

THE OXFORD GUIDE TO
LITERATURE
IN ENGLISH
TRANSLATION

EDITED BY

PETER FRANCE

The Oxford Guide to Literature in English Translation

Edited by
Peter France

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

OXFORD

UNIVERSITY PRESS

Great Clarendon Street, Oxford OX2 6DP

Oxford University Press is a department of the University of Oxford.
It furthers the University's objective of excellence in research, scholarship,
and education by publishing worldwide in

Oxford New York

Athens Auckland Bangkok Bogotá Buenos Aires Calcutta
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Karachi Kuala Lumpur Madrid Melbourne Mexico City Mumbai
Nairobi Paris São Paulo Singapore Taipei Tokyo Toronto Warsaw
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Published in the United States
by Oxford University Press Inc., New York

Introduction © Peter France 2000
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First published 2000

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
Data available

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

The Oxford guide to literature in English translation / edited by
Peter France.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

1. Literature—Translations into English—History and criticism.
2. Language and languages—Translating into English—History.

I. France, Peter, 1935–

PR131.O94 2000

820.9—dc21

ISBN 0-19-818359-3

1 3 5 7 9 10 8 6 4 2

Typeset by Jayvee, Trivandrum, India

Printed in Great Britain
on acid-free paper by
T. J. International Ltd.,
Padstow, Cornwall

Advice to Readers

Contents

In Part II a list of the contents of each section is given at the head of the section. Entries within each section are generally arranged either in roughly chronological order (if the section concerns a single literature) or alphabetically (if there are number of literatures involved), or by a combination of the two.

Dates

Birth and death dates of original authors are not generally given if the period of their activity is clear from the context. Birth and death dates are usually given (where known) for translators born before 1870, with the exception of well-known writers such as Dryden or Shelley. Approximate and uncertain dates are given as c.1528 or ?1528; c.1528–1569 means that the birth date only is approximate, whereas c.1528–c.1569 means that both dates are approximate. 1520/5 means 'at some time between 1520 and 1525'.

In the body of the text, the dates given for originals are normally those of first publication, or, for plays, first production, but for works where publication happened long after the event, dates of composition are given. Dates of translations, if not given in the text, will be found in the bibliographies at the end of entries.

References

In Part I, references are made parenthetically, using the 'Harvard' system, to the general bibliography placed at the end of Part I. In Part II, a modified version of this system refers to the bibliographies at the end of each entry.

Cross-references are made to entries, or subsections of entries: thus '[I.a.5.iii]' refers to the third subsection ('Challenging Grammatical Gender') in the entry [I.a.5] on 'Translation and Gender'. Running heads help to locate entries.

Titles

When a work is first mentioned, the original is usually given in *italic*, followed in brackets by the date of first publication and a translation of the title where this is not obvious from the context. Titles, proper names, and quotations have where necessary been transliterated according to a standard system; for Chinese names two different transliterations are given [see II.f.1].

Bibliographies

In addition to the authorities cited in the References for Part I, a brief list of general reading is given in Further Reading, p. xiii.

The bibliographies in Part II are arranged differently according to the nature of the

subject. Broadly speaking, there are two main types. For works with a long translation history, translations are arranged chronologically within each section of the bibliography; otherwise, translations are arranged alphabetically by translator's surname within each section. All bibliographies are selective, both in the translations listed and in the authorities cited. Information concerning reprints, availability in current series, etc. is given in square brackets. Where a book was published in more than one place (e.g. London and New York), in some cases only one place of publication is noted. In the case of anthologies, the abbreviation 'ed.' or 'eds.' indicate that the individuals named acted as editors rather than as translators (although they may have translated some parts of the anthology).

Index

The index covers both Parts and includes names of authors and translators and titles of anonymous works. It does not include names and titles which figure only in the bibliographies.

Translators' Names

In each entry, when a translator into English is first mentioned, his or her surname is given in bold type.

Recent Publications

The cut-off date for most entries is 1996; publications from 1997 to 1999 are covered less systematically. References to 'this century' are of course to the 20th c.

Further Reading

The following is a select list of general works and similar material relating to the subject of the Guide.

Encyclopedias and Bibliographies

BAKER, M., ed., *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*, London / New York, 1998.

CLASSE, O., ed., *Encyclopedia of Literary Translation*, London, 1999.

