

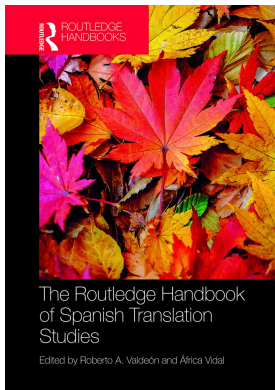
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Roberto A. Valdeón, África Vidal, Javier Muñoz-Basols

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Álvaro Echeverri, Georges L. Bastin

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TRANSLATION IN HISPANIC AMERICA

Álvaro Echeverri and Georges L. Bastin

Introduction

“Uniform and diverse”, just like Hispanic America itself, is a most fitting definition for translation in the Hispanic subcontinent. Reflecting a basic linguistic and cultural unity built on the essential and paradoxical relation between Hispanism and Indigenism, Hispanic American translation unsurprisingly finds its ideal symbiosis in the real-magic figure of Malinalli Tenépal. This Aztec Indian, better known as la Malinche, symbol of the *métissage* of cultures, was the first American interpreter to stamp her controversial mark on the polemic process of universal history through which the hitherto unknown continent became the ‘New World’ of men and ideas, notwithstanding its millenary tradition. According to Valdeón’s reading of Octavio Paz, the latter “referred to the paradox of La Malinche as being at the root of the Mexican identity vis-à-vis the European conqueror” (2013, 102). Paz (1997, 110–12) also concluded that the Mexican people were unable to come to terms with their own mixed identity because of their inability to accept their own historical predicament (as quoted in Valdeón 2013).

In America, translation was born with the continent and has not ceased to leave its mark upon its history and its peoples. Paraphrasing Paz (1990, 9), Americans learned to speak Spanish, and, therefore, to translate. Translation in Hispanic America was not only an essential tool for the successful evangelizing campaign during the spiritual Spanish conquest of the continent, it was also incorporated in the very first colonial literature, namely, the *métis* chronicles by Felipe Guamán Poma (1550–1616) and Inca Garcilaso de la Vega (1539–1616) as a precursor to South American literary writing (Viereck 2005). After Independence, translation activity (political, scientific and literary texts) was creatively carried out by members of the political and intellectual elites, especially to validate the local vis-a-vis the foreign. In many cases, this resulted in appropriation. Much like translation theory in the Western world, the first theoretical musings about translation in Hispanic America were documented by passionate translators like Andrés Bello (1781–1865), Miguel Antonio Caro (1843–1909), José Martí (1853–1895), and Bartolomé Mitre (1821–1906), and were appended as prefaces or introductions to translated texts.

In Hispanic America, translation represents both a way of being and a way of thinking. As Edwin Gentzler (2008, 5) states, “Translation in the Americas is less something that happens

between separate and distinct cultures and more something that is *constitutive* of those cultures”, or “Translation in South America is much more than a linguistic operation; rather, it has become one of the means by which an entire continent has come to define itself” (2008, 108). In 1827, 1831 and 1845, Andrés Bello included theoretical ideas in his prologues to and commentaries on translations. However, Julio César Santoyo (1987, 13) notes, in his proposed periodization of translation history in the Spanish-speaking world, that *theorization* starts in 1888. That year, the Colombian writer, Miguel Antonio Caro, wrote theoretical considerations that were added in 1889 as an introduction to his *Traducciones poéticas* [poetic translations]. In 1889, Bartolomé Mitre titled the foreword of his *La Divina Comedia* translation: “Translator’s Theory”; so, too, did José Martí (1875) in his translation of the Preface to Victor Hugo’s *Mes fils*. In more recent times, Octavio Paz, in *Traducción: literatura y literalidad* (1990), a magnificent reflection on translation, added another milestone to the theoretical discussion about translation in the region. The starting point of modern theorization in Hispanic America could, thus, be attributed to Bello, but, following Viereck and Payàs, it is Guaman Poma, Garcilaso de la Vega and Bernardino de Sahagún who are associated with the very birth of translation in Hispanic America.

