EUGENE A. NIDA

TOWARD A SCIENCE OF TRANSLATING

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PREFACE

This volume, *Toward a Science of Translating*, has been largely prompted by the nature of field work in which I have been involved during recent years in Latin America, Africa, and Asia. An earlier book, *Bible Translating* (Nida, 1947a), though very useful to the Bible translator, is essentially only a practical handbook, with a kind of rule-of-thumb orientation. Increasingly it became obvious that in order to assist translators more satisfactorily it was necessary to provide something which would not only be solidly based on contemporary developments in the fields of linguistics, anthropology, and psychology, but would also relate the specific area of Bible translating to the wider activity of translating in general. The present volume is an attempt to fill this need.

As the title of this book implies, it makes no pretension to be a definitive volume, for in the present state of development in the field of semantics it is impossible to contemplate writing such a final work. However, there have been a number of important and fruitful developments in linguistics, both in the structural as well as the semantic areas, and these have contributed very significantly to the organization of this book.

Though the scope of translation theory in this volume is all-inclusive, the illustrative data are drawn primarily from Biblical materials, and especially so in the later chapters. This is not as great a disadvantage as it might appear at first glance, for no other type of translating has such a long history, involves so many different languages (at present more than 1,200), includes more diverse types of texts, and covers so many distinct cultural areas of the world. But though the examples are drawn primarily from Biblical data, this volume is not prepared with the average Bible translator in mind, for it is rather too technical in orientation. Nevertheless, it should serve as an important help to such translators as may have some background in present-day linguistic theory and it will be the basis of other more simply written books now in preparation, which will be aimed at teaching translation methods.

Very important help on this volume has been received from a number of colleagues and friends. I am especially indebted to the following: Robert G. Bratcher, Wesley Culshaw, H. A. Gleason, Joseph E. Grimes, R. W. Jumpelt, Jan Knappert, Terry Langendoen, Robert P. Markham, Fred C. C. Peng, Punya Sloka Ray, William Reyburn, William Samarin, William A. Smalley, G. Henry Waterman, and William L. Wonderly. Dorothy L. Tyler is to be thanked for her invaluable assistance in

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The polyglot empire of ancient Babylon, with its hard-working core of multilingual scribes sending out official communications on cuneiform tablets to the far corners of the realm, is a far cry from the electronic equipment used today in simultaneous interpretation at the United Nations in New York. The basic problems of interlingual communication, however, remain the same, though in our day the terrifying potentialities of modern technology require us to increase our efforts to guarantee effective understanding between peoples. Whether one is dealing with translation in international gatherings, or with the highly publicized efforts to put machines to work translating masses of scientific abstracts, or with the pioneering efforts of missionaries translating the Scriptures for remote, primitive tribes, one thing is certain: at no time in the history of the world have there been so many persons as today who are dedicating so much time and effort to the task of translation.

Opposition to Translation

Though interlingual translation is accepted by all as a practical necessity, the task and its results have not been without detractors. Grant Showerman (1916, p. 100) has declared that "translation is meddling with inspiration," while Harry de Forest Smith (Brower, 1959, p. 173) has insisted that a translation of a literary work is as tasteless as "a stewed strawberry," and Max Eastman (1936) contends that "almost all translations are bad," for they are made by ordinary people who match the unusual foreign expression with the commonplace in their own tongue. Moreover, they add insult to injury by their desperate concern to be literary. [1]

There may well be reason to complain of translating when one examines closely what happens to a document in the process of being transferred from one language to another. As an experiment, the editors of *Politiken*, a newspaper in Denmark, sent a delightfully written essay of 700 words by J. V. Jansen to a succession of Swedish, German, English, and French translators. Finally, this successively retranslated article, which started out as a descriptive essay with "rhythmical sentences, simple phrases and well-chosen words, giving a vivid impression of forest smells, and colors, of abundant animal life and the dignity of nature and of labor," ended up as so prosaic a jumble that a Danish professor, who was asked to produce the final translation from French back into Danish, protested

[1] For a number of equally poignant criticisms of translations by well-known literary figures, see Mounin (1955).

that he could not see any point to his wasting time in translating material "that seemed to have been written by a school child." [1]

Some objections to translation have reflected theological considerations. The *Masseketh Sopherim* (Tractate of the Scribes), for example, reflects the medieval Jewish attitude toward the translation of the Old Testament into Greek by saying, "Five elders wrote the Law in Greek for King Tolmai (Ptolemy); and that day was a hard day for Israel, like the day on which Israel made the golden calf." The *Megillath Taanith* (The Roll of Fasting) describes thus the same translation: "On the eighth day of Tebeth the Law was written in Greek in the days of King Tolmai, and darkness came upon the world for three days," (Thackeray, 1917, pp. 89-93). Sir Thomas More was opposed to all Bible translations because the expressions used in them were contrary to the tradition of the Roman Church, a position emphasized by the strictures of the Council of Trent. [2]

Nevertheless, men have not always despaired of translation, for it has at least some advantages, even though, as some have said, "Nothing improves by translation except bishops." [3] Even so, Fitzgerald (1903, p. 100) would contend that "a live sparrow is better than a stuffed eagle." Though a translation may be like old wine in new bottles or a woman in man's clothing, the results can be both tasteful and alive, despite the judgment of early Renaissance Italian writers, who contended that translations are like women—homely when they are faithful and unfaithful when they are lovely.

Underlying all the complications of translation is the fundamental fact that languages differ radically one from the other. In fact, so different are they that some insist that one cannot communicate adequately in one language what has been said originally in another. Nevertheless, as linguists and anthropologists have discovered, that which unites mankind is much greater than that which divides, and hence there is, even in cases of very disparate languages and cultures, a basis for communication. This common core of human experience and the relatable modes of speaking about it do not, however, eliminate the striking and fundamental differences between languages. Moreover, the divergences seem to be not only far more numerous than the similarities, but also to provide many more obstacles to understanding than the similarities are able to clear away.

At the same time, the translator is under constant pressure from the conflict between form and meaning. If he attempts to approximate the stylistic qualities of the original, he is likely to sacrifice much of the meaning, while strict adherence to the literal content usually results in considerable loss of the stylistic flavor.

Similarly, the translator is caught in the dilemma of "the letter vs.

[1] This procedure has been described in an anonymous editorial, entitled "Transformation by Translation," *Living Age* 333.1117-1118 (1927).

[2] For a discussion of various theological aspects of translation, see Schwarz, 1955.

[3] Cited by Grand'combe, 1949.

the spirit," for in being faithful to the things talked about, he can destroy the spirit that pervades an original communication. At the same time, if he concentrates too much upon trying to reproduce the original "feeling" and "tone" of the message, he may be accused of playing loose with the substance of the document—the letter of the law.

To make matters even worse, translators must deal with a medium of communication which is constantly in process of change. To be a useful instrument for social intercourse, language must be able to admit new knowledge and new organization of knowledge. In a sense, it must fit reality or it is useless; but it cannot fit reality too closely, or it would be equally unserviceable, for language cannot uniquely specify all the infinitely different events. It must be able to classify and group experiences. Moreover, it must have sufficient generality of utility to be employed by the masses of the people, and not merely by some small coterie of initiates. It is therefore not a private code but a public system of symbols, constantly, if slowly, being remade to fit the exigencies of a changing world. Translators themselves, however, are responsible for a good deal of the change that does take place within languages, for as Julio Casares (1956) has so aptly said, "Translation is a customs house through which passes, if the custom officers are not alert, more smuggled goods of foreign idioms than through any other linguistic frontier."

Another problem facing the translator is the proper understanding of his own role. Is translating, for example, an art or a science? Is it a skill which can only be acquired by practice, or are there certain procedures which can be described and studied? The truth is that practice in translating has far outdistanced theory; and though no one will deny the artistic elements in good translating, linguists and philologists are becoming increasingly aware that the processes of translation are amenable to rigorous description. When we speak of "the science of translating," we are of course concerned with the descriptive aspect; for just as linguistics may be classified as a descriptive science, so the transference of a message from one language to another is likewise a valid subject for scientific description. Those who have insisted that translation is an art, and nothing more, have often failed to probe beneath the surface of the obvious principles and procedures that govern its functioning. Similarly, those who have espoused an entirely opposite view have rarely studied translating enough to appreciate the artistic sensitivity which is an indispensable ingredient in any first-rate translation of a literary work.

