

外研社学术文库·翻译研究

翻译与帝国： 后殖民理论解读

TRANSLATION AND EMPIRE:

Postcolonial Theories Explained

(美) Douglas Robinson 著



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自从翻译诞生以来，与之紧密相关的大多是意思、对等、精确、技巧等概念，都是关乎技巧性和评价性的问题，涉及的是词、句和语篇。传统定义上的翻译一直被认为是用各种机械的方式把意思从原始文本传递到目标文本的不改变原意的、不带个人因素的过程。

20 世纪 80 年代中晚期，对翻译的研究萌生出一个全新的视角——对翻译和帝国的研究。这种视角使翻译研究从传统的语言学领域中转移开来，而将帝国、政治、力量均衡等因素纳入研究范围。美国学者道格拉斯·鲁宾逊的《翻译与帝国：后殖民理论解读》系统地介绍了后殖民主义理论的产生和发展，堪称这一领域的力作。

本书以后殖民主义翻译研究的叙事性发展或称为乌托邦式的神话发展为基础，详细介绍了翻译从殖民化渠道到非殖民化渠道的发展历程。全书共分 6 章：第 1 章概述了后殖民主义对翻译的研究；第 2 章介绍翻译和帝国的基本概念；第 3 章探索了后殖民主义翻译理论产生以前的历史发展情况；第 4 章和第 5 章分析了翻译在殖民的和后殖民的背景中所起的多种作用；最后一章简要回顾了对后殖民主义翻译理论的多种批评。

本书内容充实，体系系统，通观全书，不难发现具有以下几个特点：

1. 内容全面，评论客观。本书以后殖民主义翻译理论的发展为主线，对其各个发展历程介绍详细入微。同时，书中多见其他学者的著作引证，不管是理论论证，还是事例列举，都是本着客观公正的态度进行阐述，真实地再现了翻译在帝国主义殖民化发展过程中的历史背景并描述了其历史作用。

2. 结构严谨，体系合理。本书在结构安排上可谓由浅入深、循序渐进。作者先从最基本的概念介绍入手，在阐述和分析中自然进入深层次的问题研究，从而带领读者深入地了解主旨。同时，作者在对其他学者观点保持客观态度的同时，把自己的主张、看法独立成章，并置于本书的最后，既不影响读者对其他作者观点的评价，又可充分表达自己的观点。这种体系安排有张有弛，堪称合理。

3. 角度独特,体裁新颖。后殖民主义翻译研究是一个全新的研究领域。本书抛开传统的翻译语言学研究视角,将翻译与帝国、政治、文化以及历史发展等外围因素紧密联系起来,站在历史的高度,旨在为读者提供一个评价翻译在帝国主义殖民化进程中所起作用的研究平台。

为方便广大读者阅读,现将本书的主要内容概括如下:

第1章:后殖民主义研究和翻译研究

对翻译和帝国的研究,出自一种意识——翻译一直是帝国主义征服和占领必不可少的一环。与此相关的最初历史始于在帝国范围内挑选和培训翻译人员,以便在殖民者和被殖民者之间进行调解,翻译其实是为帝国主义力量服务的有效工具。为了挖掘翻译对于帝国、帝国对于翻译的含义,我们必须从仅仅把翻译当作一种语言学行为或文本行为的传统观念上转移开来,从一种完全不同于翻译传统定义的角度审视翻译。

本章首先厘清了后殖民主义理论的概念。后殖民主义理论或称为后殖民主义研究,是文化理论和跨学科研究领域的一部分,主要依赖人类学、社会学、人种研究、道德研究、文学批评、历史、心理分析和政治哲学等学科来考察各种文化文本和文化行为。