Hispanic American authors have also reached the international Translation Studies community and are often included in anthological publications on the history of translation. Jorge Luis Borges is, without doubt, the most quoted of Hispanic American translation thinkers, on the strength of his “Los traductores de las 1001 noches” [The Translators of the *Thousand and One Nights*] (1936) and many other translations. But many are the intellectuals who have helped lay the foundations of a ‘Hispanic American way of translating’.

Waisman (2010, 53) also explains that since the movements of Independence and the processes of nation formation at the end of the colonial period, especially in the nineteenth century, “translation in Latin America has functioned as a dynamic source for founding, developing and expanding [the region’s] literary tradition”.

Hispanic America has become a large market for translation. Apart from the increasing number of publishing houses, the demand for translation is guaranteed by the volume of diplomatic, commercial, industrial, and technological exchange required by a community of fifteen countries and more than 500 million people (Bastin 2009, 491). However, while training programmes in universities, institutes, or professional translation associations are to be found in most countries in the region, their existence is not synonymous with full institutionalization or recognition of the translation profession. Translation is still regarded as an ancillary activity and, even today, is hardly recognized as an object of study.

Historical perspective

While no concrete evidence to this effect has been found, translation must have occurred well before Columbus, in the exchanges between the many different linguistic communities that lived on the continent. The Mayan, Incan and other similar empires could not have been constituted without close linguistic exchanges between their multiple ethnicities.

In contrast with western European periodization, translation history in America after 1492 can be divided into four main periods: (1) encounter and conquest (1492 to 1521/1533, i.e., the fall of Moctezuma and Inca Atahualpa), (2) colonization (sixteenth to eighteenth century), (3) pre-Independence and Emancipation (end of the eighteenth to the first half of the nineteenth century), and (4) creation and consolidation of the different Republics (the second half of the nineteenth century to the present) (Fundación Polar 1988, Tome 3, 108). This periodization reveals two brief, crucial spells of intense translation activity: encounter and

conquest; and pre-Independence and Emancipation. The first, encounter and conquest, lasting around fifty years, represents, principally, the very first exchanges between conquerors and the local populations, facilitated by Indian and Spanish “lenguas” or interpreters, including the so-called “caraspálicas” [palefaces] (Herren 1991). The second period, pre-Independence and Emancipation, also lasting half a century, was characterized by Spanish translations of European and North American philosophical and political texts aimed at nurturing the ideological aspirations of the South American elites for independence, and the building of the first republics (Bastin and Echeverri 2004). The role played by translation in the various periodicals of the region is to be underlined, as they contributed significantly to the spread of Enlightenment ideas and ideals (Navarro 2014) and to the development of liberal education (Montoya 2015).

The two other periods were much lengthier and produced a considerable quantity of translations, as the activity was more stable, organized, and systematic. During the nearly three-centuries-long colonization period, the major translation activity was carried out by missionaries, in order to facilitate the evangelization of the native populations. This involved the translation from Spanish into the native tongues of mainly catechisms, books of prayer and confession, and doctrines (Payàs 2010; Bastin 2013), rendering the referential world of indigenous communities similar to that of the Europeans, the first step of a cultural assimilation. No less important are the translations from American languages into Spanish (Bastin 2009). A good example is provided by *Historia general de las cosas de Nueva España* [General History of the Things of New Spain], transcribed in Náhuatl by a team led by Franciscan friar, Bernardino de Sahagún, from testimonies of elders and old practitioners from Tlatelolco, and translated into Spanish by Sahagún between 1540 and 1585.

Since the second half of the nineteenth century, the fourth period, translation has become a widespread activity in many different fields – literature, science, commerce, and law – to name a few. A comprehensive account with translator details and examples of translations is provided in Lafarga y Pegenaute’s (2013) *Diccionario histórico de la traducción en Hispanoamérica* [Historical Dictionary of Translation in Hispanic America].

Another perspective on the historical development of translation is offered by Birgit Scharlau (2004, 25–28), according to whom interest in translation in Hispanic America is observable in three fields of studies which converge into a sort of historical periodization: translating in the Amerindian and non-Amerindian worlds, translating foreign literature, and translating within the colonial and postcolonial power relations. Surprisingly, the three categories of this diachronic description of translation evolution still apply today in studies that are being published, as we will see in our last section.

