

Robert Lukenda

The Translation of Science in the Era of Italian Nation-building The Journal *Antologia* (1821–1833) between Fixation on France and Nationalisation Efforts

1/2023
DOI: 10.70596/cts148

Herausgegeben am / Éditée au /
Edited at: Institute of Applied
Linguistics and Translatology
(IALT), Leipzig University
ISSN: 2617-3441

Abstract

*The early nineteenth century saw the beginning of intensive translation activity on the Italian peninsula in order to promote the cultural and scientific process of national unification (Risorgimento). Despite efforts to open up Italian culture to the English and German-speaking world, the French axis remained the central source of scientific and cultural import for Italy in the 19th century. This is evidenced not least by the appearance on the Italian peninsula in the 1820–1830s of scientific journals such as *Antologia* (1821–1833), conceived purely as translation organs and dedicated to the transfer of science and culture through translations from French journals. Taking *Antologia* as an emblematic example of this development, this article examines the early translation policy of this journal in its political and cultural context. Specific emphasis is placed on exploring the twists and turns of this translation policy, its influence on the scientific, cultural and political discourse in Italy, and the resulting implications for the process of Italy's internationalisation and nationalisation.*

Keywords: translation history, translation of science, nation building, Risorgimento, periodical translation

Zum Zitieren des Artikels / Pour citer l'article / To cite the article:

Lukenda, Robert (2024): The Translation of Science in the Era of Italian Nation-building. The Journal *Antologia* (1821–1833) between Fixation on France and Nationalisation Efforts, *Chronotopos* 5 (1), 94–111. DOI: 10.70596/cts148



Robert Lukenda

The Translation of Science in the Era of Italian Nation-building

The Journal *Antologia* (1821–1833) between Fixation on France and Nationalisation Efforts

Abstract

The early nineteenth century saw the beginning of intensive translation activity on the Italian peninsula in order to promote the cultural and scientific process of national unification (Risorgimento). Despite efforts to open up Italian culture to the English and German-speaking world, the French axis remained the central source of scientific and cultural import for Italy in the 19th century. This is evidenced not least by the appearance on the Italian peninsula in the 1820–1830s of scientific journals such as Antologia (1821–1833), conceived purely as translation organs and dedicated to the transfer of science and culture through translations from French journals. Taking Antologia as an emblematic example of this development, this article examines the early translation policy of this journal in its political and cultural context. Specific emphasis is placed on exploring the twists and turns of this translation policy, its influence on the scientific, cultural and political discourse in Italy, and the resulting implications for the process of Italy's internationalisation and nationalisation.

Introduction

The emergence of Romanticism in Italy led to an increase in translation activities aimed at revitalising the divided country and promoting the process of national unification, known as Risorgimento or ‘rebirth’. Although the role of scientific journals in this process has been extensively researched, there is a dearth of studies on the strategic significance of translation in these publications. It is surprising that this lack exists, given that Germaine de Staël’s famous article *Sulla maniera e l'utilità delle traduzioni* (1816),¹ which appealed to Italian scholars to renew their language and culture through increased translation efforts, also found success in the field of science.²

This paper will address two questions. The first is how the model of the popular French scientific journal of the early nineteenth century shaped translation policies in the field of science on the Italian peninsula. The second is how these policies affected the Italian

¹ English: *The Spirit of Translation*.

² The role of translation in the process of Italian nation-building has hardly been valued in classical historiographical studies of the Risorgimento. Recent exceptions, based on a cultural and translation studies perspective, are (in addition to existing analyses such as SCHWARZE 2004) ENGELSKIRCHER (2020) and GIPPER et al. (2022a). The classic works on the Italian press in the Risorgimento (such as GALANTE GARRONE & DELLA PERUTA 1979; GERNERT 1990) also neglect the translation perspective. On the role of translation in early nineteenth-century Italian periodicals, see AGORNI (2021) and LUKENDA (2022b).

scientific discourse at a time of rising national aspirations. In light of these questions, the aim of this article is to illustrate the complex relationship between periodical translation, Italian nation-building and the internationalisation of scientific and cultural discourses, drawing upon the case of *Antologia* (1821–1833). This Italian scientific journal, published during the 1820s, was originally conceived as a translation journal, dedicated to the dissemination of scientific and cultural knowledge, primarily from French periodicals. *Antologia* not only serves to illustrate the status of the French scientific journal as a model for Italy's nascent popular scientific press, but also exemplifies a translation policy that is both versatile and reflective of the complex and often conflicting dynamics between the processes of nationalisation and internationalisation that characterise the modern nation-building process. In other words: this article examines the ambivalence between cultural openness and national demarcation that shaped Italy's path towards political modernity and the establishment of a national scientific community and culture.³

Preliminary Remarks on Translation, Science and Nation-Building

Prior to an investigation into the context previously outlined, a number of preliminary remarks are necessary. Firstly, one should consider the concept of translation policy, which, according to the classic definition proposed by Toury,

[...] refers to those factors that govern the choice of text-types, or even of individual texts, to be imported through translation into a particular culture/language at a particular point in time. Such a policy will be said to exist inasmuch as the choice is found to be nonrandom. Different policies may of course apply to different subgroups, in terms of either text-types (e.g., literary vs. non-literary) or human agents and groups thereof (e.g., different publishing houses), and the interface between the two often offers very fertile grounds for policy hunting. (TOURY 1995: 58)⁴

³ In this regard, Sakai has shown that translation is characterised by a fundamentally ambivalent logic. This is due to the fact that it serves as a vector for both cross-border and border-forming dynamics of a cultural and political nature: “[...] translation is not only a border-crossing but also and preliminary an act of drawing a border, of bordering” (SAKAI 2010: 32). On the role of translation in processes of nation-building, which has become a major focus of research in the history of translation in recent years, cf. DIZDAR et al. (2015). For reasons of readability, in this article only longer quotations are given in their original language, while shorter quotations are usually provided directly in an English version.

⁴ As will be demonstrated, journals in the early nineteenth century were frequently associated with prominent intellectual figures. Therefore, translation policy can be seen as a “strategic action taken by these individuals” (cf. ENGELSKIRCHER 2020: 52) in the context of a socio-political agenda. Despite the ideological diversity of the national movement, its agenda can be described in terms of progress, industrialisation, intensified international exchange, and cultural and political nation-building. Notwithstanding the contributions of notable figures, the translation policies in question have been shaped to a significant extent by the scientific communities on the Italian peninsula. This will be demonstrated in the ensuing analysis.