后殖民主义研究起源于20世纪40年代和50年代欧洲大陆帝国的分裂和随之而来的反霸权主义文化研究的突起。后殖民主义主要有以下3种定义:一是独立后对欧洲前殖民地的研究,所跨越的历史时期大约是20世纪下半叶;二是对欧洲前殖民地被殖民地化后的研究,这包括16世纪以后的现代时期;三是对所有的文化、社会、国家和民族的研究,这种观点主要侧重于政治和文化力量,跨越整个人类历史。根据以上3种定义,出现了相对应的3个学派:“后独立”研究学派、“后欧洲殖民化”研究学派和“力量关系”研究学派。其中,大多数后殖民主义翻译理论学者倾向于第1种和第2种定义,致力于研究翻译对特定的被欧洲殖民化了的文化的影响。

对于后殖民主义理论的兴起,作者认为后殖民主义的研究发展可以分为3个阶段:1. 东方人的历史时期,是欧洲的东方人研究者写的印度历史;2. 民族主义者历史时期,是民族主义历史学家在20世纪20年代和30年代针对欧洲中心论提出的观点;3. 后殖民主义历史时期,是基于为了解释印度过去和现在的复杂性并为印度的将来制定新方向的观点。

接下来的两个小节主要阐释了霸权、征服、质询、语言、地方和自我的含义以及与翻译的联系。最后,作者致力于解释超越民族主义以及移民

和边界文化对翻译的影响。他指出 Bhabha 是最有影响的后殖民主义理论家。Bhabha 的观点是一种文化混合的观点,认为使西方文化本土化的最有效方法是研究西方世界内部和它的边界的移民文化,“从后殖民主义的观点来修订全球的空间问题便是把文化差异的定位从民主政治的多元性空间转移开来,转向文化翻译的边界谈判”。

第2章:权力差异

翻译在后殖民主义理论中扮演了3个有序但又互相重叠的角色:作为一种殖民的渠道,与教育保持平行且互相联系,或公然或隐蔽地控制市场和机构;作为殖民主义瓦解后仍然存在的文化不平衡的掩护物;作为非殖民化的一种渠道。

本章中,作者主要介绍了越过权力差异的翻译以及如何越过权力差异建立理论。作者指出 Jacquemond 对越过权力差异的翻译作出了最好的解释。Jacquemond 提供了一个关于翻译的不平衡系统,提出了翻译和文化间、霸权和受控间的4种假定。根据这4个假定,本书作者作了详细的分析,使读者能够更深入地了解何为超越权力差异的翻译。

本章的第2节是关于如何越过权力差异建立理论。在殖民时期,一方面译者在引进占统治地位的语言和文化时是缺乏独立性的调解者,他们往往毫不犹豫地接受外国的事物;另一方面当译者在引进霸权主义的语言和文化时,他们便是权威人士,在使其他文化保持不受污损的同时,又使得引进的文化可以被理解。而在后殖民时期,一方面,对西方价值观的抵制允许把占统治地位的作品翻译看作是利用西方意识形态进行知识控制的一部分;另一方面,西方文化少数派对非西方文化的外来化和归化及商品形式的西方知识的输出能力进行了批评。

在本章的最后,鲁宾逊又阐述了其他几位有影响的学者的观点,使读者对后殖民主义的翻译理论的现状有了一个大致的了解。

第3章:帝国翻译:理论记录

作者在本章分4部分介绍了后殖民主义理论出现以前的帝国翻译理论历史,主要以代表性的人物来说明其特征。这4部分分别是:君主和转移人口、帝国的升华、帝国翻译的研究和被俘虏的源文化。

1. 君主和转移人口

西塞罗(Cicero)并不是第一个翻译理论家,但他第一个明确表达了一些在现在的人们看来是通向翻译的正确方法。另一位早期的对埃及的翻译和口译进行评价的是爱奥尼亚的历史学家希罗多德(Herodotus),他明确