Concepts and theoretical approaches

Modern theories originating in Europe and in North America have undoubtedly played a crucial role in the development of translation theory and practice in the Hispanic American continent, but in a quite peculiar way.

After Independence, intellectuals and privileged members of the Hispanic American society created literary and intellectual social groups (Salones Literarios – Tertulias, Sociedades de Amigos). They looked mainly to the non-Spanish Western European traditions in their efforts to give birth to a new, national tradition in South America. “For the Salón Literario of 1837, translation is a key mechanism not only in the ‘civilizing’ Project of nation building, but also as a constitutive element of the very national identity that is being created” (Waisman 2010, 57). Juan María Gutiérrez declares, in Félix Weinberg’s 1837 Salón Literario:

Pero esa importación del pensamiento y de la literatura europea no debe hacerse ciegamente . . . Debemos fijarnos antes en nuestras necesidades y exigencias, en el estado de nuestra sociedad y su índole . . . Y si hemos de tener una literatura, hagamos que sea *nacional*; que represente nuestras costumbres y nuestra naturaleza.

(citado en Catelli y Gargatagli 1981, 365)

But we ought not to blindly import European ideas and literature. . . . We must first carefully consider our [particular] needs and requirements, the nature of our society and its stage of development. . . . And if we must have a literature, let it be home-grown; let it represent our customs and our nature.

(as quoted in Catelli y Gargatagli 1981, 365)

Catelli y Gargatagli (369) note: “For the American intellectual task: it is necessary not only to escape Spain. To be American one must become a different kind of reader and translator”. Along the same lines, Martí wrote: “Ni con galos ni con celtas tenemos que hacer en nuestra América, sino con criollos y con indios” [We need neither the French nor the English to build our America. We need the Creole and the Indian] (Martí 1963, Tome 7, 59).

Octavio Paz (1990, 13), like Borges before him, believes that:

cada texto es único y simultáneamente la traducción de otro texto. Ningún texto es enteramente original porque el lenguaje mismo, en su esencia, es ya una traducción: primero del mundo no-verbal y, después, porque cada signo y cada frase es la traducción de otro signo y de otra frase.

every text is unique and at the same time the translation of another text. No text is entirely original since language itself is, in essence, a translation: firstly, of the nonverbal world; and, secondly, in the sense that every sign and every sentence is the translation of another sign, another sentence.

Paz and Borges do not believe in “cierta idea ingenua de la traducción. O sea: la traducción literal [. . .] significativamente, *servil*. No digo que la traducción literal sea imposible, sino que no es una traducción. [. . .] la traducción es siempre una operación literaria”. (Paz 1990, 13) [some naïve idea of translation. That is: the literal translation [. . .], namely, *servile*. I am not saying that the literal translation is impossible, but rather, that it is not a translation. [. . .] translation is always a literary operation] – and the translated piece is “[. . .] an example of the interdependency between creation and imitation, translation and original work” (Paz 1990, 26).

Various examples of a like concept of refusal of literalness and acceptance of the manipulation of ‘original’ texts can be found in Hispanic American literature. Waisman (2003, 357), for instance, explains that Borges’ version of “El brujo postergado”, taken from “Exemplo XII” of Don Juan Manuel’s *Conde Lucanor*, is “a linguistic and cultural transposition from fourteenth-century Medieval Spanish to twentieth-century Río de la Plata *castellano*, in which the temporal and geographic displacements are foregrounded by the *acriollamiento* of the text”.

The same notion is apparent in José Martí, especially in his writings for children and teenagers, where he appropriates European translation models (Andersen, Perrault, and Mme D’Aulnay) in order to carry out, by means of fiction, a didactic project aimed at young Hispanic Americans (Arencibia 2000, 57). A similar approach can be observed in Andrés Bello, who, in his poem, *Alocución a la poesía*, invites the “divine poetry to leave cult Europe and set her flight to the Columbus world” (Paz 1981, *LXII*). It is even more obvious in his

translations (or imitations, as he used to call them). In his Spanish version of Hugo's *La prière pour tous*, for example, Bello leaves aside the moral, religious nature of the original, to introduce clear, political references related to his exile in London (Bastin, Echeverri, and Campo 2004, 78).