The Field of Translation

The general field of translation may be divided into three parts, following Jakobson (1959b, p. 233). The first type, or "intralingual" translation, consists essentially in rewording something within the same language. By this process we may interpret the verbal signs by means of other signs in the same language, a process much more frequently practiced than we generally imagine, and one basic to an adequate theory of

meaning.[1] The second type, or "interlingual translation," may be called "translation proper," for it comprises the interpretation of the verbal signs of one language by means of the verbal signs of another. However, in interlingual translation we are concerned not merely with matching symbols (i.e. word-for-word comparisons) but also with the equivalence of both symbols and their arrangements. That is to say, we must know the meaning of the entire utterance.

A third type of translation may be called "intersemiotic," or transmutation, by which we mean the transference of a message from one kind of symbolic system to another. For example, in the U. S. Navy a verbal message may be transmuted into a flag message by hoisting up the proper flags in the right sequence. Similarly, a speech by a Kiowa chief may be transmuted into sign language without verbal accompaniment, to be understood not only by the speakers of other languages, but also by any other Kiowas who may be present.

In many instances, however, translating does involve certain rather severe restrictions imposed by the cultural contexts and linguistic literary styles, or media of communication. The translation of legal documents from English to Spanish, for example, involves some basic differences between English common law and Roman law. The translator of American comic strips is constantly beset by problems arising out of cultural specialties; for example, corned beef and cabbage—a dish that fits so well the character of Jiggs—just does not make sense in many cultures. Accordingly, Jiggs's favorite food becomes rice and fish in Southeast Asia, cabbage stuffed with hamburger in Turkey, and stewed codfish in Italy (McManus, 1952).

Stylistic restrictions are a particularly important element in the translation of poetry, for so much of the essence of poetry consists in a formal envelope for a meaningful content.

An even more trying set of formal restrictions resulting from the particular medium of communication is encountered in trying to dub in live sound for a foreign motion picture, for one must not only communicate the story but also—particularly in close-up scenes—match the timing, the syllabic structure, and even the corresponding facial movements.[2]

Of all the various types of translating, however, one can safely say that none surpasses Bible translating in: (1) the range of subject matter (e.g. poetry, law, proverbs, narration, exposition, conversation); (2) linguistic variety (directly or indirectly from Greek and Hebrew into more than 1,200 other languages and dialects); (3) historical depth (from the third century B. C. to the present); (4) cultural diversity (there is no cultural area in the world which is not represented by Bible translating); (5) volume of manuscript evidence; (6) number of translators involved; (7) conflicting viewpoints; and (8) accumulation of data on principles and procedures employed. It is thus with some justification that this volume

[1] See the sections on the determination of meaning by substitution techniques and hierarchical structuring, in Chapter 5.

[2] Caillé, 1960.

on the science of translating employs to a considerable extent the experience of Bible translators, as being useful in a wider study of the theory and practice of translating. There is, however, no attempt to restrict this treatment to Scriptural materials, for this volume is concerned with the entire range of translating. Nevertheless, even within the scope of Biblical materials themselves there is an ample supply of significant and representative data.

There are, of course, special problems involved in Bible translating which do not affect other types of translating to quite the same degree: (1) in comparison with purely contemporary materials, the Bible represents a document coming from a relatively remote historical period; (2) the cultural differences between Biblical times and our own are considerable; (3) the nature of the documentary evidence, though in some ways very abundant (in contrast to other documents from classical times), is crucially deficient in many matters of word division and punctuation; (4) arbitrary traditional divisions into chapters and verses have tended to obscure meaningful connections; and (5) overriding theological considerations have in some instances tended to distort the meaning of the original message. Furthermore, not only does the Bible translator have to confront the natural tendency to conservatism and mystery in religious expression, but, as Campbell said so aptly in 1789, "There is an additional evil resulting from this manner of treating holy writ, that the solecisms, barbarisms and nonsensical expressions, which it gives rise to, prove a fund of materials to the visionary, out of which his imagination frames a thousand mysteries." [1]

The Purpose of this Treatment of Translation

Isenberg (1953, p. 234) is quite right in stating, "The truth is that the art of interpretation has by far outstripped the theory of interpretation." The present work is an attempt to remedy this unfortunate state of affairs by bringing to the subject of translation numerous insights which have become increasingly significant in a number of related fields.

In Europe the earliest significant work in anthropological semantics was that of Wilhelm von Humboldt (1836), who insisted upon profound psychological and philosophical relationships between language on the one hand and thought and culture on the other. [2] But undoubtedly the most important influence in Europe on the development of a theory of

[1] George Campbell's introductory volume to his translation of *The Four Gospels* (London: A. Strahan, 1789) is an outstanding scholarly treatment of translation principles and procedures, especially as they are related to the problems of the Bible translator.

[2] The distinctive viewpoints of Humboldt have given rise to a number of similar studies by German scholars, including J. Trier (1931), G. Ipsen (1932), and L. Weisgerber (1953-1954). These views on the relationship of language and culture contributed considerably to the tendency for certain German theologians to develop a theology out of language—a position against which James Barr (1961) has effectively remonstrated.

meaning was exercised by Ferdinand de Saussure (1916), whose basic concepts of linguistic structures provided a basis for dealing constructively with semantic problems.

In the United States, where, in reaction against a "catch-all" kind of mentalism, semantic problems were for some time side-stepped by many linguists as being outside the realm of linguistics proper, Edward Sapir made initial and highly significant contributions (1930, 1944), while Benjamin Lee Whorf (1945, 1950) formulated additional and provocative concepts which sought to explain certain thought structures and many culture traits as being basically a reflection of the fundamental linguistic categories of the languages of the peoples in question. These studies were rapidly followed by important contributions by a number of anthropologically oriented linguists, such as Harry Hoijer (1948, 1953), Floyd Lounsbury (1955, 1956), and Zellig Harris (1952).

Anthropology has come a long way from its biological preoccupation in the last century to its present-day concern with symbolism and values, a process which was decisively influenced by Bronislaw Malinowski (1922, 1935) and which has been carried on by a number of anthropologists, including Ward H. Goodenough (1956), Anthony F. C. Wallace and John Atkins (1960), C. O. Frake (1961), and Harold C. Conklin (1962). This shift of emphasis has been of utmost importance to anyone studying the meaning of verbal symbols; for, from the careful analysis of kinship systems and the detailed descriptions of the ways in which people describe their own lives and environments, we have obtained unparalleled insight into the manner in which the meanings of words can be studied and classified.

General semanticists have been the active gadflies in contemporary discussions of communication. They have not been content with the explanations of the grammarians, who are concerned with the relationships of words to words, or of the logicians, who deal with the relationships of assertions to assertions. They have not even been satisfied with the traditional semanticist, who directs his attention to the relationship of words and assertions to the referents to which they supposedly correspond. Rather, they have become involved in the problems of the relationship of these words and statements to human behavior in general. These men are interested, not in the supposed categories underlying logical expression, but in the behavior of people during, and resulting from, the process of communication.

General semanticists, such as Rapoport and Hayakawa, have toned down some of the extravagant claims of the early pioneer Korzybski, but they have not overlooked the important contributions which the latter made. Especially in his "map analogies," Korzybski (1933) claimed that: (1) the map is not the territory (i.e. the word symbols are not reality, but only the surrogates for such); (2) the map does not include everything (i.e. words lump together various more or less similar things but do not precisely identify all the differences of experience); and (3) the map is self-reflexive. That is to say, the map must really include the map, or in other words, that language contains symbols by means of which one may

speak about language—a language within a language, or as some linguists speak of it, a "metalanguage."

As the result of an intense concern for language as a symbolic system, symbolic logicians have also contributed some highly important insights into the problem of meaning, and thus to translation. It is almost inevitable that such men as Bertrand Russell (1940) and L. Wittgenstein (1953), who declared that "Alle Philosophie ist Sprachphilosophie," all philosophy is the philosophy of language, should have made important contributions to our understanding of symbols and their meanings. By means of certain new concepts in logic, including: (1) the propositional function, (2) the operational definition, (3) predictive evaluation as the criterion of truth, and (4) the theory of types,[1] the traditional logic of Aristotle was almost completely reversed. Instead of assuming that words have certain meanings, and that the task of the logician is merely to describe what is already an inherent property of such a symbol, the symbolic logicians set up entire systems of symbols, assigned meanings to them, and proceeded to manipulate them as means of testing their values and relationships. In a sense, words were dethroned from the exalted status assigned to them in the Platonic system of "ideas," and made to be tools for the manipulation of concepts. The practical result has been the recognition that words are essentially instruments and tools, and that communication is merely one type of behavioral event. In this area some of the most stimulating observations have come from Ernst Cassirer (1933, 1946, 1953) and Willard V. Quine (1959, 1960a and b).