地指出了翻译与帝国翻译研究之间的密切关系，这事实上甚至可以被称为是最早的“后殖民主义”的翻译研究。

但是，鲁宾逊强调，翻译理论必须告诉翻译者或口译者如何翻译或口译。因此，西塞罗和希罗多德涉及翻译的论述并不能被称为是一种翻译理论。

2. 帝国的升华

这一小节和下两个小节主要探讨在帝国的适应期对翻译的讨论，本节主要是选择性地引用西塞罗和贺拉斯（Horace）的观点。西塞罗和贺拉斯自从他们所在的时代起就已被当作翻译理论的鼻祖。贺拉斯呼吁罗马的作者不仅要建立他们自己的原始文本，强调创意，还要引用希腊文化来为帝国的罗马服务。对罗马占有希腊文化的事实，西塞罗在他的小册子《关于最好的雄辩家》（*On the Best Orator*）中阐释得极为详细。

3. 帝国翻译的研究

本节主要介绍古代和中世纪的帝国翻译的研究。西塞罗和贺拉斯的传统被后来的许多早期作家认同，并在这些作家的作品中体现了出来。昆体良（Quintilian）等遵循了西塞罗把希腊的作品翻译成拉丁文的过程系统化的观点，使拉丁文文化引用希腊文化的重要性得以保留。这使得事实上引用了异教徒的希腊和罗马文化来为中世纪的教堂教会服务的拉丁文化在基督教中扩展开来。另一个典型例子是14世纪的法国作品《奥维德的被教化》（*Ovid Moralized*），体现了中世纪的基督教学者对学术需要的关注。这是一个很明显的理想化的例子，而这种理想化却正好是后殖民主义翻译理论想要使之非理想化和非神秘化的东西。

4. 被俘虏的源文化

本节通过“抓住被俘虏的源文化”的隐喻介绍了哲罗姆（Jerome）、Daniel of Merlai、John Florio 和 German Romantics。例如，在哲罗姆给 Pammachius 的信里，他表达的观点是翻译者不能被原作者束缚，做一些“奴性的”、“卑屈的”翻译，而应该抓住对文本和源文化的控制权，进而奴役他们。这显然是一种隐喻。这种把译者比作征服者或奴隶的隐喻更强势地出现在德国浪漫主义作品中。在某种程度上，德国的倾向因而变得有些帝国主义，翻译的目的便是要“把外国作者保持原样”转变为征服。这种虚构的翻译与实际政治运用中的帝国之间的联系是后殖民主义翻译理论的一个主要焦点，也是下面两章的主题内容。

第4章：翻译与殖民主义影响

本章里，作者重点分析了3本关于翻译与殖民帝国发展的关系的著作，

着眼点放在翻译在帝国主义控制美国、印度和菲律宾过程中所起的作用。本章分析的 3 部著作是：Eric Cheyfitz 的《帝国主义诗论》(*The Poetics of Imperialism*)，Tejaswini Naranjana 的《定向翻译》(*Siting Translation*) 以及 Vicente L. Rafael 的《殖民主义缩影：西班牙早期殖民主义统治下的塔加拉族社会的翻译和基督教传信》(*Contracting Colonialism: Translation and Christian Conversion in Tagalog Society Under Early Spanish Rule*)。本章对以上 3 部书反映出的关于翻译和殖民主义关系的观点进行了简明扼要的介绍。

1. Eric Cheyfitz 与新大陆殖民主义

Eric Cheyfitz 的《帝国主义诗论》是最详尽、最深刻地阐述后殖民主义翻译理论的一部著作。具体地说，Cheyfitz 的理论分为以下几个方面：(1) 最初的殖民化引导：在 Cheyfitz 看来，演说家进行的翻译是为了把与之生活在一起的野蛮人带入一种文明状态，教育这些人以使他们达到与之相同的文明境界；(2) 抑制与等级制度：Cheyfitz 提出，应该在全世界建立只有一种语言的世界性帝国，使所有的语言转变为一种语言，通过翻译来消除一切分歧和差异，使原本低级的人种发展到文明人的阶段；(3) 投射：Cheyfitz 认为语言间的翻译问题常常表现在每种语言内部，由于广为接受的殖民观念，交流和翻译问题必然存在，并常常存在于与其他文化的冲撞中，这其实是一种语言内部矛盾防御性投射；(4) 雄辩与对话：Cheyfitz 还提出了一种对未来的构想，即作为民主核心的两者间自由公平的对话；(5) 地产：Cheyfitz 指出将无人拥有的土地转变为地产是通过翻译来实现的；(6) 中心与边缘：知识与帝国的翻译就是假想历史上的所有中心只有一个，认为帝国无论在什么历史变革中都是稳定的，从而使帝国统治跨越了地区限制。