As Pagni (2003, 354) puts it, translation can be seen as displacement practice that prompted the emergence of new cultural paradigms rather than as mere repetition of previous ones. This has to do with an anti-European position on the part of Hispanic American intellectuals. Waisman confirms:

[. . .] Latin American writers can transform the original, including the values of the center where it was produced. This move destabilizes concepts of originality, authorship and influence, creating major cultural political implications for the periphery and its literatures.

(Waisman 2003, 366)

With regard to Hispanic America, therefore, one perceives a legitimate conception of translation that is significantly influenced by the 'unfaithful' and irreverent stance on translation and original texts adopted by key intellectuals such as Andrés Bello, Jorge Luis Borges, José Martí and Octavio Paz. Imitation through spatial displacement of foreign texts (e.g., Bello's transplantation of Victor Hugo's poems in tropical Hispanic America); adaptation by means of new, local references (e.g., Borges's situating of his translations in the Rio de La Plata); or appropriation by masking a translation to the point of passing it off as a Hispanic American original (e.g., the appearance of William Burke's translations of Hamilton, Madison and Jay texts as articles in the *Gaceta de Caracas*). Such are the main characteristics of what can be called the "Hispanic American way of translating".

For Justin Read:

This would mean for the translator (read: "American") to *act* in such a way that the *act of translation* becomes visible as such. Paradoxically, then, in order for one to properly speak in translation, one must willingly break the *ethos* of "proper" translation as self-abnegation. The language of the Americas must be *bad* translation.

(2003, 302)

For an understanding of the linguistic, cultural and ideological commitment of the intellectuals paving the way for a Hispanic American concept of translation (although, according to Viereck (2003) the idea was ushered in by the Inca Garcilaso and Felipe Guamán Poma in their hybrid chronicles), one should also consider the linguistic and cultural hybridity and heterogeneity that characterize the literature as well as the changing identity of Hispanic American societies. An Argentinian example of such a commitment is Mariano Moreno's translation of Rousseau's *Le contrat social* (1810), later published in serial instalments in the *Gaceta de Buenos Aires*, to spread the ideas of the revolutionary French movement. Moreno anticipates "a certain kind of translation [. . .] fragmented, with omissions and a strong, framing prologue by the translator" (Waisman 2010, 56); ". . . the kind of *mis*-translation that will be repeated throughout the nineteenth century" (ibid.) and well after in the whole region.

Hence, the never-ending questioning of concepts such as the superiority of the original and the adoption of the concept of the author's dethroning (well before Hans Vermeer) by appropriating foreign texts and ideas. From the respective periods of Independence to the present day (Bastin, Echeverri, and Campo 2004), appropriation appears to be a major

emancipating project with three areas of focus: the first, sociocultural; the second, political; and the third, educational. Translation has played a major role in all three areas. The first aimed at building a new man, racially métis, intellectually and affectively hybrid – molding him, in effect, mainly through literature. The second, truly emancipating, is contemporaneous with the Independence movement in Hispanic America (i.e., around the end of the eighteenth century). It is fully discernible in translations of letters, manifests, as well as philosophical and official texts putting forward a republican project, a new postcolonial political organization and mentality. The purpose of the third area of focus was the education of new generations in universal knowledge, albeit with an American mindset.