FRANK, A. P. et al., eds., *Übersetzung * Translation * Traduction (An International Encyclopedia of Translation Studies)*, Berlin / New York, forthcoming.

PARKS, G. B., and TEMPLE, R. Z., *The Literatures of the World in English Translation: A Bibliography*, 3 vols., New York, 1968–70.

UNESCO, *Index Translationum: Répertoire international des traductions*, Paris, 1932–

Readers in Translation Theory

LEFEVERE, A., ed., *Translation / History / Culture: A Sourcebook*, London / New York, 1992.

ROBINSON, D., ed., *Western Translation Theory from Herodotus to Nietzsche*, Manchester, 1997.

SCHULTE, R., and BIGUENET, J., eds., *Theories of Translation: An Anthology of Essays from Dryden to Derrida*, Chicago, 1992.

VENUTI, L., ed., *The Translation Studies Reader*, London / New York, 2000.

General or Introductory Works on Translation Theory and History

BASSNETT, S., *Translation Studies*, London / New York, 2nd edn., 1991; 1st edn. 1980.

DELISLE, J., and WOODSWORTH, J., eds., *Translators through History*, Amsterdam, 1995.

GADDIS ROSE, M., *Translation and Literary Criticism*, Manchester, 1997.

GENTZLER, E., *Contemporary Translation Theories*, London / New York, 1993.

KELLY, L. G., *The True Interpreter: A History of Translation Theory and Practice in the West*, Oxford, 1979.

STEINER, G., *After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation*, Oxford, 1975; 2nd edn. 1992.

See also References for Part I, in particular Barnstone, Benjamin, Berman, Brower, Catford, Cohen, Hermans, Holmes, Lefevere, Newark, Nida, Robinson, Toury, Venuti.

General Anthologies

CAWS, M. A., and PRENDERGAST, C., eds., *The HarperCollins World Reader*, single-volume edn., New York, 1994.

FADIMAN, C., WASHBURN, K., and MAJOR, J. S., eds., *World Poetry: An Anthology of Verse from Antiquity to our Time*, New York, 1998.

Further Reading

- STEINER, G., ed., *The Penguin Book of Modern Verse Translation*, Harmondsworth, 1966.
TOMLINSON, C., *The Oxford Book Of Verse in English Translation*, Oxford/New York, 1980.
VAN DOREN, M., ed., *An Anthology of World Poetry*, New York, 1928.

Journals

- Target*, Amsterdam / Philadelphia, 1989- .
Translation and Literature, Edinburgh, 1992- .
The Translator, Manchester, 1995- .
TTR, Montreal, 1988- .

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Introduction

Pushkin, according to Vladimir Nabokov in the Foreword to his translation of *Eugene Onegin*, 'likened translators to horses changed at the posthouses of civilization'. Translation has been a crucial process in world culture over the last two or three millennia, and is perhaps more so today than ever, in an age of global communications where Goethe's ideal of world literature (*Weltliteratur*) seems closer to becoming a reality. Since 1932 the *Index translationum*, now run by UNESCO, has provided an annual register of translations throughout the world; even in its necessarily incomplete form, this gives an impressive idea of the way writing is crossing national frontiers in all directions.

The rise of English as a world language [see I.b.4-5] has affected this traffic of words substantially, and not necessarily for the good. The English-speaking countries, secure or complacent in their linguistic dominance, today translate proportionally far less than their neighbours, and their literary culture is the poorer for it. Even so, this culture, using the expression in its broad sense, has been in large measure shaped by translated texts, from the Bible to Freud, from Ovid to Dostoevsky. Yet in the history of English literature, the post-horses have generally had to make do with a small corner of the stable.

Due obeissance is made, of course, to the Authorized Version of the Bible, as to some of the classic Elizabethan translations: North's Plutarch, Florio's Montaigne are recognized not only as influences on Shakespeare but as major works in their own right. The same is true of a few poetic translations: Dryden's Virgil, Pope's Homer, Fitzgerald's Omar Khayyam, and in the 20th c. the work of Ezra Pound, Charles Tomlinson, or Edwin Morgan. But one would look in vain for serious discussion of Constance Garnett's Turgenev and Dostoevsky in histories of 20th-c. English literature, and few anthologies of English poetry make much room for translation.