2. 英国对印度的“质询”

在这一小节，作者主要引用了 Tejaswini Niranjana 和 Vicente L. Rafael 的观点。

Niranjana 主要探讨英国是如何通过英语对印度人的法律、文学翻译进而把印度人改造成英国人或使印度人将英国人看作保护人这一新特征的。她把这一过程称为“质询”(interpellation)，这是殖民化的重要部分。英国人以两种方式对印度人进行质询：一是尽量使他们保持在原有的低级状态；二是改造他们以达到和“我们一样”的最高境界。翻译不仅可以帮助英国达到上述目的，甚至还可以使英国殖民者美化他们对印度实行的暴行。

Rafael 阐述了信仰转变、翻译和征服三者的关系。他指出,在西班牙语中,这三者是相互关联的。政府不仅以武力占有土地,而且在感情、爱情上征服某人。而转化信仰和征服相同,指跨越土地、情感、宗教和文化的界限进入他人的领域并占为己有。而翻译是征服中最有创造力、最可靠的途径。

第 5 章:抵抗、更改和重译

第 4 章通过对 3 位代表人物的主要观点的阐述来探讨翻译在殖民扩张中所起的作用,主要体现了翻译作为殖民统治工具的角色。与第 4 章相呼应,本章将从相反的方面即翻译的积极作用来研究翻译在殖民统治时期反抗殖民统治时所起到的作用。作者同样通过列举 3 位作家的观点来阐述这一问题。

1. Tejaswini Niranjana 和重译

Tejaswini Niranjana 认为,重译作为一种新方法,是完全地重新翻译印度人及其他被压迫民族的文本,从而进一步推进非殖民化的进程。但是这种方法不是完全抹杀殖民者在殖民地文化中的影响,而是重新转化以减弱殖民者带来的影响。Niranjana 认为对殖民主义及其残余影响最有力的解决方法是民族主义或本土主义。殖民者在殖民神话中创造的加强本国论的重大变革原来被认为是消极的,现在应给予肯定。原来对殖民者来说是无知的、原始的、迷信的,现在被认为是根植在本土文化传统中的宗教,具有了体现本国神话的权力。Niranjana 认为这种吸收殖民色彩神话的本国论是用于压制分歧、创造多元化和混合现象的最好方法。

2. Vicente L. Rafael 和错译

同 Niranjana 相同,Rafael 对翻译在帝国主义发展过程中的作用持肯定态度。他研究的重点是被压迫民族是如何利用翻译作为工具来抵制殖民压迫的。由于他本人就是多元文化的产物,精通 3 种语言,所以他大力颂扬多元化和文化混合状态。

3. Samia Mehrez 和混合理论

Mehrez 探讨并颂扬了混合文化这一现象,并提出近代应充分利用混合文化、语言。他一直致力于研究混合语言对传统的把语言明显区分为源语言和目标语言的翻译理论的影响。他指出各种语言相互混合,很难区分源语言和目标语言。后殖民主义文本通常是混合语言的,后殖民色彩的文本多用双语表达,从而创造了一种中间语言。对于语言的选择和等级,Mehrez 主张在世界主要语言、地方语、第三世界语言中间创造一种中间语言。

第6章：评论

作者在本章发表了自己对翻译与帝国主义发展关系的观点，主要体现在两个方面：一是翻译在殖民化和非殖民化中的作用；二是对非殖民化而言积极有利的翻译方法。

第一个方面中，作者讨论了翻译在殖民主义过程中的作用到底是消极的还是积极的。作者认为起哪方面的作用取决于后殖民主义理论家的本国论程度的深浅。后殖民主义理论家的本国论程度越深，就越容易美化殖民化以前的时代，就越痛恨帝国主义的罪恶，从而就更加痛斥翻译，将之视为帝国主义殖民统治的暴力工具。这种倾向在 Cheyfitz 身上得以体现。