Psychologists also have made important contributions to the study of meaning, not only in the area of Gestalt psychology, which is preeminently concerned with perception and conceptualization, and hence with symbolization, but also in behavioristic analyses. The earlier attempts to explain all meanings merely in terms of stimulus and response have proved quite inadequate, for the conditioning features of human behavior cannot be readily controlled as are those of animals in mazes. However, by setting up "behavioral predispositions" psychologists have been able to show the relationship between symbol and behavior in ways that provide important insights into the problems of response to meaning —features of the utmost importance to the translator attempting to reproduce in his audience something of the same effect which is understood to have existed in the response of the original hearers. In this connection one should refer to the research and theories of B. F. Skinner (1953, 1957) and Roger Brown (1954, 1956).

Some psychologists (cf. Miller, Galanter, and Pribram, 1960) have developed psychological theories which exhibit very marked parallelism to linguistic structures, for their fundamental concepts about the structure of human behavior correspond closely to the types of structures encountered in language. Moreover, these theories tie in with present-day developments in the field of cybernetics, and demonstrate rather clearly

[1] For a useful summary of these basic concepts see Anatol Rapoport, "What is Semantics?" in Hayakawa (1954), pp. 3-18.

that behavior involves much more than reflexes and re-enforcement. In fact, it can be adequately explained only by taking into consideration such factors as image, plan, testing, and feedback. If these theories prove correct (and they are rapidly gaining ground), they offer means of rather startling advances for correlating the findings of linguists and psychologists in the crucial area of communication.

Psychiatry also has contributed significantly to modern approaches to meaning, particularly through the insights of Jung and Erich Fromm, by highlighting the importance of symbols and the extent to which verbal symbols carry far more emotive significance than was earlier thought possible.

Philologists, for whom translation has been a familiar and long-studied field, have also materially assisted the present-day study of literature by focusing increasing attention on the total cultural context of literary production, rather than attempting, as so often in the past, to ferret out hidden motifs and wasting time on irrelevant reconstructions.

Persons directly concerned with basic problems of Biblical interpretation have also contributed to an understanding of fundamental semantic theory, as in the detailed studies of Joachim Wach (1926-1929), who analyzed the theories of interpretation in the nineteenth century, and in the penetrating insights of Karl Jaspers and Rudolf Bultmann in *Myth and Christianity* (1958).

On the basis of these many different types of contemporary studies which are related directly and indirectly to problems of semantic and linguistic correspondence, this volume attempts to provide an essentially descriptive approach to the translation process. If at times the principles and procedures appear to be prescriptive, it is only because, within the range of the type of translation being discussed, these elements have been generally accepted as being the most useful. The fundamental thrust is, of course, linguistic, as it must be in any descriptive analysis of the relationship between corresponding messages in different languages. But the points of view are by no means narrowly linguistic, for language is here viewed as but one part of total human behavior, which in turn is the object of study of a number of related disciplines.

In order to do justice to the wide range of problems involved in translation, and as a means of so treating such matters that there is least need for repetition or cross reference, this introduction is followed by a chapter on the history of translating. This chapter, directly or indirectly, touches upon most of the basic issues treated in more descriptive detail in later sections of the book.

Chapters 3-5 are concerned with the nature of meaning in its linguistic, referential, and emotive phases.

Chapter 6 deals with the dynamic dimension of language. The total amount of information received by a receptor may be quite different from what was intended by a source, and therefore the translator must be concerned with language not only as a code, but also as a communicative event.

Then, as a special element in the communicative process, the role of

the translator is considered in Chapter 7; for the principles and procedures of translation cannot be fully understood or objectively evaluated without recognizing the important part played by the personal involvement of the translator.

The principles of correspondence in translation are treated in Chapters 8-9 in terms of types of translations, principles of translating, formal restrictions on translations, and types of correspondence. The actual techniques of adjustment are treated in Chapter 10. Translation procedures, as treated in Chapter 11, include such subjects as the analysis of the receptor language text, the selection of correspondences, and the basic differences in translation procedure for (1) work done by a committee and (2) that done by a single individual. A final chapter deals with the practical and theoretical developments and implications of machine translation.

In Chapters 8 through 10 the presentations may appear to be somewhat repetitive, for we are attempting in these chapters to look upon the same sets of data from various points of view. For example, in Chapter 9 we note the types of correspondences which exist between languages, but in Chapter 10 we deal with these same sets, but from the standpoint of the techniques of adjustment which need to be employed in reproducing these in languages having other basic structures. The essentially theoretical aspects of translation are treated in Chapters 3 through 6, while the practical implications and applications are handled in Chapters 7 through 12. Though it is true that the basic approach to translation is primarily "descriptive," nevertheless, it is based upon a concept of language which goes beyond the more narrow confines of a so-called "taxonomic grammar." In other words, following Noam Chomsky (1957), we are not content to look upon a language as some fixed corpus of sentences, but as a dynamic mechanism capable of generating an infinite series of different utterances. An adequate description of a language must in some way or other account for the capacity of the individual speaker of a language to generate such a stream of speech and to interpret what he hears, even though he has usually never heard the particular combinations before. This generative view of language seems to be particularly important for the translator, for in translating from one language into another he must go beyond mere comparisons of corresponding structures and attempt to describe the mechanisms by which the total message is decoded, transferred, and transformed into the structures of another language. To describe this process we must have more powerful tools than mere lists of correspondences, for in so far as possible we need to explain how one can take a unique message in the source language and "create" an equally unique message in the receptor (or target) language. This requires looking upon language in some generative manner. At the same time, this does not mean that other views of language have nothing to contribute or that they are irrelevant to the task. These other approaches are often quite helpful and entirely satisfactory if we are seeking primarily observational or descriptive adequacy, but if we are looking for a deeper level of comprehension, that is, for "explanatory adequacy"

(Chomsky, 1962), we must employ an approach to procedures which will help to explicate the generative capacities of language.

If the range of subject matter and the detail with which it is treated in the subsequent sections seem at times unduly difficult or surprisingly voluminous, it must be recognized that translation is essentially a very complicated procedure. In fact, in describing the communication process in translating, I. A. Richards (1953, p. 250) has said, "We have here indeed what may very probably be the most complex type of event yet produced in the evolution of the cosmos."

CHAPTER TWO

THE TRADITION OF TRANSLATION IN THE WESTERN WORLD[1]

Undoubtedly the most famous translation from the ancient world is the Rosetta stone, dating from the second century B.C., but found only in 1799; for it provided the key to unlock the secrets of ancient Egypt through the clue it gave to deciphering Egyptian hieroglyphics. The stone actually contains both a biscript, a text in two forms of writing—Egyptian hieroglyphic and later demotic characters—and a translation of them into Greek.

Evidence of formal translations does not, however, begin with the Rosetta stone, for in the third millennium B.C., Sargon of Assyria delighted in having his exploits proclaimed with elaborate embellishments in the many languages of his empire. The Babylon of Hammurabi's day (c. 2100 B.C.) was a polyglot city, and much of the official business of the empire was made possible by corps of scribes who translated edicts into various languages. Part of the work of these ancient translators evidently consisted in the compilation of lists of corresponding words in various languages, for some of these "dictionaries" have been preserved in cuneiform tablets from various locations and from differing periods. Some of the activity of ancient translators is also reflected in the much later account found in Esther 8:9, where it is said that the King's scribes were summoned to prepare an edict to be sent "to all the satraps and governors and princes of the provinces from India to Ethiopia, a hundred and twenty-seven provinces, to every province in its own script and to every people in its own language, and also to the Jews in their script and language."

A special form of translation developed in the Jewish community in the time of Nehemiah, around 397 B.C.[2] As the event is recorded in Nehemiah 7:73b—8:8, all the people gathered to hear the reading of the law in the square before the Water Gate, "And they read from the book, from the law of God, clearly (or with interpretation); and they gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading." The Jewish people who returned from captivity in Mesopotamia were no longer able to understand the form of Hebrew used in the Scriptures. Accordingly, if the people were to understand, translators (or interpreters) had to explain the contents in a form of Aramaic, the rapidly spreading Semitic trade language of the Eastern Mediterranean.

[1] Because of the peculiar nature of translation problems and traditions in the non-western world, we are here restricting ourselves to the tradition of which we are a part and which is exerting the dominant influence in the world today. For discussions of traditions in the non-western world, see several articles in *Babel*, volume IX, nos. 1 and 2 (1963).

