Introduction

One of the most urgent problems posed by the existence of Europe is that of languages. We may envisage two kinds of solution. We could choose a dominant language in which exchanges will take place from now on, a globalized Anglo-American. Or we could gamble on the retention of many languages, making clear on every occasion the meaning and the interest of the differences—the only way of really facilitating communication between languages and cultures. The *Dictionary of Untranslatables* belongs to this second perspective. But it looks to the future rather than to the past. It is not tied to a retrospective and reified Europe (which Europe would that be, in any case?), defined by an accumulation and juxtaposition of legacies that would only reinforce particularities, but to a Europe in progress, fully active, *energeia* rather than *ergon*, which explores divisions, tensions, transfers, appropriations, contradictions, in order to construct better versions of itself.

Our point of departure is a reflection on the difficulty of translating in philosophy. We have tried to think of philosophy within languages, to treat philosophies as they are spoken, and to see what then changes in our ways of philosophizing. This is why we have not created yet another encyclopedia of philosophy, treating concepts, authors, currents, and systems for their own sakes, but a *Dictionary of Untranslatables*, which starts from words situated within the measurable differences among languages, or at least among the principal languages in which philosophy has been written in Europe—since Babel. From this point of view, Émile Benveniste's pluralist and comparatist *Vocabulary of Indo-European Institutions* has been our model. In order to find the meaning of a word in one language, this book explores the networks to which the word belongs and seeks to understand how a network functions in one language by relating it to the networks of other languages.

We have not explored all the words there are, or all languages with regard to a particular word, and still less all the philosophies there are. We have taken as our object *symptoms* of difference, the "untranslatables," among a certain number of contemporary European languages, returning to ancient languages (Greek, Latin) and referring to Hebrew and Arabic whenever it was necessary in order to understand these differences. To speak of *untranslatables* in no way implies that the terms in question, or the expressions, the syntactical or grammatical turns, are not and cannot be translated: the untranslatable is rather what one keeps on (not) translating. But this indicates that their translation, into one language or another, creates a problem, to the extent of sometimes generating a neologism or imposing a new meaning on an old word. It is a sign of the way in which, from one language to another, neither the words nor the conceptual networks can simply be superimposed. Does one understand the same thing by "mind" as by *Geist* or *esprit*, is *pravda* "justice" or "truth," and what happens when we render *mimesis* as "representation" rather than "imitation"? Each entry thus starts from a nexus of untranslatability and proceeds to a comparison of terminological networks, whose distortion creates the history and geography of languages and cultures. The *Dictionary of Untranslatables* makes explicit in its own domain the principal symptoms of difference in languages.

The selection of entries arises from a double labor of exploration, both diachronic and synchronic. Diachrony allows us to reflect on crossings, transfers, and forks in the road: from Greek to Latin, from ancient Latin to scholastic then humanist Latin, with moments of interaction with a Jewish and an Arab tradition; from an ancient language to a vernacular; from one vernacular to another; from one tradition, system, or philosophical idiom to others; from one field of knowledge and disciplinary logic to others. In this way we reencounter the history of concepts, while marking out the turnings, fractures, and carriers that determine a "period." Synchrony permits us to establish a state of play by surveying the present condition of national philosophical landscapes. We are confronted with the irreducibility of certain inventions and acts of forgetting: appearances without any equivalent, intruders, doublings, empty categories, false friends, contradictions, which register within a language the crystallization of themes and the specificity of an operation. We then wonder, on the

basis of the modern works that are both the cause and the effect of the philosophical condition of a given language, why the terms we ordinarily consider as immediate equivalents have neither the same meaning nor the same field of application—what a thought can do in what a language can do.

The space of Europe was our framework from the beginning. The *Dictionary* has, in fact, a political ambition: to ensure that the languages of Europe are taken into account, and not only from a preservationist point of view, as one seeks to save threatened species. In this respect, there are two positions from which we clearly distinguish our own. The first is the all-English one, or rather the all-into-English one—that official English of the European Community and of scientific conferences, which certainly has a practical use but is scarcely a language ("real" English speakers are those that one has the most difficulty in understanding). English has imposed itself today as an "auxiliary international language," as Umberto Eco puts it. It has assumed its place in the chronological sequence of instrumental languages (Greek, Latin, French): it is at once the universal language of the cultured technocracy and the language of the market; we need it, for better or for worse. But the philosophical situation of English as a language deserves a slightly different examination. In this case, English is rather in the line of the *characteristica universalis* that Leibniz dreamed of. Not that English can ever be reduced to a conceptual calculus on the model of mathematics: it is, like any other, a natural language, that is to say the language of a culture, magnificent in the strength of its idiosyncrasies. However, for a certain tendency in "analytic philosophy" (it is true that no terminological precaution will ever suffice here, because the label applies, via the "linguistic turn," even to those who teach us again to question the language, from Wittgenstein to Austin, Quine, or Cavell), philosophy relates only to a universal logic, identical in all times and all places—for Aristotle, for my colleague at Oxford. Consequently, the language in which the concept finds its expression, in this case English, matters little. This first universalist assumption meets up with another. The whole Anglo-Saxon tradition has devoted itself to the exclusion of jargon, of esoteric language, to the puncturing of the windbags of metaphysics. English presents itself, this time in its particularity as a language, as that of common sense and shared experience, including the shared experience of language. The presumption of a rationality that belongs to angels rather than humans and a militant insistence on ordinary language combine to support a prevalence of English that becomes, in the worst of cases, a refusal of the status of philosophy to Continental philosophy, which is mired in the contingencies of history and individual languages.

Neither . . . nor. The other position from which we wish to distinguish our own is the one that has led philosophy from the idea of the spirit of language, with all its clichés, to an "ontological nationalism" (the expression is that of Jean-Pierre Lefebvre). The position finds its image in Herder, at the moment when he determines that translation, as imitation and transplantation, is the true vocation of the German language: "If in Italy the muse converses in song, if in France she narrates and reasons politely, if in Spain she imagines chivalrously, in England thinks sharply and deeply, what does she do in Germany? She *imitates.* To *imitate* would thus be her character. . . . To this end we have in our power an admirable means, *our language*; it can be for us what the *hand* is for the person who imitates art" (Herder, *Briefe*). The position is also represented by a certain Heideggerian tradition of "philosophical language," that is to say, the language best suited to speak faithfully for being, which occupies a predominant place in the history of this so Continental Western philosophy. Martin Heidegger thinks that Western thought is born less in Greece than in Greek and that only the German language rises to the level of Greek in the hierarchy of philosophical languages, so that "untranslatability finally becomes the criterion of truth" (Lefebvre, "Philosophie et philologie"). "The Greek language is philosophical, i.e., . . . it philosophizes in its basic structure and formation. The same applies to every genuine language, in a different degree, to be sure. The extent to which this is so depends on the depth and power of the existence of the people and race who speak the language and exist within it. Only our German language has a deep and creative philosophical character to compare with the Greek" (Heidegger, *Essence of Human Freedom*). Even if it is "true" in one sense (Greek and German words and forms are obligatory places of passage for many articles in the *Dictionary*), this is not the truth we need. Our work is as far as could be from such a sacralization of the untranslatable, based on the idea of an absolute incommensurability of languages and linked to the near-sanctity of certain languages. This is why, marking our distance from a teleological history organized according to a register of gain and loss, we have not conferred a special status on any language, dead or alive.

Neither a logical universalism indifferent to languages nor an ontological nationalism essentializing the spirit of languages: what is our position in relation to these alternatives? If I had to characterize it, I would speak Deleuzian and use the word "deterritorialization." This term plays off geography against history, the semantic network against the isolated concept. We began with the many (our plural form indicates this: "dictionary of untranslatables"), and we remain with the many: we have addressed the question of the untranslatable without aiming at unity, whether it is placed at the origin (source language, tributary words, fidelity to what is ontologically given) or at the end (Messianic language, rational community).

Many languages first of all. As Wilhelm von Humboldt stresses, "language appears in reality solely as multiplicity" (*Uber die Verschiedenheiten des menschlichen Sprachbaues*). Babel is an opportunity, as long as we understand that "different languages are not so many designations of a thing: they are different perspectives on that same thing, and when the thing is not an object for the external senses, those perspectives become so many things themselves, differently formed by each person" (*Fragmente der Monographie über die Basken*).

The perspectives constitute the thing; each language is a vision of the world that catches another world in its net, that performs a world; and the shared world is less a point of departure than a regulatory principle. Schleiermacher throws an exemplary light on the tension that exists between a concept, with its claim to universality, and its linguistic expression, when he asserts that in philosophy, more than in any other domain, "any language . . . encompasses within itself a single system of concepts which, precisely because they are contiguous, linking and complementing one another within this language, form a single whole—whose several parts, however, do not correspond to those to be found in comparable systems in other languages, and this is scarcely excluding 'God' and 'to be,' the noun of nouns and the verb of verbs. For even universals, which lie outside the realm of particularity, are illumined and colored by the particular" ("On Different Methods of Translating"). It is that "scarcely excluding" we must underline: even God and Being are illumined and colored by language; the universality of concepts is absorbed by the singularity of languages.

Multiplicity is to be found not only among languages but within each language. A language, as we have considered it, is not a fact of nature, an object, but an effect caught up in history and culture, and that ceaselessly invents itself—again, *energeia* rather than *ergon*. So the *Dictionary*'s concern is constituted by languages in their works, and by the translations of these works into different languages, at different times. The networks of words and senses that we have sought to think through are networks of datable philosophical idioms, placed by specific authors in particular writings; they are unique, time-bound networks, linked to their address (exoteric or esoteric), to their level of language, to their style, to their relation to tradition (models, references, palimpsests, breaks, innovations). Every author, and the philosopher is an author, simultaneously writes in a language and creates his or her language—as Schleiermacher says of the relation between author and language: "He is its organ and it is his" ("General Hermeneutics"). The untranslatable therefore is also a question of case by case.

Finally, there is multiplicity in the meanings of a word in a given language. As Jacques Lacan says in *L'étourdit*, "A language is, among other possibilities, nothing but the sum of the ambiguities that its history has allowed to persist." The *Dictionary* has led us to question the phenomenon of the homonym (same word, several definitions: the dog, celestial constellation and barking animal) in which homophony (bread, bred) is only an extreme case and a modern caricature. We know that since Aristotle and his analysis of the verb "to be" that it is not so easy to distinguish between homonymy and polysemy: the sense of a word, also called "meaning" in English, the sense of touch, *sens* in French meaning "direction"—these represent traces of the polysemy of the Latin *sensus*, itself a translation from the Greek *nous* (flair, wit, intelligence, intention, intuition, etc.), which from our point of view is polysemic in a very different way. Variation from one language to another allows us to perceive these distortions and semantic fluxes; it permits us to register the ambiguities each language carries, their meaning, their history, their intersection with those of other languages.

In his introduction to Aeschylus's *Agamemnon*, which he considers to be "untranslatable," Humboldt suggests that one should create a work that studies the "synonymy of languages," and records the fact that every language expresses a concept with a difference: "A word is so little the sign of a concept that without it the concept cannot even be born, still less be stabilized; the indeterminate action of the power of thought comes together in a word as a faint cluster of clouds gathers in a clear sky." "Such a synonymy of the

principal languages . . . has never been attempted," he adds, "although one finds fragments of it in many writers, but it would become, if it was treated with intelligence, one of the most seductive of works" (*Aeschylos Agamemnon*). This work that is among "the most seductive" is perhaps our *Dictionary.* I hope it will make perceptible another way of doing philosophy, which does not think of the concept without thinking of the word, for there is no concept without a word.

The *Dictionary* aims to constitute a cartography of European and some other philosophical differences by capitalizing on the knowledge and experience of translators, and of those translators (historians, exegetes, critics, interpreters) that we are as philosophers. It is a working implement of a new kind, indispensable to the larger scientific community in the process of constituting itself and also a guide to philosophy for students, teachers, researchers, those who are curious about their language and that of others. It is also the collective work of ten or more years. Around a supervisory team of scholars—Charles Baladier, Étienne Balibar, Marc Buhot de Launay, Jean-François Courtine, Marc Crépon, Sandra Laugier, Alain de Libera, Jacqueline Lichtenstein, Philippe Raynaud, Irène Rosier-Catach—it assembled more than 150 contributors, with the most varied linguistic and philosophical domains of competence. The truly collective work (long, difficult, frustrating, to be redone, to be continued) did in any case seduce each of us, drove us back to the drawing board and to consider from other perspectives what we thought we knew in philosophy, of philosophy. Everyone gave more than his or her share of time, energy, knowledge, inventiveness, for something that expresses both our friendship and our sense of adventure, and that is beyond all possible expression of gratitude.