Publications, research projects and methods

Hispanic America has always participated in the general discussion surrounding the ideas that have been shaping translation practices since the first encounter between originary peoples and Europeans. In Bello's comments about the translations of the Bible (1979, 393), there are references to Tytler's paraphrase. Likewise, his criticism of José Gómez de Herosilla's translation of the *Iliad* has all the makings of the Newman-Arnold debate about translating Homer. In fact, Miguel Antonio Caro (1888) made explicit reference to Mathew Arnold's criticism of some translations of Homer's works. Also interesting is Bartolomé Mitre's (1889) mention of the *Belles infidèles* idea in his 'teoría del traductor' [translator's theory]. Hispanic Americans have joined in and contributed to the universal study of translation. While Borges' texts have won worldwide recognition, those of Andrés Bello and Miguel Antonio Caro have yet to achieve the same within and without the Spanish-speaking world. The region's interest in Translation Studies has produced such a vast bibliography that it would be manifestly naïve to pretend to draw a complete and detailed landscape of it in these pages. Instead, in the following pages, we produce a mere sketch of Hispanic America's Translation Studies landscape by referencing publications and research activities undertaken by a group of scholars actively involved in the creation of the Red Latinoamericana de Estudios de Traducción e Interpretación (RELAETI <http://relaeti.org/>, Latin American Network of Translation and Interpretation Studies).

The contributions to the study of translation in the region made by authors such as Borges, Paz and Martí, while undeniably important, were quite sporadic. Translation could hardly be considered the main 'occupation' of these men, who were nonetheless active translators. But in the region as a whole, Translation Studies has benefitted from a strong push in the last twenty years, owing to the continuous efforts of scholars and researchers who have made translation their principal research topic.

The number of research activities and publications concerned with translation in the region is immense. The task of giving an account of such activities becomes harder when one considers that research initiatives whose focus is translation, translators, and translated texts in Hispanic America have thrived both inside and outside the region's geographical limits. While important studies have been carried out mainly in Argentina, Chile, Colombia and Mexico, some of the most prominent research projects about Translation Studies in Hispanic America have come into being outside its geographical boundaries – in Canada, Germany, Spain and elsewhere.

Since 2004, in Canada, the research group on the history of translation in Latin America (HISTAL, www.histal.ca/) has provided a platform for and a portal to the history and the practice of translation in the region. HISTAL's publications have covered the translation of Independence political documents, the translation done by the religious communities inhabiting the

continent in colonial times, and the role played by translation in early periodicals in Venezuela and Colombia. More recently, the research group has started to investigate exploratory travels by foreign visitors to Hispanic America, from a translational point of view. Although the research subjects are directly associated with political and cultural translation, literary topics can also be found on the website, as the group collaborates with researchers around the world.

The history of literary translation in the region has been thoroughly documented by Andrea Pagni (2014) in an article published in the journal *Iberoamericana*. In this article, Pagni, who is a full professor at the Institute of Romanic Languages of the Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg, paints a detailed landscape of literary translation history in the region over the last fifty years. We relied considerably on Pagni's work in what follows. Pagni conceived of a rich catalogue of researchers, research groups and publications dealing with literary translation. In addition to compiling a list of the most representative Translation Studies publications in the Spanish-speaking countries, she reviews chapters from the two volumes edited in 2012 by Francisco Lafarga and Luis Pegenaute: *Aspectos de la traducción en Hispanoamérica: autores, traducciones y traductores* [Aspects of Translation in Hispanic America: Authors, Translations and Translators] and *Lengua, cultura y política en la historia de la traducción en Hispanoamérica* [Language, Culture and Politics in the History of Translation in Hispanic America]. Pagni criticizes the editors' decision to organize the contributions in alphabetical order. Their decision, however, is, perhaps, justifiable, given that the two volumes contain all the papers presented at a congress, *On Translation History in Hispanic America*, held at the Universidad de Barcelona, in 2011. Nonetheless, the volumes are dwarfed by what is arguably, to date, the most extensive and exhaustive project ever published on the history of translation in the region.

In 2013, the year following the publication of the two aforementioned volumes, Lafarga and Pegenaute published the *Diccionario histórico de la traducción en Hispanoamérica*. The editors, recognizing that on many occasions research carried out in one country was not gaining sufficient scholarly awareness in others, had set about to produce the most comprehensive compendium of translations and translators in Hispanic America. With the help of Latin American colleagues, they constituted a committee of Translation Studies scholars from Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Mexico, Peru, Spain and Venezuela, supported by various collaborators – a team totalling 106 persons. In spite of that, as Pagni (2014, 219) observes, the translation landscape of five countries (Bolivia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua) does not appear in the dictionary. In her article, Pagni also highlights certain shortcomings and questions some decisions regarding this enormous enterprise. In her opinion, a supranational approach (i.e., classification of entries by country) is not as effective as the categorization of translation research in terms of networks, professional associations, literary genres or text types. Be that as it may, for those labouring at Translation Studies in the region, the unearthing of any evidence related to translation activity in the territories under study is an enormous step forward in consolidating Translation Studies as a field of scientific research. Translation students with an interest in translation history in any of the countries included in Lafarga and Pegenaute's dictionary will find a treasure trove of potential research topics for master's or doctoral theses.

