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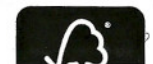
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book is a good companion piece to Peter M. Engelfriet's *Euclid in China: The Genesis of the First Chinese Translation of Euclid's Elements Books I-VI (Jihe yuanben; Beijing, 1607) and its Reception up to 1723*, also published by Brill in 1998. Two other works in the Brill series, *Sinica Leidensia*, are about translation, in both the narrow linguistic sense and the broad sense of the translation of culture, specifically of ideas – *New Terms for New Ideas: Western Knowledge and Lexical Change in Late Imperial China*, edited by Michael Lackner, Iwo Amelung and Joachim Kurtz (2001) and *Mapping Meanings: The Field of New Learning in Late Qing China*, edited by Michael Lackner and Natascha Vittinghoff (2004). The four books complement one another, providing both sinologists and translation studies scholars with a rich and indispensable source of reference on a most tumultuous period of modern Chinese history and of intercultural (mis)communication between China and the West.

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*Traduire la science. Hier et aujourd'hui*. Pascal Duris (ed.). Pessac: Maison des Sciences de l'Homme d'Aquitaine, 2008. 231 pp. ISBN 2-85892-352-3, €24.

This collection of nine papers written in French and edited by Pascal Duris offers penetrating insight into the translation of science in France from the Renaissance to the 18th century. The authors are not translation scholars but historians, although they belong to different disciplines such as the history of science, medieval linguistics, French studies, philosophy and comparative literature. That the book represents the work of historians can be seen in both the titles of the paper, for example, Jean-François Baillon's 'Retraduire la science. Le cas de l'Optique de Newton, de Pierre Coste (1720) à Jean-Paul Marat (1787)' (Retranslating Science: The Case of Newton's *Opticks* from Pierre Coste (1720) to Jean-Paul Marat (1787)) and Thierry Hoquet's 'Traduire Linné aujourd'hui. Texte de science ou objet philosophique et historique?' (Translating Linnaeus Today. Scientific Text or Philosophical and Historical Object?), as well as the concepts and methods used.

The papers all share a common theme, namely, that translating science was doing science. This approach is summed up in the first paper by Joëlle Ducos, 'La traduction comme mode de diffusion scientifique au Moyen Âge' (Translation as a Means of Scientific Dissemination in the Middle Ages) and is evident in many of the titles in the collection: Philippe Seloche's 'Traduire la nomenclature néo-latine de la Renaissance: la linguistique au secours de l'histoire des sciences' (Translating Neo-Latin Renaissance Nomenclature: Linguistics Comes to the Rescue of the History of Science); Patrice Bret's 'Les promenades littéraires de Madame Picardet. La traduction comme pratique sociale de la science au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle' (Madame Picardet's Literary Walks. Translation as a Social Practice of Science in the 18th Century); and Isabelle Poulin's 'Peut-on raconter la science? Reflexions sur la traduction controversée d'un écrivain lépidoptériste: Vladimir Nabokov' (Can Science Be Narrated? Reflections on the Controversial Translation of a Lepidopterist Writer: Vladimir Nabokov).

The authors also point out that the translators of this period were not just language specialists but often scientists themselves. For example, in Violaine Giacomotto-Charra's paper 'Entre traduction et vulgarisation: l'astronomie en français au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle' (Between Translation and Popularization. Astronomy in French in the 16th Century), the author points out (p. 46) that

Georg von Peurbach's *Theoricæ novæ planetarum* was translated [into French] in 1528 by Finé, who at the same time wrote and regularly enriched his own treatise of the sphere (in Latin) to deliver a French version in 1551, while Gemma Frisius's *De principiis antronimæ et cosmographiæ*, essentially concerned with cosmography, was translated by mathematician Claude de Boissière in 1556 at the same time as the Paris edition of the Latin text.