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TO TRANSLATE

FRENCH	*traduire*
GERMAN	*dolmetschen, übersetzen, übertragen, überliefern*
GREEK	*hermêneuein* [ἑρμηνεύειν], *metaballein* [μεταβάλλειν], *metaphrazein* [μεταφράζειν], *metapherein* [μεταφέρειν], *metagraphein* [μεταγράφειν], *metharmozein* [μεθαρμόζειν]
LATIN	*vertere, convertere, exprimere, reddere, transferre, interpretari, imitari, traducere*

➤ ANALOGY, COMPARISON, CONNOTATION, EUROPE, HEIMAT, HOMONYM, INTENTION, ITALIAN, LANGUAGE, LIGHT, LOGOS, MIMÊSIS, SENSE, SUPPOSITION, TROPE, WORD

"To translate," in the generally accepted sense of "passing from one language to another," derives from a relatively late French adaptation of the Latin verb *traducere*, which means literally "to lead across" and whose application is both more general and vaguer than translation itself. We do well to keep in mind this initial, indefinite vagueness attached to the verbs we translate as the verb "to translate," verbs that always also designate something additional or something other than the passage from one language to another. We should keep in mind as well the determining role of Latin culture as it appropriated and adapted Greek culture in the construction of the Latin language. It takes at least two languages for any translation, but the Greeks, even when they spoke other languages, were willing to recognize only the *logos* [λόγος], their *logos*, the Greek language. Yet the lexicon of translation is partly Greek as well, since it derives from another foundational moment, the commission in Alexandria of a translation into Greek of the Old Testament, the Septuagint Bible, which joins together both interpretation and translation within *hermêneuein* [ἑρμηνεύειν] and in the hermeneutic gesture.

In different languages, particularly in Latin and German, a skein of recurring and varying tension runs through this lexicon of translation: between the precise and exact relations from one word to another (the *verbum e verbo* of the *interpres*) and the literary image (the *sensum* and *sensu* of the orator). The close proximity between translation, metaphor, and equivocation (the medieval *translatio*) is troubling for us. As a result, translation can both be appreciated as "treason," treachery, or betrayal, according to the Italian saying "*traduttore, traditore*," and, on the other hand, as the very essence of tradition (starting with that *translatio studii* that applies to the displacement of Greek, then Latin, then Christian knowledge right through to the *Überlieferung*, or transmission, that enabled Heidegger access to an authentic *Übersetzung,* or "translation." But as Schleiermacher explains, there are basically two, and only two, manners of translation: the exchange of supposedly equivalent linguistic values in the passage from one language to another according to the methods of an interpreting agency (*dolmetschen*) that "leaves the reader in peace as much as possible"; and the displacement of the reader in relation to his native language by virtue of the translation (*übersetzen*) such that they become foreign to each another, which is perhaps the best method for presenting it.

I. Greek Monolinguism: Hellenism or Barbarism

A. *Hellênizein*

One needs at least two languages in order to translate. But the Greeks, in A. Momigliano's expression (*Sagesses barbares*), were "proudly monolinguistic." Instead of speaking their language, they let their language speak for them. In this way, the polysemic value of the term *logos* [λόγος] allowed them to dispense with distinguishing between discourse and reason, between the language they speak and the language proper to man (see LANGUAGE, LOGOS, and GREEK, Box 4).

In a more definitive manner, *hellênizein* [ἑλληνίζειν] (after the adjective *hellên* [ἕλλην], "Greek") fixes under the same term the meanings of "speaking Greek" and "speaking correctly," or even, insofar as the corpus of rhetoric and the historico-political corpus are bound together here as one, to "behave as a free, civilized, and cultivated individual"—in short, as a person. To speak, to speak well, to think well, and to live well—these goals all nest together. Two occurrences in Plato reveal their interrelatedness. In the *Meno* (82b), the only criterion that Socrates applies to the young slave in order for him to come to understand the idea of the square root is that he "Hellenize": "*Hellên men esti kai hellênizei?*

[Ἕλλην μέν ἐστι καὶ ἑλληνίζει;]" (He is Greek and speaks our language?). Answer: Yes, he is "born to the household" (*oikogenês* [οἰκογενής]). In the *Protagoras*, the apprenticeship into Hellenism is indistinguishable from the apprenticeship into political competence and the practice of *isêgoria* [ἰσηγορία], that equality of speech that is a characteristic of Athenian democracy. (327e: In the city, all are teachers of virtue, just as everyone in the home teaches the child to speak Greek. "In the same way, if you asked who teaches *hellênizein*, you would not find anyone." See VIRTÙ, Box 1; cf. B. Cassin, *L'effet sophistique*, pt. 2, chap. 2).

Beginning with Aristotle, *hellênizein* or *hellênismos* [ἑλληνισμός] serves as a chapter heading in treatises on rhetoric (Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 3.5: "On correction") or on grammar (Sextus Empiricus: "Is there an art of the Greek? [*Esti d'archê tês lexeôs to hellênizein* (Ἔστι δ' ἀρχὴ τῆς λέξεως τὸ ἑλληνίζειν)]"; *Adversus mathematicos*, 1.10). One has the choice of rendering the first sentence of the Aristotelian description as "The basis of expression is to express oneself in Greek" or as "The principle of style is in speaking correctly" (*Rhetoric*, 3.51407a20–21; on *lexis* [λέξις], see WORD, II.B and SIGNIFIER/SIGNIFIED).

In order for what one writes to be easily read or spoken aloud, one must simply respect the "natural order" (*pephukasi* [πεφύκασι]), the sequences set out by articles and conjunctions (that remain within the reach of memory in the same way as they are within hearing in the city) that respect semantic propriety (proper nouns, *idia* [ἴδια]; see PROPERTY), propriety of reference (by avoiding ambiguities and circumlocutions; see COMPARISON, HOMONYM), and propriety of grammar (the internal consistencies of genre and number). Speaking naturally, by following the accepted norms of clarity and precision—this remains the definition of Hellenism and of the classical "style": "whoever Hellenizes [*ho . . . hellênizôn* (ὁ . . . ἑλληνίζων)] is able to present the idea of things in a clear and distinct manner [*saphôs hama kai akribôs* (σαφῶς ἅμα καὶ ἀκριβῶς)], as in a conversation [*homilia* (ὁμιλία)] which signifies a band of warriors, companionship, society, commerce, relation—including sexual relation—the lessons of a master, discussion and the normal usage of a word" (*Adversus mathematicos,* 1.10.176–79). This concept cannot but provide support for a claim to universal legitimacy.

- See Box 1.

B. The semantics of verbs that touch upon the operation of translation

If translation does not constitute a problem all unto itself, this is because the difference between languages is not taken into consideration as such. Instead, the place of translation is more of a gap or void. So it should come as no surprise that there is no Greek verb that signifies "translating" purely and simply, even if a certain number of them can be rendered that way.

One of the most explicit and general models of the difference between languages is sketched out by Plato in the *Cratylus*: it is presented as a simple matter of phonetic difference. As long as there is a competent nomothete capable of forming names that take into consideration the *eidos* [εἶδος] (the form which is the name in itself, naturally appropriate to its object), then the matter itself is of little import, and the user will be the one to judge if the tool (*organon* [ὄργανον]) is of value:

> And the legislator, whether he be Hellene or barbarian, is not to be deemed by you a worse legislator, provided he gives the true and proper form of the name in whatever syllables—this or that country makes no matter.
>
> (*Cratylus*, 390a)

The verb that Catherine Dalimier chose to render as "translation," *apodidôi* [ἀποδιδῷ], literally signifies "to render to someone by right," "to restitute," "to give in exchange," "to transmit." It substitutes for the expression *tithenai eis ti* [τιθέναι εἰς τι] (389d, 390e), "to transpose, to impose" (the name in itself) "in" (syllables), as one imposes the form of a shuttle on a particular piece of wood: the terms definitely derive from another technical model. Most often, besides, the difference between languages is taken into account in the major philosophical texts only as a gap or void, as if by inadvertence. It is only implicit in the text or in a concept, and there is simply no term to specifically designate the operation of translation; thus, Aristotle's *De interpretatione* simply mentions that "just as all men have not the same writing, so all men have not the same speech sounds" (1.16a5–6; see SIGN, Box 1) and refers to the Stoics' "signified" as that which Sextus Empiricus defines as "what the barbarians don't understand when they hear the sound" (*Adversus mathematicos*, 8.11; see SIGNIFIER/SIGNIFIED, II.A).

The operation of translation is touched upon from many different points of view. Thus our verb *hellênizein*, when used transitively, can mean "learning Greek" (Thucydides, 2.68), to "Hellenize" a barbarian, or later—but essentially only in relation to the translation of the Bible—to "express in Greek," and thus to "translate" words or a text (in the second century CE, in Dion Cassius [55.3], in relation to what we would call the transliteration of "Noah" or "Jacob"; see Flavius Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 1.6.1). The same holds true for a number of composite verbs that incorporate *meta*, as indicating trans-port and trans-formation: *metapherein* [μεταφέρειν] (to transport, transpose, employ metaphorically, or report); *metaphrazein* [μεταφράζειν] (to paraphrase), and especially *metagraphein* [μεταγράφειν] ("to change the text," "to falsify" but also "to transcribe," "to copy"). These all designate literary operations of a poetic, rhetorical, or philological nature and only marginally take on the meaning of "translating" in classical Greek. (For *metaphrazein*, see Flavius Josephus, ibid. 9.14.2; for *metagraphein*, see Thucydides ["On being translated," 4.50.2] and Lucian, *How History Must Be Written*, 21, in which a purist claiming to be an inheritor of Thucydides purports to "transform Roman names [*metapoiêsai* (μεταποιῆσαι)]" and "to translate them into Greek [*metagrapsai es to hellênikon* (μεταγράψαι ἐς τὸ ἑλληνικόν)] such as Chronion for Saturn" or others even more ridiculous.)

The Aristotelian title *Peri hermêneias* is rendered as *De interpretatione*, as *Lehre vom Satz*, but never as "On Translation," and yet it is the phrase *hermêneuein*, meaning "interpreting, explaining, expressing," in the manner of one who puts his

1
What is a "barbarian" for a Greek?

➤ *AUTRUI*, COMPARISON, PEOPLE

Hellên and *barbaros* [βάρβαρος] are, as Koselleck puts it, "asymmetrical antonyms" (*Futures Past*, pt. 3, chap.1): the former is both a noun and a proper name as well, while the latter is only a common noun. *Barbarizein* [βαρβαρίζειν] is an onomatapoesis similar to "blah-blah-blah" (Fr. *blablater*; cf. Lat. *balbus*, stutter) and refers to a conjunction of linguistic, anthropological, and political features that make the "barbarian" altogether other from the self, a *heteros* [ἕτερος]—that make it unintelligible, perhaps even not altogether human.

In the rhetorical and grammatical corpus, "barbarism" refers to an effect of unintelligibility: for instance, in poetry, when one diverges from the proper meaning or common use (*to idiôtikon* [τὸ ἰδιωτικόν], *to kurion* [τὸ κύριον]) and uses "foreign" expressions instead (*xenika* [ξενικά]). Too many metaphors result in *ainigma* [αἴνιγμα]. a confusion of the signifier, and too many borrowings (*glossâi* [γλῶσσαι]) lead to *barbarismos* [βαρβαρισμός], gibberish, and the confusion of the signified (Aristotle, *Poetics*, 22.1458a18–31; see LANGUAGE, II.A). Diogenes Laertius went so far as to specify the difference, which is still current in classroom exercises, between "solecism" (*soloikismos* [σολοικισμός]), which is an error of syntax, and "barbarism," which is an error of morphology—which renders a word morphologically unrecognizable (7.44 and 59).