Worse still, much translation has traditionally been done anonymously. To use the expression recently popularized by Lawrence Venuti (*The Translator's Invisibility*, 1995), the translator in such cases remains invisible. This was quite normal practice in the 17th and 18th c., as was a cavalier attitude to previous translations which might be recycled or revised with or without acknowledgement (as in the case of Tobias Smollett). Things have not changed radically since then. Unattributed translation was common at least until the early 20th c. (e.g. Vizetelly's Zola translations [II.g.9.vi]), and even today the translator's name is frequently hidden away in some inconspicuous place and ignored by advertisers or reviewers, who act as if the book came immediately from the original author. Nor has the unacknowledged recycling and reprinting of old material disappeared; inexpensive reprint series habitually reissue 100-year-old translations on which copyright has lapsed, without giving any indication of their provenance. *Caveat emptor*: buyers of translated literature need to be on their guard.

The silence surrounding translation has been more often breached in recent years. For one thing, new views of writing cast doubt on the clear hierarchical distinction, a distinction sometimes expressed in gender terms [see I.a.5.ii], between the so-called original (primary, 'male') and the translation (secondary, 'female'). At the same time, there has been a growth of interest in the actual phenomenon of translation and the problems it poses. This flourishing of the new discipline of 'Translation Studies' [see I.a.1.iii] has brought with it the desire to do greater justice to the place of translation within our culture, to encourage awareness of what goes on in translation, to make translation and the translator more *visible*.

The present *Guide* is intended to play a part in this movement. It is not addressed primarily to the Translation Studies community, but to ordinary readers and students of literature, who inevitably turn to translation from time to time, whether for business or for pleasure. All too often such readers (and they include students of English and Comparative Literature) act as if in reading a translation they were reading—perhaps with some loss of intensity—the original. (In the same way, it is not unknown for philosophers to discuss the ideas of Descartes or Kant as if they had written in English.) But translations are not, nor should they be, transparent windows onto an 'original', and the aim of this volume is to suggest to readers that translation involves transformation, and that this transformation is worthy of our attention.

In order to do so, we address the following questions, among others:

- What has or has not been translated into English from the literature of the world?
- How has translation shaped for English speakers a 'canon' of world literature?
- How have translators seen their task, and in what social context have they worked?
- Under what guise have the greater and lesser works of world literature been transported into English?
- What is the nature and quality of the different translations currently available to readers?

The contributors to the *Guide* are specialists in their various fields, but their answers to these questions are often incomplete and tentative. Incomplete, because we have aimed to cover an immense field highly selectively so as to produce a single volume which is accessible to the general reader. Tentative, because there is not at present, for many of the subjects discussed here, the exhaustive bibliographical database needed for a complete account of literary translation in English. It is to be hoped that this will one day exist; meanwhile, we hope to demonstrate the magnitude and interest of the field, while offering, as the title implies, some guidance within it. Other important reference works in this area are listed in the Further Reading section.

The *Guide* is divided into two interrelated Parts. Part I offers an overview of some of the contexts within which the subsequent discussions of particular translations need to be set. It opens with discussions of some of the major theoretical or methodological questions raised by translation. Then comes a series of contributions, some of them polemical, to the general history of translation in Britain since the Middle Ages, and in modern North America. And finally, the problems raised for the translator by specific text types such as poetry or drama are the subject of separate essays.

The word 'literature' in the title is, of course, a problematic word in the year 2000. It is understood here in a fairly broad sense, including not only fiction, poetry, and

drama, but a variety of discursive writing, including some of the classics of philosophy, and a fairly large number of texts (including religious writings) whose original function was not what we normally understand by literary today. Gideon Toury, in his *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond* (1995), makes an important distinction between the 'translation of literary texts' and 'literary translation'. A text considered as 'literary' in the original may be given a 'non-literary' (i.e. informational) translation, whereas all kinds of text may through translation become a part of the literature of the target culture. On the whole the translations discussed here are those designed to be read as literature, but there are many exceptions.