[2] Some scholars date this as 445 B.C.

The only reliable account we have for the formal translation of some part of the Scriptures concerns the book of Ecclesiasticus, included in the Apocrypha. We learn, for example, that Sirach's book of Wisdom was translated into Greek in Egypt about 130 B.C. by his grandson. About this same time the Old Testament was translated into Greek by various scholars who were trying to meet the needs of the large Greek-speaking Jewish community in Alexandria, Egypt, where the Jews numbered some two-fifths of the population in this intellectual and commercial center of the ancient eastern Mediterranean.

The ancient Greco-Roman world, however, was well acquainted with translations and the techniques involved. As early as about 240 B.C., Livius Andronicus had translated Homer's Odyssey into Latin Verse, and Naevius and Ennius rendered a number of Greek plays into Latin. Quintilian, Cicero, Horace, Catullus, and the younger Pliny all gave serious study to translation problems. However, there was no systematic study of principles and procedures from the ancient world. They simply translated, and in many instances they rendered the Greek classics with great skill and insight.

Unfortunately, Bible translating did not in some respects fare as well as the classics, for there was a tendency to regard the "letter rather than the spirit," with results that were sometimes lamentable. Aquila, for example, in the second century A.D. made a painfully literal translation of the Hebrew Old Testament into Greek. Theodotian, also in the second century, tried to make some major improvements in this type of translating; and Symmachus, toward the end of the same century, went somewhat further in the direction of intelligibility, so that Jerome could say of his work, "He gave the sense of the scripture, not in literal language, as Aquila did" (Grant, 1961, p. 25).

Translations of the New Testament were made very early, and into a number of different languages. Beginning first with Syriac and Latin, the process of translation included Coptic (several different dialects), Ethiopic, Gothic, Georgian, and Armenian, to meet the needs of the rapidly expanding Christian community. With respect to the Latin translations, we know that many of these were quite literal, and some of them apparently rather haphazard. As a model in literalness the translators could, of course, point to certain sections of the Septuagint, which are often so literal as to be stylistically very awkward, and not infrequently downright bad Greek.[1] Certainly by the time Jerome was commissioned in 384 A.D. by Pope Damasus to produce a text of the New Testament, it was no easy task to choose between conflicting renderings and to deal with the vested interests of competing interpretations. In the preface to his work Jerome felt obliged to anticipate some of the criticisms by writing: "Who is there, whether learned or unlearned, who, when he takes up the volume in his hands and discovers that what he reads therein does not agree with what he is accustomed to, will not break out at once in a loud voice and call me a sacrilegious forger, for daring to add something

[1] Wikgren, 1947, p. 2.

to the ancient books, to make changes and corrections in them?" (Grant, 1961, p. 36). Jerome was right, for his translation of the New Testament produced a storm of protest that followed him through the rest of his life—a life dedicated first and foremost to the translation of the Old Testament into Latin.

Jerome's approach to translation was probably one of the most systematic and disciplined of any of the ancient translators. He followed well-conceived principles, which he freely proclaimed and defended, and stated quite frankly that he rendered "sense for sense and not word for word." [1] Furthermore, he claimed the support of Cicero, who had translated Plato's Protagoras and other Greek documents into Latin. Cicero, for example, had declared: "What men like you ... call fidelity in translation, the learned term pestilent minuteness ... it is hard to preserve in a translation the charm of expressions which in another language are most felicitous .... If I render word for word, the result will sound uncouth, and if compelled by necessity I alter anything in the order or wording, I shall seem to have departed from the function of a translator."

Jerome also defended his principles of translation by citing the manner in which the Gospel writer Mark treated such expressions as the Aramaic *talitha cumi*, literally, "Damsel, arise," but which Mark rendered into Greek by the sense as "Damsel, I say to you, arise." Jerome further confirmed his principles by citing the manner in which the New Testament writers freely quoted or adapted the Hebrew original or the Septuagint translation. On the other hand, Jerome made some statements which seem to contradict this striving for the sense rather than the wording; but these statements are probably due to his theological controversies with Rufinus, who espoused even freer principles of translation than Jerome, at least in theory, was willing to adopt. Actually, the work of Rufinus and that of Jerome are not so different as has often been implied.

Any departure from past tradition not only brings criticism from those who retain their preference for the old ("And no one after drinking old wine desires new; for he says, 'The old is good'," Luke 5:39), but also inevitably raises questions for and from those who are justifiably confused by differences of translation. Thus the Goths inquired of Jerome which was the correct translation of the Psalter—Greek or Latin? Which, they asked, was the more nearly correct translation of the Hebrew? With so many translations, some of which were very literal indeed, it is no wonder that the Gothic clergymen were confused, as many people still are today (Bratcher, 1961c).

During the Middle Ages in Western Europe, translating, with the exception of the Venerable Bede's translation of the Gospel of John in 735 A.D., was confined primarily to religious essays rendered into stiff, ecclesiastical Latin. In the 9th and 10th centuries, however, Baghdad became an important center for the translation of the Greek classics into

[1] Letter 57 to Pammachius on the Best Method of Translating, from *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, translated by Schaff and Wall, Volume 6, *Jerome: Letters and Select Works*.

Arabic. By the 12th century, Toledo, Spain, had become a center of learning and for the translating of Greek classics into Latin, but generally by way of intermediate languages such as Syriac and Arabic. Nevertheless, there were scholars who were not unaware of the basic requirements of translation. Maimonides, for example, toward the end of the 12th century, insisted that word for word renderings generally make for a doubtful and confused translation (Luzzatto, 1957, p. 63).

From the Renaissance to the Present

At the time of the Renaissance, Western Europe was, figuratively speaking, inundated with a flood of translations, largely from Greek, for it was the rediscovery of the ancient world which had produced the "rebirth" in Western Europe. Since at last translations were being produced for a much wider audience than the ecclesiastically trained scholastics, there was every incentive to put such translations into the language of the people, and accordingly many persons became engaged in such enterprises. Apparently, however, the general level of such translating of secular works was not high, for, as F. R. Amos (1920, p. 50) has noted, "In contrast to translators of secular works, Bible translators labored long and carefully." Moreover, most of the controversies about translation principles were focused on the efforts of Bible translators, who were engaged in activities strongly supported by some and as vigorously denounced by others.

Undoubtedly the dominant figure in the field of translation during the 16th century was Martin Luther. In order to understand the significance of Luther's contribution, it is important to know something of the pre-Luther period; for by the time Luther published his New Testament in 1522 (the entire Bible was completed only in 1534), there were already a number of translations in several major Western European languages, e.g. Dutch, German, Bohemian (Czech), English, and French. Moreover, the theory of translation was being influenced profoundly by such intellectual leaders as Erasmus. Furthermore, political and social factors contributed to the importance of the languages of the people, in contrast with courtly and ecclesiastical Latin—differences which even the Latin grammarians, in their attempt to teach good Latin, were compelled to emphasize. Hence, even these Latin rhetoricians encouraged people, at least indirectly, to regard their own language as having a distinct form and genius (Schwarz, 1945). Even though such a person as Nicolas von Wyle might argue for literal word-for-word translations, most translators insisted on following the spoken language of the people. In doing so they were, of course, rapidly undermining the traditional rhetorical principles inherited from the Middle Ages (Schwarz, 1944).

Nevertheless, despite earlier tendencies toward more meaningful translating, Luther deserves full credit for having sensed the importance of full intelligibility, especially in the heat of theological controversy. Luther not only defended his principles in general terms, namely, that only in this way could people understand the meaning of the Holy

Scriptures; he also carefully and systematically worked out the implications of his principles of translation in such matters as: (1) shifts of word order; (2) employment of modal auxiliaries; (3) introduction of connectives when these were required; (4) suppression of Greek or Hebrew terms which had no acceptable equivalent in German; (5) use of phrases where necessary to translate single words in the original; (6) shifts of metaphors to nonmetaphors and vice versa; and (7) careful attention to exegetical accuracy and textual variants. [1]

In view of Luther's theological leadership in the Reformation and his remarkable success in translating the New Testament into German, it is little wonder that William Tyndale, who first translated the New Testament into modern English, was ready to parallel quite closely what Luther had already done. Though Tyndale translated directly from Greek, and of course could not depend on German for lexical choices in English, nevertheless he has shown unmistakable dependence upon the principles of translation which Luther employed (Gruber, 1923). Undoubtedly these principles played a major role in the acceptance of Tyndale's work as a basis for later English translations of the New Testament.