A particular strength of the dictionary is the considerable number of translators, translated texts, translation agents, and potential translation networks it succeeds in cataloguing. Its usefulness as a reference work is beyond question. However, the perceptive reader will soon come to recognize that in some cases, the same text may have been translated in more than one country. In Hispanic America, for example, one might find a Peruvian, a Colombian, a Venezuelan, an Argentinian and a Chilean translation of some of Baudelaire's poems. The same could be

said of texts written by the array of authors listed under ‘translated authors’ in the dictionary’s index. All things considered, Lafarga and Pegenaute’s dictionary, conceptualized in Spain, supported with Spanish funds, but realized mainly by Hispanic American researchers, provides a unique window into translation in the entire region. Increased interest in Translation Studies has also prompted significant research efforts from within the region.

The information found on HISTAL’s website, in Lafarga and Pegenaute (2012a, 2012b) and (2013), and in Pagni (2014) is sufficient proof that Hispanic Americans have been active as translators and Translation Studies scholars. As mentioned in a previous study (Bastin 2003), the first exclusive international Translation Studies event in the region was held in Santiago de Chile in 1980. Notable for the attendance of Georges Mounin and Eugene Nida, it represents a key moment in the history of Translation Studies in South America. Patricia Hormann and Ileana Cabrera, translation teachers from the Department of translation of the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, are two names commonly associated with the first efforts to foster research on translation, mostly in the countries located in the Southern Cone of the American continent, namely, Argentina, Chile and Peru, according to Cabrera et al. (1991, 141). The initial steps taken by this group of researchers in Santiago are very likely the earliest serious efforts towards the consolidation of translation as a research field in the region.

In more recent years, Gertrudis Payás at the Universidad Católica de Temuco has done important historiographical research in order to highlight the role played by translation in the development of national Chilean culture. In 2007, she edited a revised and augmented edition of *Biblioteca chilena de traductores (1820–1924)*. Ordenada por J.T. Medina [Chilean library of translators (1820–1924). Selected and compiled by J.T. Medina]. This publication is a catalogue of translations collected over a century by José Toribio Medina in Chile. According to Payás (2007, 34), Medina conceptualized his bibliographical endeavour as a record of translation practices of his time and not as a historical document. Medina’s *Biblioteca* represents, in Payás’ words, a project for future generations of people interested in translation.

Payás has also developed an interest in intercultural translation and interpretation, specifically as it relates to the Araucanian frontier in the seventeenth century. In 2012, she co-edited, with José Manuel Zavala, *La mediación lingüístico-cultural en tiempos de guerra: cruce de miradas desde España y América* [Linguistic and Cultural Mediation in Wartime: Alternative Perspectives from Spain and America]. In this book, the editors bring together texts that analyse interlinguistic mediation from a Translation Studies point of view, as well as from philosophical, anthropological and historical perspectives. The intention is to make a contribution to the discussion about one of the oldest conflicts in the continent between originary peoples and the population of Spanish or other descent. Needless to say, translation has always played a key role in fostering understanding between the linguistic communities interacting in the Mapuche region.

In *El revés del tapiz. Traducción y discurso de identidad en la Nueva España (1521–1821)* [The Other Side of the Tapestry. Translation and Discourse on Identity in the New Spain (1521–1821)], Payás provides an elaborate account of one of the most influential research projects carried out on Translation Studies and translation history in Hispanic America. Combining historiography, Translation Studies, and language studies with topics such as translation, language and nation creation, the author ends up bringing to life a book that opens the borders of Translation Studies to scholars from other human and social sciences. *El revés del tapiz* is slowly but surely becoming compulsory reading for those interested in translation in the Spanish-Speaking world.