Although, as Gipper, Heller and Lukenda argue, *Descriptive Translation Studies* focused on the connections between the act of translating and its socio-cultural and political contexts, the transitions and connections between the different levels of translating – the “interfaces” between agents, institutions and text types that Toury refers to – are rarely analysed in studies on translation history:

So konzentrieren sich die vielen Untersuchungen entweder auf die Ebene des Übersetzungsaktes [...] ohne diese in einen Zusammenhang mit der Spezifik bestimmter Effekte auf der (inter)kulturellen oder politischen Ebene bringen zu können; oder sie konzentrieren sich auf die institutionelle Ebene, etwa auf die von Verlagen, Organisationen und anderen Institutionen betriebene Translationspolitik, jedoch häufig, ohne die konkreten Translationspraktiken zu beleuchten, auf die diese Politik abzielt; oder sie konzentrieren sich auf die (inter)kulturelle Ebene, d. h. auf die übersetzungsbedingten strukturellen Transformationsprozesse, und vernachlässigen dabei nicht selten die sprachliche und / oder die translationspolitische Dimension der Übersetzung. (GIPPER et al 2022b: 516; cf. also HELLER 2022).

[Thus, many studies either concentrate on the level of the act of translation, i.e. on concrete translation practices that are more or less regulated or conspicuous in terms of translation policy, [...] without being able to link them to the specificity of certain effects at the (inter)cultural or political level; or they concentrate on the institutional level, e.g. on the translation policies of publishers, organisations and other institutions, but often without shedding light on the concrete translation practices that these policies are aimed at; or they concentrate on the (inter)cultural level, i.e. on the structural transformation processes caused by translation, and often neglect the linguistic and/or translation policy dimension of translation. (RL)⁵].

From a methodological point of view, the present paper aims to make the dynamics visible in a holistic perspective. It presents a synthesis of the various levels of translation, with a particular emphasis on the intercultural level, the level of actors and institutions, while not neglecting the textual dimension of translation. This is done in order to elucidate some fundamental decisions pertaining to the policy of translation. The final objective of this approach is to draw precise conclusions about the role of periodical and scientific translation in the dynamics of Italy’s internationalisation and nationalisation.⁶

⁵ The initials of the author of this article are used below to indicate his own translations.

⁶ However, the proposed methodology encounters certain challenges, including the relatively short lifespan of many journals, which is often a consequence of inadequate funding and the prevalence of political censorship. What is particularly striking, is the discrepancy between the high value and frequency of translation (which testifies to the fact that translation has been a common tool of scholarly communication since the eighteenth century) and the lack of methodological reflection on translation in the Italian journals of the early nineteenth century. As a result, conclusions about translation policy must usually be drawn both from a perspective that closely links the existing documents (prefaces, translated texts) to the political, scientific and cultural discourses in which

The second remark concerns the politicisation of translation in Italy, generally attributed to the publication in 1816 of Germaine de Staël's aforementioned essay *Sulla maniera e l'utilità delle traduzioni* in the Milanese journal *Biblioteca italiana*. Despite its focus on the field of literary translation, the article was of broader cultural relevance and interest for two principal reasons: On the one hand, it facilitated a period of extensive cultural exchange in the subsequent decade and encouraged the strengthening of already existing scientific and cultural relations with Northern Europe through translations. On the other hand, it was the source of inspiration for the development of a political understanding of translation in Italy. If translation, according to DE STAËL (1979²), was the key to cultural rebirth in Italy, in the eyes of her Italian Romantic followers, as we shall see, it became an important tool for linking the idea of cultural and scientific exchange with the project of political unity.⁷

the journal projects are embedded. A comprehensive analysis of *Antologia's* translation policy would also need to address several other key questions, including the role of the collaborators in this editorial project, their attitudes towards translation, and their specific translation work. This is beyond the scope of the present discussion. Furthermore, the constraints of space preclude an exhaustive examination of a substantial corpus of translations within the present context. Consequently, the focus will be on a few pivotal and qualitative aspects of translation policy and practice. According to Corpet, analysing the translation policies of journals requires more than a quantitative approach. The history of a periodical cannot be fully understood by simply examining its table of contents. Periodicals require “une approche qualitative [...] qui impose de considérer chaque revue particulière comme un *fait éditorial total* [...] et permet de comprendre l'incroyable [...] *performance* de la revue dans la création et la diffusion des formes, du savoir ou des opinions. [...] tout positivisme statistique risque [...] de fonctionner comme un leurre tant il est vrai que le monde des revues, qui flirte souvent avec l'infiniment petit, le précaire et l'insaisissable, résiste à l'investigation quantitative par excès. L'économie des revues est par nature, contrairement à celle des livres ou des journaux, un monde souvent irrationnel, paradoxal [...]” (CORPET 2002: 8, highlights of the original text).

[...] a qualitative approach [...] which demands to consider each journal as a *total editorial fact* [...] and which makes it possible to understand the incredible [...] *performance* of the journal in the creation and dissemination of forms, knowledge or opinions. [...] any statistical positivism runs the risk [...] of functioning as an illusion, since the world of magazines, which often flirts with the infinitely small, the precarious and the elusive, resists excessive quantitative study. The economics of magazines, unlike those of books or newspapers, is by its very nature a paradoxical world [...]. (RL)] The domain under discussion is a complex system of dynamics and interactions. According to Bourdieu's field theory, this includes not only human and institutional actors, but also ideas, forms and traditions (such as journalistic concepts, editorial traditions, scientific and literary discourses, etc.). In this context, the question of the importance of translation in magazines always involves the acquisition of symbolic capital resources.

⁷ Although translations were already a thriving field prior to the publication of *Sulla maniera*, the article in question initiated a modest yet perceptible discourse on the methodology of translation, which was hitherto absent on the peninsula.

The third point concerns the politicisation of science in Italy, in a national sense. If the genesis of a political concept of translation can be placed around 1816,⁸ the emergence of a scientific discourse committed to the goal of national unification must be situated somewhat earlier, around the turn of the century.