第二方面中，作者主要讨论了是否存在唯一真正在非殖民化进程中起作用的基本批评模式，即从德国浪漫主义中引发的近代字面意义或外语中的异化现象，通用的翻译理论是不是很有效。这些态度同样取决于受后殖民主义者的杰出人物统治论的影响程度。受影响越深，理论家越遵守文化杰出人物维持的审美标准和翻译批评，从而翻译也就越能有效地进行，并可从是否可交流、是否可归化、是否可异化上区分。翻译理论家要设计一种翻译模式，通过对原文本的紧密依赖，保持并承认差异和多元化。

由此可见，道格拉斯·鲁宾逊撰写的《翻译与帝国》为读者提供了一个后殖民主义理论发展的完整框架，既有抽象意义上的理论解释，又配以对某种语言的个案研究加以说明，是一部不可多得的翻译理论著作。本书特点鲜明，相信可以为广大翻译理论学习和爱好者提供不小的参考和借鉴。

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Introduction

Many students of translation have been trained to think of the field in terms of choices between two opposed alternatives: between translating individual words or whole sentences; between studying translation in terms of linguistics or of literature.

Unfortunately, it isn't that simple.

For one thing, the ancient division between 'word-for-word' and 'sense-for-sense' translation has grown enormously complicated. Nowadays it covers such radically different ground as Juliane House's (1977) distinction between 'overt' and 'covert' translation, between drawing attention to the fact that a given text *is* a translation and pretending that it was originally written in the target language; and Lawrence Venuti's (1986, 1995) distinction, drawn from the German Romantics, between 'foreignizing' and 'domesticating' translation, between what Friedrich Schleiermacher (1813) would call "taking the reader to the author" and "bringing the author to the reader".

Linguistic and literary approaches to translation have likewise grown complex, as linguists and literary critics both become interested in social power and belief systems – see, for example, Hatim and Mason (1990) on the linguistic side, Even-Zohar (1979, 1981) and Lefevere (1992) on the literary side – ; as linguists become psycholinguists, studying translation processes through 'think-aloud protocols', and as literary critics become hermeneuticists, studying translation processes through the complex philosophical theories of, say, Walter Benjamin (1923), Martin Heidegger (1957) or Jacques Derrida (1985).

Even in their increased complexity, however, the old dualisms for the study of translation are proving inadequate for discussions of an important new approach to translation, born in the mid- to late 1980s out of neither linguistics nor literary studies but anthropology, ethnography and colonial history: postcolonial translation studies, or the study of translation in its relation to empire. The major influences on this recent work come from outside the emerging field of translation studies – from anthropologists and historians interested in the clash of cultures who also, as if secondarily, gradually became interested in problems of language and communication between the first-world anthropologist and the third-world 'natives'. Further, the recent postcolonial theorists and historians of translation themselves remain on the peripheries of translation studies, not quite identifying themselves as primarily translation scholars, not attending translation-studies conferences, not publishing in translation studies journals. Vicente Rafael,

author of *Contracting Colonialism* (1988), is a historian by training and currently teaches in a communication department; Eric Cheyfitz, author of *The Poetics of Imperialism* (1991), is a professor of American studies; Tejaswini Niranjana, author of *Siting Translation* (1992), is a lecturer in an English department.

Nor is this simply a matter of translation scholars finding their institutional homes elsewhere than in translation-studies programmes, which are, after all, relatively new and not particularly widespread or well-established phenomena. Rather, these scholars continue to identify with other fields first, with translation studies second or third (if at all) – and then only, it seems, because the publication of their books on translation has won them admiring readers in a scholarly community they knew little about. Rafael, Niranjana, Cheyfitz and other postcolonial scholars confess that while they ‘try to keep up’ with translation studies, they actually find little in the field to hold their interest, and so do not attend translation-studies conferences or subscribe to or publish in translation-studies journals.