Despite the great importance of Luther in the entire field of translation, not only through the example of his work, but also in his *Sendbrief vom Dolmetschen* (1530), discussed more fully below, the credit for the first formulation of a theory of translation must go to Etienne Dolet (1509-1546). Dolet published in 1540 a brief but unsurpassed statement of translation principles (Cary, 1955b).

Etienne Dolet was born in Orleans, France. After some preliminary study in Paris and later travel in Italy, he returned to France at the age of 21 and became deeply immersed in the humanistic movement, arguing with Erasmus, and becoming involved in numerous political and intellectual controversies. This involvement led inevitably to his being imprisoned at various times, with thirteen of his books condemned and burned by the authorities. Finally, after escaping from prison, he was arrested in Lyon and brought to trial on the charge of heresy for having "mistranslated" one of the dialogues of Plato in such a way as to imply a disbelief in immortality. Condemned as a confirmed atheist, Dolet, at the age of 37, was tortured and strangled, and his body was burned, with copies of his books.

Etienne Dolet, himself an excellent translator and a brilliant student of the classics, summarized the fundamental principles of translation under five headings:

1. The translator must understand perfectly the content and intention of the author whom he is translating.
2. The translator should have a perfect knowledge of the language from which he is translating and an equally excellent knowledge of the language into which he is translating.

[1] For a supplementary discussion of these matters, see Edward H. Lauer (1915) and Heinz Bluhm (1951).

3. The translator should avoid the tendency to translate word for word, for to do so is to destroy the meaning of the original and to ruin the beauty of the expression.
4. The translator should employ the forms of speech in common usage.
5. Through his choice and order of words the translator should produce a total overall effect with appropriate "tone." [1]

It is interesting to note that Dolet senses the prime necessity of the translator's being in full rapport with the spirit and intent of the original author, a sentiment emphasized and stated negatively by Luther when he said, "I contend that a false Christian or a person with a sectarian spirit cannot faithfully translate the [Scriptures]." Moreover, Dolet does not seek to distinguish between the relative degree of control the translator must have in the source and the receptor language. In theory, one should have perfect knowledge and control of both. Dolet's emphasis upon avoidance of literalism and upon the use of vernaculars is strikingly relevant for all types of translation aimed at a general audience, and his final word on the tone of the translation as reflected in its appropriate stylistic effectiveness is fundamental to all serious efforts in translation, regardless of medium or content.

Of course there was some disagreement with such principles as Etienne Dolet enunciated and Luther demonstrated in his translation. Men like Gregory Martin held to a basically obscurantist viewpoint, insisting that the authority of the Church Fathers came before the results of contemporary scholarship. But people like William Fulke (1583), who undoubtedly had considerable influence on the translators of the King James Version, insisted that ecclesiastical tradition must give way to common English usage. Fulke contended that "To translate precisely out of the Hebrew is not to observe the number of words, but the perfect sense and meaning, as the phrase of our tongue will serve to be understood" (Amos, 1920, p. 60).

An outstanding Bible translation from this early period is the Spanish work of Casiodoro de Reina, whose translation, published in 1568, was revised by his friend and colleague Cipriano de Valera in 1603. These men were in close touch with all the major intellectual developments in France, England, and Germany, and their knowledge, combined with unusual sensitivity to linguistic usage, resulted in the production of a remarkably fine translation. In various degrees of revision it has served the Spanish-speaking world as the principal Spanish Bible in circulation. Because of the declining importance of Spain as an intellectual center of European life, this translation had much less effect upon translation theory and practice than various English and German translations had. However, it should be recognized as an outstanding example of the flowering of literary achievement in Spain in the 16th century, combined with intellectual insights from the ferment of learning in the world of the Reformation.

[1] Dolet's principles are reproduced here in summary form with certain paraphrastic adaptations, based upon Cary's analysis (1955b).

The translators commissioned by King James I of England to produce a text of the Bible which could be authorized for reading in the churches did not develop new principles or theories of translation. Actually, they were not seeking to do something new, but rather to select the best of what had been included in previous translations, as the preface, *The Translators to the Reader*, clearly states. However, a text that could have been a series of tasteless compromises turned out to be a remarkably fine translation, owing to the unusually good sense the translators showed in matters of exegesis and their extraordinary sensitivity to the style of speech appropriate in public reading. They were refreshingly better than the Rheims-Douay translators, who floundered in a morass of awkward literalness and ecclesiastical verbiage. Even though at first the King James Version was roundly denounced, and such groups as the Pilgrims would have nothing to do with it—copies were not allowed in the Mayflower Company—it finally won out. It served to cast a very long shadow over Bible translating in many languages for several centuries.

In contrast with the relative care exhibited by the translators of the Scriptures, those engaged in the translation of secular works in the 17th and 18th centuries showed an almost unrestrained freedom. This period has been quite appropriately called the age of *Les Belles Infidèles* (Mounin, 1955). As G. M. Young (1941) has commented, translators of this period were not always asking themselves, "Have I captured the exact shade or sentiment in that line?" Rather, they "brought their subject home in bulk."[1] During these centuries foreign models had considerable influence with literary people throughout Europe. Though many English translations were rather garbled abridgments and revisions, they were, for the most part, vigorous and meaningful (Hughes, 1919). Primarily, however, the freedom of this period implied, not so much a technique for giving the translator greater opportunity to display his own powers, as a means by which he could reproduce more truly the spirit of the original (Amos, 1920, p. 156).

Probably the dominant person who set the stage for a conscious freedom in translation was the poet Abraham Cowley (1656), who defended his translations of Pindar's Odes by saying, "If a man should undertake to translate Pindar word for word, it would be thought *one Mad-man* had translated another; as may appear, when a person who understands not the original, reads the verbal translation of him into Latin prose, than which nothing seems more raving .... I have in these two odes of Pindar taken, left out, and added what I please; nor made it so much my aim to let the reader know precisely what he spoke, as what was his way and manner of speaking."

Dryden (1680) did not approve of Cowley's rather radical approach to Pindar's Odes, and classified his translations as "imitation." Dryden felt that there were three basic types of translation: (1) metaphrase, a word-for-word and line-for-line type of rendering; (2) paraphrase, a translation in which the author's work is kept carefully in view, but in which

[1] See also John W. Draper (1921).

the sense rather than the words are followed; and (3) imitation, in which the translator assumes the liberty not only to vary the words and sense, but also to leave both if the spirit of the original seems to require. Dryden said quite frankly that, "It is impossible to translate verbally and well at the same time. 'Tis much like dancing on ropes with fetter'd legs! A man may shun a fall by using caution, but the gracefulness of motion is not to be expected." Dryden proposed the golden mean of paraphrase, insisting that "Imitation and verbal version are in my opinion the two extremes, which ought to be avoided."

Alexander Pope (1715) followed very much the same position as Dryden, for he contended that "No literal translation can be just to an excellent original" . . . and yet "no rash paraphrase can make amends." Pope insisted that "The fire of the poem is what the translator should principally regard, as it is most likely to expire in his managing."

Batteux (1760) in France sounded a more cautious word during this same general period. His "rules" involved the preservation of word order wherever possible, the conservation of the order of ideas, the use of the same length of sentences, the duplication of conjunctions, and the avoidance of paraphrase. Batteux was not opposed to alterations if they were fully justified, but he was cautious and deeply concerned with the reproduction of form. In Germany a somewhat similar development had taken place, as reflected in Herder's translations and in A. W. Schlegel's verse rendering of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* (Purdie, 1949).

John Wesley's translation of the New Testament, published in 1755, had considerable influence on views of Scripture translating, for his work was strikingly ahead of his time. He reflected very well the secular concepts of translating, and in many of his decisions on technical theological problems and exegesis he anticipated much of what was later incorporated into standard translations.

In 1789 George Campbell of Aberdeen published an outstanding work on the history and theory of translation, especially as related to the Scriptures. In his two-volume work, of which the first is a 700-page introduction to his translation of the Gospels, Campbell treated Bible translation in a detailed and systematic way, with far greater breadth and insight than anyone before him had employed in dealing with the problems. He indicated by copious examples precisely where he differed in principle and practice from such translators as Jerome, Castalio, and Beza, and showed remarkable insight into problems of textual criticism. In his study of the key words of the New Testament he anticipated many later developments.