It was during the *Triennio Repubblicano* (1796–1799) period in northern Italy under Napoleonic rule that intellectuals first formulated tangible political proposals for the establishment of a unified Italian nation-state.⁹ The *Triennio* closely linked political and scientific debates in Italy as these plans were essentially based on efforts to create supra-regional structures in infrastructure and economy. The need to promote technical and industrial progress throughout the peninsula created an enormous demand for knowledge transfer and scientific translation. The initial consequence was an increase in exchange with France, which assumed a significant position in both political and cultural matters. France also served as a primary source for Italy to access the European knowledge market. The liberalisation of press legislation paved the way for the advent of newspapers and journals, which assumed a pivotal role in the discourse surrounding modernisation. As media outlets with an encyclopedic scope, they addressed a comprehensive range of subjects pertinent to social advancement, encompassing the natural sciences, agriculture, literature, and the arts. This approach resonates with the Enlightenment tradition of the late eighteenth century, which regarded journals as “political instruments for disseminating knowledge and opinions in a broader sense” (GERNERT 1990: 25, RL).¹⁰

Although public discussions on political unification were largely suppressed in the post-Napoleonic era of Restoration, debates on industrialisation and scientific progress continued to develop. This was because the restored regimes on the Italian peninsula had clear economic interests. They promoted the establishment of economic societies, such as the Milanese *Società per l'incoraggiamento delle arti e dei mestieri* in 1838, and scientific journals.

Although Italian periodicals did not have a significant impact, in quantitative terms, with respect to distribution and circulation,¹¹ their qualitative impact on the national

⁸ Cf. Giovanni Berchet's manifesto of Italian Romanticism (BERCHET 1992), which was published in the same year as de Staël's essay and is a direct response to her call for translation.

⁹ The *Dissertazione sul problema dell'amministrazione generale della Lombardia: quale dei governi liberi meglio convenga alla felicità d'Italia* (1796) by the philosopher and economist Melchiorre Gioia is a prototype of this approach.

¹⁰ The Milanese journal *Il Caffè* (1764–1766) represents a significant example of this tradition, which diverged from the prevailing style of 'erudite journalism' and expanded the scope of journalistic content to encompass a broader, educated readership.

¹¹ According to estimates published in the *Annali Universali di Statistica* (1824–1847), a highly influential journal of the period, the total number of copies sold across all Italian journals in 1833 was 18 000. This figure represents approximately ten readers per copy, with a total readership of at least 180 000 individuals across the Italian peninsula. Carlo Cattaneo's *Politecnico* (1839–1844), one of the most widely read scientific publications of its time, sold approximately 1 000 copies (Gernert

unification process was of paramount importance. The findings of Gernert's study indicate that the journal projects involved an intellectual elite,

[...] die [...] über die partikularstaatlichen Grenzen hinaus miteinander in Kommunikation stand. Gemeinsam mit den ab 1839 jährlich stattfindenden Wissenschaftskongressen formierte sich so eine gesamtitalienische Führungsschicht bürgerlicher und adeliger Intellektueller, die zwar gesamtgesellschaftlich eine Minderheit darstellte, aber in ihrer Funktion für die italienische Nationalbewegung von primärer Bedeutung war, stellte sie doch die einzige Kompensation für das Manko eines profilierten und zielbewussten italienischen Bürgertums dar. (GERNERT 1990: 259, cf. also GALANTE GARRONE & DELLA PERUTA 1979: 5–6)

[...] who [...] communicated with each other beyond the borders of individual states. In conjunction with the annual scientific congresses, which commenced in 1839, a pan-Italian leadership class comprising bourgeois and aristocratic intellectuals was established. Despite representing a minority in society, this class was of primary importance for the Italian national movement, as it was the only compensation for the lack of a distinctive and ambitious Italian bourgeoisie. (RL)]

In contrast to the Napoleonic era, which was marked by a prevailing republican spirit and a flourishing of liberal thought among Italian intellectuals, who frequently occupied prominent roles within the state administration, the Restoration period saw a notable decline in the influence of these individuals. Subsequently, following the events of 1815, they were

[...] gezwungen, wieder zu ihren Kompensationsstrategien des 18. Jahrhunderts zurückzukehren und die politische Diskussion in privaten Zirkeln zu suchen. Es ist charakteristisch für die italienische Presse des frühen Risorgimento, daß Zeitschriftenprojekte aus diesen politischen Zirkeln, die sich meist um einzelne Führungspersönlichkeiten (Romagnosi, Vieusseux, Cattaneo u.a.) bildeten, hervorgingen (GERNERT 1990: 261; cf. also GALANTE GARRONE & DELLA PERUTA 1979: 11–12).

[...] forced to return to their eighteenth-century strategies of compensation and to pursue political discourse in the confines of exclusive circles. It is characteristic of the Italian press of the early Risorgimento that journalistic initiatives emerged from these political circles, which were typically centred around individual leaders. (Romagnosi, Vieusseux, Cattaneo and others). (RL)]

Editorial engagement thus served as a “surrogate for political action” (GERNERT 1990: 261, RL).

1990: 258–259). Gernert posits that these figures are modest in comparison to European standards of the period.

Cultural and scientific journals are topical media and as such, they can be considered a barometer for monitoring the evolution of political, scientific, and cultural discourses. They respond to the necessity for rapid communication and immediate intervention in debates. As Carlo Cattaneo, one of the leading intellectuals, writers and publishers of the national movement in Italy, wrote in the foreword to the first issue of his *Politecnico*, founded in 1839, periodicals aimed to serve as intermediaries between the world of scholars and a broader mass audience.: “[...] it is our intention to act as interpreters and mediators between the reflections of a select few and the habits of the majority” (CATTANEO 1839a: 3, RL). In this mediating role of disseminating ideas of social and scientific progress, the linguistic aspect was of particular importance. While many representatives of Italian Romanticism ascribed a pioneering role to the *litterati* and literature in the process of Italian linguistic regeneration and promoted the “nationalisation of the middle classes” (PORCIANI 1998: 201, RL) through the importation of foreign literatures through translation, Cattaneo saw science at the forefront.