For the Greeks, the underlying problem was apparently to determine whether barbarianism (and hence Hellenism as well) is itself a fact of nature or a fact of culture (see BILDUNG, Box 1). Hence Antiphon uses the verb *barbarizein* to refer to those who make the distinction between Greek and barbarian into a natural distinction: "We make ourselves into barbarians in relation to each other [*barbarômetha* (βαρβαρώμεθα)] whereas by virture of nature itself, we are all naturally made to be barbarians and Greeks [ὁμοίως πεφύκαμεν καὶ βάρβαροι καὶ Ἕλληνες εἶναι]" (P. Oxy, 1364 + 3647, fr. A, col. 2, in Bastianini and Decleva-Caizzi; cf. Cassin, *L'effet sophistique*).

Similarly, Euripedes's *Orestes* contrasts a barbarian conception of Hellenism, which Orestes believes is a result of a natural difference, with a Greek conception of Hellenism, based on respect for legality, for the law, and maintained by Tyndareus (Cassin, ibid.), and Isocrates praises Athens for this advance:

> Our city has made the use of the word *Greek* no longer as a reference to the race [*mêketi tou genous* (μηκέτι τοῦ γένους)] but as a reference to the intellect [*alla tês dianoias* (ἀλλὰ τῆς διανοίας)], and we refer to those who play a part in our upbringing [*paideuseôs* (παιδεύσεως)] as Greeks, rather than to those who have the same nature [*phuseôs* (φύσεως)] as us.
>
> (*Panegyric*, 4.50)

But in either case, the question is in the end a political one: barbarians are those who submit to, or even seek out, despotism. If, according to Aristotle, "barbarians are more slave-like by nature [*doulikôteroi* (δουλικώτεροι)] than are the Greeks" (*Politics*, 3.14.1285a20; cf.1252b9, 1255a29), it is because, like the slave in his master's house, the barbarian is de facto ruled despotically (*despotikôs* [δεσποτικῶς]), according to the Persian model (every Persian, a slave to the great ruler, is "another's man") in contradistinction to the hegemonic (*hêgemonikôs* [ἡγεμονικῶς]) Greek model, which binds a leader (*hêgemôn* [ἡγεμών]) and a free man. This is what is at stake in the entire book 7.7 of *Politics,* which lays out a first theory of climate, in which the Greeks occupy a temperate middle zone between the thymic, passionate, and cold zones of Europe, in which life is free but disorganized, and a hot, dianoetic, and technical Asia, in which life is lived in submission. As for Greece, it is both passionate and intellectual; it is "capable of living in freedom within the best political institutions, and it has the capacity to give directions to all." An internal domination, the slavery of the slave, rests on an external domination, the slavery of the barbarians, who require a master, in a theoretical compact to which the modern era will no longer so easily subscribe (cf. Cassin, *Aristote et le logos*, pt. 1, chap. 3).

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thoughts into words (Plato, *Laws*, 966b) as well as one who serves as the interpreter for the gods (the poet, the rhapsodist, the seer), that is the most likely candidate for the retroversion of "translating" (starting with Xenophon, *Anabasis*, 5.44). At least this is what the future will hold (see below, II and III).

II. Greece in Rome: Translating/Adapting

In the classical Latin authors, the translation from Greek into Latin very barely satisfies modern criteria, and the process of translation itself is not clearly defined in the Latin language: the verbs *vertere, convertere, exprimere, reddere, transferre, interpretari, imitari* can all refer to what we would call "literal translation" as well as to looser adaptations of Greek models. The fact that we are unable to find a sharp distinction between literal translation and literary adaptation in these verbs rather clearly indicates that the question of translation is posed differently in the classical period than it would subsequently be raised starting with Jerome and the translation of sacred texts, when faithful rendering *verbum pro verbo* will become the very principle of translation: for the classics, translation consists of adhering to a meaning (*vis*) and not to a word (*verba*), and it is primarily an occasion for reflection on the creative modalities of the Latin language. At play in "translation" is the very reception of Greek culture in Rome, with all that entails.

A. Fluidity of meanings and contradistinctions

The uses of the verb *interpretari* in a single author reveal the fluidity of meanings that only contradistinctions can fix point by point. Thus Cicero has Varro say (*Academics*, 1.8) that he has imitated (*imitari*) rather than translated (*interpretari*) Menippus. Cicero himself specifies that he followed (*sequi*) Panetius rather than translating (*interpretari*) him in his treatise *On Duties* (2.60). But the same verb applies as much to the hermeneutic activities of the Stoics in relation

to the mythic narratives (*On the Nature of the Gods*, 3.60) as to the interpretation of a philosophical doctrine (*On Moral Ends*, 2.34) or the adaptations of Greek works by the founders of Latin literature, such as Ennius did for *Sacred History* of Euhemerus (*On the Nature of the Gods*, 1.119).

None of the other verbs referred to above is sufficient to specifically designate the activity of translation: instead, each of them allows the Latin authors to define their work in relation to a Greek "model." The lexicon of translation can thus be understood only in relation to the tensions of literary polemics and within the specific context of Latin literature.

When Plautus uses the verb *vertere* to refer to his translation/adaptation of a Greek play, his usage is not neutral but instead underscores the difficulties that underlie the development of the literary Latin language (*The Comedy of Asses*, v. 11) In Greek, this play is called *The Donkey Driver*. It was written by Demophilus, and Maccus [Plautus] translated it into the barbaric language (*vortit Barbare*). "To translate into the barbaric tongue," that is to say, into Latin, is a provocative expression that Plautus also employs in *The Three Crowns* (v. 19), and it must be understood as a literary manifesto: that it is not a matter of submitting to the original language, the Greek, in relation to which everything else is the barbaric. On the contrary, in order to avoid the loss of meaning and end up with an incomprehensible language, one must write in one's own language and create one's own language. This is why Terence can contrast his comic rival's ability to translate well and his inability to write well:

> By translating well, but by writing poorly, he took good Greek comedies and made them into Latin ones that weren't.
>
> ([Q]ui bene vertendo et easdem scribendo male / ex graecis bonis latinas fecet non bonas.)
>
> (*The Eunuch*, v. 7–8)

B. Cicero and the sparkle of philosophical translation

The articulation between translating/adapting/creating sketched out by the Latin playwrights is explicitly taken up by Cicero, who defines his conception of philosophical translation in reference to the practices of the founders of Latin literature:

> Even if I were to translate [*vertere*] Plato or Aristotle literally, as our poets did with the Greek plays, I hardly think I would deserve ill of my fellow citizens for bringing [*transferre*] those sublime geniuses to their attention. . . . If I think fit, I will translate certain passages, particularly from those authors I just mentioned, when it happens to be appropriate, as Ennius often does with Homer and Afranius with Menander.
>
> (*On Moral Ends*, 1.7)

What is at work in this "transfer" from Greece to Rome is not some simple transport of booty, even if this dimension is always present in the background (see, e.g., *Tusculan Disputations*, 2.5: where it is expressed that it is necessary to tear away [*eripere*] Greece's philosophical preeminence in philosophy and transfer it to Rome): the verb *transferre* also describes the displacement of meaning that is at work in the deployment of metaphor. By using the same verb for the activity of translation and the creation of metaphors, Cicero establishes the link in language between translating and writing; one has only to apply to translation what he has to say about the development of metaphor, undoubtedly starting from the Aristotelian reflections on metaphor as a process of enrichment of language, to define translation as a true creation:

> The third genre of ornament, the metaphorical use of a word, is born of necessity and constrained by need and inconvenience; it subsequently finds general application as a result of the pleasure and ease which it provides.
>
> (*On the Ideal Orator*, 3.155)

But this *rapprochement* has a broader scope as it is inscribed in language itself. The Greeks, who have no need to "translate," do not take advantage of this potential usage of *metapherein* (Plato uses it once to designate the transcriptions of proper names: *Crito*, 113a), and when Plutarch invokes the philosophical works of Cicero (*Life of Cicero*, 40), he uses the verbs *metaballein* [μεταβάλλειν] and *metaphrazein* to designate his "translations" in general and employs the term "metaphor" only in connection with isolated translations of terms that Cicero was unable to render through a word in its common form of usage. The work of polysemy that Cicero achieves through *transferre* is invisible to the Greek language because its referent is something only thought in Rome: to translate is to achieve a new splendor, a new brilliance that results from a use of language that is out of the ordinary, that results from borrowings instead of the familiar and proper usage: "these metaphors are a kind of borrowing [*mutationes*] which enable us to find elsewhere what we are lacking ourselves" (*On the Ideal Orator*, 156). The language of the other can thus provide what is lacking, but borrowings are only acceptable and provide appropriate ornamentation if they are fully reappropriated. To put metaphors (*verba translata*) to good use, "rather than suddenly appearing in some place that does not belong to them [*alienum locum*], they must appear to take up residence [*immigrasse*] in their own surroundings" (*Brutus*, 274). This is none other than an integration, a borrowing that does not arrive as a foreigner but makes itself at home. Seneca will also say that the "Latin grammarians give the [Greek] word *analogia* the right to the city [*civitas*]" (*Seneca's Letters to Lucilius*, 120.4). This idea of the reception of the Greek language, described as the integration into the body of citizens, validates the link established between translation and the use of metaphors by the verb *transferre*. It does not consist of a change from one language to another. It takes place within a single language, as a result of the transfer from Greece to Rome, as displacements and borrowings that create splendor: "[T]he metaphors draw attention to the discourse and illuminate it like so many shining stars" (*On the Ideal Orator*, 3.170). This is the sense in which Lucretius calls his poem a "translation" of the doctrine of Epicurus: "bringing to light the obscure discoveries of the Greeks" (1.136–137) and "composing sparkling verses on obscure subjects" (1.933)—bringing a new splendor and

luminous intelligibility through translation by appeal to the senses. If "all metaphors are addressed directly to the senses, especially to the sense of vision, the most penetrating of them all" (*On the Ideal Orator*, 3.160), one can see that what is at stake in the transference by translation is precisely to achieve a form of immediacy in the form of the "living" language of Latin.

III. Translations of the Bible: The Lexicon of Translation and the Status of the *Hermêneus*

The translation of the Bible into Greek is not a counterexample to the monolinguism of the Greeks but rather an illustration of it. This translation is of Jewish inspiration rather than of Greek, born from the idea that Greek is de facto the language of culture par excellence, which enables it to render accessible the Book par excellence.

The body of literature that will be given the overarching title of *Biblia* [Βιβλία] in the twelfth century of the Common Era was translated into Greek first, though only in part, in Alexandria starting in the third century before Christ. It was a great novelty in the world of culture. These Greek "writings" (*graphai* [γραφαί]), which even today embody the Old Testament in the Greek Orthodox Church, served straightaway as the linguistic matrix for Christian doctrine, providing the concepts and expressions that course through the new phraseology. These texts provided the basis for most of the older versions of the Bible, right up to the translations of Cyril and Methodius (middle of the eleventh century) into old Slavonic. Competing Greek versions of the text appeared in the course of the second century, including an extremely literal one commissioned by the rabbis from the proselytizer Aquila. But this did not keep the former from serving as the exclusive source of the first Latin translations. Saint Jerome first proposed a series of scientific and literary revisions before deciding to directly translate the Hebrew texts of Jewish writings directly into Latin. The end result of his work of revision and translation was the Latin Vulgate, the official Bible of Roman Catholicism until the middle of the twentieth century. Jerome remained the champion of what he would himself call *hebraica veritas*. This conception even served as a model for Luther's German Bible. But in actuality, and despite his intent, a reign of *latina veritas* was the result of Jerome's labors instead. For centuries the Latin Vulgate would provide the textual basis for most translations into the so-called vernacular languages. Whatever the destiny of the Greek Bible itself, its appearance in classical antiquity signals an important moment in the very history of culture. Moses, in fact, lays down a challenge to Homer! And most of all, the objective foundations of the lexicon and of the discourse that have subsequently come to be known as "translation" are put irreversibly in place.