Campbell took considerable pains to point out the inadequacies of the King James Version; and, whether he was dealing with minor details or broad principles, he displayed an unusual combination of sound knowledge and common sense. Campbell (pp. 445-446) summarized the criteria of good translating under three principles:

1. To give a just representation of the sense of the original.

2. To convey into his version, as much as possible, in a consistency with the genius of the language which he writes, the author's spirit and manner.
3. To take care that the version have, "at least so far the quality of an original performance, as to appear natural and easy."

Using these three fundamental principles, Campbell proceeded to point out their full implications, not only in the history of Bible translating, but also in the way in which the Greek text should be translated into contemporary English.

In the following year, 1790, Alexander Fraser Tytler (Lord Woodhouselee), an Edinburgh Scot, published a volume on *The Principles of Translation*, in which he likewise sets up three principles, as follows:

1. The translation should give a complete transcript of the idea of the original work.
2. The style and manner of writing should be of the same character with that of the original.
3. The translation should have all the ease of the original composition.

Quite justifiably, Campbell accused Tytler of plagiarism, but the latter insisted that his was purely a parallel development. However, Tytler's work has had far more influence than Campbell's, because he treated a wider range of subject matter, and concentrated on the secular field of translation, rather than dealing exclusively with the Scriptures, as Campbell had done.

Tytler's approach is rather startlingly modern at times, for he admits additions if they are fully legitimate; that is, if "they have the most necessary connection with the original thought, and actually increase its force"; likewise, he countenances omissions if the words are "confessedly redundant" and their omission "shall not impair or weaken the original thought" (p. 22). He gives sensible advice on problems of obscurities in the original text, saying that translators should exercise judgment and select the meaning which agrees best with the immediate context or with the author's usual mode of thinking. "To imitate the obscurity or ambiguity of the original is a fault and it is still a greater one to give more than one meaning" (p. 28).

Tytler explains the translator's function as a process in which "he uses not the same colors with the original, but is required to give his picture the same force and effect. He is not allowed to copy the touches of the original, yet is required, by touches of his own, to produce a perfect resemblance . . . . He must adopt the very soul of his author, which must speak through his own organs" (pp. 113-14). On the other hand, Tytler complains of Dryden's influence, for it was after Dryden that Tytler sees too great a freedom coming into vogue, a circumstance in which "fidelity was but a secondary object," and translation was considered "synonymous with paraphrase" (p. 45).

In a sense, Tytler's caution marked the close of one period of translation and the beginning of another, for with the opening of the 19th

century a type of supersophistication arose which spread the idea that "nothing worth translating can be translated" (Young, 1941, p. 209). The classical revival of the 19th century and the emphasis upon technical accuracy, combined with a spirit of exclusivism among the intelligentsia, conspired to make that century as pedantic in its attitudes toward translation as it was toward many other aspects of learning. This tendency was strikingly illustrated in some translations of the *Arabian Nights' Entertainments*, which, though technically more accurate than their predecessors, nevertheless robbed the stories of their Eastern atmosphere.[1] The same tendency has been noted in various European translations (Thierfelder, 1955).

Undoubtedly the principal exponent—for English—of a more literal tendency in translating was Matthew Arnold, who tried to reproduce Homer in English hexameter, and insisted upon close adherence to the form of any original. Moreover, Arnold was quite unwilling to accept as a criterion of a translated work that it should have essentially the same effect upon the average reader today as it had for the original receptors. Arnold was not, however, translating for people in general, but for a select audience who knew the originals and could read the translation with their mind's eye on the Greek. His proposed test (1862) was that a translation should more or less reproduce the effect of the original for "the competent scholar." It is little wonder that such persons as Laurie Magnus (1931) have severely criticized Arnold for having rules which merely conveyed the text and slighted the spirit of the original work.

Perhaps the best illustration of the pernicious effects of a literalistic view of translation is to be found in the English Revised Version of the Bible (1881, 1885) and in the corresponding American Standard Version (1901). These versions are as literal as they can be and still make sense—the result of well-defined principles aimed at producing just such a translation. These translations have been very popular with theological students studying Greek and Hebrew, since they make excellent "ponies"; but they have never been popular with the Christian community of English-speaking people, for they simply do not communicate effectively, owing to their 16th century forms (in some cases more archaic than those of the King James Version) and the literal, awkward syntax. Note, for example, such passages as the following:

2 Corinthians 10:14-16

> For we stretch not ourselves overmuch, as though we reached not unto you: for we came even as far as unto you in the gospel of Christ: not glorying beyond our measure, *that is*, in other men's labors; but having hope that, as your faith groweth, we shall be magnified in you according to our province unto *further* abundance, so as to preach the gospel even unto the parts beyond you, *and* not to glory in another's province in regard of things ready to our hand.

[1] See Anon. (1900).

2 Corinthians 3:10

> For verily that which hath been made glorious hath not been made glorious in this respect, by reason of the glory that surpasseth.

The words may be English, but the grammar is not; and the sense is quite lacking.

The 20th century has witnessed a radical change in translation principles. In the first place, new concepts of communication have developed in our shrinking world. Not only have semanticists and psychologists insisted that a message which does not communicate is useless, but advertisers and politicians, among others, have set a high premium upon intelligibility. Moreover, there has been a new sense of urgency in world affairs, and Victorian optimism among an intellectual élite has given ground to radical realism. Writers, editors, publishers, and translators have all been caught up in a new mode of communication, subject to a vast variety of pressures and responding to numerous needs.

During recent years five developments have had a significant effect on the theory of translation and its practice in various parts of the world. The first of these is the rapidly expanding field of structural linguistics. In Europe the influence of Ferdinand de Saussure has been unequaled, and more recently the work of Hjelmslev (1953) and of other members of the Linguistic Circle of Copenhagen has been very important. But the most creative work in relating linguistics to translation and literary criticism was carried out by the Linguistic Circle of Prague under the early stimulus of Trubetskoy (1939), and later followed up in the field of translation and stylistics by such men as Boh Havránek, Jan Mukařovský, Jiří Levý, and Vladimir Procházka. In the United States a number of linguists, e.g. Edward Sapir, Benjamin L. Whorf, Floyd Lounsbury, C. F. Voegelin, Harry Hoijer, Martin Joos, Joseph H. Greenberg, and Uriel Weinreich became increasingly concerned with problems of language and culture. With an orientation rather different from their European counterparts, they have likewise made important contributions to the field of semantics, and thus to translation. Perhaps one of the most significant contributions of modern linguistic science to the field of translation has been the liberation of translators from the philological presuppositions of the preceding generation. [1]

A second development is the application of present-day methods in structural linguistics to the special problems of Bible translation by members of the Summer Institute of Linguistics, also known as the Wycliffe Bible Translators. Beginning in 1935, this organization has worked in more than 200 languages in thirteen different countries, and has produced an impressive number of technical publications on languages and linguistic structures, as well as numerous translations of the Scriptures in so-called primitive languages. By means of summer training programs open to missionaries of various groups and going to many places throughout the world, it has had an extensive influence on the use

[1] See Vladimir Procházka (1942).

of modern linguistic approaches to the problems of translation and communication.

The third development is the program of the United Bible Societies, which began with an international conference of translators in Holland in 1947. The Societies have published since 1950 a quarterly journal called *The Bible Translator*. This program has been sponsored primarily through the efforts of the American Bible Society, the Netherlands Bible Society, and the British and Foreign Bible Society. At the same time, linguists associated with the American Bible Society have prepared extensive helps for translators that reflect not only general developments in linguistics, both in America and Europe, but also their own research and field work.

The fourth development has been the publication since 1955 of *Babel*, under the auspices of UNESCO. Published by the International Federation of Translators, this quarterly has informed translators not only of new lexical aids and changing conditions affecting professional translators in different parts of the world, but also of the new trends in theory and practice. The leaders of this program, Pierre-François Caillé, E. Cary, R. W. Jumpelt, and Erwin H. Bothien, have all made highly important contributions to a better understanding of contemporary theory, principles, and procedures in the field of translation.

The fifth development, machine translation, has unfortunately been publicized rather out of proportion to its present tangible results. Nevertheless, there has been some solid work in this area, particularly in such places as the Academy of Sciences of the USSR in Moscow, Birkbeck College (University of London), and in the United States at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Harvard University, IBM Research Center in Tarrytown, New York, Georgetown University, and the University of California at Berkeley. Even apart from any practical results which such research may ultimately produce, the thorough study of translation procedures required by machine translation programing has produced some important insights into semantic theory and elements of structural design. These factors are discussed more fully in Chapter 12.