In establishing the *Politecnico*, which concentrated on science and technology, Cattaneo sought to create a popular scientific idiom in Italy, a goal without precedent at the time. Consequently, he accorded significant attention to the convergence forces of international scientific terminology (GERNERT 1990: 112, RL; PÖCKL 1983: 14, RL). An investigation into the development of a popular scientific language in Italy and the role of journals in this process would require a separate research project. The following chapter will examine the important, yet ambivalent, role of translation and translation policy in the context of such modernisation (and nationalisation) efforts, using the example of the journal *Antologia* as a case study.¹²

Between Nationalisation and Europeanisation: The Journal *Antologia* (1821–1833) and its winding Translation Policy

Antologia's early Focus on France

The introduction of modern journalistic standards in Italy constituted a crucial prerequisite for these endeavours and for the role of social mediator that Italian scientific journals were striving for. Despite the growing appreciation for English and German-speaking cultures in terms of modern scientific and journalistic standards, many intellectuals of the time still considered France to be of paramount importance in this regard. Although political relations with France were largely severed in the post-Napoleonic era, strong intellectual and cultural ties remained. French was not only the language of choice for a significant proportion of the Italian elite, but France also represented a place of exile for numerous Italian patriots who had been persecuted on Italian soil. During the first decades of the nineteenth century, a notable Italian community gathered in Paris. In order to reinforce cultural ties with France, they

¹² As will be demonstrated, Cattaneo expressed reservations about the heightened scientific translation activity of his era.

established their own periodicals, such as the bilingual *L'Esule/L'Exilé* (1832–1834). Moreover, they fulfilled the role of correspondents for a number of scientific and cultural journals in various Italian regions. A significant number of Italian intellectuals had their biographical roots in the French-speaking area and maintained close relations with its academic circles. One such individual was Gian Pietro Vieusseux, a Florentine publisher of Swiss origin. He was a major figure in the promotion of scientific discourse during the early Risorgimento period, establishing a new public institution dedicated to debates and lectures. This institution, the *Gabinetto scientifico-letterario* in Florence (1819), facilitated the transfer of scientific discourse from the academies and private salons of the eighteenth century to the public domain.

In the subsequent two-year period, Vieusseux proceeded to establish a new type of popular scientific journal for Italy, entitled *Antologia*.¹³ As its subtitle *Scelta di opuscoli d'ogni letteratura tradotti in italiano* suggests, it was designed to publish only translations.

There were a number of compelling political and economic reasons for the establishment of translation journals. During the period between 1820 and 1821, which was characterised by revolutionary uprisings across various states on the Italian peninsula, translations, particularly those of a scientific nature, were less vulnerable to political censorship. Furthermore, translations were typically more cost-effective than the original texts from which they were derived.

In order to gain insight into *Antologia*'s translation policy, it is imperative to examine the programmatic preface to the inaugural issue.¹⁴ Vieusseux's decision to devote himself to translating texts and to categorically exclude Italian originals may, at first glance, appear to indicate a disregard for contemporary Italian scholarship. However, this resolution seems, primarily, to be a direct reaction to de Staël's call to transcend the linguistic boundaries of (national) literary and scientific cultures. The promotion of scientific communication also involves the improvement of translations, a goal which the journal strives to achieve. Vieusseux, therefore, extends an invitation to Italian writers to increase their translation activities and to submit translations.¹⁵

¹³ A substantial corpus of research literature exists on *Antologia*, particularly in Italy. It would be beyond the remit of this article to provide an overview of this existing research. For an analysis of the *Antologia* and Vieusseux's pivotal role in shaping the Italian national scientific landscape, see Bossi (2013). While research such as the referenced study demonstrates the intimate connection between this process and Vieusseux's European experiences and aspirations, there is a notable absence of analysis that addresses the translation-political aspects of his editorial endeavors.

¹⁴ The preface, bearing only the initials G. and P., can be attributed to Vieusseux, who was undoubtedly the driving force behind the journal's editorial policy. It is plausible that the letters represent his initials.

¹⁵ It is possible that Vieusseux is alluding to the dearth of translators with expertise in specialized fields in Italy. Consequently, he requests leniency with respect to the quality of translations during the inaugural stages of the journal (G./P. 1821: 10). In *Antologia* (1822: 526–527), a reference is made to the establishment of a 'translation society' in Paris. The society was dedicated to the export of French literature and culture and the import of international knowledge through translation. These activities, according to the author, helped to consolidate Paris' position as a capital of

Nevertheless, if the stated objective of *Antologia* was to facilitate the dissemination of European scientific advancements in Italy through translation, Vieusseux concentrated these endeavours on a single journal: the French *Revue encyclopédique* (1819–1835), a prominent forum for liberal and progressive ideas in France during the Restoration period.¹⁶

What factors contribute to the *Revue encyclopédique*'s prominence in this context? First and foremost, Vieusseux's choice is evidently a reflection of the sociological and cultural milieu of his era. On the one hand, the high level of familiarity with French among the Italian elite meant that translations from this language required less effort in terms of cultural mediation than translations from English or German. Conversely, the objective was to attract a readership that extended beyond the proficient French-speaking elite. This audience was interested in engaging with scientific and cultural discourses but was reliant on translations. Furthermore, Paris' reputation as the capital of knowledge and the journalistic quality of its journals are also significant factors.¹⁷ For Vieusseux, any publication in Paris, and particularly in the *Revue encyclopédique*, was regarded as a marker of quality and had been subjected to a process of rigorous peer review. It is noteworthy that translations from French and from well-known works written in French can be beneficial for French-speaking audiences in Italy, as they offer access to the highest standards of journalistic and scientific criticism (G./P. 1821: 8). In this context, the translated text is not merely a representation of its content, but also a reflection of the discourse surrounding it.¹⁸ Vieusseux's approach demonstrates that translation is not solely a matter of "linguistic recoding but is also a fundamental aspect of scientific communication" (GIPPER 2022: 86, RL). It thus offers a valuable contribution to this field of enquiry.

knowledge. The note serves as a salient reminder for Italian authors lacking their own contacts to have their works translated. The primacy of France in the field of science is explicitly linked to increased translation efforts.

¹⁶ The full title was *Revue encyclopédique ou analyse raisonnée des productions les plus remarquables dans la littérature, les sciences et les arts*. Cf. on the *Revue* Chappey (2019). For further insight into the editorial, political and cultural context surrounding the establishment of *Antologia* and its subsequent history cf. *Galante Garrone & Della Peruta* (1979: 113–147).

¹⁷ As is well documented, it was with Rozier's *Observations sur la physique, sur l'histoire naturelle et sur les arts* that the model of the scientific journal was first established in France. From the outset, it was dedicated to "making pan-European scientific research accessible through translation" (GIPPER 2022: 71, RL).

¹⁸ Vieusseux also cites England and Germany as exemplars of contemporary knowledge exchange and press, and underscores *Antologia*'s aspiration to address this deficit in Italy. However, he considered French periodicals, and in particular the *Revue encyclopédique*, to occupy a distinctive position due to the exceptional quality of their scholarly and journalistic criticism (G./P. 1821: 6–8). To emphasise the intrinsic connection between translation and criticism: In the nineteenth century, it was customary to include entire translated passages in scholarly reviews. Consequently, translations are not standalone texts; rather, they are embedded within discursive contexts.