A. The Greek Bible of the Septuagint

Thus, in the third century before Christ, the peoples of *Iouda*, or the *Ioudaioi* [Ἰουδαῖοι], took up the translation of their *hagiai graphai* [ἅγιαι γραφαί], "holy writings," into Greek, starting first and foremost with the Law of Moses, *nomos* [νόμος]—or as they would say, their *nomothesia* [νομοθεσία], or "constitution." The *politeuma* [πολίτευμα], the "community within the city" that they formed in Alexandria, protected their difference of nationality, and it would subsequently gain political recognition as well. Versions of the other books followed: spread out over two or even three centuries and probably completed by Christian writers. This was an event without precedent. The idiom of the Greeks, the language of thought that aspired to universality, now became the language of the Bible. Toward the end of the second century BCE, a widespread legend, first referred to in the *Letter of Aristeas*, would introduce "the book" (*hê biblos* [ἡ βίβλος]), as the law in question became Greek, as the extraordinary work of seventy or seventy-two scholars of *Iouda* at the request of the grand priest of Jerusalem. The order is said to have come from the royal librarian of Alexandria at the request of the second monarch of the Ptolemaic dynasty, Ptolemy Philadelphus (Ptolemy II). The latter wanted the books of the *Ioudaioi* included in the famous library of his sumptuous city. According to the same source, each of the translators translated the text in a rigorously consistent way, identical to the work of the other translators. In the middle of the second century CE, Christian authors circulated or forged the letter and set in place the Latin word *septuaginta*, "seventy." They made this into the general title of this collection of Greek writing that they had inherited and would henceforth be the only ones to use. The word is still in use today—although not without ambiguity, since the legendary role of the "seventy" applied only to the five books of Moses—as the title of the Greek Old Testament.

B. Translation, interpetation, inspiration, prophecy

The unprecedented event of the translation of the Law appealed immediately to the theoreticians of the local Judaic community, which was entirely hellenophonic. It was thus and at that moment that the conceptual field of translation became established in the Greek lexicon. The verb *hermêneuin* and the nouns, *hermêneia* [ἑρμηνεία] and *hermêneus* [ἑρμηνεύς] saw their respective meanings of "express" or "signify," "expression," "signification" or "interpretation," and "interpreter" become qualified to specifically signify "translate," "translation," and "translator." Other etymologically related and practically synonymous terms, such as *diermêneuein* [διερμηνεύειν] and *diermêneusis* [διερμήνευσις], were subject to the same process. The word *metagraphê* [μεταγραφή], "copy" or "transcription," came itself to signify "translation," and *metagraphein*, "to transcribe" or "to copy," became equivalent to "translate." The verb *metagein* [μετάγειν], to "deport," now applied to the text as "transferred into another language"; in other words, "translated" (*Prologue* by the translator of the *Siracides* around 100 BCE). Recourse was also taken to *metharmozein* [μεθαρμόζειν], "to arrange differently." Three great agents or Judaic witnesses of this semantic innovation succeeded one another between the second century BCE and the first century CE, all of them convinced that the translation of the Law was in response to an external political will. Around 180 BCE, the philosopher Aristobolus claimed that the "entire translation [*hermêneia*] of the Law" was realized under Ptolemy Philadelphus, but he insisted that there had been previous attempts at translation, ones that were fragmentary or flawed, which is impossible to verify anyway. His intention was to make more credible his own belief that Moses, the father of universal culture, was the original teacher of the Greek thinkers,

especially of Plato and Pythagoreas, who would have learned directly from the Greek sources of "the Law" (text cited by Eusebius of Caesaria, *Praeparatio evangelica*, 13.12.1). Aristobolus was the first to demonstrate the use of *hermêneia* in the technical sense of "translation." A half-century later, and still in Alexandria, a lengthy piece of fiction appeared carried down in its entirety under the title *Letter of Aristeas*. This work decisively confirms the use of *hermêneia* as "translation," a term it immediately distinguishes from *metagraphê*, "transcription." It also contains the formulaic expressions *ta tês hermêneias* [τὰ τῆς ἑρμηνείας] and even *ta tês metagraphês* [τὰ τῆς μεταγραφῆς], the "work or works of translation" that one "executes" (*epitelein* [ἐπιτελεῖν]), or that one "achieves" (*telein* [τελεῖν]). As for the "translators," it would seem that they are still designated only by a participle of the verb *diermêneuein*.

The decisive setting up of the complete lexicon of translation is both certified and commented upon by the Alexandrian exegete and philosopher Philo in the first decades of the first century. The relevance, if not the legitimacy, of the act of translating the *hierai bibloi* [ἱεραὶ βίβλοι] (the sacred books) or simply *graphai* (writings) is demonstrated within the framework of a theological reasoning in which the mythological figure Moses plays the central part. Here are two essential texts:

> 1. For any time that Chaldeans who know the Greek language, or Greeks who know Chaldean [i.e., Hebrew] were to come upon the two versions [*graphai*] simultaneously, namely the Chaldaic and the translated version [*hermêneutheisê* (ἑρμηνευθείση)], they would look upon both of them with admiration and respect them as sisters, or rather as one and the same work in both substance and form, and they would call their authors not translators [*hermêneutheisê*] but hierophants and prophets to whose pure minds it had been granted to go along with the purest spirit [*pneuma* (πνεῦμα)] of Moses.
>
> ("A Treatise on the Life of Moses," 2.37)
>
> 2. For a prophet does not utter anything whatever of his own, but is only an interpreter [*hermêneus*] of another being who prompts and suggests to him all that he utters, at the very moment he is seized by inspiration [*enthousia* (ἐνθουσία)].
>
> ("The Special Laws," 4.49)

For Philo, the Greek translation of the writings is equally as "inspired" as the Hebrew original. The same holds true in his eyes for the interpretation of the sacred texts, which is limited to a small number of the elect, or the "initiates." To add force to his argument, he resorts to the register of the mysteries in the same manner as the Alexandrian writers in their explications of Homer's works. The schema that underlies his propositions is that of language (*logos*) as the interpreter (*hermêneus*) of thought or spirit (*nous* [νοῦσ]), whence his expression *ho hermêneus logos* [ὁ ἑρμηνεὺς λόγος], "the speech which translates our thought" (*De somniis*, 1.33). He uses the same schema in relation to the fact or process of divine revelation. The science and God's word (*logos*) have their interpreter (*hermêneus*) in Moses. Philo designates the latter as *ho theologos* [ὁ θεολόγος] (*De proemiis et poenis*, 53; *De vita Mosis*, 2.115). Insofar as the divine *logos* expresses itself through the "holy laws [*nomoi hieroi* (νόμοι ἱεροί)]," Moses is their *hermêus,* or more precisely, *prophêtes* [προφήτης]. Yet he himself needs interpreters in his own image and of his stature, whence Philo's report of a chain of interpreters, "prophets," in which the translator and commentator hold the same rank, each "inspired." (We can compare this with Plato's *Ion*, in which the chain of enthusiasm goes from the muse or from the god to the poet and then to the rhapsodes, whose performances interpreted the interpreters [533c–535a]). Thus all the quantitative and qualitative divergences of the Greek version of the holy books are a priori justified and already fully recognized as authentic *graphai*. In some cases, the translator went to great lengths to repair the language of the works, occasionally going so far as to write what amounts to a new text. This is particularly evident for the book of Proverbs, entirely redrafted by a talented author of Greek wisdom. This is indeed the case of a *hermêneus* who is not so much a "translator" as an "interpreter" with literary and even musical connotations, since the book also contains poetry. But if there is translation nevertheless, it is insofar as the biblical message remains constant through its potency and deep articulations in relation and opposition to everything else. The semantic plenitude of the word *hermêneus* is thus assured.

C. Jerome, translator (*interpres*) or writer (*orator*)?

With Jerome (born in 347 CE near Emona, now Ljubljana in Slovenia, and died in Bethlehem in 420 CE), who was trained at a high level of humanism in Rome, the occidental destiny of the Christian Bible arrived at a decisive threshold. Very early on, he undertook to revise the text of the Latin scriptures, which appeared first in Africa around the beginning of the third century CE, then in Spain and in southern Gaul, and finally in Rome. Aside from the so-called Vulgate of Jerome, these writings are known as *Vetus Latina*, "old Latin," *Vetus edition, Antiqua translatio,* or *Vulgata editio*. Augustine called them *Italia*, "the Italian." Jerome considered all translations prior to his to be *vulgata editio*, or "commonly accepted editions," starting with the Septuagint (*Letters of St. Jerome*, letter 57, to Pammachius, para. 6). The variants of this *editio*, and especially the recensions, seemed to reflect a very ancient model of Greek related to a Hebrew family of texts that were found among the scrolls of Qumran.

This Bible made a significant contribution to the establishment of Christian Latin as distinct from classical Latin. The vocabularies of occidental languages that derive from Latin are deeply influenced by it. Shocked by the profusion of variants and its general literary impoverishment (at one point a *sermo humilis* had been the rule), Jerome wanted the Bible to be worthy of a Roman society that was rediscovering its classics. An extended stay in the East enabled him to perfect his knowledge of Greek and to properly learn Hebrew. He first used these skills with the encyclopedic accounts of Eusebius of Caesarea. Upon his return to Rome, he began to revise the Latin text of the Septuagint, limiting himself to stylistic corrections. In 386, he settled in Bethlehem permanently, where he discovered the *Hexapla of Origen*. His confrontation

with this exhaustive synopsis in six columns raised profound questions regarding the truth of the text and its language. And he undertook the task of addressing them, limiting himself to the Hebrew canon of writings. He became increasingly open to Greek versions of the text other than the Septuagint, such as those of Aquila, Symmachus ben Joseph, and Theodotion. These were much closer to the Hebrew text that was already the official Jewish version than was the Alexandrian translation, the classic text for the Christians. Jerome thus adopted the Hebrew text as the only basis for the "revealed" truth, what he called *hebraica veritas*. This would be the third and final phase of his work as a translator, which lasted from 390 to 405. In his Latin translation of the Hebrew corpus, he was returning *ad fontes*, "to the sources." He put aside, although not completely, the other books contained in the Christian Bibles, generally known as deuterocanonic, which he called apocryphal. Beginning in the thirteenth century, the Latin Bible that derived from the work of Jerome was called the Vulgate. Its contents do not all come from Jerome. As in the case of most of the deuterocanonic books, it limits itself to adopting the older revision of the text of the *Vetus Latina*. The success of the long work of editing that the Vulgate embodies results from the fact that it answered the pressing need to have a standard text with a prestigious signator as well as being partly anonymous. It would thus remain the official Bible of the Roman Catholic Church until the middle of the twentieth century.

As a firm proponent of the *hebraica*, or *hebrea veritas*, Jerome saw the Hebrew language as the "matrix of all languages" (*matrix omnium linguarum*; *Book of Commentaries of the Prophet Sophonias*, 3.14–18), as the first language from which all others derive. As the originary language, Hebrew was thus at constant risk of having truth erode. Jerome was sympathetic to the pessimistic theory of history dear to Hesiod, which sees history as the progressive decay of humanity with perfect truth found only at its point of origin. So the Greek version of the Septuagint could only be a pale reflection of the Hebrew bible. Nonetheless, Jerome believed himself qualified to translate the holy books because his interventions occurred after the coming of the Christ, the historical principle of all truth. In regard to the technical framework that he formulates, his competence is far greater than that of the Septuagint, whose version, he admits, had "prevailed with good cause in the churches because it had been the first one . . . and the apostles had made use of it" (*Letters of St. Jerome*, letter 67, §11). But he justifies his rule of the *hebraica veritas* through the philosophy of language, influenced by Origen and Plato's *Cratylus*). Adopting the doctrine of the indivisible link between "being" in Greek, *on* [ὄν], and the "name," *onoma* [ὄνομα], he shows that this union is most forcefully achieved in the Hebrew language, the primordial idiom and the most apt to express and guarantee the truth. He comments upon it in these terms:

> Just as there are twenty-two letters in Hebrew with which to write everything that is said, and that the human language is captured through the elementary functions of the letters, so too are there twenty-two books of the Bible, through which, as by the letters and basic rudiments the tender childhood of the just man is instructed in the divine doctrine.
>
> (Prologue to the Book of Samuel in the Book of Kings)

Thus, there was the need to have recourse to the Hebrew text in order to translate the Bible and to limit the translation to the Hebrew corpus as a remedy to both the excesses and deficiencies of the Septuagint. The "revealed" truth, which is one with the "name," in other words the formula itself, will thus be preserved. The books translated by Jerome will not be "corrupted by the transfer into a third vase [*in tertium vas transfusa*]." "Stored in a very clean jug as soon as they leave the press, they will retain all their taste" (Prologue to the books of Solomon).