In Argentina, Patricia Willson’s *La constelación del Sur: Traductores y traducciones en la literatura argentina del siglo XX* [The South Constellation: Translators and Translation in

Twentieth-Century Argentinian Literature] (2004) has also had an enormous influence on the Hispanic American Translation Studies community. Willson carried out her research according to the guidelines of polysystems theory and descriptive Translation Studies as interpreted by modern Translation Studies scholars. She has been particularly keen on revealing the treasures of literary translation history in Argentina. Among her many other publications, it is worth singling out the article (Willson, 2008), “El fin de una época: letradados-traductores en la primera colección de literatura traducida del siglo XX en la Argentina” [The End of an Era: Men of letters /Translators in the First Collection of Twentieth-Century Translated Literature in Argentina], in which she investigates a time when translation was practised principally by a limited number of intellectuals and politicians. She undertakes a detailed study of the translation policy in the *Sur Editorial* and describes the collaboration between the publishing house and three prominent translators. Although the Argentinian case is the focus of Willson’s research, her study could serve as the basis for comparable research projects in other Hispanic American countries where similar scenarios occurred. It is a fact that at a particular juncture in the region, translation was practiced mainly by the educated political elites.

Colombia represents another important centre of translation activity in the region. The translation programme in the school of modern languages at the Universidad de Antioquia in Medellín has made enormous strides in terms of the institutionalization of Translation Studies. Today, two research groups in Translation Studies and one in terminology are associated with the school. The research group on Translation Studies, headed by Marta Lucía Pulido, has won recognition in Hispanic America for actively promoting the discipline. Two of the group’s initiatives have borne fruit: the translation into Spanish of (1) translation theory and (2) translation history books.

As Translation Studies history teaches us, one of the first steps towards the institutionalization of a discipline is to work on its history. One of the group’s first projects dealt with the translation of Jean Delisle and Judith Woodworth’s (1995) *Translators through History/Les traducteurs dans l’histoire* (both the English and French versions), published under the title *Los traductores en la historia* (2005). Various works by Antoine Berman were also translated and published in Spanish. In addition to opening up the hitherto inaccessible content of books and papers, the collaborative nature of the project provided the opportunity to engage students and teachers in discussions about translation strategies and techniques, and, above all, to clarify Translation Studies concepts.

Another of the group’s projects entailed the creation in 2008 of the online journal, *Mutatis Mutandis*,¹ an important step towards the institutionalization of the discipline in the region. This journal has been gaining recognition among the community of established and young researchers with regard to translation at home and abroad. One of the key features of the multilingual journal is a special section dedicated to the translation of Translation Studies articles and books. In fact, the translation into Spanish of key theoretical texts about translation has been fundamental to developing Translation Studies discourse in the region; discourse, here, is to be understood as knowledge.

The terminology project, led by Maria Cecilia Plested, has successfully organized training seminars and events and has collaborated with INFOTERM experts and Colombian academic libraries on ISO projects.

Lastly, in the northern tip of the region, Mexico has been another active centre of intense research in Translation Studies. Higher education institutions like El Colegio de Mexico as well as the Direction of Literature and the Center for Foreign-Language Learning of the Universidad Autónoma de Mexico have been fertile ground for the study of translation. For more than twenty-five years, literary translators in Latin America have been gathering yearly for the