In light of the aforementioned evidence, it is apparent that Vieusseux's objective in establishing a translation journal was not solely to gain access to a significant repository of knowledge. Rather, it was to introduce (or translate) a comprehensive and contemporary concept of scientific journalism in Italy. This is most evident in the second issue of *Antologia*, which opens with a distinctive and highly symbolic translation: the translation of the preface to the first volume of the *Revue encyclopédique* (fig. 1), which contains the journalistic and scientific programme of the French journal. This presents a classification of scientific disciplines and a structure of contents, which *Antologia* subsequently adopts through translation, along with a liberal political stance focused on industrial progress.¹⁹

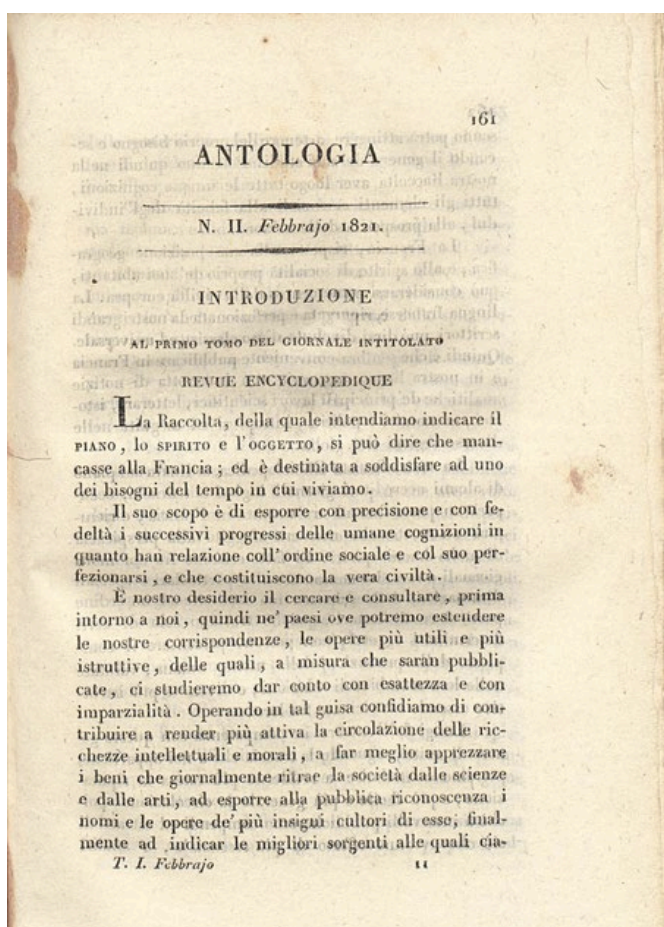


Fig. 1

This approach gives rise to questions concerning the methodology of translation. However, the preface of the first edition of *Antologia* makes a relatively straightforward commitment to prioritising the quality of the translators themselves, to translate as

¹⁹ *Antologia* not only adopts the thematic structure (1. natural sciences, 2. social sciences, 3. literature and the arts), but also reclaims the journalistic expertise associated with it. This is evident in the publication's commitment to providing a well-founded overview of the state of scientific research using careful selection, insightful commentary, and effective organisation. It is clear that Paris, the capital of knowledge and European civilisation, serves as the source for this (cf. JULLIEN 1821: 161–169, translator unknown).

faithfully as possible and only to provide “supplementary notes or transitions” (G./P. 1821: 8), along with a few introductory remarks on the author, if necessary, regarding his/her biography, scientific activities and publications. This approach involves a minimal level of visible intervention. In the majority of instances, only the source is referenced, typically without indicating the name of the translator.²⁰ In this way, the journal appears to simultaneously emphasise and conceal its status as a translation journal. This tendency towards the ‘invisibility of the translator’ is typical of the period (cf. VENUTI 1994) and has a number of causes. As the location and format of publication become a marker of quality, the role of the translator as a reviewer is less prominent, as was the case in the eighteenth century.²¹ It is noteworthy that Vieusseux’s emphasis on the added value of translation, and thus its independent ontological status, is at odds with a view that stresses the transparency of the original in translation (through a methodology of minimal intervention). This appears to reflect a tension that Antoine BERMAN (1984) has described as characterising the translating culture of German Romanticism. On the one hand, there is the idea of a general translatability of arts and sciences (expressed in terms such as versability and convertibility). On the other hand, there is the belief in the influence of criticism on translation. Consequently, for the German Romantics, criticism is the highest form of translation.²² However, the emphasis on commentary and mediation is dependent on the visibility of the interventions in question, namely those pertaining to translation activities. This apparent contradiction between an understanding of translation that eschews intervention and a journalistic approach that emphasises it is unlikely to be resolved without some degree of tension. As will be discussed further below, this discrepancy has the potential to engender a lack of trust in the role of translation in the context of communicating scientific information.

These findings corroborate the assertion that the “modern scientific press, in its nascent stages preceding the advent of the contemporary monolingual English paradigm, was predominantly a translation-oriented enterprise” (GIPPER 2022: 71, RL). If *Antologia* is, in terms of content and journalistic conception, “born translated”, to use the formula proposed by Rebecca L. WALKOWITZ (2015), this is also true of other Italian journals

²⁰ How has this approach affected the translation of the aforementioned preface to the *Revue encyclopédique*? The Italian version excludes a few passages from the French preface and occasionally condenses others. It is noteworthy that the omitted passages include references to figures of enlightened absolutism (JULLIEN 1819: 10), specifically the monarchs Frederick II and Catherine II (the latter in close contact with the prominent Italian Enlightenment philosopher Cesare Beccaria). Such references may have been deemed politically inappropriate in the context of the restorative political climate that prevailed in Italy after 1815, potentially leading to censorship.

²¹ Cf. also the other articles in this dossier.