For profane works and in his youth, Jerome claims to have applied the rules of Cicero or Horace, translating not "*verbum e verbo* but *sensum e sensu*," not "as a simple translator, but as a writer [*nec . . . ut interpres sed ut orator*]." He specifies that "I have not translated the words, but rather the ideas [*non verba sed sententias transtulisse*]" (*Letters of St. Jerome*, letter 57, §5 and §6). And he invokes those authors, starting with the Septuagint, who "translated according to the meaning [*ad sensum interpretati sunt*]," or some others, like Saint Hilary of Poitiers, who "captured the ideas in his own language by the law of the victor [*victoris jure transposuit*]" (ibid.). For the sacred texts, Jerome requires *verbum e verbo*. But what this means is that he does not want to lose a single word, for each and every one contains part of the divine "mystery" (*mysterium* or *sacramentum*). He is thus a "translator" and not a "prophet": "It is," he states, "the erudition and richness of the words that translate what one understands [*eruditio et verborum copia ea quae intellegit transfert*]" (Prologue to the Pentateuch). Even if he uses it, he rejects Aquila's Greek translation, done by a "meticulous interpreter [*contentiosus interpres*] who translates not only the words but also the etymologies" (*Letters of St. Jerome*, letter 57, §11)—in other words, Jerome rejects the servile forms of literality that evacuate the "mystery," the carrier of truth. In addition, he affirms that the *ad verbum*, or literal, version "sounds absurd" (ibid.). The hermeneutic way of putting *verbum e verbo* to use allows the talent—or even the genius—of the translator, in this case Jerome, to come into play without affecting the meaning or *mysterium*. It is even possible sometimes to "keep the euphony and propriety of the terms [*euphonia et proprietas conservetur*]" (ibid., letter 106, §55). This explains and justifies the literary qualities and even the audacities of Jerome's translation, which is certainly exempt of all servility.

Jerome's contemporary and correspondent Augustine rejected the rule of *hebraica veritas*. For him, the Greek text of the Septuagint is "inspired by the holy Spirit": it is the very best version in existence. This means that if there is an original truth, it is contained within this text. This Greek Bible had truly announced the Christ (e.g., by introducing the adjective *parthenos* [παρθένος], "virgin," to translate "young woman" in reference to the mother of the Emmanuel, in Isaiah 7:14), and the church made this translation its own. Augustine believed in the progress of humanity through history, culminating in its final stage, which the Christ had "completed." In addition, his position is directed by a

concept of language that stems from the Stoic doctrine of the *res et signa* (the things and the signs; *On Christian Teaching*, bks. 1 and 2, passim). If *on* and *onoma* are fused, *res* and *signa* are separated. The unique and only *res* for Augustine is God, and *veritas* is just another way of saying God. Language, on the other hand, falls under *signa*, and writing is only a "sign" of a "sign": it cannot be identified with truth, which belongs to the order of the *res* (see SIGN, and below, IV).

IV. Medieval *Translatio*

In the Middle Ages, the term *translatio* encompassed different usages, all of which referred to a common idea of "displacement" or "transfer":

1. "transfer from one meaning to another" for one word, or "from the name of one thing to another" in a given language;
2. "transfer of a term from one language to an equivalent term in another," whence "translation" (see the difference with *etymologia* and *interpretatio*);
3. "transfer of culture or government from one epoch to another," "from one place to another" (*translatio studii, translatio imperii*).

A. Transfer of meaning

The notion of *translatio* is truly at the confluence of the arts of language (grammar, logic, rhetoric) and of theology. In its widest accepted meaning, the term *translatio* designates a transfer of meaning, a displacement of signification, from a proper usage to an improper usage. In a narrower acceptance, which one can find in grammar or rhetoric (in Quintilian or Donatus, for example), *translatio* is equivalent to *tropus*, defined as a change in signification for reasons of ornament or necessity (cf. Quintilian, *The Orator's Education*, 12.8–9) In an even narrower sense, *translatio* is equivalent to *metaphora*, which is one of the tropes; it entails using a word in some unusual and particular way, either because there is no proper word for this meaning or because this usage intensifies the meaning. The new use of the word is based on a perception of a resemblance between the thing that it properly signifies and the object to which it applies by transfer (e.g., when one says of some person: "he or she is a lion" because of his or her strength). The two first meanings apply equally to a single word as to a sequence of words; the third applies to a word in isolation. The terms *translatio* and *transumptio*, which had been distinct from each other in antiquity (e.g., with Quintilian), were, according to some medievalists, used interchangeably in the Middle Ages.

1. *Translatio*: Equivocation/ornament

In a very influential passage of his first chapter of the *Categories* of Aristotle, Boethius introduces the notion of *translatio*. He distinguishes two cases: (1) the transfer of meaning that occurs when one uses the name of one thing to designate another that has no name; this is done out of "penury of names" and results in equivocation, since the same name now applies to two different things; (2) the transfer of meaning that occurs for reasons of ornamentation and that does not result in equivocation (e.g., using *aurigia* [cart driver] to refer to the pilot of a ship, although this has its own proper name: *gubernator*) "*Translatio nullius proprietatis est* [transfer is a property that belongs to no thing]," says Boethius, and this formula must be understood in relation to case (2): the transfer does not establish the property of a thing (since it does not receive its proper name by transfer) nor of a name (since the transferred usage does not constitute a stable or permanent property of the name). Abelard will also emphasize this latter point: the transfer occurs for some given length of time as part of a specific utterance and is to be understood in its context. He thus confirms that this does not lead to equivocation, since there is no new imposition of meaning, only an "improper" usage. He adds that this kind of *translatio* is a form of *univocatio* because there is only a single imposition, even if the term takes on an acceptation different from the original acceptation. The analysis of several of these variations in acceptation that are contextually determined, along with the idea of *univocatio*, forms the basis for elaborating the theory of supposition: one speaks of *translatio disciplinalis* for the specific ways terms are used in expressions of grammar (e.g., *homo est nomen* ["man" is a noun]), of logic (*homo est species* ["man" is a species]), or of poetry (*prata rident* [the prairies are laughing]). It is a matter of determining if the predicate is the reason for the particular acceptation or if it only actualizes some semantic potentialities already contained in the term. In the context of the medieval commentaries on Aristotle's *On Sophistical Refutations*, *translatio* is often analyzed as the second kind of equivocation: between the equivocation that is produced when two signifieds are equally present in the term (e.g., *canis*) and the contextually determined equivocation (e.g., *monachus albus*, "white monk" [Cistercian], where *albus* can only refer to the Cistercian in this particular context), one finds *translatio*, in which the two acceptations of a term are in a hierarchy "according to the anterior and the posterior [*secundum prius et posterius*]." One can see that the medieval commentaries are more precise than Aristotle's original text, which is difficult to interpret because of the absence of examples to illustrate this second kind; it seemed to concern the semantic variations due to use, when we make a habit of using a word in a sense that it did not originally have (166a–b16–17): "another manner, is when we have become used to expressing ourselves in a certain way"). In the thirteenth century, the notion of *analogia* would be developed within this second category, as when one acceptation is primary and all the others can be traced back to it according to a determinant relation (e.g., *sanum* relates first to the health of the animal, then later, and in relation to the first, to the urine, the potion, etc.).

2. The theological context

In a theological context, Augustine contrasted *signa propria* and *signa translata* (*De doctrina christiana*, 2.10.15); among the latter, he mentions the name "bull," which properly refers to the animal but also, by *usurpatio*, refers to the evangelist: the name properly refers back to a thing, which itself refers back to a second thing, and it thus signifies the second by transfer. In a different perspective, the *De trinitate*, §4 of Boethius, which takes up in part the *De trinitate*, §5 of Augustine, is the point of departure for a series of important reflections. In this text, Boethius speaks of the *mutatio* of categories when applied to the divinity: they are modified as a function of

the subjects they are applied to, whence the adage "*talia sunt praedicamenta qualia subjecta permiserint* [the categories are such as their subjects permit them to be]"; when the predicates apply to something other than the divine reality, they can be substance or accidents; but they are modified when they apply to the divine ("*cum qui in divinam verterit predicationem cuncta mutantur que predicari possunt* [when one turns to divine predications, that which can be predicated finds itself completely changed]"). The adage is subject to two modifications in the context of the analysis of the propositions of Trinitarian theology. The first substitutes *predicata* for *praedicamenta* and gives it a semantic application: the value of predicates, when applied to divine reality, can change, even to the point of rendering false the utterance, says John of Salisbury in the first half of the twelfth century, and on the same occasion, Thierry de Chartres specifically talks of the "*verborum transsumptio*." The second transformation consists in the inversion of the terms *subjecta* and *praedicata* ("*talia sunt subjecta qualia praedicata permittunt*" [subjects are such that predicates allow]) It is no longer an issue of showing the "improper" character because of the "transfer" of the discourse on God, but rather of setting out a general principle making the semantic and referential properties of the subject depend on the nature of the predicate (e.g., the predicate "engender," in "God engendered" [*Deus generat*] restricts the subject "God" to refer only to God the Father). Through this latter acceptation, the adage becomes the very principle of contextual semantics developed by the determinist logicians of the thirteenth century.

The notion of the transference of meaning was also influenced by the Dionysian tradition, starting with John Scotus Erigena, who took up the teaching of Pseudo-Dionysius. The term "metonomy" (translated as *transnominatio* in Erigena or as *denominatio* in John Sarrazin) is generally used here, and the trope by the same name likewise designates a transfer of sense based on different relations, especially from cause to effect, which makes it particularly useful in this context. Erigena chooses the term *translatio* (and its derivations) both for the transfer of categories and the transfer of names, and this usage would continue in all subsequent literature devoted to the divine names. He also speaks of *metaphora* when he considers types of relation and resemblance, but also relations of opposition and difference, which legitimize the transfer of names to God. These latter are affirmations that are called *per translationem*, which are improper and false, while the negations are proper and truthful.

The idea that names are attributed to God by a process of *translatio*, which results in an improper usage because it is different from the one assigned to the name by virtue of the first imposition, leads to the analysis of translated usages as examples of equivocation, *aequivocatio* (Abelard, and then the commentators on *De trinitate* of Boethius: Gilbert de Poitiers and Thierry de Chartres). At that time, one generally considered there to be "equivocity" between a noun or name applied to a created reality (which the name is proper to, having been first imposed upon it) and a noun applied to God. Toward the end of the twelfth century, several authors would think the opposite, that there is "univocity" in "God is just" and in "man is just" because in both expressions the word "just" signifies the same thing (whence the *univocatio*) but *connote* different properties (the root of all justice and the effect of divine justice, respectively). So there is no incommensurability between the two kinds of discourse themselves, only a partial incommensurability, and the notion of *connotatio* permits the precise designation of this difference (see CONNOTATION). Alain de Lille, starting from the different theological sources mentioned previously and borrowing from the arts of language, specified the notion of *translatio* by distinguishing between the *translatio nominis* (transfer of the name) from the *translatio rei* (transfer of the thing). When one says *linea est longa* (the line is long), there is a transfer of both the word and the object it specifies; in *seges est leta* (the harvest is a happy one), there is only a transfer of the thing (the joy is transferred from a human, to which it properly belongs, to an inanimate object); in *monanchus albus*, there is a transfer of word only (only the name is transferred, as a "white monk" is not white), and only this latter mode comes into play in the *translationes in divinis* (see HOMONYM). In this way, Alain de Lille shows how language is subject to a general displacement when it is applied to God, a global distortion:

> Here, the words do not express existing realities. The terms are removed from their proper signification . . . here the nouns become pronouns, the adjectives become substantives, the verb does not apply in the usual way, the predicate has no subject, the subject has no content, here the affirmation is proper, the negation true, the words cannot be evaluated by the meaning they provide, but according to the meaning from which they originate, here syntax is not subject to Donatus's laws, metaphor (*translatio*) is a stranger to Cicero's rules.
>
> (Quoted in Dahan, *L'exégèse chrétienne*)

3. *Translatio* and analogy

The introduction of the notion of analogy in the thirteenth century reduces the scope of *translatio* (see ANALOGY). Analogy is introduced based on the second mode of equivocation of *On Sophistical Refutations*, the very same passage that had been previously considered a mode of *translatio* and following the same formula calling out the passage from *prius* to *posterius* ("healthy" refers first to health and then to urine, a constitutional walk, etc.). In theology, the question of ineffability is subdivided, starting with Pseudo-Dionysius, into two distinct parts: the first includes the case of "mystical" nouns, essential nouns, or nouns of perfection ("justice," "truth," etc.). The second applies to "symbolic" nouns (e.g., when one uses the name "lion"). The real philosophical and theological problem, according to Duns Scotus, applies to the former: to determine the relationship between divine justice and human justice, which will permit the analysis of the relation between the expression "God is just" and "man is just." *Translatio* or *metaphora* will be limited to "symbolic" nouns: purely linguistic questions that do not address resemblance or similarity between God and man (these are the dissimilar symbols, or metaphors without resemblance, of Pseudo-Dionysius). In order to determine the kind of "transfer," it is important to consider the location of the *per prius* that is transferred. Thus justice as a "thing" or "signified object" is found *per prius* in God, and secondarily *per posterius* in man (according to different modes of analysis, but, e.g., by virtue of a relation of participation).