Basic Conflicts in Translation Theory

Despite major shifts of viewpoint on translation during different epochs and in different countries, two basic conflicts, expressing themselves in varying degrees of tension, have remained. These fundamental differences in translation theory may be stated in terms of two sets of conflicting "poles"; (1) literal vs. free translating, and (2) emphasis on form vs. concentration on content. These two sets of differences are closely related, but not identical, for the tension between literal and free can apply equally well to both form and content. However, in general the issues are not well defined. For the most part such expressions as literal vs. free, translation vs. paraphrase, and words vs. sense are essentially battle cries for those who wish to defend their own work or criticize the work of others. Rarely are these conflicting views analyzed

in detail or the implications of such principles worked out carefully in actual practice.

The most literal type of translation, an interlinear one, can scarcely be called a translation in the usual sense of the term. However, some productions intended as fully accredited translations are almost as absurdly literal as an interlinear rendering. For example, Arias Montanus, in the Antwerp Polyglot (1551), in translating the Old Testament into Latin, employed some of the most literal renderings imaginable. He did not hesitate to make up new Latin words in order to translate the same Hebrew stem by a single corresponding Latin stem, and he flagrantly violated good canons of Latin usage. In Genesis 1:20, for example, his rendering *reptificent aquae reptile* is no better Latin than the English parallel would be, "Let the waters reptilify the reptile."[1] Simply because the Hebrew verb in question was a causative, Arias constructed a causative in Latin, but the formal parallelism completely distorted the meaningful relationship.

Such a tendency toward absurd literalism is by no means dead. During the past fifteen years a small group of earnest but misguided persons have been putting out a so-called Concordant Version in English, in which they have attempted always to translate the same Greek or Hebrew term by the same English word. Moreover, they have attempted to match grammatical forms and even to employ the same word order, if at all possible. The results are lamentable, for the attempt to be literal in the form of the message has resulted in grievous distortions of the message itself.[2]

A famous literal translation of the Old Testament was the work of Aquila (c. 125 A.D.), who composed barbarous Greek in an attempt to be faithful to the Hebrew original. Jerome's translation of the Hebrew Old Testament into Latin was radically different in principle, and accordingly in results, but in the New Testament Jerome was guilty of many awkward renderings which simply reproduced Greek sentences in Latin words. In his rapid work on the New Testament Jerome was more of an editor than a translator; in many instances he merely selected the least unsatisfactory rendering current in various existing Latin translations. So poor were certain aspects of Jerome's Latin that Cardinal Bembo, at the time of the Reformation, objected to reading the Latin Bible on the ground that it would corrupt his Latin style.

Sebastianus Castellio, who in 1551 published his Latin translation of the Scriptures with the avowed purpose of making them more attractive to cultured Latin-reading persons than were Jerome's rather awkward ecclesiastical renderings, went somewhat to the other extreme. His language was frequently too florid, and often quite exotic. However, at certain points he certainly improved on Jerome. For example, Jerome's

[1] This and numerous other literalisms are noted by George Campbell (1789), pp. 450 ff.

[2] Another very literal translation of the Old Testament has been prepared by Buber and Rosenzweig, who have displayed remarkable ingenuity in reproducing in German many of the formal and stylistic features of Biblical Hebrew. This translation is, however, more admired by scholars than read by common people desirous of understanding the sense of the message.

rendering of the statement, "For with God nothing shall be impossible" (Luke 1:37), as *non erit impossibile apud Deum omne verbum* is a strictly literal translation of the Greek, and certainly inferior Latin in comparison with Castellio's *nulla res est quam Deus facere non possit.* [1]

The differences between literal and free translating are, however, no mere positive-negative dichotomy, but rather a polar distinction with many grades between them. These grades may be well illustrated by the following renderings of Romans 8:1-4 in the American Standard Version, the Revised Standard Version, the New English Bible, and J. B. Phillips' New Testament in Modern English:

American Standard Version

> There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and of death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the ordinance of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Revised Standard Version

> There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set me free from the law of sin and death. For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

New English Bible

> The conclusion of the matter is this: there is no condemnation for those who are united with Christ Jesus, because in Christ Jesus the life-giving law of the Spirit has set you free from the law of sin and death. What the law could never do, because our lower nature robbed it of all potency, God has done: by sending his own Son in a form like that of our own sinful nature, and as a sacrifice for sin, he has passed judgement against sin within that very nature, so that the commandment of the law may find fulfilment in us, whose conduct, no longer under the control of our lower nature, is directed by the Spirit.

Phillips' Version

> No condemnation now hangs over the head of those who are "in" Jesus Christ. For the new spiritual principle of life "in" Christ lifts me out of the old vicious circle of sin and death.

[1] This contrast and a number of others are cited by George Campbell (1789), pp. 480 ff.

> The Law never succeeded in producing righteousness—the failure was always the weakness of human nature. But God has met this by sending his own Son Jesus Christ to live in that human nature which causes the trouble. And, *while Christ was actually taking upon himself the sins of men, God condemned that sinful nature.* So that we are able to meet the Law's requirements, so long as we are living no longer by the dictates of our sinful nature, but in obedience to the promptings of the Spirit.

The conflict between the dictates of form and content becomes especially important where the form of the message is highly specialized, as it is in poetry. The 17th century poet Sir John Denham fully recognized this problem and stated quite bluntly in his Preface to the Second Book of Virgil's Aeneid: "I conceive it a vulgar error in translating poets to affect being *fidus interpres*. Let that care be with them who deal in matters of fact or matters of faith; but whosoever aims at it in poetry, as he attempts what is not required, so shall he never perform what he attempts; for it is not his business alone to translate language into language, but poesie into poesie" (Tytler, 1790, p. 35).

Lyric poetry obviously cannot be adequately reduced to mere prose, for the original form of the "song" must in some way be reproduced as another "song." The meter may be different, but the overall effect must be equivalent if the translation is to be in any sense adequate. Thus, though in some instances the form may be neglected for the content (as in Rieu's prose translation of Homer's epic poetry), in the case of lyric poetry some approximation to the form must be retained, even with some loss or alteration of content.

The problems of literal vs. free and form vs. content have been discussed more recently in terms of other frames of reference. L. Forster (1958a), for example, has dealt with these difficulties in terms of "levels" of translation, as related to the size of the basic units which enter into the translation process. In the Middle Ages, he notes, the primary unit of translation was the word, while later it became the phrase and the sentence. A still further concept of translation takes in the entire work as the legitimate unit of translation. A somewhat similar characterization of translation procedures may likewise be described in three stages, on the basis of escape from the tyranny of (1) words, (2) grammar, and (3) stylistic form.

This same basic problem has been approached by T. F. Higham (1938, p. xxxvi) from quite a different point of view. In discussing the two major kinds of translation, Higham says: "The one sect aims at transporting us back to the poetry of Greece, and the other at bringing Greek poetry closer to our own. The former aim is deserving of respect .... On the other hand, it is evident that such translators are praised more often than read."

By close attention to literal wording and formal correspondence one can be transported back to an earlier culture or off to some contemporary, but foreign, one. However, literalness and formal agreement do not let us

feel really at home in such a strange literary land, nor do they actually help us to appreciate as we should how this same message must have impressed those who first heard it. Without some adjustments in form and content, at times even rather radical, no literary translation can fully accomplish its real purpose.

Special Theological Problems

As the preceding discussion has demonstrated, the translating of the Bible raises certain special issues. This would be true of any document having a long history and involving the deep personal attachment of many people and the vast, vested interests of numerous institutions. But dealing with any religious document such as the Bible, one must bear in mind that its contemporary significance is not determined merely by what it meant to those who first received it, but by what it has come to mean to people throughout the intervening years.