²² As Berman demonstrates, this conceptualisation of translation aligns with a comprehensive Romantic educational program, encompassing both universal and national objectives at its core. It is important to note that the context outlined by Berman is primarily concerned with poetry and philological activities. Nevertheless, the overarching objective of *Antologia* is to cultivate interest in the sciences *and* the arts (G./P. 1821: 7).

of the period. These journals, like the Milanese *Rivista Europea* (1838–1842, 1843–1847), were conceived in their early stages as translation ventures. They borrowed complete editorial profiles from abroad, mainly from France, England, and Germany (cf. GALANTE GARRONE & DELLA PERUTA 1979: 9).²³

Nevertheless, the purely translational journal is not a phenomenon exclusive to early political modernity. In fact, it was common practice in eighteenth-century Europe to reprint entire journals in other languages.²⁴ However, at the turn of the century, the nationalisation and popularisation of science gave rise to a notable shift in the linguistic character of the scientific journal. While late eighteenth-century journals such as Luigi Brugnatelli's *Giornale fisico-medico* (1792–1795) still published original articles in French and Latin, this was due to the fact that they were intended (apart from a circle of Italian scholars) for an international scientific community. Such journals included only translated texts from languages that were less common in Italy, such as English or German. In contrast, journals such as *Antologia* abolished multilingualism in their quest for national scientific, linguistic and cultural cohesion.²⁵

Nevertheless, it would be erroneous to assume that this translation programme is devoid of ambivalences and discontinuities. These issues will be addressed in the subsequent section.

Antologia's turnaround in translation policy

In light of the growing demand for scientific dissemination that *Antologia* aims to fulfil through its translation activities, it appears somewhat incongruous that, after a relatively brief period, it should reconsider its translation policy. In his foreword to the third issue, Vieusseux states his intention to reduce the number of translations, particularly from French, in favour of more original Italian articles, which were initially excluded. The rationale behind this shift is not entirely evident. It seems probable,

²³ On the *Rivista Europea*, cf. GERNERT (1990: 45–47). The main source for the *Rivista* was the French *Revue des Deux Mondes*, a journal conceived as a cultural, economic, and political 'bridge' between France and the Americas.

²⁴ In her overview of the development of Italian scientific journals in the late eighteenth century, Delpiano refers to the *Osservazioni spettanti alla fisica, alla storia naturale ed alle arti* (1776–1783) – a reprint of Rozier's *Observations* (DELPIANO 1989).

²⁵ On the *Giornale fisico-medico* cf. DELPIANO (1989: 472–474). This development was already evident in Italy at the end of the eighteenth century, as evidenced by translation journals such as the *Scelta di opuscoli interessanti tradotti da varie lingue* (1775–1778). These journals represented the medial prototype of "scientific dissemination" (DELPIANO 1989: 470, RL) in Italy. As an encyclopaedic journal, *Scelta di opuscoli* was designed for a broader readership and was committed to social utility. With its more concise texts reflecting the accelerated pace of scientific communication, it supplanted the more comprehensive publications of the academies (DELPIANO 1989: 467). A note on the method of translation: The figure of the translator is indeed present in the *Scelta* in the form of annotations. However, as the preface to the inaugural issue (SOAVE 1775: n. p.) indicates, the journal was intended to minimise the visibility of the editor for the sake of readability, as was the case with the *Antologia*. In 1778, the reference to translation was removed from the title, and the journal continued under the name *Opuscoli scelti sulle scienze e sulle arti*.

however, that the debates that arose in Italy following de Staël's appeal for translation played a significant role. These debates pitted proponents of classical and romantic culture against each other in a struggle for national renewal. While de Staël's call for translation was enthusiastically embraced by her Romantic Italian followers, who were often advocates of Italian political unity and who founded journals such as the Milanese *Conciliatore* (1816), dedicated to the importation of literature from northern Europe through translation, the adherents of classicism, who were often opponents of Italian unification, rejected such translation efforts, drawing attention to their own tradition in their quest for cultural regeneration. This debate became a journalistic issue, as it was largely fought out in the new cultural magazines of the Italian peninsula (cf. AGORNI 2021). Although proponents and opponents of extensive translation efforts could not be clearly delineated along ideological lines of romanticism and classicism, the question of the relationship between translations and original texts (and its implications for Italian nation-building) constituted an important subject of discussion, resulting in a series of shifts in the journalistic orientation of journals such as *Antologia*. Shortly after its launch, the journal's translational orientation was already up for debate – largely, it seems, because of pressing national concerns. In the third issue, we find the following passage:

Il desiderio palesato da molti, e le gentili offerte d'alcune illuminate Persone zelanti della gloria patria, ci hanno persuasi a modificare la massima, adottata in sul nascere dell'ANTOLOGIA, di non comporla, cioè, se non colla versione di cose, tratte dalle migliori opere periodiche o da opuscoli d'Oltramonte; e a dar luogo anche a quelli articoli originali, che paressero meritevoli della curiosità de' Lettori. (ANTOLOGIA 1821c: 321)²⁶

[The expressed desire of many and the kind offers from some enlightened individuals, zealous for the glory of their country, have prompted us to modify the initial maxim adopted at the beginning of ANTOLOGIA. This involved composing it not solely with the version of things taken from the best periodicals or pamphlets from beyond the Alps, but also with original articles deemed worthy of the readers' curiosity. (RL)]

If *Antologia* intends to publish more “original articles”, as stated in this communication, due to public demand and the kindness of some patriotic luminaries who have donated manuscripts, it is with the declared aim of intervening in debates and national issues:

Incominciamo pertanto colla seguente scrittura anonima, pervenutaci da una città di questo Granducato. La quale pubblichiam [...] così per la natura del subietto, che, relativamente ai Toscani, ha l'aria di essere affatto nazionale, come per la suppellettile

²⁶ In the case of articles without an identifiable or signed author, the name of the journal is given as the author.

de' fatti irrefragabili, messi in campo dall'Autore, nel prendere parte ad una controversia, tanto a di' nostri agitata in Italia. (ANTOLOGIA 1821c: 321)²⁷

[We therefore begin with the following anonymous letter, which we received from a town in this Grand Duchy [Tuscany, RL]. We publish it [...] because of the nature of the subject, which seems to be entirely national as far as the Tuscans are concerned, as well as because of the irrefutable facts presented by the author, taking part in a controversy that is so much agitated in Italy today. (RL)]

As can be read in the following pages, this controversy concerns issues that fall within the context of the (re)emerging *Questione della lingua* – the language question, one of the central and historical issues in the creation of trans-regional standards in the fields of culture and communication on the peninsula.²⁸

This coexistence of dense and rapidly changing dynamics of translation and non-translation is by no means a singular phenomenon, as it can also be observed in other journals, such as the aforementioned *Rivista Europea*. The tendency to cut back on translations can also be seen in one of the most important applied science journals of the time: In the *Politecnico*, Cattaneo speaks of keeping the proportion of translations as low as possible for reasons of quality. At the same time, however, he wants to promote the international networking of his journal and of Italian science by recruiting correspondents and collaborating scientists (CATTANEO 1839b: 6).²⁹