But on the level of names or words, the relation is reversed, since the word "justice" applies *per prius* to the living creature (since names were first imposed on the things of this world, and then *per posterius*, "transferred" to God). On the basis of signification, such a noun applies "properly" to God, but it applies "improperly" on the mode of signification, since the latter is necessarily adequate for its user and thus inadequate to speak of unthinkable and ineffable realities (see SENSE, III.B.3). For a symbolic name like *leo*, there is no relation between the signified and the thing that the subject it is applied to signifies; the transfer, which is purely nominal (*translatio nominis*), is achieved by virtue of a property judged to be one of similarity and of a relation of proportionality (one says "God is a lion" by positing God/strength : lion/strength); for this reason, says Bonaventure, these are the only words that are truly "transferred names" (*nomina translativa*) (*In IV Sententiarum*, distinction 1.22, a. un., question 3 resp.). We should note that Albertus Magnus, on the other hand, considers that there is in fact a "transfer of thing" due to the fact that it is the property (strength) that is transferred from the lion to God. Whatever the case, these symbolic names are absolutely improper, both on the level of the signification and, as is the case with all names, on the level of the modes of signifying.

B. Transfer from one language to another: *translatio*/"translation"

The medieval grammarians and lexicographers sought to distinguish the different modes by which two terms can be set in relation to each other, on the condition that they have something in common. It is the recognition of what they have in common that allows one of them to serve as a gloss (*expositio*) of the other. One can see some of the difficulties they encountered by considering the following couplings of terms, where the equals sign points out an equivalence that is precisely what needs to be specified.

1. *deus* = *Dans Eternam Vitam Suis* (God = Giving Eternal Life to his Own): etymology called "by letters";
2. *episcopus* = *epi* + *skopos* [ἐπί + σκοπός]: analysis by composition;
3. *deus* = *theos* [θεός];
4. *homo* = *anthropos* [ἄνθρωπος];
5. *Iacob* = *Ioacobus*;
6. *sapientia* (wisdom) = *amor philosophiae* (love of philosophy).

The most common generic term for these equivalences is *expositio*. It is also used in logic to designate the logical structure of an utterance (e.g., *homo qui currit disputat*, "a man who runs discusses" = *homo qui currit et ille disputat*, "a man runs and he discusses"). In the same way, the *expositio* enables the recovery of multiple meanings or acceptations of a term, which may also explain its material form: the more difficult a word is to understand, the more one is tempted to capture it by a multiplicity of *expositiones* based on more commonly understood expressions, as in the case, in the *Catholicon* of John Balbi of Genoa, of the word *dues* (we find, among others, [1] and [3]).

The authors of the twelfth century distinguish two kinds of *expositions*. As for the first, "etymology (*etymologia*) is the *expositio* of a term by one or more better-known terms, based on the property of the signified object and the similarity of letters and sounds, and it (most often) occurs within a single language." It includes examples of type (1) but excludes (6) due to the absence of formal similarity. It can include the process of composition/derivation, although, as illustrated by example (2), which is fairly representative of what one finds in the dictionaries known as *Derivationes* (Hugh of Pisa, for example), the passage from one language to another is also authorized, since a Latin term is decomposed into Greek units. As for the second: "*Interpretatio* is the *expositio* or the *translatio* of a term into another language, whether or not there is similarity in sound." *Interpretatio* can be applied to (4). Depending on the author, the distinguishing criterion is either: in the same language / in another language; or: with a formal similarity / not necessarily with a formal similarity. Some authors distinguish between the two first notions of *translatio*, which occurs when a term is "transferred" from Greek to Latin—for example, *ego*, *tu*, *sui*, which are therefore "derived," according to John of Genoa. He then asks himself if there is always derivation (*derivatio*) whenever there is *translatio*, to which he replies in the negative: in the case of translation (3) or (5), one cannot say that there is derivation, since in both cases the *same noun* is subjected to a simple formal modification in passing from one language to another (*detorsio unius lingue in alteram*); each of the words in these copulas is thus the same in both its signification and its signifier. One can speak of derivation when this is not the case, as in the coupling (Latin) of *olor* (swan) "derived" from *olon* ("completely"; Gr. *holon* [ὅλον], "because the swan is COMPLETELY white," or in the case of *gigno* (to engender) from *gê* [γῆ] (earth). One should note that this problematic of the "unity of the noun," which originates from a theological context (it needed to be demonstrated that the Gospel was everywhere the same, even if it was written in various languages, see WORD), is also raised in relation to example (4) of *interpretatio*.

We can see from these remarks that it would be misleading to start from a problematic of *translation* when the heart of the matter is establishing the relationship between two words (or expressions). The function of all these *expositiones* is to account for the signification of words and/or to justify their formation, which explains how *etymologia* as a form of *veriloquium* (true talking) sometimes becomes the generic term applied to the different types we have encountered. Only with Roger Bacon did the notion of *etymologia* become defined by precise characteristics that are closer to modern criteria and clearly exclude what came to be called fantasy etymology (what Buridant, in "Les paramètres de l'étymologie médiévale," calls *ontological*, because of the kind of relationship between objects they depend on; cf. Rosier, "Quelques textes sur l'étymologie au Moyen Âge"). Thus we see that only some of these *expositiones* serve as translations, *translatio*, in the modern sense, for example, (3), (4), and (5).

■ See Box 2.

V. The German Tradition of Translation: *Dolmetschen/Übersetzen/Übertragen*

A. *Dolmetschen*: "To render in German" and "to translate"

It is often said that modern German was formed primarily through a translation: Luther's translation of the Bible.

2

Translatio studii: The constituent languages and traditions of philosophy in Europe

The theme of *translatio studii* constitutes a *topos* in medieval thought destined to illustrate how, at different moments, knowledge (*savoir*) "moved" from Greece to Rome and then from Rome to the Christian world. The concept was first developed by the defenders of Charlemagne and the empire as a defense of Capetian power. From the twelfth century on it reappeared at different times and under different forms, notably in the Scholastic setting, and then especially in the universities: the University of Paris was thus legitimized as the culmination of a long journey of knowledge, first from Greece to Rome, and finally as an essential component of the "identity of the French realm." One problem with this *topos* derives from the term *studium* itself when identified with knowledge or wisdom (*sapientia*): is this sacred knowledge or profane? Roger Bacon's approach was an original one. In discussing *translatio philosophiae*, he stated that "[i]t pleased God to give whatever wisdom he wanted, since all wisdom comes from God; he thus revealed it to philosophers, both to the faithful and the infidel alike" (*Opus Tertium*). This voyage of philosophy was necessarily a voyage through the languages, a *translatio linguarum*:

> God first revealed philosophy to his saints and gave them the laws. . . . It was thus primarily and most completely given in the Hebrew language. It was then renewed in the Greek language, primarily by Aristotle; then in the Arabic language, primarily through Avicenna; but it was never composed in Latin and was only translated/transferred [*translata*] based on foreign languages, and the best [texts] are not translated.
>
> (Bacon, *Opus Tertium*)

The improbable status of the Latin language is clearly apparent here. It is simultaneously a language of sacred knowledge, since it is one of the three languages of the cross, along with Hebrew and Greek, but it is not really a language of profane knowledge, since, according to Bacon, the "Latins" did not add anything to that domain, unlike the Greeks and the Arabs.

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Luther designated the act of translating, constitutive of language and culture, as *dolmetschen*, and he often clarified it by substituting the verb *verdeutschen* ("to make German," to "Germanize," or as Philippe Büttgen translated it into French, "to put in German"). To explain *dolmetschen* by *verdeutschen* is to specify the method and purpose of translation: to make it understandable for the people, for "the mother at home and the ordinary man" ("Ein Sendbrief" [1530]), and to facilitate the mediation of cultures.

In our day, *dolmetschen* has remained close to "interpreting agency," that is to say, the oral and immediate translation of the interpreter-guide or the interpreter-translator. In *Truth and Method* by Hans-Georg Gadamer, "The Translator as Interpreter" ("*Der Übersetzer als Dolmetsch*") designates the intepreter-translator as part of a living dialogue. We should note nonetheless that within the domain of translation, the German language does not contain a term that in itself refers to interpretation as a necessary part of the understanding of meaning. *Dolmetschen* has simply been progressively replaced by *übersetzen*, and the two terms, which had started out as synonyms, have ended up being opposed to each other to the point of excluding *dolmetschen* from the philosophical vocabulary. Thus Schleiermacher sets them in radical opposition ("Über die verschiedenen Methoden des Übersetzens" [1813]): the two verbs designate two distinct manners of passing from one language into another and thus two perspectives on the activity of translation. Schleiermacher distinguishes authentic translation, which takes the signified content as its object and draws upon reflection (*übersetzen*) from simultaneous or immediate translation (*dolmetschen*), which is a simple exchange of linguistic values that are judged to be equivalent. This is why *dolmetschen* is rarely used in philosophy: Fichte, for example, used it occasionally to designate the interpretive activity of the preacher, the intermediary between human beings and the gods (*Fichtes Werke*, 7:600; 8:254), but never as part of a theoretical discussion. In contemporary philosophical language, both in the hermeneutic tradition (Gadamer) and in the analytic tradition, *übersetzen* is rendered as "to translate" (Quine, Davidson) or *traduire*.

B. *Übersetzen*, *übertragen*: "Translation" and "transposition"

The German language also includes a synonym of *übersetzen*, the verb *übertragen*. *Übersetzen* literally means "to transpose," whereas *übertragen* means "to transport." *Übertragen* is the more general term and designates all sorts of "transposition," "transfer," or "transmission," whereas today *übersetzen* is limited to the written transposition of discourse. Thus "to translate" is generally applied to *übersetzen*, while "to transpose" is used for *übertragen*. *Übertragung* can also designate "transfer" or even "metaphor." In Nietzsche, the verb is translated (into English) as "to transfer" ("On Truth and Lie"). In their normal usage, the terms are strictly equivalent, but they are distinguished from each other in the reflections and analytic writing of Heidegger and Gadamer, who used the nuances of this distinction in philosophical discourse.

C. *Übersetzen, übertragen, überliefern*: "Translation" and "transmission"

In fact, like "transmission" in general, *übertragen* can underscore the existing link between translation and transmission. In this sense, the two terms are complementary, as for Kant,

for example. He writes in *Religion within the Bounaries of Mere Reason* (RT: Ak., 6:166):

> Indessen es ist nicht genug, es in Übersetzungen zu kennen und so auf die Nachkommenschaft zu übertragen.
>
> (It does not suffice to be acquainted with the book [the Bible] in translation and to transmit it to posterity in this form.)

It is this proximity that binds in French *traduction* and *tradition*.