Encuentro internacional de traductores literarios [International Meeting of Literary Translators]. This annual gathering has also provided a platform for shared knowledge about translation. As in the case of Martha Pulido in Colombia and Gertrudis Payás in Chile, efforts to ground Translation Studies in Mexico were undertaken, among others, by Danielle Zaslavsky, a teacher and researcher at El Colegio de México, who later collaborated with Patricia Willson and Nayelli Castro. The research of Zaslavsky, who has close ties to the *Encuentro Internacional de traductores literarios* and to the international Translation Studies community as a researcher as well as a very active translator, is characterized by the creation of links between Translation Studies and discourse analysis. She has conducted research on the translation of *Zapatista* discourse (2006) and, in 2013, published the result of a study on the role of legal interpreters and translators in the case of Ernestina Rosario Ascencio, a 73-year-old Nahuatl victim of gang rape. These two publications by Zaslavsky show that although subjects related to literary translation still dominate the landscape of Translation Studies in the region, the Cultural Turn in Translation Studies has been prominent in translation practice in Hispanic America. Two of the most recent collective works on Translation Studies in Latin America corroborate this trend. The first is *Traducciones y traductores en la historia cultural de America Latina* [Translations and Translators in the Cultural History of Latin America] (2011) edited by Andrea Pagni, Gertrudis Payás and Patricia Willson. Four of the book's nine chapters deal only marginally with literary subjects. The second work is *Traducción, identidad y nacionalismo en Latinoamérica* [Translation, Identity, and Nationalism in Latin America] (2013), edited by Nayelli Castro Ramírez, an active member of RELAETI, who has done extensive research work on the translation of philosophical texts in the Mexican context. Literary topics do not figure in any of the book's nine chapters. These last two books were published in Mexico. Gertrudis Payás, while working, earlier, in Mexico, also published two papers on Berman's approach: "Ética para traductores" (1996) and "Posada para forasteros" (1997).

Certainly, there are many other projects worth mentioning: research, for example, carried out by María Constanza Guzmán on translated Latin American literature (2013a, 2013b); on Gregory Rabassa (2010), the translator; and her own research into the role cultural journals have played in the history of translation in Latin America (forthcoming). Lourdes Arencibia (2000) has been a very active and prolific researcher working on translation history in Cuba. Her work on José Martí as a translator is of special interest. The same could be said of Lydia Fossa's (2006) contributions to a better understanding of lexicographical issues in colonial times and translation practices in Perú; in her book *Problemáticas narrativas. Los Inkas bajo la pluma española*.

Though mentioned in closing, other researchers from outside Hispanic America – aside from Andrea Pagni and Georges Bastin, mentioned earlier – have contributed, in no small measure, to the region's heritage. Sergio Waisman (2005), Roberto Valdeón (2014), Iciár Alonso Araguás and Jesús Jalón (2002) and Julio César Santoyo (1987) are worthy of mention.

Conclusion

Hispanic America, from its unique position, has made unquestionable contributions to Translation Studies. Beginning with the conquest, the work of interpreters and translators is evidenced in the chronicles and religious texts translated from and into indigenous languages. During the colonial period, numerous foreign documents – mainly political, ideological, and philosophical – enriched the transition, steering it towards a genuine Hispanic American identity that culminated in the creation of new, independent nations. Reflections on how to translate and essays on theoretical thoughts followed, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The

twentieth century saw prominent literary figures developing a genuinely theoretical approach to translation.

Cultural hybridity, appropriation, resistance, irreverence and similar concepts have been widely discussed in books and papers dealing with translation, in recent years. Much like prominent intellectuals and certain statesmen of the nineteenth century, today's translation scholars continue to view translation as a creative operation that is neither ancillary nor servile, but active in promoting appropriation in order to foster cultural heterogeneity.

While translation training and research are yet to come of age in some countries, in others, translation is being taught at the highest educational levels and there has been a prolific outturn of translation research. Hispanic American scholars, dispersed the world over, have successfully established a regional network dedicated exclusively to translation and interpretation studies (RELAETI). Their common motivation is the desire to bring to light the translation history of their respective countries, to become more intimately knowledgeable about the numerous translations and translators that spanned half a millennium, and to open up new fields of inquiry. Together with scholars within and outside of the regional network and with new knowledge at their disposal, they are set on developing a credible approach to Translation Studies, an approach whose firm foundations have already been laid by a very rich, yet not fully apprehended, translation heritage.

Note

- 1 Mutatis Mutandi. Revista latinoamericana de traducción. Grupo de investigación en traductología, Universidad de Antioquia, Medellín, Colombia. <http://aprendeonline.udea.edu.co/revistas/index.php/mutatismutandis/index>

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