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Rizzi, Andrea; Lang, Birgit & Pym, Anthony (2019): *What is Translation History? A Trust-Based Approach*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 140pp, ISBN 978-3-030-20099-2

As the first volume of Palgrave's Translation History series, *What is Translation History? A Trust-based Approach* presents a feasible way to tackle the present state of extremely fragmented narratives on translation history. Translation Studies (TS) scholars tend to view translation history as a sub-field of the larger discipline of translation studies, and to their purpose, they mainly gather and recount the history of translation or translation theorization to give depth, recognition, and authenticity to the institutionalization of TS. However, history scholars involved in translation tend to consider translation as an approach to intercultural or transnational historical subjects rather than seeing translation itself as their historical object. Against this backdrop, this book seeks to build interdisciplinary trust and commensurability in doing translation history with new epistemological reflections.

The book advantageously draws on the respective expertise of its three authors, Andrea Rizzi, a literary historian who explores translation in early modern multilingual Europe, Birgit Lang, a cultural historian with expertise in the interdisciplinary exchange of knowledge, and Anthony Pym, a TS scholar who has published prolifically on translation history. The three authors' team brainstorming serves to bridge the disciplinary divide between history and TS. Their theoretical sources are broad and diverse, but mainly from sociology, TS, philosophy of history, cultural history, book history, and history of science. Such a wide breadth of scholarship may render the body chapters somewhat mosaic-like. However, one of the most outstanding merits of this book lies in its synthesized, trust-based approach that chimes strongly with trends of New Cultural History in contemporary historiography and the sociological turn in TS.

Chapter 1 provides necessary groundwork for a new translation history. In inquiring what translation history is, the authors give a retrospective analysis of the past conceptual foundations of translation history based on philosophical and social theories. They contend that translation history is by nature an interdisciplinary pursuit straddling between translation studies and history studies. But unfortunately, it seems that at present translation scholars still need to know more about historiography, and historians lack translation awareness as well (6). The authors believe that the translation historian's task is not only to collect facts like who translated what, where, and when diachronically, but also to interpret these facts, to construct narratives and thereby to give new meaning to the past. Adopting a definition of trust as "a solution to a specific problem of risk" (11), the authors suggest an epistemological turn towards evidence for trust, distrust, and trust-signaling in the production, dissemination, and re-

ception of translations in history. They trace the concept of trust back to the usage by George Steiner, Charles Tilly, Andrew Chesterman, and Christiane Nord, and give trust-related evidence from centuries ago to argue for its relevance to the translator. Then they differentiate three discrete and concurrent perspectives of interpersonal, institutional, and regime-enacted trust to shed light on agents that were trusted in the history of translation and interpreting. To answer the question raised in the book title, their newly proposed way of doing translation history refers to a scholarly exploration of historical translators' visible trust-signaling, and the manners in which their translations were trusted or distrusted (22).

Chapter 2 examines the afore-mentioned tripartite types of trust and the ethos of historical translators from the perspective of their trust-signaling endeavor and reception studies. Trust here refers to "a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behavior of another" (41-42). While trust is often tacit, distrust tends to leave traces as can be identified from the translators' claims of their trustworthiness, or through an analysis of the reception of the translated product. With the ultimate purpose to establish their trustworthiness, translators display their ethos (i.e., trust claims) strategically, trying to meet the two-pronged expectations of readership and relevant regimes. Incompatibilities between these two aspects usually offer untapped sources of evidence of the translators' dynamics of trust. The probe into the trust aspect in translation history investigates the relationality between various historical agents and regimes of knowledge. It requires both quantitative methods to collect "hard" data, and qualitative approaches to account for the intrinsic causality behind the numbers. The micro and macro aspects of this comprehensive intellectual enquiry challenges translation scholars' and history scholars' capability in at least two aspects: firstly to grasp the social agencies behind the production and reception of translation in history and secondly to navigate the flows of trust downstream and upstream in the relevant historical intercultural mediation. Tracking trust downstream means to investigate how a translator's trust-signaling is received whereas tracing trust upstream means to explore how a translator's trust claim is constituted.

Chapter 3 draws our attention to the relativity of trusting historians. As the subject position and motivation of the historian take with it personal and cultural involvement in doing history, the historical description is never a neutral or wholly objective portrayal. Here, the authors cite Luhmann's notions such as "trust is a mechanism for reducing complexity" and "trust only has social value when there is the possibility of distrust" to lend credibility to their argument (64). Historians can search for instances of doubt, uncertainty, questioning, and irritation between social systems. Wherever there is potential for distrust, there is a social role for trust. The authors look into the discursive trickery of feigned neutrality and transparency in the historian's account of the past and formulate that most historians recount things in the past from the vantage position of the present. The past is a construction based on written narratives or artifacts transmitted to the present, but only selectively. They argue against Andrew Chesterman's "universalist context of justification" of "hypotheses and theories" (70), contending that there is no neutrality in translation history, and there is

certainly added value because of the historian's provenance and aspirations. The notion of "position" entails a point from which to see the rest of the world, a world in which borders are instituted through translation. Meanwhile, the western translation form travels along with the international spread of technologies. Western translation form here refers to the European conceptualization of translation (79). The spread of modernity involves not just technologies, communication practices, social mobility, but also noteworthy relations of cross-cultural dominance exercised through translation. It is therefore suggested that translation historians should think reflexively with a global and globalizing vision to avoid a simplified understanding of the oppositions and complexity involved in the history of European expansion.