²⁷ The concept of nation can, of course, be interpreted here in a regional sense. Nevertheless, the supra-regional dimension of the “controversy” is emphasised in the last part of the quotation. The fourth issue further justifies the programmatic reorientation in favour of more original Italian texts and translations from German and English: Original French texts are better known to an educated Italian public and are easily available in Italy. Translations from northern European languages therefore have a greater public utility and are more readily accepted by the Italian readership (ANTOLOGIA 1821a: 1–3). Issue 13 states that the aim is to nationalise *Antologia*: In Vieusseux’s words, the journal was meant above all to serve the exchange of an Italian scientific community – “I shall bear in mind in particular that we write for Italians” (VIEUSSEUX 1822: 7, RL) – and the creation of supra-regional standards in the fields of science, language and culture on the peninsula, without dispensing entirely with translations. According to the editor, the original focus was not least due to the limited resources and the adventurous nature of this editorial venture (VIEUSSEUX 1822: 3–15). In *Antologia*, translations are not always recognisable as such. In the third issue there is only one text that can be clearly identified as a translation. The text is derived from an English journal.

²⁸ “Da poco in qua si è rinnovata in Italia la questione, se *toscano* debba dirsi il nostro volgare illustre, anzichè *italiano*, e se quindi ebbe ragione o torto chi lo chiamò finora toscano” (ANTOLOGIA 1821b: 323). [“Recently in Italy the question has been raised again as to whether Tuscan should be called our illustrious vernacular instead of Italian, and whether those who have been calling it Tuscan are right or wrong” (RL).]

²⁹ Despite the flourishing of translation throughout the nineteenth century, a certain degree of translation fatigue can also be observed in other fields. In literature, for example, towards the middle of the century, the Italian Romantics, especially some prominent leaders of the national movement such as Berchet, began to turn their attention away from translation towards the establishment of their own national linguistic and cultural standards. (cf. LUKENDA 2022a).

Dynamics of Translation and Non-Translation: *Antologia*'s Contribution to the Nationalisation of Science in Italy (Conclusion)

The twists and turns observed in *Antologia*'s translation policy (which can also be seen in other contemporary journals) necessitate further investigation. They call for a closer look at the relationship between translation and non-translation and its effects in studies of translation history, nation-building and also in the emerging field of Periodical Studies – dynamics that, as shown, often coexisted in Italian journalistic enterprises in the nineteenth century.

There are undoubtedly also sociological reasons for the change in translation policy outlined above. When a journal, whether 'born translated' or not, is successful, it receives many 'suggestions' for publication which may lead it to correct its original program. Vieusseux's own words ("kind offers from some enlightened people") point to this.³⁰

However, the presence of two strong dynamics – the increasing demand for translation on the one hand, and the growing discomfort with translation in literary and scientific circles after a Romantic period characterised by enthusiasm for translation on the other – seems to confirm what Peter BURKE (2000) has identified as an essential component of the social history of knowledge: the coexistence and interaction of opposing, ambivalent and sometimes even conflicting trends: internationalisation and nationalisation. It seems reasonable to suggest that Vieusseux and his fellow activists were well aware of the scientific and cultural significance of these dynamics, but initially miscalculated the potential for conflict they might generate.

If we follow the history of *Antologia*, we can see that this combination of opposing tendencies – the need to establish international links and to create national scientific and cultural standards – will guarantee the journal a prominent position in the emerging Italian scientific landscape. *Antologia* and Vieusseux were the first to draw attention to the emergence of new scientific institutions at the international level. With the detailed and continuous reports that appeared in *Antologia* on the national scientific congresses held in Switzerland and Germany in the early 1820s (cf. ANTOLOGIA 1821d), Vieusseux and his journal were undoubtedly among the most important initiators of the *Riunione degli scienziati italiani* (1839–1847) – the leading pre-national scientific institution that played an important role in the constitution of national scientific branches (such as geography) during the Risorgimento period. The dynamics of non-translation and nationalisation thus follow the path traced by translation.

³⁰ It is a bold hypothesis to suggest that these reflections on the relationship between translations and originals manifest something like an early, proto-national idea of cultural balance, which became a cultural doctrine in Italy in the early 20th century, albeit under very different political and ideological auspices – a parameter measuring the relationship between the export and import of cultural productions. However, further, extensive research would be required to shed light on this intriguing hypothesis.

References

Primary sources

- ANTOLOGIA (1821a): "Ai lettori". *Antologia* 4 (Aprile), 1–3.
- ANTOLOGIA (1821b): "Appendice critica all'opera del Sig. C. Giulio Perticari". *Antologia* 3 (Marzo), 323–384.
- ANTOLOGIA (1821c): "Avvertimento". *Antologia* 3 (Marzo), 321.
- ANTOLOGIA (1821d): "Società scientifiche". *Antologia* 1 (Gennajo), 58–70.
- ANTOLOGIA (1822): "Société de traduction". *Antologia* 21 (Settembre), 526–527.
- BERCHET, Giovanni (1992): "Sul 'Cacciatore feroce' e sulla 'Eleonora' di Goffredo Augusto Bürger: Lettera semiseria di Grisostomo al suo figliuolo". In: BERCHET, Giovanni: *Lettera semiseria. Poesie*. CADIOLI, A. (ed.). Milano: Rizzoli, 55–136.
- CATTANEO, Carlo (1839a): "Prefazione", *Politecnico* 1, 3–8.
- CATTANEO, Carlo (1839b): "Prefazione", *Politecnico* 2, 3–8.
- G./P. (1821): "Proemio". *Antologia* 1 (Gennajo), 1–11.
- JULLIEN, Marc-Antoine (1819): "Introduction", *Revue encyclopédique* 1, 5–17.
- JULLIEN, Marc-Antoine (1821): "Introduzione al primo numero del giornale intitolato *Revue encyclopédique*". Translated from French. *Antologia* 2 (Febbrajo), 161–169.
- SOAVE, Francesco (1775): „Prefazione“. *Scelta di opuscoli interessanti tradotti da varie lingue* 1, n. p.
- STAËL, Germaine de (1979): "Sulla maniera e l'utilità delle traduzioni". In: CALCATERRA, C. & SCOTTI, M. (eds.): *Manifesti romantici*. 2nd ed. Torino: UTET, 79–92.
- VIEUSSEUX, Gian Pietro (1822): "Ai lettori". *Antologia* 13 (Gennajo), 3–15.