It is in this same sense that Heidegger took up the philosophical problem of translating: *übersetzen* is to pass from one shore to another, the translator being the ferryman (*passeur*). *Übersetzen* signifies "translation" in the Latin sense of *traducere*, "to lead across." "To translate" is to bring a discourse across from one language into another, that is to say, to insert it into a different milieu, a different culture. Translation is not to be understood as a simple "transfer" or as a pure linguistic "version," but instead within the general development of the spirit. This idea, already present in Luther, would be taken up by Goethe, Herder, and Novalis, and in a general way by the first romantics that considered this exchange between languages as the condition of *Bildung* (Berman, *The Experience of the Foreign*). Schleiermacher's theory of the methods of translation, which favors the reader's encounter with the foreign, is likewise completely based on the analysis of this movement. "Translation" is thus considered as a "transplantation": to translate is "to transplant [*verpflanzen*] to a foreign soil the products of a language in the domains of the sciences and the arts of discourse, in order to enlarge the scope of action of these products of the mind" ("Über die verschiedenen Methoden"). F. Schlegel used similar formulas as early as 1798: "Each translation [*Übersetzung*] is either a *transplantation* [*Verpflanzung*] or a *transformation* [*Verwandlung*], or both at the same time" (*Kritische Friedrich-Schlegel Ausgabe*, 18:204, fr. 87). The same metaphor allows Benjamin to talk of a *Nachreife*, that is to say, a ripening of words past the point of their usefulness ("Die Aufgabe des Übersetzers").

1. *Über-setzen*: Trans-late

This is the classical perspective that Heidegger inherited when he affirmed that translation transposes the work of thought into the spirit of another language and thus transforms thought in a fruitful manner: this is why a translation "serves mutual comprehension in a higher sense. And each step in this direction is a blessing for the peoples" (Heidegger, author's prologue to Henri Corbin's French translation of *What Is Metaphysics?*). The "translation" of *Über-setzung* (*Über*-set*z*ung, with the accent on the penultimate syllable) is thus, "trans-lation" (Über-*setzung*), the transposition of a thought into another universe of thought (Heidegger, *Off the Beaten Track*). The displacement of the stressed accent indicates the focus of the thought: to lead to the other side, to another context that will reveal its truth. Such a passage can be measured by what it passes over, "a bound over a trench," a "*Sprung über einen Graben*" (*Off the Beaten Track*), which becomes in Gadamer an "abyss" (*Kluft*; *Truth and Method*).

Thus, translation is no longer a simple transfer, but an inscription into another relation to the world or global form of comprehension of the world, according to the general structure of understanding. *Übersetzen* is thus not a "replacing" (*ersetzen*) but a "transposing" (*es setzt über*): there is a true "transfer," "transport" (Heidegger, *Parmenides*).

2. *Überliefern*: "Tradition" and "revealing"

If Heidegger's analysis of the term "translation" as "transmission" remains within the classical perspective, he nonetheless inflects it by introducing the dimension of truth. In translation as tradition (*tradieren*), Heidegger gives the idea of transmission (*Übertragung*) a particular form in which "to transmit" is called *überliefern*. By its connection to "tradition" (as Préau translates *Überlieferung*, without being able to render the full Heideggerian sense), the German language does not promote the relationship between translation and treachery (*Verrat*) that is imprinted so forcefully in the Italian expression *traduttore-traditore*. *Trahir* (to betray) is an adaptation of the Latin *tradere*, which signifies "to surrender," "to hand over," or "to bequeath," so that in French *trahir* also means "to reveal." The German connotation is different from the common usage in French and the Romance languages. If "translation" is "treason" or "betrayal" in French, it is because even a beautiful translation does not express the original text. The translation "abandons" the original. But by underscoring the tie to tradition, Heidegger instead conveys the *Übersetzung* of fundamental concepts into the historical languages, that is to say, the translation of a culture, touching upon the essence of language, as an *Überlieferung* (*The Principle of Reason*): *Übersetzung* as *Überlieferung* ensures a reprise, a taking over (*Übernahme*), which is a reception or "collection." In *Übersetzung/Überlieferung*, the transposition is a reappropriation, a deliverance, a liberation:

> [T]radition [*Überlieferung*] is what is proper to its name: a transmission, a handing over, a delivery [*ein Liefern*] in the Latin sense of *liberare*, a liberation. As a liberation tradition opens up and brings to light hidden treasures of what has never ceased from being, even if this light is only a first tentative dawn.
>
> (Heidegger, *Principle of Reason*)

There is thus an inflection despite the relation between *überliefern* and *tradere*, "to betray," "to hand over," "to reveal" (German has kept *tradieren* and *Tradition* as synonyms of *überliefern*, *Überlieferung*). For the connotations are different in French: if *livrer* can be traced back to its origin in *liberare* by Heidegger, to link *traduire* to *trahir* is to place it under the sign of infidelity and falsehood. But in following Heidegger's German, on the other hand, what translation reveals instead is the "truth," the "unconcealment." The French language seems less inclined to think of tradition as a revealing, whereas the German seems less inclined to think of tradition as treachery and betrayal.

The importance attributed to translation in contemporary German thought, and especially in Gadamer's hermeneutics (*Truth and Method*), is based on this approach. In effect, Gadamer sees "Heidegger's genius" in the analyses that lead back to the "natural meaning of words and to the wisdom that can be discovered in language" (*Philosophical Hermeneutics*). In this context, the rehabilitation of tradition

is inseparable from the concept of translation. In *Truth and Method*, it is this notion that opens up the reflection on the "ontological turn taken by hermeneutics with language as its guide": not only is tradition usually transmitted to us through translation (*Truth and Method*), but it is essentially "translation." Tradition-translation transmits interpretations, that is to say, the understanding of the world that constitutes the framework in which the world reveals itself to us and in which the existential dimensions of comprehension are inscribed (Heidegger, *Being and Time*, para. 31). So to understand is both to receive and to translate what we have received. But this translation is *trans*-lation, a form of passage "beyond" that Gadamer calls the "fusion of horizons" (*Truth and Method*). From this point on, inscribed within an encompassing comprehension, translation carries with it a passivity that refers back to the idea of a comprehension that is always other. In effect, if translation liberates by submitting to tradition, and this liberation is also a betrayal, then one can understand how "*we understand in a different way, if we understand at all*" (*Truth and Method*). Heidegger made the same claim, although in a less radical fashion: explication does not yield a better understanding, but just another one "all the while still encountering the same" (*Off the Beaten Track*). Difference and identity are the gap that translation straddles and that becomes an abyss for Gadamer. Here, translation, in its inevitable infidelity, becomes the revealer of truth.

Thus translation-tradition-treason loses the linguistic rigor on which it was based and becomes in Gadamer and later in Heidegger, the very revelation of the essence of language as a dimension of human accomplishment (cf. Escoubas, "De la traduction"). "To translate" becomes synonymous with "to think." In this context, it is in the very term in German that we can read the passage of translation from simple transfer to translation as an interpretation of the world (see WELTANSCHAUUNG).

■ See Boxes 3, 4, and 5.

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3
Duhem-Quine: On the underdetermination of theory and the indeterminacy of translation

1. The underdetermination of epistemological translation

In Pierre Duhem's work on the philosophy of science, *The Aim and Structure of Physical Theory*, one encounters the word "translation" in its original epistemological meaning. It allows Duhem to formulate a conception of the relation between experiment and theory, which profoundly influenced the epistemology of the twentieth century (see EPISTEMOLOGY). Starting with a critique of the notions of observation and the "experimental method," Duhem redefined the relation of scientific theory to facts using the idea of translation:

> The mathematical elaboration of a physical theory can be tied to observable facts only through a translation. In order to introduce experimental conditions into a calculation, one must make a *version* that replaces the language of concrete observation by the language of numbers; in order to make the results which the theory predicts into something observable, one needs a *theme* to transform a numerical value into an indication formulated in the language of experiment.
>
> (*Aim and Structure of Physical Theory*)

The interest of Duhem's thesis lies in the fact that it affirms that the nontransparency and asymmetry inherent in each of these two translations is subject to indetermination. The first translation (version) is a mathematical translation upon concrete *things*, linked to methods of measurement: "The methods of measurement are the vocabulary which render translation possible in both directions" (ibid.). Duhem continues:

> But he who translates also betrays; *traduttore, traditore*; there is never a perfect fit [*adéquation*] between the two texts that a version makes correspond to each other.

Translation makes it possible to define the distance between theory and experiment, whose consequence for contemporary theories will be the underdetermination of theory in relation to experiment (the plurality or even empirical equivalence of theories that can account for the same facts), which will also lead to holism (the impossibility of assigning a specific experimental content to a theoretical point). From this, Duhem draws important methodological conclusions, which account for the posthumous reputation of *Aim and Structure* and its renown under the name of the Duhem-Quine thesis: an experiment cannot apply to an isolated hypothesis because there is a work of symbolization between a fact and its theoretical translation that is part of the work of theory: "a fact of practice does not translate into a single fact of theory," and "an infinite number of theoretical facts can be taken as translations of the same fact of practice" (ibid.). Recourse to the idea of translation allows the formulation of an incommensurability between a fact and the theory applied to it.

Long before Popper, Duhem developed a critique of the inductive method. He took the transition from Kepler's laws to the Newtonian theory of gravitation as an example. Newton's theory is not an inductive generalization of Kepler's laws: on the contrary, it is incompatible with them. If Newton believed he had made a generalization based on Kep-ler's laws, it is because he *translated* those laws. "For them to acquire this fecundity, they needed to be transformed, to be translated symbolically" (ibid). Once Kepler's laws were "translated" into Newton's theoretical framework, they gained new meaning: "The translation of Kepler's laws into symbolic laws required the physicist to have already adopted a whole set of hypotheses" (ibid.). We can see the modernity of Duhem's approach: in the translation of the laws, the adoption of a new theory entails a change in usage and meaning of earlier concepts and facts within a new paradigm.

Duhem's use of the word "translation" to describe the process of scientific constitution

(*continued*)

(*continued*)

is thus neither metaphorical nor trivial: his affirmation of the nontransparency and asymmetry of any translation allows him to expose the indeterminacy between theory and experiment in a new light. *Aim and Structure* would have a considerable influence subsequently, both in epistemology through the ideas of paradigm and empirical influence (Kuhn, Feyerabend) and in the debates around Quine's thesis on the indeterminacy of translation, which radicalized Duhem's indeterminacy.

2. The indeterminacy of radical translation

The thesis on the indeterminacy of radical translation set out by the American philosopher W. V. O. Quine in 1960 in his book *Word and Object* played a central role in the development of philosophy of language, as well as in the philosophy of mind and the epistemology of the twentieth century. Quine attacked the idea of shared signification between different languages and affirmed that in a situation of radical translation (without prior contact and with nothing in common between his language and the local language) a linguist could develop contradictory manuals of translation that would be compatible with the facts; in other words, there would be *no basis* on which to determine whether the translator was right or wrong. The radicalness of this thesis and Quine's notion of a "conceptual schema" put his work at the center of the debate on relativism. It starts out with a "thought experiment": a linguist "on the ground" goes into the jungle to discover a completely unknown language. How will he produce a translation manual that makes correspondences between the terms of the foreign language and his own without a dictionary or interpreter? The linguist goes for a walk with the native and sees a rabbit hop away in front of him. "*Gavagai*," exclaims the native. What does this expression mean? Quine's answer is to say that there is no sense in asking him, especially if one is wondering not only about the signification of the utterance but also what entity is designated by the word *Gavagai* (a stable object, a sense-datum, a spatiotemporal segment of rabbithood, an event—"he rabbits"; see SENSE).

The thesis of indeterminacy, with its critique of signification, is a "philosophical point," according to Quine: as soon as one leaves behind any linguistic community, synonymy becomes opaque. The point is also an anthropological one, since what is at stake in the question of synonymy is the very idea of a common core shared by several languages, such as one finds in Frege's classical formulations. Quine calls the belief in such a common core, which is expressed differently by each language, the *myth of meaning.* We can compare this thesis to the idea of paradigm as developed by T. S. Kuhn in *Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1962), a work that is contemporary with Quine's. The question of the indeterminacy of translation is in fact the question of whether a form of thought, a meaning, or a reality can be held in common by all of humankind, or by all languages, even with different conceptual schemes. In a famous text, "On the Very Idea of a Conceptual Scheme," Donald Davidson applies his critique of relativism to what he calls the "conceptual relativism" of both Quine and Kuhn (see EPISTEMOLOGY). The idea of conceptual scheme extends the problem of translation between utterances to the commensurability of conceptions of the world, to conceptual schemas, and to *common sense* (see COMMON SENSE).

