'

Idiomatic English, therefore, is not necessarily "modern English"; it has a rhythm which follows speech patterns, and so long as there is rhythm and metre almost anything can be made intelligible, as many years ago "Professor" Stanley Unwin so brilliantly demonstrated.[47] Rowan Atkinson's complaint about the French:

> They even steal the words they lack—le camping, le weekend, and cul-de-sac[48]

actually begins as an iambic tetrameter, which is why the final part works so well—the metre breaks at the point where the comical point first becomes clear. Such considerations move us beyond questions of "faithfulness" to an original, or "accuracy"; and raise wider questions about the importance of "good writing" in rendering anything readable, and the importance that all scholars and translators should attach to it.[49]

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[47] Stanley Unwin (1911–2002) was the Heath Robinson of the English language, seemingly discoursing informatively upon technical and scientific subjects in a conversational tone; but if you paid attention it turned out to be nonsense. It was his spoken delivery that made him sound *as if he were* making sense, playing upon a quality of idiomatic English that too often goes unremarked. In the early days of live variety television he could be relied on to improvise in this vein for as long as any producer needed, since the fact he continued speaking fluent nonsense was the joke. Dick Vosburgh in his *Independent* obituary reported Unwin saying to him: "I love the English language, Voslodes, even though I do terrible things to it." See entry on Unwin in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

[48] From his song "I Hate the French" (Howard Goodall, Richard Curtis), recorded from his "Live in Belfast" performance, September 1980.

[49] See Mark Bauerlein, "Bad Writing's Back," *Philosophy and Literature* 28 (2004): 180–91. The 1999 *Philosophy and Literature* award for bad writing went to Judith Butler; four years later Theory at last responded in a collection of essays in defence, *Just Being Difficult?*, which is the object of Bauerlein's review essay.

It is today generally accepted that while Max Weber would not today be such a familiar figure in the social science landscape of the English-speaking world—which, in the post-war era, more or less amounted to international scholarship—without the combined efforts of Edward Shils, Talcott Parsons, Hans Gerth, C. Wright Mills and Don Martindale, the construct which their selections and actual translations have put into circulation is one now in need of serious revision. There are many layers to the problems posed by the existing translations, now partially replaced, but without any significant modification of the accepted "corpus." So, besides the problems of selection, how has it come about that a Max Weber cast in the role of a founding father of modern sociology is disavowed by Max Weber scholars?

As suggested above, the principal problem with Parsons' translations of Weber is that Parsons never was an especially lucid writer, a difficulty which his belief that "more was more" in rendering Weber into English compounded; today "less is more" has become a style and design dogma, and none the worse for that. The opacity and sheer turgidity of some passages in Parsons' Weber[50] nonetheless made it easier for him to make of Weber what he willed. The new American sociology of the 1940s was thereby endowed with a figurehead whose actual preoccupations and interests were very different from those which he was to represent for the following forty years; the persistent idea that Weber believed in "value free science" testifies to the success with which Weber's writings were reinterpreted and retransmitted.

Secondly, it seems never to have occurred to Parsons, to Shils, or to Gerth, that translation of key concepts in Weber should be construed with respect to Weber's own understanding, which in turn was rooted in a specific conceptual context. The "action frame of reference" that was so central to Parsons' sociological understanding actually derives from the economics of Menger, von Wieser and Böhm-Bawerk, written on into the central Weberian conception of the "conduct of life," *Lebensführung*, which links the *Protestant Ethic* to "Politics as a Vocation"—the "calling" of the former being in the latter translated as "vocation," both being in fact variant translations of *Beruf*. But there is no sign in Parsons' writing that he ever read these Viennese economists, nor that he more generally considered that one's understanding of what makes Max Weber someone

[50] Leaving to one side the sheer incoherence of the Shils and Finch "methodological" essays.

worth reading should, at some stage, involve reading what Max Weber read and so determine what he took from others, what he made of what he took, and what he made himself. Only after this do we gain a clear perspective upon what "Max Weber" was, and might remain.

Thirdly, from this it follows that we need to establish some key concepts and investigate their provenance; hence placing Weber within a developing linguistic context, in which what he states is almost as important as what he does not state. This is necessarily a historical task, linked to the idea of "translation as a conceptual act," in the words of Peter Ghosh. For unless we know how Weber's writings link into a contemporary domain of problems, drawing upon specific formulations and opposing others, we are free to read Weber in whatever way that we will. Except that in so doing we are reading ourselves, not Weber; and so in reading Weber we merely discover what we "already knew." The translation history of Weber's writings draws our attention forcefully to this difficulty, but this is not a problem unique to non-German readers, the direct linguistic access that German readers seem to possess automatically endowing them with an interpretative pre-eminence. In fact Parsons' own reading of Max Weber, and especially his construction of a Weberian "methodology," was heavily indebted to the work of Alexander von Schelting.[51] The problem of historical understanding is a general one in the reception of Weber's writings, transcending linguistic competence. It is the same with the writings of Karl Marx: we can no more rely on German editors to inform us about Marx, who mostly wrote in German but whose writings predominantly relate to English or French sources with which his modern editors are unfamiliar.[52]

Presented as we are with a canonical Max Weber whose features we now mistrust, our response must be a work of conceptual reconstruction, reaching back beyond the canon to recover meanings in his work long overlaid in the course of its reception. Translating the writings of Max

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[51] Alexander von Schelting, *Max Weber's Wissenschaftslehre. Das logische Problem der historischen Kulturkenntnis. Die Grenzen der Soziologie des Wissens* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1934). See Talcott Parsons, "Weber's Methodology of Social Science" in his edition of *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, 8–29.

[52] In fact the only scholarly edition of Marx's writings is the (incomplete) Rjazanov edition; unlike the Dietz edition, or the later MEGA, this was an edition which combined editorial stringency with a clear grasp of Marx's historical location between French socialism and English political economy. Insofar as the Dietz and MEGA editors refer to this literature, they assume that Marx's "insights" remain eternally valid, rather than treating them as historical constructs whose understanding presupposes that we work from the sources to Marx, and not from Marx to his sources.

Weber thereby becomes an aspect of the study of his work, and not simply a process by which his writing is made available to a wider readership. The meanings we seek to recover cannot result from an invocation of "history" against "theory." The conceptual history which has to underpin the work of translation is itself a construct, reformulating the context within which Max Weber wrote and argued, seeking to understand why he made the choices that he did, reviewing the sources upon which he drew as well as those which he ignored. In this way we might begin to learn again from the work of Weber, and in so doing learn something that we do not already know.

APPENDIX

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INDEX