Secondary sources

- AGORNI, MIRELLA (2021): *Translating Italy for the nineteenth century: translators and an imagined nation in the early romantic period 1816-1830s*. Bern/Berlin/Bruxelles: Peter Lang.
- BERMAN, Antoine (1984): *L'Épreuve de l'étranger*. Paris: Gallimard.
- BOSSI, Maurizio (2013) (ed.): *Giovan Pietro Vieusseux: pensare l'Italia guardando all'Europa: atti del Convegno di studi. Firenze, 27-29 giugno 2011*. Florence: Olschki.
- BURKE, Peter (2000): *A Social History of Knowledge: From Gutenberg to Diderot*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- CHAPPEY, Jean-Luc (2019): *Penser les progrès de la civilisation européenne sous la Restauration: Marc-Antoine Jullien et la Revue encyclopédique (1819-1831)*. Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes.

- CORPET, Olivier (2002): "Avant-propos". In: PLUET-DESPATIN, J. & LEYMARIE, M. & MOLLIER, J.-Y. (eds.): *La Belle Époque des revues (1880-1914)*. Paris: IMEC, 7–8.
- DELPINO, Patricia (1989): "I periodici scientifici nel Nord Italia alla fine del Settecento: Studi e ipotesi di ricerca", *Studi Storici* 2, 457–482.
- DIZDAR, Dilek & GIPPER, Andreas & SCHREIBER, Michael (2014) (eds.): *Nationenbildung und Übersetzung*. Berlin: Frank & Timme.
- ENGELSKIRCHER, Kathrin (2020): *Nationsbildung als Übersetzungsprojekt. Giuseppe Mazzinis italienische Translationspolitik*. Stuttgart: Steiner.
- GALANTE GARRONE, Alessandro & DELLA PERUTA, Franco (1979): *La stampa italiana del Risorgimento*. Roma/Bari: Laterza.
- GERNERT, Angelica (1990): *Liberalismus als Handlungskonzept. Studien zur Rolle der politischen Presse im italienischen Risorgimento vor 1848*. Stuttgart: Steiner.
- GIPPER, Andreas (2022): "Die Geburt der wissenschaftlichen Fachzeitschrift aus dem Geist der Übersetzung: Die Observations sur la physique, sur l'histoire naturelle et sur les arts". In: FORNER, F. & MEIER, F. & SCHWARZE, S. (eds.): *I periodici settecenteschi come luogo di comunicazione dei saperi. Prospettive storiche, letterarie e linguistiche*. Berlin: Peter Lang, 69–90. <https://doi.org.10.3726/b18907>.
- GIPPER, Andreas & HELLER, Lavinia & LUKENDA, Robert (eds.) (2022a): *Politiken der Translation in Italien. Wegmarken einer deutsch-italienischen Übersetzungsgeschichte vom Risorgimento bis zum Faschismus*. Stuttgart: Steiner.
- GIPPER, Andreas & HELLER, Lavinia & LUKENDA, Robert (2022b): "Zur Übersetzungspolitik der frühen italienischen Romantik. Translationshistorische Überlegungen in deutsch-italienischer Perspektive". In: AUTERI, L. & BARRALE, N. & DI BELLA, A. (eds.): *Jahrbuch für Internationale Germanistik 8: Wege der Germanistik in transkultureller Perspektive*. Frankfurt/Main: Peter Lang, 515–533. <https://doi.org.10.3726/b19961>.
- HELLER, Lavinia (2022): "Theoretische Überlegungen zum Verhältnis von Übersetzung(swissenschaft) und Geschichte". In: GIPPER, A. & HELLER, L. & LUKENDA, R. (eds.): *Politiken der Translation in Italien. Wegmarken einer deutsch-italienischen Übersetzungsgeschichte vom Risorgimento bis zum Faschismus*. Stuttgart: Steiner, 19–31.
- LUKENDA, Robert (2022a): "Übersetzungspolitik und Übersetzungstheorie im frühen Risorgimento: Giovanni Berchet". In: GIPPER, A. & HELLER, L. & LUKENDA, R. (eds.): *Politiken der Translation in Italien. Wegmarken einer deutsch-italienischen Übersetzungsgeschichte vom Risorgimento bis zum Faschismus*. Stuttgart: Steiner, 35–55.
- LUKENDA, Robert (2022b): "Zwischen Europäisierung und Nationalisierung – Zeitschriften, nation-building und Übersetzungspolitik im frühen Risorgimento". In: FORNER, F. & MEIER, F. & SCHWARZE, S. (eds.): *I periodici settecenteschi come luogo di comunicazione dei saperi. Prospettive storiche, letterarie e linguistiche*. Berlin: Peter Lang, 135–170. <https://doi.org.10.3726/b18907>.

PÖCKL, Wolfgang (1983): "Sigmund Freud, Konrad Lorenz". In: PÖCKL, W. (ed.): *Österreichische Literatur in Übersetzungen. Salzburger linguistische Analysen*. Wien: Verlag der Österr. Akademie der Wissenschaften, 11–42.

PÖCKL, Wolfgang & PÖGL, Johann (2006): "Übersetzen und Sprachgeschichte: Übersetzungen ins Italienische und Sardische". In: ERNST, G. & GLEßGEN, D. & SCHMITT, C. & SCHWEICKARD, W. (eds.): *Romanische Sprachgeschichte. Ein internationales Handbuch zur Geschichte der romanischen Sprachen*. 2. Teilband. Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 1373–1386.

PORCIANI, Ilaria (1998): "Fare gli italiani". In: FLACKE, M. (ed.): *Mythen der Nationen: Ein europäisches Panorama*. München/Berlin: Koehler & Amelang, 199–222.

SAKAI, Naoki (2010): "Translation and the Figure of Border: Toward the Apprehension of Translation as a Social Action." *Profession*, 25–34.

SCHWARZE, Sabine (2004): *Sprachreflexion zwischen nationaler Identifikation und Entgrenzung*. Münster: Nodus.

TOURY, Gideon (1995): *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 53–69.

VENUTI, Lawrence (1994): *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation*. London/New York: Routledge.

WALKOWITZ, Rebecca L. (2015): *Born Translated. The Contemporary Novel in an Age of World Literature*. New York: Columbia University Press.