The conflicts which have arisen over principles and procedures in Bible translating can be viewed from a number of different perspectives. Perhaps one of the most meaningful ways to study these problems is to note the differences of opinion which have arisen over issues of (1) inspiration vs. philology, (2) tradition vs. contemporary authority, and (3) theology vs. grammar.[1]

The inspirational vs. the philological points of view in Bible translation were well defined by the differences between Augustine and Jerome. Augustine, for example, fully accepted the tradition of Aristeas, together with later elaborations, concerning the alleged miraculous translation of the Septuagint by seventy-two men (six from each of the twelve tribes), who, in groups of two and in complete isolation from other translators, translated the entire Old Testament with such divine inspiration and control that the resulting thirty-six drafts were absolutely identical in all respects (Thackeray, 1917). St. Augustine recognized that the Greek text of the Septuagint does not always agree with the Hebrew. He explained the differences by saying that the Spirit "with divine authority could say through the translators something different from what he had said through the original prophets—just as, though these prophets had the two meanings in mind, both were inspired by the Spirit .... We will conclude, in the case of something in the Hebrew which is missing in the LXX that the Spirit elected to say this by the lips of the original prophets and not by the lips of their translators. Conversely, in the case of something present in the LXX and missing in the original, we will conclude that the Spirit chose to say this particular thing by . . . the seventy rather than . . . by the original prophets, thus . . . all of them were inspired."[2]

[1] Schwarz (1955) has dealt with the history of Bible translation in terms of the traditional, philological, and inspirational views. The situation, however, seems somewhat more complex than this analysis would imply, for in each aspect of translation there are opposing tendencies and counter currents. Accordingly, it would appear more satisfactory to highlight these tensions by presenting the issues in terms of contrasting positions.

[2] St. Augustine, *The City of God*, 18.43.

It would be difficult to state more clearly the case for the divine inspiration of translators. Moreover, this view has certainly not died out. For example, people not infrequently ask the Bible Societies whether they publish the King James Version in Japanese or the King James Version in Spanish, implying that they regard the King James Version as in a special sense divinely inspired. On the other hand, such implicit views of inspired translation, often arising out of ignorance of the full implications of the problem, can be matched by the "informed obscurantism" of those who insist that, in translating the Old Testament, one should correct the Hebrew Text at those points at which the Septuagint, as cited in the New Testament, differs from the Hebrew Old Testament.

In contrast to the views of St. Augustine and his present-day successors, Jerome was completely opposed to the idea of the divine inspiration of translators. In fact, he said that he did not know "who was the first lying author to construct the seventy cells at Alexandria." Jerome was fully on the side of a philological approach to translation, as his examination of and judgments on variant New Testament renderings and his long and arduous study of Hebrew for Old Testament translating amply testify. Jerome's attitudes, fully confirmed by similar approaches by Erasmus at the time of the Reformation, are shared by most present-day scholarship, which has not hesitated to point out instances of theological bias on the part of the Septuagint translators. [1]

One must recognize, however, that neo-orthodox theology has given a new perspective to the doctrine of divine inspiration. For the most part, it conceives of inspiration primarily in terms of the response of the receptor, and places less emphasis on what happened to the source at the time of writing. An oversimplified statement of this new view is reflected in the often quoted expression, "The Scriptures are inspired because they inspire me." Such a concept of inspiration means, however, that attention is inevitably shifted from the details of wording in the original to the means by which the same message can be effectively communicated to present-day readers. Those who espouse the traditional, orthodox view of inspiration quite naturally focus attention on the presumed readings of the "autographs." The result is that, directly or indirectly, they often tend to favor quite close, literal renderings as the best way of preserving the inspiration of the writer by the Holy Spirit. On the other hand, those who hold the neo-orthodox view, or who have been influenced by it, tend to be freer in their translating; as they see it, since the original document inspired its readers because it spoke meaningfully to them, only an equally meaningful translation can have this same power to inspire present-day receptors. It would be quite wrong, however, to assume that all those who emphasize fully meaningful translations necessarily hold to a neo-orthodox view of inspiration; for those who have combined orthodox theology with deep evangelistic or missionary convictions have been equally concerned with the need for making translations entirely meaningful.

[1] See Gehman (1949, 1950) and Gard (1955).

The problems of traditional vs. contemporary authority have affected translations more in the realm of exegesis and text than in style. But again Jerome was fundamentally on the right side, for he broke with entrenched tradition, both in respect to his edited New Testament (where he rejected many popular renderings in various older Latin versions) and in his Old Testament translation, which constantly ran counter to the sacrosanct Septuagint. The irony of Jerome's work was that through the centuries it came to be venerated by traditionalists, against whose counterparts at an earlier period Jerome had waged so valiant a fight. Ultimately the spirit of Jerome was sacrificed to the letter of his translation, and the Vulgate became the exegetical standard of the Roman Catholic Church, even supplanting the Greek text itself—not only officially, but emotionally. Cardinal Ximenes, for example, regarded the Latin Vulgate, which he printed in his Complutentian Polyglot between the Hebrew and the Septuagint, as being like the Lord between two thieves, with Hebrew the unrepentant thief.

The battle between traditional standards and contemporary learning was an important part of the Reformation. At that time it was Erasmus who campaigned for the Greek Text of the New Testament against the Roman Church's insistence on the Vulgate. Beza endeavored by means of his Latin translation to overcome many of the grievous errors of the Vulgate; but unfortunately Beza was too much motivated by theological interests to restrain himself when there was an opportunity to read into the text some choice Reformed Church doctrine. [1]

Luther understandably had to confront the problem of traditionalism vs. the new enlightenment. One key passage which became an issue for all Protestant Reformation translators is Luke 1:28, where the Vulgate rendering of *plena gratiae* "full of grace" (a key passage for those who claim that Mary is able to dispense grace), is obviously an inaccurate translation of the Greek participle *kekharitomenē*. Luther therefore rejected the earlier German rendering of *voll Gnaden* (based on the Vulgate) and used *holdselige*, a very close parallel to the Greek. This same problem was an issue for Tyndale in English and for Reina and Valera in Spanish.

The Roman Catholic Church has not, however, maintained the same intransigent attitude that characterized the Counter Reformation. Even a translation of the Bible into Spanish by Eloíno Nácar F. and Alberto Colunga in 1944 shows a number of significant departures from tradition, even though it retains certain Roman Catholic hallmarks, such as this *llena de gracia* "full of grace" in Luke 1:28 and several instances of "penance," when the Greek term is "repentance." In the excellent *Bible de Jérusalem* in French, the Jerusalem School has produced an outstanding piece of work, reflecting a degree of scholarship quite superior to anything produced by any other group of Roman Catholic scholars, though in Luke 1:28 this French text also adheres to the Vulgate tradition, while a footnote, as so often, serves to give the truer meaning.

[1] For a discussion of Beza's doctrinal bias, see George Campbell (1789), pp. 493 ff.

The issue of theology vs. grammar is a somewhat more subtle problem. Luther, for example, was certainly one who looked to grammar as a basis for exegesis. In fact, he makes it quite clear that the comments of the church fathers are no substitute for careful study of the original languages, "for in comparison with the glosses of the Fathers, the languages are as sunlight to darkness." [1] Nevertheless, in translating, Luther had two overriding concerns: (1) that the people might fully understand the language [2] and (2) that the theological implications of the Bible should be perfectly clear. Accordingly, (in Romans 3:28) Luther translated *dass der Mensch gerecht werde ohne des Gesetzes Werke, allein durch den Glauben*. This word *allein*, making the last phrase mean "through faith alone," quite understandably provoked the ire of Luther's enemies, who insisted that he was adding to the Scriptures. Luther, however, contended that this added word was fully justified by the theological significance of the passage as well as the grammatical structure, even if it were not to be found literally in the original. [3]

Modern translators have been somewhat more inclined to trust the text as it is, rather than to re-enforce its meaning. In other words, the Biblical writers are permitted to speak more for themselves, rather than to do special service to some theological cause which the translator himself may represent. Of course, as in any realm of human activity, complete objectivity in translation is impossible, for we ourselves are a part of the very cultural context in which and for which we are translating. However, present-day attention given to the serious study of the text of Scripture, rather than merely to its philosophical implications, is a healthy sign. It has had its impact not only on the average Bible student, but also upon most translators.

In one sense Luther was a strong adherent to the principle of grammar, especially the grammar of the receptor language—the one into which the translation was being made. In his day he probably did more to sweep away meaningless ecclesiastical verbiage than anyone else. His contribution is obscured by the fact that the innovations of the Reformation have become the traditions of our day.

Again today translators face the problem of meaningless vocabulary. Klaus von Bismarck (1957) states the issue quite bluntly: "The official language of the church and the 'pious' speech of most of its members make it plain that church communities as a whole are not really facing up to the problems of their time, but are simply passing many questions by with their eyes closed." Fortunately, in a number of Biblical translations now coming out in English and other world languages there seems to be a growing awareness of the necessity of vital communication. At last, some of the meaningless phrases are giving way to sometimes blunt, but intelligible, language.

[1] For an excellent summary of Luther's views on these issues, see Martin Luther, translated by Painter (1936).

[2] See Kretzmann (1934).

[3] For a translation of Luther's views on translating, see W. H. Carruth (1907).