In Chapter 4, the authors firstly claim that there is a traditional lack of collaboration in humanities and then they propose a new model of interdisciplinarity involving translation history and history of science. Here, the authors adopt a pragmatic definition of interdisciplinary trust as "deferring with comfort to others, in ways sometimes in our control, sometimes not, about a thing, or things beyond our knowledge or power that can potentially hurt us" (87). Different disciplines have their own concepts, vernaculars, discourses and logics. It is crucial that interdisciplinary researchers cultivate in-depth understanding of these and devote time to communicate with project team members as well. Interdisciplinary interactions take many forms and varieties, from occasional borrowing of frames, methods, or approaches across disciplinary boundaries to intensive ongoing collaboration addressing complicated research problems with novel solutions. To explore the varying degrees of interdisciplinary engagement, the authors adapt the three-stage language formations of jargon, pidgin, and creole in Peter Galison's conceptual model of "trading zone" to evaluate the depth and sustainability of interdisciplinarity (91). Precedent interdisciplinary publications such as Scott L. Montgomery's *Science in Translation* (2000), Sander Gilman's monograph (2008) and Carmen Acuña-Partal's paper (2016) indicate that the "trading zone" between science, history, and translation is so far under-explored. Therefore, the authors call for historians of science and translation scholars to transcend disciplinary boundaries and foster a greater awareness of trust in translation among historians, and greater methodological confidence among scholars of translation (88).

Chapter 5 briefly concludes the book. In the face of the vast unknown sectors in translation history, the authors' process of discovery is held together by a basic trust-based approach, with a range of definitions of trust offered in the previous four chapters respectively in its connections with translation history. The indeterminate collocation of "translation history" suggests a particular way of doing history, or a historical perspective, or a project in which intermediaries such as translators and interpreters are foregrounded and studied (110). The significance of different layers of trust are reiterated, and translation historians' reflexivity is called upon to form a new gaze both on the role, ethics, and praxis of historical and present translators and interpreters, and on translation historian's scholarly methods.

Despite its numerous merits, there are also flaws to this book. To begin with, in Chapter 2, the authors' historical focus explicitly and exclusively turns towards the

translator's trust networks and away from the translated text, albeit they state previously in Chapter 1 that "the focus of [their] field is simultaneously the actors, the go-betweens, and the texts or product they were concerned with"(22). Trust-signaling is persuasion indeed, and it can be propaganda too. Translation historians can detect a translator's discursual mediations not only in liminal spaces like prefaces, reviews or footnotes, but also in the translated text's variances or deviations. Disparity between the translator's pre-emptive claim and the practicalities will surely shed light on the interpretative complexity of trust networks in translation history. Another unsatisfactory aspect in Chapter 2 lies in its conceptual shifting tendency to equate intercultural mediators with translators and the history of intercultural communications with translation history in its trust-exploring process. The third party involved in intercultural communication can assume multiple identities, such as translator -cum- broker/ agent/ functionary or even decision maker. Translation is only one among many intercultural mediating skills or tasks. The referent of "intermediary" is much broader than that of "translator". All translators are intermediaries, but not all intermediaries are translators. Hence, it is difficult to ascribe an intermediary's multifunctionality to translation merely. Moreover, it is illogical to allocate all their sociocultural trust-arousing activities to translation history instead of translation-related history. Third, although Chapter 4 claims to build interdisciplinary trust among TS scholars and historians, it is deficient in addressing TS scholars as its implied audience. This partiality echoes the rooted idea that TS is always an importer of methodologies and it has little, if any, to offer to this interdisciplinary enterprise. With a good starting point to foster greater awareness of trust in translation, it ends up with distrust in TS scholars' contribution to translation historiography although it claims to be otherwise.

To sum up, *What is Translation History?* is an insightful attempt at establishing an original trust-based framework for writing translation history with an interdisciplinary dimension. Placing trust at the center of translation history, this book contributes significantly to the relatively underexplored area of translation historiography. The authors' attention to the trust aspect of translators indicates that Pym (1998)'s call for "humanizing translation history" has been favorably met. The focus on translation historians and interdisciplinary trust reflects their willingness to integrate subjectivity, self-reflexivity, and interdisciplinarity into translation historiography (BASTIN & BANDIA 2006). Collaborative authorship of this volume enables the three scholars to bring out each other's strengths in writing translation history. The conceptual framework honed in this volume will surely inspire translation historiography in the future.

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