Part II, the main body of the *Guide*, is devoted to critical descriptions of the translation into English of writing from all over the world. The greatest space is given to works which have had the greatest and most lasting impact on English-speaking culture since the Middle Ages. (For the most part these are classics of high culture, although Terry Hale [I.b.4] reminds us of the great importance of translation for popular culture in the 19th c.) In addition to the Bible, this means above all the ancient literatures of Greece and Rome and the medieval and modern literatures of Europe, but also the major literatures of Asia and the Middle East. At the same time, it seemed essential to make room for writing in such languages as Turkish or Armenian, Swahili or Korean, which, although translated, has remained relatively little known to English-speaking readers. There are thousands of languages in the world, of course, and many gaps in the *Guide*, since we have not aimed to provide a complete account of translation into English.

By the same token, the treatment of the areas which are covered is deliberately selective. This concerns both the choice of writers and works and the listing and discussion of translations of any given works. This is not an encyclopedia. For this reason, rather than giving separate entries for individual works (with a few notable exceptions), we have grouped works under writers (e.g. Pushkin, Virgil) or, more frequently, under some broader heading such as 'Nineteenth-Century French Fiction' or 'Chinese Poetry'. In some cases, indeed, one single entry surveys the whole literature of a language (e.g. Romanian, Georgian) or even of a group of languages (e.g. the languages of West Africa).

The broader the field, the more essential it became for contributors to concentrate on important works and translations. As one might expect, almost every contributor would have liked more space, but most came to agree, if reluctantly, that worthwhile things can be said in the limited compass demanded by a manageable single-volume work.

The entries in Part II differ quite markedly in the way their subjects are treated. The nature of the topics was very diverse, and contributors had considerable freedom to determine the best style of approach. In some cases, where the material is not well known to most English-speaking readers, a good deal of the entry may be devoted to recording what currently exists in translation (often works will have been translated once only), and how this relates to the literary canon in the original language. Elsewhere, where we are dealing with much-translated writers such as Homer or Montaigne, the stress is more on the translation history of the work, together with a comparative analysis of different translations.

Where translations are compared, there has been no attempt to impose neutral

description rather than critical evaluation. Nor is there any party line here. Contributors have been discouraged from grinding their own axes too loudly, but have felt free to offer judgements. This is a guide, after all, and anyone offering guidance will be concerned not only with the *nature* of existing translations but with what is perceived as the *success* or *failure* with which different (often equally valid) translation projects have been executed. Criteria for evaluation are discussed below [I.a.1]; but even when judgements are couched in apparently objective language, no critical evaluation can pretend to universal validity.

It remains to thank those who have helped with the making of this book. My first debt of gratitude goes to the members of the editorial advisory board, Mona Baker, Stuart Gillespie, the late André Lefevere, Anthony Pym, Douglas Robinson, Daniel Weissbort, and Janice Wickeri, who advised me on the contents and shape of the volume, helped me find contributors, and then read and commented on the entries as they came in. It is a source of great sadness that André Lefevere, an outstanding translation scholar and a good friend, who had committed himself to the project with enthusiasm and was to have written a substantial group of entries, died tragically and unexpectedly while still at the height of his powers.

Friends and colleagues who were not members of the editorial board gave help and encouragement in a variety of ways, especially when it came to the difficult task of finding the right contributors. Willie Gillies advised on the Celtic section, and Tom Rider masterminded the Japanese entries with exemplary efficiency; Arthur Terry was full of encouragement and helpful ideas, especially for the Hispanic section. Many others, some of them not in the end contributors, made excellent suggestions, and I am grateful to them all.

All along the way, my wife, Siân Reynolds, herself a notable translator, gave me good advice and cheerful encouragement. I have also benefited once again from the professional and editorial support of an Oxford University Press editorial team. My thanks go to Andrew Lockett, Jason Freeman, and Sophie Goldsworthy, who in turn took responsibility for managing the project, to Sarah Barrett, for her patient and meticulous work as copy-editor, and in particular—as formerly—to Frances Whistler, whose enthusiasm, good humour, eye for detail, and critical sense have been invaluable.

But above all I must thank those who actually shouldered the job of writing, a difficult job not only because of the knowledge called for, but because of editorial pressure to be concise. They responded patiently, usually positively, to suggestions for change, even Procrustean cuts, to requests for further information, and in some cases to anguished reminders about deadlines. This enterprise has brought together over 100 people from different countries and from many different specialties, some quite remote from my own, and I can only be thankful for the way in which all the entries came together more or less in time. I feel that I have learnt a huge amount from editing this book, and I hope readers will feel the same.

Peter France
Edinburgh, 1999

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