Translation is indeterminate, but not impossible; it is indeterminate because it is possible. "Indeterminacy means not that there is no acceptable translation, but that there are many." Indeterminacy is the possibility of choice: "the freedom of conjecture, the field of free creation are both wide open" ("The Behavioral Limits of Meaning," Quine, unpublished conference paper of 1984). The choice is settled according to criteria that behavior and experience cannot settle or decide. This is true of the attribution of logic or rationality. Attributing binary logic to the native is not the result of discovering it in his language, even less so in his thought: it is an invention.

The thesis of indeterminacy means that one always translates *within* one's own language, *at home*. It consists of "catapulting oneself into the foreign language" with the momentum of one's own. According to Quine, we have *nothing* on which to be right or wrong. There is no *fact of the matter* (see MATTER OF FACT). This theme of radical skepticism paradoxically inscribes the question of the plurality of languages at the very heart of an analytic philosophy that has always tended to erase it.

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4
Qur'ān [قرآن]

The Qur'ān (or Koran, according to the usual English transliteration), the name of the Muslim holy book, comes from the verb *qara'a,* which means "to read," "to recite," or "to proclaim aloud." Muslims believe that it is the very word of God revealed to the prophet Muhammad and through him to humanity. The Qur'ānic text, which is often self-referential, declares (97:1): "We have indeed revealed this [message] in the Night of Power," an allusion to the "descent" of the word of God into this world, which Islamic tradition (*hadith*) narrates as follows. It was a habit of Muhammad, before he declared himself a prophet, to go to the top of Jabal an-Nūr, one of the mounts near the city of Mecca, to spend many days in solitary meditation in a cave known as Hirā'. This was during the month called Ramadan. The "Night of Power" (or "Night of Destiny," as it is also translated) is a night during that month when he was visited in his solitude by the angel Gabriel, who commanded him: "*Iqra!*" ("Read!"), using the very word that would give its name to the message he brought: "the Reading." After he had repeated three times in terror that he could not read (he was illiterate), Muhammad asked what he was supposed to read. Then the angel revealed to him the very first words of what would become the book of the Muslims: "Read! In the name of thy Lord and Cherisher, who created—created man, out of a (mere) clot of blood. Read! And thy

Lord is most Bountiful, He who taught (the use of) the Pen—Taught man that which he knew not" (96:1–6). After the experience was over, Muhammad ran home completely terrified and only gathered his spirits when his wife Khadija expressed her faith in him and in the truth of what he had been told by the angel: that he was the prophet of God chosen to proclaim His Qur'ān. The Message would then be revealed bit by bit during the twenty-three years that followed, during which the new religion founded upon it, Islam, started its expansion. It was only under the third caliph of Islam that the verses revealed by Muhammad and often known by heart by his followers were collected and put together into a book of 114 chapters classified by length, after the first one known as "The Opening."

As this narrative shows, at the core of Islamic belief is the notion that the Qur'ān is the miracle of a revelation by God to a simple man, Muhammad, and in a simply human language, Arabic, of a message He directly authored. Again, in self-referential statements, the Qur'ān declares that the evidence for its divine origin does not require any miracle further than its "inimitability" (Qur'ānic verses are called *āyāt*, which means "miracles," or "signs"). Thus, chapter 17, verse 88 states: "Say: if the whole of mankind and Jinns were to gather together to produce the like of this Qur'ān they could not produce the like thereof, even if they backed up each other with help and support."

Does "inimitability" mean untranslatability, and what does the notion of a choice by God of a human language to carry His own word imply? These are important philosophical and theological questions. An early theological school in Islam, characterized by its rationalist outlook and known as Mu'tazilism, held the view that the Qur'ān is the word of God but created in a human language. One consequence of that view would be that the book, meant for human comprehension, is, de jure, fully understandable by human reason and translatable into all human languages. Conservative schools of thought would insist on the fundamental untranslatability of the word uttered by God Himself, parts of it being known solely by Him. Those schools would reluctantly accept translations of the Qur'ān only as a makeshift solution because the majority of Muslim populations do not speak Arabic and use it merely as a liturgical language. One important aspect of the issue of translatability is the meaning of the "election" of the Arabic language: is there anything special in that language that called for its election or, on the contrary, does the Qur'ānic miracle consist precisely in the fact that this is simply a human language, equivalent to and translatable into any other human language?

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5
No untranslatables!

> There's nothing in Greek that can't also be said in Latin.
>
> (Leonardo Bruni, *On Correct Translation*)

It was through the Italians that translation as a theoretical enterprise was revived in the Renaissance. This was in large part thanks to Leonardo Bruni, erstwhile chancellor of Florence and indefatigable translator of Greek into Latin at a particularly heady moment in the history of humanism: the early fifteenth century, two generations after that other indefatigable humanist (albeit one ignorant of Greek), Petrarch. Indignant over criticism of his translation of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, Bruni threw himself into *De interpretatione recta* (*On Correct Translation*) in the mid-1420s. His anger at a churchman whose critique revealed misunderstanding not only of Greek but also of his own "mother tongue," Latin, produced a passionate statement about translation's importance to the modern Western world.

Bruni seems to be the first to have used *traductio* and *traducere* to mean "translation": words that would come to replace *interpretare*, *vertere*, and *convertere*, as Remigio Sabbadini has noted, and thus words that insist on the act of transporting, and even transformation. Transformation is, in fact, at the heart of Bruni's meditations: the "best translator will turn his whole mind, heart, and will to his author, and in a sense be transformed by him" (*De interpretatione recta*). But after losing his identity, the translator must regain it, and he can only do so if he is absolute master of his own language, dominating all in his power ("Deinde linguam eam, ad quam traducere vult, sic teneat, ut quodammodo in ea dominetur et in sua totam habeat potestate"; ibid., chap. 11). In this act of transporting, nothing must be left behind, and all that is carried across must be transformed into the new tongue: "Don't go begging for words or borrowing them; leave nothing in Greek out of your ignorance of Latin. The translator must know with precision the exact value and efficacy of terms." Not to translate is to remain a beggar, a mendicant, trapped in the no-man's land between two languages and thus in exile. Bruni, utterly terrestrial and at war with the Scholastics who shoehorned Aristotle to fit their own theological and pedagogical ends, was far more interested in a cultural patrimony whose greatest works looked not to otherworldly Christianity but defined and defended one's earthly homeland. Demosthenes's orations as he stood at the gate of Athens and exhorted the citizens to take a stand against Philip of Macedon were some of Bruni's earliest translations. Even Aristotle—despite his tutoring of Philip's son Alexander—becomes a supporter of civic identity and independence, the very independence Florence was struggling to maintain in the early fifteenth century.

But Aristotle (and along with him, Plato) becomes something else: a supreme and superb stylist, whose books possess "the splendor and clarity of a painting," in a comparison that harks back to Horace's *ut pictura poesis* from the *Ars poetica*. Bruni's Latin was not the medieval Latin of the Scholastics—and hence of Aristotle's prior translators. The closing chapters of the treatise are a tour de force, as Bruni lists examples of bad translations he had come across—sheer acts of "barbarism," he calls them—and enumerates

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their many weaknesses. For one thing, these incompetent translators use words no one has ever used; thus "*oligarchica sophistica legislationis*"—a literally "Latinized" version of the Greek that means nothing in Latin. But the major reason for their "*ignorantia ruditatesque loquendi*"—their ignorance and rustic way of speech—is their lack of familiarity with Aristotle as a stylist: "and every writer has his own particular style" (*cum singulis fere scriptoribus sua quedam ac propria sit dicendi figura*; chap. 14). Bruni goes on to list Aristotle's stylistic traits, marveling at one point that "a philosopher, in the midst of the subtlest discussion, should take such care for the way he wrote" (chap. 24): he is full of ornaments, elegance, and dignity. Philosophy thus becomes indistinguishable from style, as the *way* one writes becomes just as important as *what* one writes, and the pilfering of antiquity for presentiments of the Christian revelation a misguided and misleading occupation. In so focusing on style, on what he calls the "*vim ac naturam verborum*"—the force and nature of words— Bruni recasts Aristotle and Plato alike as writers and orators. Rescued from the theologians, their words sparkle with the rhetorical and literary efficacy denied them by "barbarous" translators.

As Horace's *Ars poetica* attests, Romans generally felt their civilization to be distinctly secondary to the Hellenic world they had nonetheless vanquished. The cry of Aeneas's father, Anchises, in the sixth book of the *Aeneid* expresses Virgil's sentiment on the matter: "Others, I have no doubt, will forge the bronze to breathe with suppler lines . . . plead their cases better, chart with their rods the stars that climb the sky and foretell the times they rise" (6:976–80; Robert Fagles's translation); the Romans could excel in the art of government alone. Translate everything! is Bruni's response. In reveling over the "force and nature" of the Latin language, he turns Greek philosophy into Latin oratory and poetry, setting Plato and Aristotle alongside Sallust, Livy, and Cicero. It is thus through the act of translation that one recognizes the philosopher as an artist, an orator, a "stylist." Far from being diminished with respect to his status as a *philosophe*, Aristotle gains something, as the discourse of philosophy is considerably broadened, no longer prey to the clutches of theologians. Philosophy once again becomes powerfully transformative, as it had been with Plato, prompting its readers to reflect on how they live and how they speak. One is reminded that for Bruni translation itself is a transformative act, as the translator transforms himself into the author and the author's words are transformed into the translator's tongue. Bruni closed the preface to his translation of Saint Basil's letter to his nephews with "*Et iam Basilium ipsum audiamus*" (and now let us listen to Basil himself), as though Basil himself stood before us and the translator had vanished. Except it is a Basil—one who wisely counsels his nephews to read the great works of pagan, Greek philosophy—who speaks in Latin.

Is not this dictionary, with its inclusion of "poetic" terms such as *sprezzatura* and *leggiadria*, "strength," "to stand," and thus terms from texts that are only marginally "philosophical" in the strictest sense, also a transformation of philosophical language into something broader: a way of speaking, or even a way of life? A philosophy for nonphilosophers?

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TORAH [תּוֹרָה] (HEBREW) / ŠARĪ'A [الشريعة] (ARABIC)

ENGLISH	law
FRENCH	*loi*
GERMAN	*Gesetz*
GREEK	*nomos* [νόμος]
LATIN	*lex*

➤ LAW [LEX], and *DESTINY*, DUTY, EUROPE, GOD, SOLLEN, THEMIS, TO TRANSLATE, WILLKÜR

In European philosophical discussion, the word "law," as it is developed in political philosophy, does not only derive from the Greek philosophers—Plato, Aristotle, the Stoics, Cicero—and the Roman jurists. It also has sources in the Bible, which have been the object of reflection by theologians such as Saint Augustine or Saint Thomas Aquinas. And it is an object for philosophical reflection as well, starting with Machiavelli's project to read the Bible judiciously (*Discourses on Livy*, 3.30), and continuing with Hobbes and Spinoza, right up to Kant. The idea of law comes to modern Europe through Luther's German translations (*Gesetz*) (RT: *Die Bibel nach der Übersetzung Martin Luthers*) or through the Authorized (King James) Version of the Bible. Both occur within a context already set forth by the Greek translation of the Septuagint (*nomos* [νόμος]) and the subsequent Latin translation known as the Vulgate (*lex*), with the focus of the discussion most often set by the value of the "law" in the Epistles of Paul. We shall attempt to explore the intersections of the different vocabularies of the law, starting from the Hebrew and the Arabic.

I. The Hebrew Vocabulary of the Law

In Hebrew, *torah* derives from the root YRH [ירה], which signifies "to throw," and in modern Hebrew, to "fire" with a firearm. It no doubt originally refers to "throws" of chance and their subsequent interpretation as expressions of divine will. The priests are known as the "keepers of the *torah*" (*tōfesëy hat-tōrāh* [תֹּופְשֵׂי הַתּוֹרָה]; Jer 2:8). It is not a written text, but an oral teaching that applies to the domain of sacerdotal