In one quite popular disciplinary model, this ‘indifference’ or ‘neglect’ – in any case peripherality – with regard to the field of translation studies can be taken to signify that the scholars in question really aren’t *doing* translation studies, and therefore are undeserving of attention from ‘true’ translation scholars. Obviously, the very existence of this book suggests this is not or should not be the case; quite the opposite. Whatever their sources, models and influences, these recent postcolonial theorists have much to offer the field of translation studies; and if this book does not quite serve to bring them ‘into the fold’, as it were, it is designed at least to build bridges between their work and that of self-styled translation scholars.

Traditionally, translation scholars have started with language, with the differences between languages, and with the difficulties attendant upon conveying messages from one language to the new syntactic, semantic and pragmatic systems of another. The cultural underpinnings of language have never been forgotten, of course, but until fairly recently they have been set to one side, regarded as peripheral to the study of translation, or at best somehow ‘encoded’ into linguistic systems so that to study language *is* to study culture. The polysystems and translation studies groups in the Low Countries, England and Israel from the 1970s were among the first to expand their methodologies decisively to include not only cultural but also social and political considerations. They looked at ideological norms and various social power systems such as patronage, and it could well be argued that these scholars paved the way for the awareness that postcolonial studies of intercultural communication before, during and after empire are essentially culturally and politically oriented forms of translation studies.

The direction taken by the postcolonial scholars has been precisely the opposite to this path. Starting with culture and cultural difference, they have only gradually come to realize that culture is mediated by language, and that one of the most significant intercultural phenomena they should have been studying all along has been translation. One of the most influential articles in this process is Talal Asad's 'The Concept of Cultural Translation in British Social Anthropology', which traces the evolution of anthropological thinking about "'the translation of cultures', which increasingly since the 1950s has become an almost banal description of the distinctive task of social anthropology" (1986:141). In a 1954 paper 'Modes of Thought', for example, Godfrey Lienhardt posed the germinal idea that would grow into postcolonial translation studies:

The problem of describing to others how members of a remote tribe think then begins to appear largely as one of translation, of making the coherence primitive thought has in the languages it really lives in, as clear as possible in our own. (quoted in Asad 1986:142)

It is surely significant, as Asad points out, that Lienhardt studied English literature at Cambridge under F. R. Leavis: a scholarly background in literary studies opens an anthropologist's eyes to the problem of language, and of translation. It is not, in other words, merely a matter of 'understanding' the 'native' 'modes of thought' – it is a matter rather of *translating* them from one language to another, across power differentials marked off by the concepts of 'first world' and 'third world', 'anthropologist' and 'native'.

Still, these writers are not yet scholars of translation. The anthropological inquiries into 'cultural translation' that Asad traces, Lienhardt's 'Modes of Thought', John Beattie's *Other Cultures* (1964), Rodney Needham's *Belief, Language, and Experience* (1972) and Ernest Gellner's 'Concepts and Society' (1970), are concerned with translation in passing, as a methodological problem or limitation. We want to study 'primitive' or 'native' cultures (so we can imagine ethnographers saying); if we are to be honest about our inquiries, however, we must realize that they are not, and can never be, as simple as we have previously thought. Anthropological studies of intercultural communication became specifically translation studies in the mid-1980s, with pieces like Asad's own 1986 article, Johannes Fabian's 1986 book *Language and Colonial Power*, and James T. Siegel's 1986 book *Solo in the New Order*. This was when their concern with translation moved centre stage – when, in other words, these scholars began to realize that the problem of translation is not merely a limitation on their own scholarly claims but a central issue in all communication and sociopolitical

interaction between the 'first' and the 'third' worlds, between 'moderns' and 'primitives', between colonizers and the colonized. Asad, for example, moves from his historical review of the literature on 'cultural translation' into sections on 'The Inequality of Languages' (a focal issue for postcolonial studies that we will be exploring here in chapter two) and 'Reading Other Cultures'. Fabian studies the process by which the Belgian colonizers of what came to be known as the Congo selected Shaba Swahili, then a minor dialect spoken by a few hundred Africans, to become the *lingua franca* or 'vehicular language' of empire, and systematically set about spreading it across the territory under their control so that at independence in 1960 the language had several million speakers. In his introduction, Fabian (1986:3) states what has since become a focal assumption of postcolonial translation studies:

Among the preconditions for establishing regimes of colonial power was, must have been, communication with the colonized. This went beyond the (trivial) fact of verbal exchanges, because in the long run such exchanges depended on a shared communicative praxis providing the common ground on which unilateral claims could be imposed. Granted that use and control of verbal means of communication were not the only foundation for colonial rule; but they were needed to maintain regimes, military, religious, ideological and economic. In the former Belgian Congo, our area of interest, brutal, physical force as well as indirect economic constraints never ceased to be exercised, and they have been the subject of historical studies; much less is known about more subtle uses of power through controls on communication. That concept, overworked as it may be, can be fruitful if it is understood historically and politically.

Similarly, in his study of 'Language and Hierarchy in an Indonesian City', James T. Siegel insists that "To speak Javanese, indeed, to be Javanese, one must translate" (1986:3), and he goes on:

Translation and hierarchy are intimately intertwined in Java. One is left out of discourse, remaining 'not yet Javanese', unless one can translate into High Javanese and thereby show respect. The formation of social hierarchy and translation thus appear inseparable. In the description of social scenes that constitute the bulk of this book, I show how social order is constituted through movements between Javanese languages, how during the New Order what is heterogeneous to this interplay is accounted for, and how, in a moment of social disruption, it was not. If hierarchy is constituted by language, language can also work against it. (1986:9)

Fabian and Siegel were major influences on Vicente Rafael's work in *Contracting Colonialism*; and while in this book they will continue to be seen as 'influences' rather than as early postcolonial theorists or historians of translation, it is important to recognize the enormous shaping force they have had on this emerging approach to the study of translation since the late 1980s. Toward the end of his book, for example, Rafael summarizes what for him is the key contribution Siegel made to his thinking about translation:

Siegel claims that translation arises from the need to relate one's interest to that of others and so to encode it appropriately. Translation in this case involves not simply the ability to speak in a language other than one's own but the capacity to reshape one's thoughts and actions in accordance with accepted forms. It thus coincides with the need to submit to the conventions of a given social order. Deferring to conventions of speech and behavior (which, precisely because they are conventions, antedate one's intentions), one in effect acknowledges what appears to be beyond oneself. Translation is then a matter of first discerning the differences between and within social codes and then of seeing the possibility of getting across those differences. To do so is to succeed in communicating, that is, in recognizing and being recognized within the intelligible limits of a linguistic and social order. Hence, if translation is to take place at all, it must do so within a context of expectation: that in return for one's submission, one gets back the other's acknowledgement of the value of one's words and behavior. In this way, one finds for oneself a place on the social map. (1993:210)

It is difficult to say, of course, in this chain of anthropological and historical statements – Lienhardt, Beattie, Gellner, Needham, Fabian, Siegel, Asad, Rafael, Cheyfitz, Niranjana, Jacquemond, Mehrez – at precisely what point 'translation' as a subject of study becomes central, focal, no longer a methodological issue or metaphor for various problems in intralingual communication. Should Siegel's study of Java be considered postcolonial translation theory? Perhaps. In this book Asad's article will be presented as the first major statement of postcolonial translation theory; Fabian and Siegel will remain Rafael's precursors. More important than a reliable sense of the exact originary moment of postcolonial translation theory, however, is a sense of the process by which a number of scholars, especially anthropologists and historians, came to think of translation as central to their concerns – and in the process came also to redefine translation in ways that were new and exciting for translation scholars as well.

Still only implicit in this process, of course, is the concept of a