

THE DEMOCRATIZATION OF TRANSLATION STUDIES

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ABSTRACT: Translation studies scholars have traditionally studied texts that are called translations in the receiving cultures. And scholars in that field have traditionally been nearly perfectly bi-lingual and bi-cultural, literary and/or linguistic scholars of the highest order. "Accuracy" of the translation remains the dominant critical criterion. But in the age of mass media, blogs, online journals, reader reviews, and fan fiction, accuracy in translation is not always the most important factor. Instead, social and political insight moves to the forefront. New forms of translated "texts" are circulating, sometimes called versions, adaptations, and rewritings, are often only tangentially related to the "original." Many of the rewriters and reviewers today have limited language skills and base their "translations" on previous versions. This talk discusses the "politics" of such a movement, looking first at rewritings, adaptations, and sequels, often in film, theater and music, but also in history, politics, and philosophy; and second at post-translation repercussions, how translations can introduce new ideas and forms, thereby effecting social change. While some scholars are skeptical of including such a wide range of texts in the corpora, I suggest that this democratization of the field helps to move it from the halls of academia and into that lively social arena where social and political change is possible.

BIONOTE: Edwin Gentzler is an Emeritus Professor of Comparative Literature and served for many years as Director of the Translation Center at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. He is the author of *Translation and Rewriting in the Age of Post-Translation Studies* (Routledge, 2017), *Translation and Identity in the Americas* (Routledge, 2008), and *Contemporary Translation Theories* (Routledge, 1993), reissued in several revised editions and translated into Italian, Portuguese, Bulgarian, Arabic, Persian, Chinese, and Greek. He is the co-editor (with Maria Tymoczko) of *Translation and Power* (University of Massachusetts Press, 2002). He served on the executive committee for the Nida Institute and was one of the co-founders and board member of ATISA (American Translation and Interpreting Studies Association). He was co-editor (with Susan Bassnett) of the Topics in Translation Series for Multilingual Matters, editing over twenty volumes.



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