Giacomotto-Charra also examines the relationship between translators and scientists in her second contribution to the volume, 'Le traducteur à l'oeuvre: le *De principiis* de Gemma Frisius et sa traduction par Claude Boissière' (The Translator in Action: Gemma Frisius's *De principiis* and Its Translation by Claude Boissière).

Unlike today, translations between Latin and French were not the work of specialized translators but of astronomers, mathematicians, physicists and botanists, for example, who saw their mission as contributing to the constitution of science in French. Faced with the decline of Latin among the educated and the claim that French was well equipped to write, express and develop science, they decided to provide French versions of Latin documents, while often also writing original works in Latin themselves. The situation in France was in fact similar to the struggle between other European vernaculars and Latin for the right to scientific dignity. It was also a way of distancing oneself from the grip of the Catholic religion.

Interestingly, all nine papers show that the fight for the scientific dignity of French came with the recognition of a new broader readership that was hardly fluent or not fluent at all in Latin. There was a new demand for science from readers not necessarily comfortable with the sciences they were discovering. The translations often consisted in rewriting, amending, correcting, enlarging or reducing the original texts. New elements were added and some were dropped. Figures could also be supplemented.

In addition to its historical value, this collection of papers fulfils the same role as other books on the history of translation, such as Jean Delisle and Judith Woodsworth's *Translators through History* (1995). It shows us that translations should be understood and explained in their own context, taking into account the historical situation and actors as well as the social role they play, as considered in Pascal Duris's own contribution to the collection, 'Traduire Linné en français à la fin du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle' (Translating Linnaeus into French at the End of the Eighteenth Century). Although the book does not claim to be in the field of translation studies but at the crossroads of other disciplines, it offers considerable food for thought from a theoretical perspective for translation scholars and students. It gives greater flesh and substance to the notion of 'agents' often envisaged overly macroscopically in the Bourdieusian approach. In these papers, individual agents are seen making choices vis-à-vis other particular agents and particular stakes. The concept of *Skopos* is also illustrated superbly: the translators of the period in question aimed to do science not just reproduce it. The acknowledgement of the audience, not only the author, as one of the determinants of the translation process is well evidenced. The dichotomy between 'translation' and 'adaptation' is also qualified; for these scientists/translators of the 16th through the 18th century, there was no question of taking liberties with the originals. On the contrary, they seemed to consider that they were paying tribute to them. They saw their own translations

as contributions to science, and hence as transformations.

*Traduire la science. Hier et aujourd'hui* should be read by translation scholars and students who have come to realize that even the most ethereal concepts should be grounded in reality and that translation history helps to place them in perspective.

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*Translating the World. Science and Language*. Sundar Sarukkai. Lanham, Maryland & Oxford: University Press of America, 2002. xxi+165 pp. ISBN 0-7618-2272-0, \$47.50.

Sundar Sarukkai's formation as a science and philosophy student, and then as a scholar in the field of the philosophy of science, makes him a privileged observer of the intricacies of scientific translation. The extremely abstract nature of his field of study – his doctoral dissertation was in particle physics – may be the source of his interest in the ambivalent condition of language and meaning. Though some of the ideas in *Translating the World* were explored in two interesting articles published in *Meta* (Volume 46/4, 2001): 'Mathematics, Language and Translation' (pp. 664-74) and 'Translation and Science' (pp. 646-63), Sarukkai has enlarged his views in this book, which is divided into three parts. The first part, 'Writing Theories', deals with the conventions of writing science, especially mathematics, and the characteristics of scientific 'textuality'. Sarukkai does not focus on the conventions of textuality as usually described in genre approaches, but on the condition of the scientific text as an epistemological 'field' that tends to displace other fields which may also be present in scientific accounts. The second part, 'Making Meaning', focuses on how meaning is generated and communicated in science through multisemiotic and special devices (figures, diagrams, metaphors, symbols, etc.), and the relationship between reality and the world of which scientific discourse is presented as a faithful copy. Part 3, 'Science, Language and Translation', returns to issues previously discussed in the book regarding language, science and translation in three sections: