

Translating Neo-Latin Texts for Contemporary Audiences: Some Methodological Reflections

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In 2012 Jeanine De Landtsheer very deservedly received the Homer Prize of the Dutch Classical Association (Nederlands Klassiek Verbond) for her ‘crystal clear’, ‘astonishing and engaging’ Dutch translation of a selection of Erasmus’s *Adagia*, based on robust philological research.¹ Any student of Neo-Latin texts will at some point in their research need to address questions of translation, but it is rare that a modern translation of a Neo-Latin text receives such critical acclaim. The interaction between Neo-Latin and the vernacular has been a focus of attention almost as soon as the notion of our discipline emerged, if not long before.² The study of this bilingualism – and in most cases, multi- or plurilingualism, potentially involving also other Ancient languages such as Greek, Hebrew or Syriac – has given rise to a plethora of scholarly investigations.³ Some

¹ J. Bloemendal, review of “Desiderius Erasmus, *Verzamelde Werken*, vol. 5: *Spreekwoorden: Adagia*, tr. J. De Landtsheer (Amsterdam, 2011)”, *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandse Taal- en Letterkunde* 128 (2012), <https://www.tntl.nl/boekbeoordelingen/?p=301>; H.-J. van Dam, “Een rijk leven tussen de boeken: Jeanine De Landtsheer, 1954-2021”, <https://www.tijdschrift-filter.nl/webfilter/vrijdag-vertaaldag/2021/week-5-harm-jan-van-dam>.

² E.g., H. de Vocht (ed.), *The Earliest English Translation of Erasmus’ ‘Colloquia’ 1536-1566: Two Dialogues, A Mery Dialogue. Ye Pylgremage of Pure Deuotyon, Diuersoria* (Leuven – Oxford, 1928). L. Forster’s *The Poet’s Tongues: Multilingualism in Literature: The de Carle Lectures at the University of Otago 1968* ([London, UK – New York – Sydney – Dunedin], 1970) is considered a pioneering study of multilingualism from the Middle Ages to the twentieth century: of interest here are Chapters Two (‘Middle Ages and Renaissance’) and Three (‘Renaissance and Baroque’). See also C. Dionisotti, *Gli umanisti e il volgare fra Quattro e Cinquecento* (Firenze, 1968) and I.D. McFarlane, “Poesie néo-latine et poésie de langue vulgaire à l’époque de la Pléiade”, in J. IJsewijn, E. Kessler (ed.), *Acta Conventus Neo-Latini Lovaniensis. Proceedings of the First International Congress of Neo-Latin Studies, Louvain 23–28 August 1971* (München – Leuven, 1973), 389-404.

³ See, among many others, G. Castor, T. Cave (ed.), *Neo-Latin and the Vernacular in Early Modern France* (Oxford, 1984); A. Moss, “Being in Two Minds: The Bilingual Factor in Renaissance Writing”, in R. Schnur, A. Moss, Ph. Dust et al. (ed.), *Acta Conventus Neo-Latini Hafniensis. Proceedings of the Eighth International Congress of Neo-Latin Studies, Copenhagen 12 August to 17 August 1991* (Binghamton, NY, 1994), 61-74;

have concentrated on this interplay between Latin and other languages within a single work, within a particular author's *œuvre* (such as Petrarch, Joachim Du Bellay, or Milton) or among a coterie of writers.⁴ Others have immersed themselves in the rich and varied vein of historical translations from and into Neo-Latin,⁵ in the study of Latin language

M. Deramaix, G. Vagenheim (ed.), *L'Italie et la France dans l'Europe latine du XIV^e au XVII^e siècle: Influence, émulation, traduction* (Rouen, 2006); N. Thurn, *Neulatein und Volkssprachen. Beispiele für die Rezeption neusprachlicher Literatur durch die lateinische Dichtung Europas im 15.-16. Jahrhundert* (München, 2012); J. Bloemendal (ed.), *Bilingual Europe: Latin and Vernacular Cultures – Examples of Bilingualism and Multilingualism c. 1300-1800* (Leiden, 2015); T. Deneire (ed.), *Dynamics of Neo-Latin and the Vernacular. Language and Poetics, Translation and Transfer* (Leiden, 2018); V. Sanzotta (ed.), *Una lingua morta per letterature vive: il dibattito sul latino come lingua letteraria in età moderna e contemporanea. Atti del convegno internazionale, Roma, 10-12 dicembre 2015* (Leuven, 2019); A. Winkler, F. Schaffnerath (ed.), *Neo-Latin and the Vernaculars: Bilingual Interactions in the Early Modern Period* (Leiden, 2019).

⁴ E.g., E. Haan, *Both English and Latin: Bilingualism and Biculturalism in Milton's Neo-Latin Writings* (Philadelphia, PA, 2012); Ph. Ford, *The Judgment of Palaemon: the Contest between Neo-Latin and Vernacular Poetry in Renaissance France* (Leiden, 2013).

⁵ For a general introduction, see B. Hosington, "Translation and Neo-Latin" and "Women in Renaissance England and Neo-Latin Translation", in Ph. Ford, J. Bloemendal, C. Fantazzi (ed.), *Brill's Encyclopaedia of the Neo-Latin World Online* (first published Leiden, 2014) [henceforth *BENLWO*]. Examples of studies include: M.M. Fernández Sánchez, J.A. Sabio Pinilla, "El Humanismo renacentista y la traducción en Portugal en los siglos XVI y XVII", in M.D. Valencia, J.A. Sabio Pinilla (ed.), *Seis estudios sobre la traducción en los siglos XVI y XVII: España, Francia, Italia, Portugal* (Granada, 2003), 205-242; A. Taylor (ed.), *Neo-Latin and Translation in the Renaissance* = special issue of *Canadian Review of Comparative Literature* 41.4 (2014); D. Lines, "When Is a Translation Not a Translation? Girolamo Manfredi's *De homine* (1474)", in D.A. Lines, A.L. Puliafito (ed.), *'In Other Words': Translating Philosophy in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries* = special issue of *Rivista di storia della filosofia* 74.2 (2019), 287-307; and further studies quoted below.

On translations into Latin, see *inter alios* W.L. Grant, "European Vernacular Works in Latin Translation", *Studies in the Renaissance* 1 (1954), 120-156; Id., "Neo-Latin Verse-Translations of the Bible", *The Harvard Theological Review* 52.3 (1959), 205-211; D. Briesemeister, "Französische Literatur in neulateinischen Übersetzungen", in R.J. Schoeck (ed.), *Acta Conventus Neo-Latini Bononiensis: Proceedings of the Fourth International Congress of Neo-Latin Studies: Bologna, 26 August to 1 September 1979* (Binghamton, NY, 1985), 205-215; Id., "Portugiesisches Schrifttum in lateinischer Übersetzung", *Lusorama* 63-64 (2005), 6-24; Id., "Traducciones neolatinas de obras en lengua española", *Studi ispanici* 35 (2010), 11-44; P. Botley, *Latin Translation in the Renaissance: The Theory and Practice of Leonardo Bruni, Giannozzo Manetti and Desiderius Erasmus* (Cambridge, UK - New York, 2004); P. Burke, "Translations into Latin in Early Modern Europe", in P. Burke, R.P.-c. Hsia (ed.), *Cultural Translation in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, 2007), 65-80; M. Cortesi (ed.), *Tradurre dal greco in età umanistica: metodi e strumenti atti del seminario di studio Firenze, Certosa del Galluzzo, 9 settembre 2005* (Firenze, 2007); R.F. Gleij, "(Neo-)Latin as a Meta-Language", *Humanistica Lovaniensia* 63 (2014), 3-25; M. Furno (ed.), *Traductions vers le latin au XVI^e siècle* = special issue of *Asterion* [online journal] 6 (2017), DOI: 10.4000/asterion.2877; F. Fery-Hue, F. Zinelli (ed.),

acquisition,⁶ in the role of the printing press in the production of early modern translations,⁷ or indeed in the status of Latin itself in a post-Medieval, ‘vernacular world’,⁸ including the enduring appeal of Latin as a scientific idiom,⁹ and the interchange between Latin and the vernacular in the history of ideas.¹⁰ Very recently, we have seen a surge of interest in the relation between Neo-Latin and New Ancient Greek.¹¹

Habiller en latin: la traduction de vernaculaire en latin entre Moyen Âge et Renaissance (Paris, 2018). Recent case studies include N. Jovanović, “Two Gentlemen-Translators from Nineteenth-Century Dubrovnik”, in C. Bertiau, D. Sacré (ed.), *Le latin et la littérature néo-latine au XIX^e siècle. Pratiques et représentations* (Turnhout, 2020), 135-157; G. Comiati, “Translating Petrarch’s Vernacular Poems in Latin in Early-Modern Italy”, in B. Hintzen (ed.), *‘Gelehrte Liebesnöte’ – Lateinischer Petrarkismus der Frühen Neuzeit* (Berlin – Boston, MA, 2022), 215-238.

From c. 1990 to its suspension in 2017, the “Instrumentum bibliographicum” in *Humanistica Lovaniensia* regularly featured a category of *Interpretatoria*, where further references can be found.

⁶ E.g., P. Grendler, “The Teaching of Latin in Sixteenth-Century Venetian Schools”, in Schoeck (ed.) 1985 (as in n. 5), 258-276; B. Colombat, “Les XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles français face à la pédagogie du latin”, *Vita Latina* 126 (1992), 30-43; S. Mercuri, “A scuola di latino nel Quattrocento: l’esercizio del *componere epistolas*: tre esempi inediti”, *Interpres. Rivista di Studi Quattrocenteschi* 26 (2007), 245-263; B. Charlet-Mesdjian, J.-L. Charlet, “Une méthode *Assimil* pour apprendre le latin à l’époque humaniste: les *Colloquia* dérivés du *Vocabulare* de Noël de Berlaimont”, *Rursus* [online journal] 6 (2011), DOI: 10.4000/rursus.495; I. Taida, “The Earliest History of European Language Education in Japan: Focusing on Latin Education by Jesuit Missionaries”, *Classical Receptions Journal* 9.4 (2017), 566-586.

⁷ E.g. M. Cortesi, S. Fiaschi (ed.), *Repertorio delle traduzioni umanistiche a stampa: secoli XV-XVI*, 2 vol. (Firenze, 2008) (a reference work); B. Hosington (ed.), *Translation and Print Culture in Early Modern Europe* = special issue of *Renaissance Studies* 29.1 (2015).

⁸ P. Burke, “*Heu Domine adsunt Turcae*: a Sketch for a Social History of Post-medieval Latin”, in P. Burke, R. Porter (ed.), *Language, Self and Society* (Cambridge, UK – Cambridge, MA, 1991), 23-50; F. Wacquet, *Le latin, ou l’empire d’un signe: XVI^e-XX^e siècle* (Paris, 1998); N. Ostler, *Ad Infinitum: A Biography of Latin and the World it Created* (London, 2007), Part IV: “Latin in a Vernacular World”. See also the two contributions by C. Bertiau and J. Spoelder on the decline of Latin in schools and university environments, and that by Š. Demo on the persistence of Latin in nineteenth-century Croatia, in Bertiau, Sacré (ed.) 2020 (as in n. 5), 11-34, 35-58, 115-132.

⁹ E.g., A. Blair, “La persistance du latin comme langue de science à la fin de la Renaissance” and I. Pantin, “Latin et langues vernaculaires dans la littérature scientifique européenne au début de l’époque moderne (1550-1635)”, in R. Chartier, P. Corsi (ed.), *Sciences et langues en Europe* (Paris, 1996), 21-42, 43-58; S. Fransen, “Latin in a Time of Change – The Choice of Language as a Signifier of New Science?”, *Isis* 108.3 (2017), 629-635.

¹⁰ E.g., C.S. Celenza, *The Lost Italian Renaissance: Humanists, Historians, and Latin’s Legacy* (Baltimore, MD, 2004); D.A. Lines, “Beyond Latin in Renaissance Philosophy: A Plea for New Critical Perspectives”, *Intellectual History Review* 25.4 (2015), 373-389.

¹¹ E.g., W. Barton, M.M. Bauer, M. Korenjak, “Humanist Greek in Austria”, in F. Pontani, S. Weise (ed.), *The Hellenizing Muse: A European Anthology of Poetry in Ancient Greek from the Renaissance to the Present* (Berlin, 2021), 684-717; W. Barton,

An aspect that has received far less critical scrutiny, however, is the translation of Neo-Latin texts into a modern vernacular idiom (that is, for today's audiences) and its attendant principles and challenges. Yet there is now a broad – but by no means universal – expectation that Neo-Latin texts will be accompanied by translations. It is true that my own first article consisted of a text edition, with a commentary and introduction, but without a translation.¹² Now, however, more than thirty years on, I would not lightly advise a student or fellow scholar to publish a Neo-Latin text edition *without* a translation, unless there is good reason to do so.¹³

Three observations prompt me to explore how translation is treated within the discipline of Neo-Latin Studies, broadly defined.¹⁴ The first is that when translations do accompany Neo-Latin texts (or are published on their own), their authors barely comment on their practices: translations, I shall argue, are still too often taken for granted.

“Greek and Latin Poetry on Sixteenth-Century Questions of Faith: Poetry from Cambridge’s Theological Faculty”, in G. Manuwald, L. Nicholas (ed.), *An Anthology of Neo-Latin in British Universities* (London, 2022), 141-159; R. Van Rooy, *New Ancient Greek in a Neo-Latin World. The Restoration of Classical Bilingualism in the Early Modern Low Countries and Beyond* (Leiden, 2023).

¹² I.A.R. De Smet, “Amatus Fornacius, *Amator ineptus* (Palladii, 1633): A Seventeenth-Century Satire”, *Humanistica Lovaniensia* 38 (1989), 238-306. A Dutch translation is included in the unpublished undergraduate dissertation (KU Leuven, 1987) on which this publication is based.

¹³ My views on translation evolved significantly through working on a bilingual edition of Jacques Auguste de Thou’s didactic poem on falconry: *La Fauconnerie à la Renaissance. Le Hieracosophion (1582-1584) de Jacques Auguste de Thou. Édition critique, traduction et commentaire, précédés d’une étude historique de la chasse au vol en France au XVI^e siècle* (Genève, 2013). They have continued to mature through various professional roles (committee memberships, reviewing book proposals and research projects, and directing graduate studies in modern languages), and especially through interactions with colleagues who are passionate about translation. I owe special thanks to J. De Landtsheer (much regretted), B. Hosington, M. Vanhaelen, H.-J. van Dam, O. Castro, M. Milani, and Q. Liu, and to the audiences of seminar papers I presented on this topic at the 2016 Summer School on ‘Neo-Latin Studies Today: Tools, Trends and Methodologies’ (co-organised by the IANLS, the University of Warwick’s Centre for the Study of the Renaissance and Institute for Advanced Study, and Warwick-in-Venice), the 2020 SNLS Philip Ford Annual Postgraduate Day on ‘Neo-Latin and the Vernacular’, and the 2022 SNLS Event for Early-Career Researchers on ‘Editing and Translating Neo-Latin Texts’. A 2023 Robert Lehman Visiting Professorship at I Tatti. The Harvard Center for Italian Renaissance Studies allowed me to finalize researching and writing this article.

¹⁴ I am conscious that not everyone who works with Neo-Latin texts describes themselves as a ‘Neo-Latinist’ in disciplinary terms – far from it. I shall use ‘Neo-Latinist’ and ‘Neo-Latin Studies’ inclusively and only specify neighbouring or intersecting fields where relevant.

Secondly, insights from the field of Translation Studies (Fr. *traductologie*, It. *traduttologia*, *scienza della traduzione*, Sp. *traductología*, Germ. *Translatologie*, *Translationswissenschaft*) open new avenues for the study of Neo-Latin texts and their vernacular translations (or vice versa) from the fourteenth century to the present.¹⁵ There is still scope, for example, for scholars working on various aspects of pre-modern multilingualism to contribute to a fuller grasp of the historical development of Western translation and translation theories.¹⁶ Translation Studies, however, has also stimulated a growing consciousness within academia of the effects and opportunities of translation-as-practice and translation-as-research; the two (as we shall see) are not mutually exclusive. This transpires in Classical Reception Studies, a field that has many commonalities

¹⁵ E.g. J. Luque Morenos, “Traducir los versos latinos”, in M. Aldama Roy, M.F. del Barrio Vega, A. Espigares Pinilla (ed.), *Noua et uetera. Nuevos horizontes de la Filología Latina*, 2 vol. (Madrid, 2002), I, 55-93; B.M. Hosington, “‘If the Past is a Foreign Country’: Neo-Latin Histories, their Paratexts, and English Cultural Translation”, in Taylor (ed.) 2014 (as in n. 5), 432-455; T. Deneire, “Conclusion: Methodology in Early Modern Multilingualism”, in Deneire (ed.) 2018 (as in n. 3), 302-314, at 306-307; A. den Haan, B. Hosington, M. Pade, A. Wegener (ed.), *Issues in Translation: Then and Now: Renaissance Theories and Translation Studies Today* = special issue of *Renaissanceforum* [online journal] 14 (2018), www.renaissanceforum.dk. For an example relating to modern Latin translations, C.F. Miller, “‘Maxima Debetur Puerio Reverentia’: The Histories and Metamorphoses of Latin Translation in Children’s Literature”, in A. Kérchy, B. Sundmark (ed.), *Translating and Transmediating Children’s Literature. Critical Approaches to Children’s Literature* (Cham, 2020), 303-317.

¹⁶ For early studies of Renaissance and Early Modern concepts of translation, see G.P. Norton, *The Ideology and Language of Translation in Renaissance France and their Humanist Antecedents* (Genève, 1984) and G. Folena, *Volgarizzare e tradurre* (Torino, 1991). In her seminal textbook *Translation Studies*, 4th ed. (London, UK – New York, 2014), first published in 1980, S. Bassnett’s chapter on the “History of Translation Theory”, at 50-87 considers ‘the Romans’, ‘Bible translation’, ‘Education and the Vernacular’, ‘the Renaissance’ etc. up to the ‘Coming of Age of Translation Studies’. D. Robinson’s anthology, *Western Translation Theory from Herodotus to Nietzsche*, 2nd ed. (London, 2002), includes excerpts from Coluccio Salutati, Duarte (Edward, King of Portugal), Luther, Erasmus, Thomas More, Queen Elizabeth I, Abraham Cowley among others, although discussion is necessarily brief. In 2019, M. Pade nevertheless noted that ‘surprisingly, humanist translation is largely ignored by modern translation studies’ (“Neo-Latin and Vernacular Translation Theory in the 15th and 16th Centuries: The ‘Tasks of the Translator’ according to Leonardo Bruni and Étienne Dolet”, in Winkler, Schaffnerath [ed.] 2019 [as in n. 3], 96-112 [at 97]). Of interest is also M.-A. Belle, B.M. Hosington, “‘Delivered at Second Hand’? Mediated Translations in Early Modern Britain” = special section, *Forum for Modern Language Studies* 58.4 (2022). Note also the following projects: the *Renaissance Cultural Crossroads Catalogue* (<https://www.dhi.ac.uk/rcc/>) (2007-2010); ‘Tradurre nell’Europa del Rinascimento’ (<http://www.renaissancetranslation.eu>) (2015-); and ‘Writing Bilingually, 1465-1700: Self-Translated Books in Italy and France’, led by Dr S. Miglietti, in progress at the Warburg Institute, London (2023-2026).

with Neo-Latin Studies: if the study of historic translations of ancient authors has long been a distinct line of investigation (witness the seminal *Catalogus Translationum et Commentariorum*), we observe that here too scholars increasingly reflect on their own engagement with Classical texts through translation.¹⁷ Specialists in Medieval Studies are likewise assessing how the critical landscape has changed and what kind of new translations they require.¹⁸ Yet, our own renderings of Neo-Latin texts have by and large escaped such disciplinary reflection and conceptualisation, notwithstanding a move towards more methodological deliberation within Neo-Latin Studies in general.¹⁹ Translation Studies' engagement with the ethics of machine translation, moreover, may help Neo-Latinists prepare for the unstoppable digitization of Humanities research, which will inevitably and increasingly include the translation of Neo-Latin texts, which is now still very much a human process.

Thirdly, academics at every career stage are under intense scrutiny, finding that they need to justify (not unreasonably) their research methods and outputs. It is, however, not always evident how translation fits into

¹⁷ The idea for the *Catalogus Translationum et Commentariorum (CTC)* goes back to 1945, with the first volume appearing in 1960. See <http://catalogustranslationum.org> for an overview and links to the volumes published so far. For reflections on translation and the Classics, see P. Burian, "Translation, the Profession, and the Poets", *The American Journal of Philology* 121.2 (2000), 299-307; A.-M. Ozanam, "Traduire et retraduire les textes de l'Antiquité gréco-latine", *Traduire* [online journal] 218 (2008), DOI: 10.4000/traduire.893; A. Lianeri, V. Zajko (ed.), *Translation and the Classic: Identity as Change in the History of Culture* (Oxford, 2008), especially Part III "Contesting the Classic: The Politics of Translation Practice"; A. Lianeri, "Translation Studies", in B. Graziosi, Ph. Vasunia, G. Boys-Stones (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Hellenic Studies* (Oxford, 2009), 812-822; S. Gillespie, *English Translation and Classical Reception: Towards a New Literary History* (Chichester, UK - Malden, MA, 2011); J.-P. Martin, Cl. Nédelec (ed.), *Traduire, trahir, travestir. Études sur la réception de l'Antiquité* (Arras, 2012); J. Kitzbichler, U.C.A. Stephan (ed.), *Studien zur Praxis der Übersetzung antiker Literatur: Geschichte – Analysen – Kritik* (Berlin – München – Boston, MA, 2016); R. Tadeu Gonçalves, G. Gontijo Flores, "Translation as Classical Reception: "Transcreative" Rhythmic Translations in Brazil", in M. De Pourcq, N. De Haan, D. Rijser (ed.), *Framing Classical Reception Studies* (Leiden, 2020), 227-244. Note also the conference on *Traduire-Réécrire les classiques grecs et latins au XXI^e s.* to be held at the Université Sorbonne-Nouvelle, Paris (19-20 October 2023).

¹⁸ M. G. Cammarota, "Translating Medieval Texts: Common Issues and Specific Challenges", in Ead. (ed.), *Tradurre: un viaggio nel tempo* (Venezia, 2018), 37-54.

¹⁹ T. Van Hal, "Towards Meta-Neo-Latin Studies? Impetus to Debate on the Field of Neo-Latin Studies and its Methodology", *Humanistica Lovaniensia* 56 (2007), 349-365; H. Hofmann, "Some Considerations on the Theoretical Status of Neo-Latin Studies", *Humanistica Lovaniensia* 66 (2017), 513-526. See also C. Kallendorf, "Review Essay: Recent Trends in Neo-Latin Studies", *Renaissance Quarterly* 69 (2016), 617-629, especially 620-622 (at 620): 'practitioners of Neo-Latin studies have begun thinking more reflectively about methodology'.

institutional, disciplinary, or national evaluation criteria for research rankings or for promotion and tenure. This is even more curious given the growing pressures, if not contractual expectations already, that academics share their research with non-academic audiences through public engagement and/or prove the impact of their scholarly activity on today's society: surely translation can play a role in this too.²⁰

It seems timely, therefore, to retrace the ways in which attitudes towards translation have changed since the emergence of Neo-Latin Studies as a discipline, to take stock of any existing guidelines on translating Neo-Latin, and to consider the way forward at an international level, without quelling the different schools of thought that are represented in the field.

1. To Translate or Not to Translate: Shifting Attitudes within the Discipline

Methodological considerations about the translation of Neo-Latin texts, insofar as we have them, are often caught up in discussions of editorial principles and textual criticism: comments centre in the first place on whether or not a translation should be provided. The answer to that question depends on diverging opinions on what working with Neo-Latin sources entails and whether one takes a specialist approach that is focussed on the source language or a more inclusive stance. The issue has also been debated in the margins of some key publications of Neo-Latin texts and their translations. It is telling that when in 1968 editors at the University of Toronto Press conceived the idea of commissioning English translations of, first, the correspondence, and eventually, the entire *Collected Works* of Erasmus (*CWE*) 'for those unskilled in Latin and unfamiliar with the Classical disciplines', the Yale church historian Roland Bainton (1894-1984) purportedly declined to cooperate: 'Let them learn Latin', Bainton is said to have grumbled.²¹

²⁰ E.g., in Italy, the *Certamen Philelfianum*, instigated by S. Fiaschi (University of Macerata) and her colleagues in 2016, raises awareness of humanist Latin in secondary schools: pupils are invited to translate an extract in Latin prose taken from authors working in Italy or Europe in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries (<http://philelfiana.unimc.it/certamen-philelfianum>). Other examples of public engagement and impact activities (also called the universities' 'third mission') might include working with the media, museums, libraries and charities, or influencing public policies.

²¹ M. Crane, "Forty Years of the Collected Works of Erasmus", *Renaissance and Reformation* 37.4 (2014), 71-79, at 71, 74; J.M. Estes, "The Englishing of Erasmus: The Genesis and Progress of the Correspondence Volumes of the Collected Works of

In his 1977 *Companion to Neo-Latin Studies*, published less than a decade after the launch of *CWE*, Jozef IJsewijn briefly discussed translation in Chapter IV, on ‘Text and Editions’. Whilst IJsewijn noted that ‘the need for translations is being felt more and more even in the scholarly world’, he also saw in the rising publication of translations ‘a complete reversal of history, for until the eighteenth century it was common to translate vernacular works into Latin to ensure a wider international circulation.’²² IJsewijn, however, formulated two *caveats*: first, that ‘a translation can never be a basis for scholarly research’, and, second, that ‘translations should be consulted with the utmost circumspection’, because of the ‘unbelievably high’ number of inaccuracies and errors in translations of Neo-Latin texts.²³ If the pioneer of Neo-Latin Studies was a man of principles and an exacting critic, he did have an eye to neighbouring fields. So, in Chapter VIII, on ‘Scholarly and scientific works in Neo-Latin’, he stated that ‘Neo-Latin scholars can and should contribute to the study of the history of modern scholarship and sciences by making not only reliable text editions, but *also by translations* and such linguistic aids as a Neo-Latin lexicon of scientific terms’ [my italics].²⁴

A similar outlook transpires from Alessandro Perosa and John Sparrow’s *Renaissance Latin Verse. An Anthology* of 1979, which limited itself to short biographical accounts for each author and explanatory notes.²⁵ In a separate paper, Sparrow explained that the lack of translations was a deliberate choice, driven by considerations of text volume and a select, Latinate target audience:

Had it been necessary to include a translation in order to get the Anthology published, we would no doubt have yielded to necessity; but we would not include a ‘crib’ simply for the sake of procuring additional readers who depend on it for their appreciation of the text [...].²⁶

Erasmus”, in L. Deitz, T. Kirchner, J. Reid (ed.), *Neo-Latin and the Humanities: Essays in Honour of Charles E. Fantazzi* (Toronto, 2014), 143-156, at 145.

²² J. IJsewijn, *Companion to Neo-Latin Studies* (Amsterdam – New York – Oxford, 1977), 228.

²³ IJsewijn 1977 (as in n. 22), 228-229.

²⁴ IJsewijn 1977 (as in n. 22), 302.

²⁵ A. Perosa, J. Sparrow (ed.), *Renaissance Latin Verse: An Anthology* (London UK, Chapel Hill, NC, 1979).

²⁶ J. Sparrow, “An Anthology of Renaissance Latin verse: Problems Confronting the Editor and Compiler”, in R.R. Bolgar (ed.), *Classical Influences on European Culture, A.D. 1500-1700: Proceedings of an International Conference Held at King’s College, Cambridge April 1974* (Cambridge, UK – New York, 1976), 57-64, at 59-60.

For some, however, an uncompromising emphasis on the primary text could only lead to ivory-tower research. So, when Georges Soubeille reflected on his experience of editing the poetry of Salmon Macrin at the 1976 Neo-Latin congress at Tours, he felt the provision of a translation needed no argument: everything depends on the audience one wants to reach. Dismissive of those who saw no scholarly value in translations, Soubeille favoured an outward-facing approach:

Quel public veut-on toucher, là est la question; si l'on ne vise que la maigre cohorte des spécialistes qu'intéresse le seul texte original et qui jugent toute traduction dépourvue de valeur scientifique, alors il est inutile de traduire le texte latin, il suffit de l'envelopper dans l'énorme cocon constitué par l'introduction, les notes, les divers appendices, et finalement le texte n'est plus que le prétexte à commentaire et à dissertation érudite, la critique prend le pas sur l'auteur. Mais si l'on veut que le texte original garde sa véritable importance et même s'épanouisse, si l'on veut le rendre accessible à un plus large public d'étudiants, d'historiens, de seiziémistes, de gens cultivés curieux, il faut le traduire [...].²⁷

A significant wave of debate occurred between the early 1990s and early 2000s, as scholars grappled to reconcile the primordial status of the source text with the ever-growing demand for translations. So, in 1992, Lothar Mundt stated in his 'Empfehlungen zur Edition neulateinischer Texte' that 'as a matter of principle, no Neo-Latin text should be published today without the addition of a translation.'²⁸ In his 1996 paper on 'Editing Neo-Latin Texts', on the other hand, Erasmus-specialist Edwin Rabbie reasserted the ancillary and very flawed nature of translations:

[...] the translation [of the Latin text] may at the very most serve to compare – as a check – the translator's interpretation. Apart from this, practical experience shows that the first translation of a Neo-Latin text will always contain mistakes, perhaps of an innocent character, but in some cases serious ones. Furthermore, a translator is obliged to make choices, even in those cases in which no choice can be made. Finally, the reading and interpretation of (Neo-)Latin texts is too serious a business to make ourselves dependent on the skills and opinions of a translator, however good and conscientious he may be.²⁹

²⁷ G. Soubeille, "Réflexions à partir d'une édition critique", in J.-Cl. Margolin (ed.), *Acta Conventus Neo-Latini Turonensis. Université François-Rabelais, 6-10 septembre 1976*, 2 vol. (Paris, 1980), I, 71-75, at 73.

²⁸ L. Mundt, "Empfehlungen zur Edition neulateinischer Texte", in L. Mundt, H.-G. Roloff, U. Seelbach (ed.), *Probleme der Edition von Texten der Frühen Neuzeit* (Tübingen, 1992), 186-192 (with "Diskussionsprotokoll" by U. Seelbach, at 189).

²⁹ E. Rabbie, "Editing Neo-Latin Texts", *Editio* 10 (1996), 25-48, at 26-27.

Rabbie therefore did not see a published translation as vital, even if one was expected. However, he also recommended every editor make one for their personal use: 'Often this is the only way in which textual errors will emerge, which would otherwise remain unnoticed.'³⁰

Two years later, IJsewijn and Dirk Sacré's revised edition of the *Companion to Neo-Latin Studies* (1990-1998) included an expanded, two-and-a-half-page section on 'Translations from Latin'. Acknowledging the role of translations for the broader dissemination of Neo-Latin literature, the authors cited important translation initiatives, such as the *CWE* and the bilingual edition of selected writings of Vives, to which IJsewijn had lent his expertise.³¹ Nevertheless, they reiterated the two scientific precepts of the 1977 edition: 'Research must always begin from a close scrutiny of the original text' and 'Translations should always be consulted with the utmost circumspection.'³² IJsewijn and Sacré further condemned 'the growing practice of adding a photostatic reprint to a translation'.³³ Incidentally, they did not mention an alternative arrangement, of which Mundt listed the pros and cons, *viz.* of combining a text edition with an historical translation.³⁴ The issues are analogous, however, insofar as the reuse of existing material in either the source or target language essentially saves time and effort but risks perpetuating imprecisions. Such combinations must in effect have a very persuasive rationale if they are to be considered a worthwhile contribution to research: historic translations are increasingly available on the internet, while very significant renderings are (I believe) more usefully published in annotated, critical

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 26n.

³¹ J. IJsewijn, D. Sacré, *Companion to Neo-Latin Studies*, 2nd entirely rewritten ed., 2 vol. (Leuven, 1990-1998), II, 499-501, at 501; *Desiderius Erasmus. The Collected Works of Erasmus. Volume 29: Literary and Educational Writings* 7, ed. E. Fantham, E. Rummel, with the assistance of J. IJsewijn (Toronto – Buffalo, NY, – London, 1989); C. Mattheeussen et al. (ed.), *Selected Works of J. L. Vives*, vol. 5: *Early writings* 2, ed., tr., comm. J. IJsewijn, A. Fritsen, C. Fantazzi (Leiden, 1991) (the translation is mostly due to A. Fritsen).

³² IJsewijn, Sacré 1990-1998 (as in n. 31), II, 500.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ Mundt 1992 (as in n. 28), 190. Examples include I.D. McFarlane's anthology *Renaissance Latin Poetry* (Manchester, 1980), which features sixteenth- to eighteenth-century translations. Note also M. Riley and D. Pritchard Huber's 2004 edition of John Barclay's novel *Argenis*, which was translated into no less than thirteen vernacular languages, including manuscript translations in Icelandic and Modern Greek. Riley and Huber, rather than translating Barclay anew, reproduced the 1625 English translation by Kingesmill Long [USTC 3012283], modernizing the spelling as well as grammar, using 'you' instead of 'thou' and 'thee' and eliminating archaic verb endings in '-eth' and '-est'.

editions of their own, that pay due attention to their mediating role in the reception of the source text.³⁵

In 2000, in his retrospective on twenty-five years of Neo-Latin Studies, Philip Ford broke a lance for bilingual editions to ensure the future of the field, mitigating deep-rooted concerns over defects: ‘If translations are occasionally inaccurate, this will no doubt be pointed out in reviews, and should not be seen to invalidate the entire project.’³⁶ But translations were still not valorised *per se*. When Jean-Louis Charlet and Luc Deitz shared their views on editing Neo-Latin texts at the 2003 Neo-Latin congress at Bonn, Charlet set out a tiered typology of editions, in which the provision of a translation or not depends (as it already did for Soubeille) entirely on the target audience: thus, specialists need facsimiles, diplomatic or critical editions, but not – in the first instance – translations. Bilingual critical editions, with a standardized punctuation and spelling of the Latin text, serve a well-educated (to be understood as moderately Latinate) but not necessarily specialist audience, while still being useful for specialists. Standardized, bilingual editions without a critical apparatus but with relevant notes, or standalone translations furnished with an introduction and a rich set of annotations, suit a broad readership. For Charlet, translating was even in the case of standalone translations inextricably linked to the editing process, which hones a sharp awareness on the part of the translator of potential difficulties in the source text.³⁷ One might object that such a *desideratum* rarely works out in practice, especially not for extensive projects: the twelve-volume French translation of the correspondence of Erasmus, instigated by Aloïs Gerlo on the

³⁵ E.g., V.W. Beauchamp, E.H. Hageman, M. Mikesell (ed.), *The Instruction of a Christen Woman. By Juan Luis Vives. Translated by Richard Hyrde* (Urbana, IL, 2002) can be read alongside C. Fantazzi’s modern translation in the celebrated series ‘The Other Voice in Early Modern Europe’: J.L. Vives, *The Education of a Christian Woman: A Sixteenth-Century Manual*, tr. C. Fantazzi (Chicago, IL – London, 2000). Another example is J. Ledo, H. den Boer (ed.), *Moria de Erasmo Roterodamo: A Critical Edition of the Early Modern Spanish Translation of Erasmus’s Encomium Moriae* (Leiden - Boston, MA, 2014), to be supplemented with J. Ledo, “Which *Praise of Folly* Did the Spanish Censors Read?”, *Erasmus of Rotterdam Society Yearbook* 38.1 (2018), 64-108.

³⁶ Ph. Ford, “Twenty-Five Years of Neo-Latin Studies”, *Neulateinisches Jahrbuch* 2 (2000), 293-301, at 300.

³⁷ J.-L. Charlet, “L’édition des textes néo-latins: méthodes et normes éditoriales”, in R. Schnur, P. Galand-Hallyn et al. (ed.), *Acta conventus neo-Latini Bonnensis: Proceedings of the Twelfth International Congress of Neo-Latin Studies, Bonn, 3-9 August 2003* (Tempe, AZ, 2006), 231-239, at 234-235. Charlet restates his views in “L’édition des textes latins humanistes: le cas de Niccolò Perotti”, *Res Publica Litterarum* 33-34 (2010-2011), 164-175, at 170-171.

basis of P.S. Allen, H.M. Allen et H.W. Garrod's edition, is a case in point. At any rate, Charlet regarded translation as advisable in the case of literary sources, indispensable for technical texts, but unrealistic in the case of large-scale dictionaries and encyclopaedias, whose simple style make them accessible even to readers with a moderate knowledge of Latin.³⁸

Deitz, on the other hand, recognized that 'editing a text is one thing; translating a text is quite a different business.'³⁹ He nevertheless recommended, much more emphatically than Rabbie and more in line with Mundt, that translations be offered as a matter of course alongside text editions; for Deitz, facing translations were 'definitely mandatory for poetical texts and texts of a technical nature' and (in contrast to Charlet) desirable even in the case of dictionaries and encyclopaedias.⁴⁰ Deitz listed three reasons for promoting translations, the first and third of which are by now familiar: (i) diminishing competencies in Latin; (ii) the fact that Neo-Latin differs significantly from Classical Latin (e.g., because of new coinages and shifts in meaning), whilst there is no comprehensive Neo-Latin dictionary available; and (iii) the notion that translation serves as a useful aid to the editing process (as intimated by Rabbie).⁴¹

Deitz's second argument, however, about the differences of Neo-Latin with Classical Latin (as it is now taught), is one that (as we shall see) translators of Neo-Latin texts often gloss over, but that should be extrapolated further in any future discussions of our translation practices. For this is where a Neo-Latinist's specialist knowledge and skills come into their own.⁴² These include a deep understanding of Neo-Latin authors'

³⁸ Charlet 2006 (as in n. 37), 237; Id. 2010-2011 (as in n. 37), 175.

³⁹ Charlet 2006 (as in n. 37), 235; L. Deitz, "The Tools of the Trade: a Few Remarks on Editing Renaissance Latin Texts", *Humanistica Lovaniensia* 54 (2005), 345-358, at 355-356.

⁴⁰ Deitz 2005 (as in n. 39), 355n.

⁴¹ Deitz 2005 (as in n. 39), 356: 'if one starts from the not altogether unreasonable premise that Renaissance authors wrote to be understood by their readers, and that what they wrote must be somehow meaningful, then it might not be an altogether bad idea to check by means of a translation whether one's own critical edition is actually sensible and plausible.'

⁴² On the specific, yet widely varying character of Neo-Latin, see among others IJsewijn, *Sacré* 1990-1998 (as in n. 31), II, 377-433 ("Language, Style, Prosody and Metrics"); H. Helander et al., "Neo-Latin Studies: Significance and Prospects", *Symbolae Osloenses* 76:1 (2001), 5-102, at 27-42: "The Latin Language of the Period under Investigation"; S. Rizzo, *Ricerche sul latino umanistico* (Roma, 2002); M. Pade, "From Mediaeval Latin to Neo-Latin", J. Ramminger, "Neo-Latin: Character and Development", and T.O. Tunberg, "Neo-Latin Prose Style (from Petrarch to c. 1650)", in *BENLWO* (as in n. 5); K. Sidwell, "Classical Latin – Medieval Latin – Neo-Latin", in S. Knight, S. Tilg (ed.),

much wider concept of Latinity in terms of vocabulary, morphology, and syntax (something which surprises many Classically trained scholars when they first turn to Neo-Latin) and the ability not just to recognise and locate Classical borrowings but also references to, for instance, the Bible and early Christian authors, scholasticism, and other Neo-Latin texts.⁴³ Allusions to vernacular intertexts or contemporary *realia* (persons, places, objects, events and customs), which Neo-Latin source texts often discuss under uncanny Latin guises, may be especially hard to identify.⁴⁴ In the case of legal, theological, philosophical, musical, medical, mathematical texts and so on, a thorough subject-specific knowledge will be needed too. The requisite skills for a reliable translation, in other words, may well not lie with one person or can take years to build up.

In that same period, it is worth noting, intellectual historians too started to appraise the value of translations. At a 2004 Italian conference on editing and translating philosophical texts, for example, Guido Canziani made a case for translations of Girolamo Cardano, in the context of a large-scale editorial project of the philosopher's works, which he and Marialuisa Baldi had started in 1995. Considering financial and commercial factors as well as international developments in the field, Canziani saw Italian renderings as a way of making at least some of Cardano's works accessible to a broader readership beyond the restricted circle of

The Oxford Handbook of Neo-Latin (Oxford, 2015), 13-26. For insightful case studies, see R. Hoven, "Essai sur le vocabulaire néo-latin de Thomas More", *Moreana* 35.135 (1998), 25-53; T.O. Tunberg, "The Latinity of Erasmus and Medieval Latin: Continuities and Discontinuities", *Journal of Medieval Latin* 14 (2004), 145-168. For questions of vernacular interference (or not), see G. Tournoy, T.O. Tunberg, "On the Margins of Latinity? Neo-Latin and the Vernacular Languages", *Humanistica Lovaniensia* 45 (1996), 134-175; S. Rizzo, "Il latino degli umanisti: influssi del volgare?", in M. Berisso, M. Berté, S. Brambilla et al. (ed.), *Le filologie della letteratura italiana. Modelli, esperienze, prospettive. Atti del Convegno internazionale Roma, 28-30 novembre 2019* (Firenze, 2021), 129-151.

⁴³ Cf. W. Ludwig's remarks about the extended knowledge and interdisciplinary perspective needed for working with Neo-Latin texts in W. Ludwig, R.F. Gleis, J. Leonhardt. "Klassische und Neulateinische Philologie: Probleme und Perspektiven", *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie* 146.3-4 (2003), 395-424, at 401-406; K. Sidwell, "Editing Neo-Latin Literature", in V. Moul (ed.), *A Guide to Neo-Latin Literature* (Cambridge, 2017), 394-407, at 399-400.

⁴⁴ M. Pade, "On Neologisms in Neo-Latin" and M. Mund-Dopchie, "Latin Translations of Place Names Unknown in the Ancient World", in *BENLWO* (as in n. 5). For some concrete examples, see my discussions of de Thou's Latinity: I.A.R. De Smet, *Thuanus. The Making of Jacques-Auguste de Thou (1553-1617)* (Genève, 2006), 232-236; Ead., "'An Art Unknown to the Ancients': Falconer's Parlance in Jacques Auguste de Thou's *Hieracosophiou sive de re accipitraria libri III (1582/84-1612)*", in Deneire (ed.) 2018 (as in n. 3), 230-250.

the history of philosophy. For Canziani, as for Charlet, editing and translating remained nevertheless intricately linked: ‘tradurre e editare sono per noi gradi, modi differenti e complementari di comprendere un libro.’⁴⁵

Chris Celenza, in contrast, delivered an impassioned plea for new translations in his 2004 monograph on Latin’s legacy in the Italian Renaissance.⁴⁶ Writing from a North American perspective, Celenza observed ‘quite a bit of momentum in the international scholarly world for creating reliable critical editions of Renaissance Latin texts’, but less so for translations. According to Celenza, the decision in 1970s America to teach ancient literature in translation had been the saving grace for Classical Studies as a discipline. Likewise, he argued that, for Renaissance intellectual history to survive in the higher education system of the United States, ‘quite simply, translations are as necessary as editions of texts, perhaps even more so.’ Celenza did not dismiss editorial efforts (‘it is hard to translate without even a preliminary edition to work from’) but bilingual editions were not always fit for purpose: he thus saw an urgent need for new, affordable translations that can serve as ‘editions’, rather than the reproduction of versions whose antiquated language failed to connect with modern-day students and whose introductions were already out of date. Celenza’s point was both practical and ideological:

Of course it is best, especially when dealing with specifics, to approach any text in its original language. But is a pious fraud to suggest that this is the only way that ideas expressed in other languages can be understood, especially when there are many levels in various interpretive communities.⁴⁷

In the past two decades, ever more fluid disciplinary boundaries and the continued decline of Latin have led to a much readier acceptance of the broader readerships already envisaged by Soubeille in 1976, although any disciplinary reflections on translation have remained scarce.⁴⁸ In 2017,

⁴⁵ G. Canziani, “Tradurre Cardano”, in M. Baldi, B. Faes de Mottoni (ed.), *Edizioni e traduzioni di testi filosofici. Esperienze di lavoro e riflessioni. Atti del convegno Milano (9-10 novembre 2004)* (Milano, 2006), 137-146, at 146. See also E.I. Rambaldi, “Breve storia delle edizioni cardaniane del Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche”, *Rivista di storia della filosofia* 65.4 (2010), 745-773.

⁴⁶ Celenza 2004 (as in n. 10), 151-156 (“Appendix: The State of the Field in North-America”).

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 154.

⁴⁸ T. Deneire, “Editing Neo-Latin Texts: Editorial Principles; Spelling and Punctuation”, in *BENLWO* (as in n. 5) is descriptive and does not take a pronounced view about the provision of translations. J. Gruchała, “Problems in Editing Renaissance Texts”, in G. Urban-Godziek (ed.), *Renaissance and Humanism from the Central East-European*

Keith Sidwell called once more for full translations to accompany text editions, ‘given that one of the crucial audiences for neo-Latin editions will be scholars and students of the early modern world, and that many of these will not have had Latin as a major component of their training.’⁴⁹ In his bid to steer Neo-Latin Studies towards greater theorization, however, Heinz Hofmann unhelpfully ranked ‘collecting and archiving Neo-Latin texts, providing critical editions, and *making texts accessible through translations*, annotations, and commentaries’, under the ‘*antiquarian tasks*’ of Neo-Latin Studies, stating that these activities, as ‘essential’ and ‘fundamental’ as they are, belonged ‘the so-called *technical disciplines*’ [my italics].⁵⁰ Not only does this nomenclature devalue the specialist research and myriad micro-decisions that underpin a good translation of any sizeable Neo-Latin text. At its worst, it exacerbates the problematic status of translations under regionally varying copy-right and intellectual property regulations, especially since we translate – with scarce exceptions – historic source texts that are often considered to be in the public domain (depending on any applicable law).⁵¹

If we factor in fast-moving developments in the digital world, with its push for Open Access and Artificial Intelligence (of which machine translation is an eminent, daily manifestation), the situation can only become more intricate, more pressing. Just as digital tools have been developed to transcribe and search historic printed and handwritten texts quite successfully, it would be utterly complacent to think that complex Latin (of any period) will continue to defy machine translation, even if

Point of View: Methodological Approaches (Kraków, 2014), 187-196, notes that the Latin productions of Poland’s bilingual Renaissance culture have often been overlooked by scholars, but does not explicitly discuss translation. In the same collection, despite the volume’s subtitle, E. Buszewicz’s “From the Renaissance through to Our Times: The Reception of Neo-Latin Poetry in Polish Translation” (221-231) and E. Ranocchi’s “Some Remarks on Translation in Old Polish Literature: The Kochanowski Case” (233-244) focus almost exclusively on historic translations. Similarly, there is no real discussion of modern translations of Neo-Latin texts in M. van der Poel. (ed.), *Neo-Latin Philology: Old Tradition, New Approaches* (Leuven, 2014).

⁴⁹ Sidwell 2017 (as in n. 43), 405.

⁵⁰ Hofmann 2017 (as in n. 19), 521, 525.

⁵¹ Different jurisdictions take widely differing views of, for instance, notions of originality and/or ‘sweat of the brow’ and ‘modicum of creativity’ doctrines. These views also affect different regions’ legal attitudes towards palaeographic transcriptions and critical editions. For discussions of translations and copyright in the anglophone sphere, see S. Basalmah, “The Thorn of Translation in the Side of the Law. Toward Ethical Copyright and Translation Rights”, *The Translator* 7.2 (2001), 155-167; A. Cunningham, “Translation, Copyright & Authority”, *Pólemos* 12.2 (2018), 361-391.

specialist human oversight is still needed for training the software and for post-editing. Our best response to these universal challenges and the concomitant changes in the academic environments in which we work, is to weigh our translation needs very carefully, to set our translation practices on a sound methodological footing, and to account for them. It begs the question of why we have not done so earlier.

2. The Translator's Self-Effacement

Somewhat paradoxically, even as new translations began to proliferate, their provision was, and often continues to be, regarded as functional, their very presence as self-evident. In 1964, for example, Lucia Gualdo Rosa simply explained the translations of the poems in the *Poeti latini del Quattrocento* anthology (which she co-edited with Liliana Monti Sabia under the direction of Francesco Arnaldi) as being conform to the norms of the series in which it appeared.⁵² Gualdo Rosa only hinted, by implication, at the need for, and difficulty of, translating these humanistic poems through a general comparison with Classical texts, for which reliable editions and good translations, as well as dictionaries and a rich body of criticism were readily available.⁵³

A glance at what some other Neo-Latinists have written about their translations is illuminating. Compare the following selection of statements, which are the only and integral comments made by the editor-translator on the translation of their chosen source text or texts:

- (i) The translation, which has no literary pretensions, is intended merely to make clear what we take to be the meaning of the Latin. (1982)⁵⁴
- (ii) [...] le mie versioni poetiche potranno aumentare di per sé il patrimonio leggibile della poesia italiana. (1993)⁵⁵
- (iii) In addition I have provided on facing pages the first English translation of the poem, followed by a commentary on points of literary, historical and linguistic interest. (1996)⁵⁶

⁵² L. Gualdo Rosa, "A proposito di una antologia dei poeti latini del Quattrocento", *Latomus* 23.2 (1964), 334-344, at 337: 'Seguendo l'uso della collezione, i testi sono corredati di traduzione e di note, e preceduti da brevi introduzioni bio-bibliografiche per i singoli autori.'

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 343.

⁵⁴ Ph. Ford, W.S. Watt, *George Buchanan. Prince of Poets* (Aberdeen, 1982), 131.

⁵⁵ A. Carbonetto, *La poesia latina di Dante al Novecento* (Scandicci, 1993), "Premessa".

⁵⁶ E. Haan (ed., tr., comm.), *Phineas Fletcher. Locustae vel Pietas Iesuitica* (Leuven, 1996), lxxx.

- (iv) On a tenté de concilier dans la traduction couleur poétique et exactitude. (1998)⁵⁷
- (v) [...] I consider the translation as part of the commentary. For that reason, I have not attempted to turn Bèze's poems into English ones of my own making, but have opted for a prose rendering. I realize that there are certain benefits to a literal translation, but I have recoiled from it, because Latinized English merely repeats the alien expression of the Latin in a different guise. I have taken the liberty, therefore, to express Latin idiom with English idiom, and Latin tone with English tone, while resisting the urge to stray too far from the original. The balance, however, is delicate and difficult to maintain consistently. (2001)⁵⁸
- (vi) The translation aims to be a companion to the Latin text as well as an introduction to Eobanus's work. Accordingly I aim to stay as close to the original as English idiom permits. But whenever the ideals of faithfulness and readability clash, as they inevitably will, I resolve the conflict in favour of a more understandable, idiomatic text. Hard-to-understand allusions are translated freely, with an eye to making the intended meaning clear; unfamiliar patronymics are replaced with more familiar names. I use prose throughout, except in the prosimetric *De amantium infoelicitate*; but even there the verse is decidedly prosaic and unbound, being intended merely to suggest the interplay of prose and verse in the Latin. (2004)⁵⁹
- (vii) The translation is a literal one, its main aim, naturally, being to help the reader, but not (I hope) one that is dull or lacking in appeal. (2011)⁶⁰
- (viii) Chaque texte est suivi d'une tradition française personnelle, qui tente de réaliser le meilleur compromis possible entre la fidélité au texte et l'harmonie du résultat en français. J'ai globalement respecté l'équilibre des vers, sans me fixer un nombre de pieds précis ni introduire des rimes. (2011)⁶¹
- (ix) Die deutsche Prosaübersetzung hat hier nicht die Aufgabe, die poetische Qualität zu erhöhen, sondern den Inhalt zu verdeutlichen und dem Stil ungefähr zu entsprechen, auch wo er allzu formelhaft ist. Wo allerdings

⁵⁷ G. Soubeille (ed., tr., comm.), *Jean-Salmon Macrin. Épithalames & Odes* (Paris, 1998), 145n. The editorial principles are confined to this note. Soubeille's introduction does discuss Macrin's style and prosody in some detail (85-94: "Langue et vocabulaire", "Prosodie et métrique") and, as we have seen, the scholar expresses his views on translation elsewhere.

⁵⁸ K.M. Summers (ed., tr., comm.), *A View from the Palatine: The Iuvenilia of Théodore de Bèze* (Tempe, AZ, 2001), xv.

⁵⁹ H. Vredeveld (ed., tr., comm.), *The Poetic Works of Helius Eobanus Hessus*, vol. 1: Student Years at Erfurt, 1504-1509 (Tempe, AZ, 2004), xii.

⁶⁰ R. Green (ed., tr., comm.), *Buchanan's Poetic Paraphrase of the Psalms of David* (Genève, 2011), 10.

⁶¹ A. Smeesters, *Aux Rives de la Lumière. La Poésie de la naissance chez les auteurs néo-latins des Anciens Pays-Bas entre la fin du XV^e siècle et le milieu du XVII^e siècle* (Leuven, 2011), 46.

durch Beibehaltung bestimmter, in der Dichtung der klassischen Antike möglicher poetischer Freiheiten – z.B. der Nachstellung von “und” und der Benutzung des Plusquamperfekts statt des Präteritums – oder bei spätantikem oder mittellateinischem Gebrauch [...] der Sinn entstellt worden wäre, ist entsprechend etwas freier übersetzt worden. Offensichtliche Fehler wurden nicht durch die Übersetzung nachgeahmt. (2012)⁶²

- (x) As for the translations, contributors have sought to produce felicitous renderings into English, but ones that remain faithful to the Latin. The translations are not intended to be definitive: their primary aim is to help readers make their way through the Latin. (2020)⁶³

The well-known I Tatti series, which claims to be ‘the only series that makes available to a broad readership the major literary, historical, philosophical, and scientific works of the Italian Renaissance’, similarly declares on its dust jackets that ‘each volume provides a reliable Latin text together with an accurate, readable English translation...’ (xi). While the series is credited with having considerably expanded accessibility to, and interest in, Italian Neo-Latin texts,⁶⁴ in the individual translators’ introductions or their separate editorial notes on the text and translation, any elaboration on their practices is rare, in any case succinct, and sometimes completely absent.

Occasionally, we encounter a more extensive rationale, often from editors-translators who seek their readership outside Classics departments, who are alive to developments in Translation Studies, or where the texts throw up particular hurdles. Thus John K. Hale’s book *Milton’s Languages: The Impact of Multilingualism on Style* (1997) includes a five-page ‘Appendix’ (xii) in which Hale justifies his strategy of using a variety of existing translations of Milton’s Latin verse, including his own, in the hope of finding the most accurate rendering for each passage quoted. It also addresses both the principles and practice of translating Milton’s poetry in light of the poet’s own musings on translation and breaks a lance for verse rather than prose as the preferred style for rendering Milton’s lines.⁶⁵ Donald Cheney and Brenda Hosington, in contrast,

⁶² E. Schäfer (ed., tr.), *Conrad Celtis. Oden / Epoden / Jahrhundertlied. Libri Odarum quattuor, cum Epodo et Saeculari Carmine (1513)*, 2nd enlarged ed. (Tübingen, 2012), 11-12.

⁶³ L.R. Nicholas and W. Barton, “Introduction”, in D. Hadas, G. Manuwald, L.R. Nicholas (ed.), *An Anthology of European Neo-Latin Literature* (London, UK – New York, 2020), 1-24, at 21.

⁶⁴ E.g. Celenza 2004 (as in n. 10), 151-152; Kallendorf 2016 (as in n. 19), 625.

⁶⁵ J.K. Hale, *Milton’s Languages: The Impact of Multilingualism on Style* (Cambridge, 1997), “Appendix: Translating Milton’s Latin Poems into English”, 203-207.

explain in their edition of the collected works of Elizabeth Jane Weston (2000) (xiii) how by adding translations they wish to ‘widen [...] the scope of scholarly interest in a poet who has been unjustly neglected’. Opting ‘to give primacy to semantic accuracy, and to provide a literal rendering’, as well as to translate Westonia’s verse into prose (‘we are not poets’), the editors aimed – with a silent gesture to translation theorist Lawrence Venuti – ‘to produce a version that neither domesticates nor subordinates Weston’s compositions.’⁶⁶ Monique Mund-Dopchie and Gilbert Tournoy point in their bilingual edition of Budé’s correspondence with Vives (2015) (xiv) to the challenges of translating early modern letter exchanges, where information might be missing or unclear, and particularly to Budé’s predilection for long and ornate sentences, with learned, not to say, obscure, metaphors drawing on his detailed knowledge of Antiquity:

C’est pourquoi la traduction présentée ici s’est donné pour but de restituer les lettres de Budé dans leur vérité: les phrases longues, les particules exprimant l’enchaînement logique à l’intérieur des phrases et dans la succession de celles-ci, les réalités (*realia*) de l’antiquité auxquelles renvoient les métaphores ont été conservées, pour autant que la compréhension du contenu des lettres n’ait pas à en souffrir et que leur style très travaillé ne soit pas trahi par un excès de littéralité.⁶⁷

Where the resulting French text might appear strange to a modern reader, so the editors-translators continue, explanations are included in the commentary. The same applies for the humanists’ beloved use of quotations and allusions, to which (they claim) the translator cannot fully do justice.⁶⁸

Naturally, different texts require different approaches, and by no means do I imply that there is a correlation between the inclusion or length of any methodological or analytical comments on the translation and the actual quality of the target text. The issue is how we *think* about translation and how we *explain* our approach to our readers, beyond a mere declaration of providing a translation, even when that is in itself a pioneering contribution (example (iii)). So, when such methodological

⁶⁶ D. Cheney, B.M. Hosington, with D. Money (ed., tr., comm.), *Elizabeth Jane Weston. Collected Works* (Toronto – Buffalo, NY – London, 2000), xxv-xxvi (“On this translation”). On Venuti, see n. 70 below. Venuti’s concept of ‘domestication’, put simply, refers to the translator’s strategy of making the text conform closely to the culture of the target language. Its opposite is ‘foreignisation’.

⁶⁷ M. Mund-Dopchie, G. Tournoy (ed., tr., comm.), *La correspondance de Guillaume Budé et Juan Luis Vives* (Leuven, 2015), 16-17 (“La traduction”), at 16.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 17.

statements are present – and surprisingly often they are not –, we encounter predictable assertions of faithfulness and accuracy (examples (iv), (vi), (viii), (ix), (x), (xii), (xiii), (xiv)) with nods to readability, clarity or fluency ((vii), (ix), (xi), (xiv)) and the idiomatic quality of the target language ((v), (vi), (viii), (ix), (xiii)). Implicitly or explicitly, the translation tends to be construed as a gateway or crib to the source text ((i), (vii), (ix), (x)), calling to mind Rabbie’s tenet that ‘the main aim of the translation should be to take the reader to the original text as soon as possible.’⁶⁹ Only examples (ii), (xi) and (xiii) target a broader, non-Latinate readership. If we momentarily set aside the question of poetic source texts, only (vi), (viii) and (x) offer a glimpse of specific strategies to overcome obstacles that are due to the ‘foreign’ nature of the source text, whereas (xiv) accommodates this foreignness by pushing what is acceptable in the target language to its limits.

While external factors such as word limits or editorial intervention can affect the inclusion or length of any programmatic statements, the brevity and lack of concrete detail in many of the samples surveyed above indicate that Neo-Latinists are habitually modest and self-effacing about their translations: many seem reluctant to elaborate on their own practices or to validate the choices and effort that go into translating Neo-Latin sources.⁷⁰ We notice this even in editions, where the editor-translator takes pains to discuss the Neo-Latin author’s motivation for writing in Latin as opposed to the vernacular, the characteristics of the author’s style, and/or the merits and shortcomings of previous translations.⁷¹ To judge from their brief statements, moreover, most translators lean more towards an *ad verbum* translation than to *ad sensum* one. Whilst there is a certain

⁶⁹ Rabbie 1996 (as in n. 29), 37.

⁷⁰ Lawrence Venuti’s much-debated concept of the ‘invisible translator’ is partly helpful here, insofar as he drew attention in his 1986 article (later developed into a monograph) to the ‘low status’ and ‘minimal recognition’ of translators and their work. Venuti’s original aim, however, was to expose the complex ‘social determinations’ that shape any translation as much as it does the source text, whether the translator (or original author) is aware of them or not. Influenced among others by Barthes’s notion of ‘the death of the author’, Venuti’s approach was very much centred on the texts and a critical – though not negative – reevaluation of the translator’s intervention in the text. L. Venuti, “The Translator’s Invisibility”, *Criticism* 28.2 (1986), 179-212; Id., *The Translator’s Invisibility: A History of Translation*, first published 1995; 3rd ed. (New York, 2018).

⁷¹ E.g., C. Kallendorf (ed., tr., comm.), *Humanist Educational Treatises* (Cambridge, MA – London, UK, 2002), 311-313 (“Note on the Texts and Translations”); V. Leroux (ed., tr., comm.), *Marc-Antoine Muret. Juvenilia* (Genève, 2009), 30-31; D. Viellard (ed., tr., comm.), *Pic de la Mirandole. Les 900 conclusions*, preceded by L. Valcke, *La condamnation de Pic de la Mirandole*, bibliography and tables by N. Roudet (Paris, 2017), 79-82; and the example of Soubeille’s edition of Macrin (as in n. 57 above).

elasticity to different individuals' concepts of 'literalness', translators of Neo-Latin texts tend to propose versions that remain quite close to a 'philological translation' (a literal rendering, that serves as a foothold toward textual analysis, a 'crib' or 'trot').⁷²

This unassuming, cautious stance likely stems from the translation exercises that are widely used in Latin language teaching, whereby translating allows the tutor to check if their student has understood the vocabulary and grammar of the source text.⁷³ Stylistic considerations about the target language are very much secondary in such a setting, although internet discussions in various languages on different ways of translating an ablative absolute (for example) show that this is beginning to change. It certainly takes some experimenting, careful thought, and perhaps the encouragement of seasoned translators to break the inculcated, pedagogic mould of formulaic equivalents, of following the source text's syntax as closely as possible, and of translating every single word, down to the last particle, without permitting omissions or substitutions (e.g., a noun for a pronoun, or vice-versa). In recent years, it must also be said, Donatella Coppini has spoken out in favour of philological translations, as a reaction against translation theories that privilege the target text over the source text, and with an acceptance of such a translation's foreignizing (*straniante*) effect.⁷⁴ Given the field's uneasy and generally conservative attitude towards translations, how might we identify best practices and move towards new guidelines?

⁷² On the 'philological translation' in the strict sense of the term and its estranging effect, see P. Valesio, "The Virtues of Traducement: Sketch of a Theory of Translation", *Semiotica* 18.1 (1976), 1-96, at 46-55.

⁷³ Classicists have long associated this educational method with attitudes in the profession that used to translation as 'a second-rate activity and somehow unworthy of the attention of serious scholars' (Burian 2000 (as in n. 17), 299): 'The traditions of our discipline seem to have encouraged this disdain: translation is treated in our pedagogical practice as the most elementary stage of understanding a text. There is thus a somewhat shameful association of translation with trot' (ibid.). Cf. G. Viré, "Version, traduction et didactique de la traduction: quelques réflexions à propos du latin", *Équivalences* 36.1-2 (2009), 157-177, at 169-170; W. de Melo, 'Classics in Translation? A Personal Angle', Part I: Translation in Antiquity and the Present; Part II: Translation in Anglophone Universities, *Antigone: An Open Forum for Classics* (2023), <https://antigonejournal.com/2023/03/classics-translation-i> and <https://antigonejournal.com/2023/03/classics-translation-ii>. A *latinitas viva* approach of course does not encourage translation at all, at least not *out of Latin*; its purpose and merits lie elsewhere.

⁷⁴ D. Coppini, "'Magna res ac difficilis interpretatio recta'. Tradurre Petrarca, tradurre gli umanisti. Esperimenti", in F. Florimbii, A. Severi (ed.), *Tradurre Petrarca* (Bologna, 2018) (DOI: 10.6092/unibo/amsacta/5795), 21-34, at 22; Ead., "Preface", in J. Butcher (ed.), G. Rossi (tr.), *Gregorio Tifernate. Carmi Latini* (Sansepolcro – Città di Castello, 2021), 11-17, at 17.

3. Methodological Advice Past and Current

a. *From the First General Guidelines to Finding a Middle Ground*

Some concrete advice for would-be translators was, in fact, proffered at the very first international Neo-Latin congress, held at Leuven University in 1971, where Roger Zuber spoke about the translation of seventeenth-century French Neo-Latin texts.⁷⁵ Zuber deplored the dwindling general knowledge of Latin, as well as the general lack of *instruments de travail* (reference works) for Neo-Latinists – a situation which has dramatically improved, even if provisions are still very uneven. Recognizing that translation was an art and its success very much dependent on the talent of the individual translator, Zuber outlined some of the first methodological guidelines. Thus, where a Neo-Latin author clearly imitates, or borrows from an ancient source, and there already exists an authoritative modern translation for that author, it makes sense (so Zuber argued) to use the turn of phrase or expression suggested by that modern translation of the Classical text. However, where the ancient source has been significantly altered by the Neo-Latin author, the translator must likewise adapt. Zuber further suggested that the translation in the target language should not be too “twentieth-century”, that is, too modern or too contemporary, in character; it must retain some of the flavour of the seventeenth-century original. For this, he suggested, one can take advantage of the fact that many seventeenth-century authors were bilingual and wrote works in French too: Zuber advised the modern translator to exploit this bilingualism by imitating, if not simply reproducing, the author’s vernacular discourse and style in any rendition of his (or her) Latin. Finally, Zuber advocated the close alignment between the translation and the editor’s commentary or explanatory notes, which should complement one another. A good translation, moreover, should contain an introduction that draws the reader’s attention to the Neo-Latin text’s participation in both the humanist tradition and its place in early modern literary history.

Zuber thus advised a healthy mix of consistency with flexibility. His tempered foreignizing attitude (to use Venuti’s term) towards the source

⁷⁵ R. Zuber, “La traduction des textes néo-latins du dix-septième siècle français”, in IJsewijn, Kessler (ed.) 1973 (as in n. 2), 743-751. Zuber’s name is normally associated with the fashionable, free adaptations of Classical texts of the French seventeenth century, known as *belles infidèles*; see his award-winning book *Les ‘Belles infidèles’ et la formation du goût classique* (Paris, 2009).

text is fairly common among translators of Neo-Latin texts. In the same spirit, others too have advocated the consultation of historic dictionaries and/or using any vernacular works by the same author (or of the same milieu) as a benchmark for source texts ranging from Latin Renaissance poems from Italy, England, France, and Spain, to scientific and philosophical treatises, such as those of Galileo and Descartes.⁷⁶ Since most Neo-Latinists translate for audiences with similar, historical and/or literary interests, it certainly makes sense to avoid gross anachronisms.⁷⁷ Retaining – or more aptly, recreating – a ‘period flavour’ or historic ‘patina’, however, is a highly subjective undertaking that requires careful consideration of precisely what kind of lexical, grammatical, or stylistic features one wants to emulate in the target language: a pastiche should be avoided.

b. *Echoes of Classical Authors and the Poetry Question*

Some of the principles proposed by Zuber and echoed by Soubeille, however, are not without their own problems.⁷⁸ A steady use of ‘received

⁷⁶ E.g., J. Pascual Baréa, “Técnicas de traducción de la poesía latina renacentista según la lengua de la literatura castellana de su tiempo”, in L. Charlo Brea (ed.), *Reflexiones sobre la traducción. Actas del Primer Encuentro Interdisciplinar ‘Teoría y práctica de la Traducción’*. Cádiz del 29 de marzo al 1 de abril de 1993 (Cádiz, 1994), 507-520; V. Fera, “Interpretare et tradurre l’Africa di Petrarca”, in G. Peron (ed.), *Le traduzioni del Petrarca latino. Atti del XXXII convegno sui problemi della traduzione letteraria e scientifica (Monselice, 5 giugno 2004)* (Padova, 2007), 83-93, at 83, 91-93; C. de Buzon, “Problèmes de traduction du latin scientifique au début du XVII^e siècle”, 767. Cf. M. Hunter, *Editing Early Modern Texts. An Introduction to Principles and Practice* (Basingstoke, 2007, repr. 2009), 99-101 (“Translations”), at 99: ‘it is desirable for the translator to soak him or herself in the language of the author whose work is being translated, or in other vernacular writings from the period on the topics that the texts in question deal with.’ See also Hale’s strategy for translating Milton’s Latin verse, discussed above. I adopted a strategy of using, as much as possible, contemporary or specialist reference works for toponyms and ornithological and cynegetic terms in my 2013 French prose translation of Jacques Auguste de Thou’s *Hieracosophion* (as in n. 13).

⁷⁷ For an analogous strategy relating to the vernacular, see J.-L. Fournel, J.-C. Zancarini, “Les enjeux de la traduction. Traduire les penseurs politiques florentins de l’époque des guerres d’Italie”, *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* 145.5 (2002), 84-94, at 88: ‘Dans l’ensemble de nos traductions, nous avons cherché – “dans la mesure du possible” – à ne jamais utiliser des mots apparus en français après la Révolution française, cela pour des raisons théoriques et esthétiques à la fois : nous voulions que ce décalage – qui peut se lire comme une “patine” conférée à la langue d’arrivée – avec la langue politique française contemporaine introduise une distance temporelle, même si elle n’est que légèrement perceptible [...]’.

⁷⁸ Cf. Soubeille’s brief recommendations in his “Réflexions à partir d’une édition critique...” (as in n. 27), 73: ‘[...] il faut le traduire [c.-à-d., le texte original], avec

translations' for quotations from ancient texts, for a start, does not allow for changes of meaning according to the quotation's new context. No translation is timeless, moreover, not even those in established series such as Loeb or Budé. Nor did Zuber tackle the old chestnut of rendering verse with prose.

Mundt, in fact, held that 'as a rule, explicit quotations from ancient literature should likewise be translated by the translator, i.e., they should *not* be taken from an existing translation' [my italics], because the Neo-Latin author's understanding of the Classical text is unlikely to be the same as that of the modern editions we have to hand.⁷⁹ In other words, it makes more sense for the translator to turn to editions and commentaries of Classical authors that were available – or at least contemporary – to the author of the source text.

Mundt also recommended that poetic texts should normally be translated in prose because of the difficulties in reproducing the linguistic structures of the original in a metric translation,⁸⁰ a position resolutely shared by Rabbie,⁸¹ whereas Sidwell conveyed a more nuanced view:

It is not necessary to produce a verse translation for poetic works, though it has always seemed to me that the wrong impression can be given to non-Latinate readers if an effort is not made to cast the text in something akin to the form chosen and carefully executed by the author ...⁸²

exactitude, et selon nous, par une *translatio ad uerbum* plutôt qu'*ad sententiam*, mais aussi avec élégance, en conservant, grâce à des tournures et un vocabulaire un peu vieillis, comme un parfum d'époque, comme une coloration de poésie Renaissance... Il faudrait même arriver à rendre sensibles les emprunts à la littérature antique et, quand Macrin reproduit Ovide ou Catulle, le suggérer par quelque artifice de style ou de typographie, ou du moins par l'emploi des formule[s] consacrées dont usent les traducteurs des textes latins classiques dans les grandes collections universitaires.'

⁷⁹ Mundt 1992 (as in n. 28), 189: 'Explizite Zitate aus der antiken Literatur sollten vom Übersetzer in der Regel mitübersetzt, d.h. nicht einer schon vorhandenen Übertragung entnommen werden. Bei der Konsultation moderner kommentierter Ausgaben und wissenschaftlich abgesicherter Übersetzungen der betreffenden antiken Autoren ist stets im Auge zu behalten, daß das Textverständnis des neulateinischen Autors (und allein auf dieses kommt es an) nicht mit dem der Altphilologie des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts identisch sein dürfte.'

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 189.

⁸¹ Rabbie 1996 (as in n. 29), 37: 'In translating poetry no poetic equivalent of the original should be aimed at; a translation into prose is to be greatly preferred.'

⁸² For a general discussion of poetry as a 'specific problem of literary translation', see Bassnett 2014 (as in n. 16), 92-119. Bassnett reviews André Lefevere's classification of different ways of translating poetry (based on his analysis of translations of Cat. 64 in his 1975 monograph *Translating Poetry: Seven Strategies and a Blueprint*) and explores the issue through her own comparisons of, among others, versions of Cat. 13 and English

There is just not one way that is right for translating poetry, and what works for one poem or one author, or for one target language, may not work for another. The Spanish Classicist Jesús Luque Moreno cautioned us in 2002, for example, that a policy of translating all Latin verse with prose (or with a single type of metre) in the target language flattens the polymetric (or prosimetric) *mélange* that we find within many Latin source texts (of any period).⁸³ That still leaves us with the conundrum of what to do with humanistic experiments and showpieces such as figure poems (e.g. *alae*), acrostichs, echo poems, chronograms, and macaronic verse... Each form will need its own set of solutions.

Prose then remains the most common choice among Neo-Latinists for translating poetic source texts into modern European languages, albeit with considerable variation in terms of style, tone and register, witness descriptions such as ‘elevated’, ‘poeticised’ or ‘rhythmic’ prose, ‘blank verse’, or attempts to provide – as much as possible – corresponding line-by-line renderings. It is a tried and tested approach that serves scholarly purposes well, but also one that can co-exist alongside more creative, belletristic poetic translations that may suit shorter texts or that are re-translations, seeking new audiences.⁸⁴

c. *Empirical Lessons*

Besides the poetry question, the translation of Neo-Latin texts entails numerous other complexities. A scattering of empirical studies and reviews of different modern versions of the same Neo-Latin text have highlighted the challenges of translating wit and humour,⁸⁵ or of handling

variations of the Petrarchan sonnet (which privilege the retention of the *form* of the source text in the target language).

⁸³ Luque Morenos 2002 (as in n. 15), 90-93. See also quotation (vi) on p. 467 above, showing Vredeveld’s solution for translating a prosimetric source text.

⁸⁴ E.g., John Gilmore’s translation in rhyming couplets of Massieu’s short didactic poem on coffee (first published in 1738) follows on from William H. Uker’s 1935 translation into English prose, as well as eighteenth- and nineteenth-century translations into Italian (blank verse) and French (two in prose and one in rhyming couplets). Gilmore’s version received a commendation from the judges in the 2013-2014 John Dryden Translation Competition. J.T. Gilmore, “‘Coffee: A Poem’ by Guillaume Massieu (1665-1722), translated from the Latin”, *Comparative Critical Studies* 12.1 (2015), 135-142; Id. (trans.), *Guillaume Massieu’s Coffee: A Poem* (Todmorden, 2019).

⁸⁵ É. Wolff, “La traduction des mots d’esprit dans les *Facéties* du Pogge et les *Colloques* d’Érasme”, in N. Viet (ed.), *Traduire le mot d’esprit: pour une géographie du rire dans l’Europe de la Renaissance* (Paris, 2021), 89-106. For a general study, see

multilingual substrata,⁸⁶ complex levels of allusiveness and intertextuality;⁸⁷ non-Classical Latin and scholastic nuances,⁸⁸ or other terms of art in both literary and non-literary contexts (such as poetics, philosophy, natural law, and botany).⁸⁹ They have also pointed to diverging interpretations that arise from multiple translations of Neo-Latin works that have been recognised as ‘best-sellers’ (Erasmus’s *Praise of Folly*, Thomas More’s *Utopia*),⁹⁰ or of fundamental scientific texts (such as those of Kepler or Copernicus), sometimes linking these differences to specific translation strategies (or lack thereof).⁹¹ We will continue to need such case studies to build up a bank of experience, and to explain what strategies have been

D. Delabastita, “Focus on the Pun: Wordplay as a Special Problem in Translation Studies”, *Target* 6 (1994), 223-243.

⁸⁶ Ét. Wolff, “Érasme et les défis du traducteur”, in F. Xiangyun Zhang, K. Wei (ed.), *Recherche et traduction: une vision engagée de la traduction* (Bern, 2018), 31-44, at 39: ‘Le traducteur moderne des *Adages* se trouve donc confronté à un jeu de voltige multilingue. Il doit sauter du grec au latin, mais aussi passer par le hollandais, l’allemand, l’anglais, le français et l’italien (car la part des langues vulgaires dans les *Adages* a été sous-estimée).’

⁸⁷ Fera 2007 (as in n. 76), 83: ‘Ma è come se nell’*Africa* fossero sotterrati mille sonetti che il lettore impegnato cui anelava Petrarca deve portare alla luce.’ Coppini 2018 (as in n. 74), 26-27: ‘La traduzione ideale di testi come questo [*l’Ermafrodito*] tuttavia dovrebbe riuscire a dar conto delle loro articolazioni intertestuali, anche se l’impresa può rivelarsi disperata.’

⁸⁸ V. Perroni Compagni, “Latino grosso e sottigliezze scolastiche. Problemi di traduzione dei testi di Pietro Pomponazzi”, in Baldi, Faes de Mottoni (ed.) 2006 (as in n. 45), 85-109.

⁸⁹ E.g., P.R. Sellin, “The Proper Translation of *constitutio* in Daniel Heinsius’ *De tragœdiae constitutione* and Some Implications of the Word for Seventeenth-Century Literary Theory”, in S.P. Revard, F. Rädle, M.A. Di Cesare (ed.), *Acta Conventus Neo-Latini Guelpherbytani. Proceedings of the Sixth International Congress of Neo-Latin Studies, Wolfenbüttel, 12 August to 16 August 1985* (Binghamton, NY, 1988), 541-550; M.J. Silverthorn, “Civil Society and State, Law and Rights: Some Latin Terms and Their Translation in the Natural Jurisprudence Tradition”, in A. Dalzell, R. Schoeck, C. Fantazzi (ed.), *Acta Conventus Neo-Latini Torontonensis: Proceedings of the Seventh International Congress of Neo-Latin Studies: Toronto, 8 August to 13 August, 1988* (Binghamton, NY, 1991), 677-687; Ph. Selosse, “Traduire la nomenclature botanique néo-latine de la Renaissance: la linguistique au secours de l’histoire des sciences”, in P. Duris (ed.), *Traduire la science: Hier et aujourd’hui* (Pessac, 2008), 25-43.

⁹⁰ C.H. Miller, “Current English Translations of ‘The Praise of Folly’: Some Corrections”, *Philological Quarterly* 45.4 (1966), 718-733 (highlighting the need for a reliable edition of the source text); E. McCutcheon, “Ten English Translation/Editions of Thomas More’s *Utopia*”, *Moreana* 52.201-202 (3-4) (2015), 101-132; see also Y.-C. Liu’s article quoted in n. 96 below.

⁹¹ E.g., C. de Buzon, “Problèmes de traduction du latin scientifique au début du XVII^e siècle: sur l’exemple des *Paralipomènes à Vitellion* de Kepler”, in Margolin 1980 (as in n. 27), II, 767-778. N. M. Swerdlow, “Translating Copernicus”, *Isis* 72.1 (1981), 73-82, offers an insightful evaluation of four twentieth-century translations of *De Revolutionibus*.

developed and what contribution a translation makes to the field, especially where there is insufficient scope to do so within the introduction or notes to the published translation itself.

d. *Considerations about the Target Language*

The target language of translations of Neo-Latin texts will be dictated by the target audience, the requirements of the series or publisher, and, crucially, the linguistic (Latin and vernacular) abilities of the translator. Envisaging bilingual editions destined for academic audiences, Mundt recommended that translations of Neo-Latin texts should be in English, French, or German, i.e., in one of the main critical languages, as did Soubeille.⁹² IJsewijn and Sacré, however, duly recognised the importance of translations into ‘minority languages’ for the cultural areas to which the source texts belong.⁹³ Polish scholars have shown how the lack of modern editions and translations of Polish Neo-Latin texts created a bias in studies and perceptions of pre-modern Polish literary history,⁹⁴ whilst in 2018 Coppini, to name just one other example, highlighted the imbalance between the number of critical editions of humanistic texts and their translation into Italian.⁹⁵ In all cases, it makes sense to have a translation checked by a native speaker of the target language with a good understanding not just of Classical Latin but of Neo-Latin as well. As we have noted, for highly technical texts, this may need to be supplemented with specific subject expertise, including a mastery of its attendant, historical jargon in the target culture.

So far, most Neo-Latin texts that have benefited from translations, have been translated into European languages. However, the now dormant *Index Translationum – Unesco Bibliography of Translations* database, compiled between 2008 and 2013, shows that some of the most famous and influential Neo-Latin texts have also benefited from translations into non-European languages, such as Arabic (e.g. More’s *Utopia*) or Chinese (e.g. More’s *Utopia*, Erasmus’s *Institutio principis Christiani*, or Newton’s *Philosophiae naturalis principia mathematica*).⁹⁶ Grotius’s *Mare liberum*,

⁹² Mundt 1992 (as in n. 28), 189; Soubeille 1980 (as in n. 27), 73.

⁹³ IJsewijn, Sacré 1990-1998 (as in n. 31), II, 501.

⁹⁴ See the studies by Gruchała, Buszewicz and Ranocchi quoted in n. 48 above.

⁹⁵ Coppini 2018 (as in n. 74), 24.

⁹⁶ Begun in the 1990s, the database aim was to list ‘books translated and published in about a hundred of UNESCO’s Member States since 1979’. On More, see Y.-C. Liu,

to name another example, exists in a Korean version of 1984. With the growing interest in world literature in the global East (especially in China), including recent studies and translations of Ovid,⁹⁷ Neo-Latinists may wish to consider ways of making more of the great authors of the Neo-Latin world accessible to new readers, as a pendant also to the growing study of Neo-Latin texts written outside Europe.

e. *Bilingual Editions vs Standalone Translations*

Most Neo-Latin scholars still regard bilingual editions, that is, text editions with facing-page translations, as the most effective provision in the field, allowing the reader to flit easily between the source and target texts.⁹⁸ Some, but by no means all, of these editions are available as e-books. Anyone planning to publish a bilingual edition should check early in the process if a digital version will be made available and how this might affect the parallel lay-out. Less widespread, hypertext editions similarly invite the reader to switch between source and translation at the click of a button.⁹⁹ The translation is sometimes word-for-word (a philological translation in the strictest sense of the term), but most editions will alternate across larger units such as paragraphs, individual poems, or even the full versions of the source and target texts. Some sites allow for a useful side-by-side comparative reading of the original manifestation of the text (a manuscript or rare book), the transcription and translation.¹⁰⁰ Bilingual hypertext editions can share the variant patterns of their counterparts in book form: for example, the text edition can be old or

“Translating and Transforming *Utopia* into the Mandarin Context: Case Studies from China and Taiwan”, *Utopian Studies* 27.2 (2016), 333-345.

⁹⁷ X. Xiao, Y. Bao, “Ovid’s Debut in Chinese: Translating the *Ars amatoria* into the Republican Discourse of Love”, *Classical Receptions Journal* 12. 2 (2020), 231-247; Th.J. Sienkewicz, J. Liu (ed.), *Ovid in China* (Leiden, 2022), including, among others, Liu’s chapter on “Translating Ovid into Chinese: Challenges and Strategies”.

⁹⁸ For a trilingual edition of a self-translating (Latin-French) Neo-Latin author, see A. Schmidt (ed.), *René Descartes. Meditationen. Dreisprachige Parallelausgabe Lateinisch – Französisch – Deutsch*, first published 2004 (Göttingen, 2011).

⁹⁹ See, for instance, D.F. Sutton’s considerable list of web-based editions in a “Library of Humanistic Texts”, begun in the 1990s and accessible from the ‘Philological Museum’ website <https://philological.cal.bham.ac.uk/library.html>. I use the term ‘hypertext’ in its digital sense and not that of Genette’s *hypertextualité*.

¹⁰⁰ E.g., the online *Bibliotheca Tholosana* edition of Jean de Boyssoné’s Latin poetry and selected correspondence, transcribed and translated by N. Dauvois et al., <https://bibliotheca-tholosana.fr/inside#!:ouvrage/28> and <https://bibliotheca-tholosana.fr/inside#!:ouvrage/9>.

new and ditto for the translation. As hypertexts tend to present data in undigested form, it is not always evident what translation strategies have been adopted, or if there has been a peer review process. Some of the older digital editions now look very dated. As with any web-based resource, longevity is a major concern: if the digital environment is unstable or not maintained, digital editions and translations are more prone to ‘disappearing’ than editions that are produced in a more conventional book or e-book format with a reputable publisher.

Standalone or autonomous translations are published without an accompanying edition or reproduction of the Neo-Latin source text; they can range from major, coordinated, multi-volume projects to paperbacks, scholarly digital productions, and popular e-reader formats, destined for students or the general public. While readers should in principle be able to read any translation on its own terms, regardless of the nature or form of the source text, autonomous translations work better for prose treatises and dialogues, than for poetry, for which most readers will wish to see a reproduction of the Neo-Latin source text too. Standalone translations tend to have an introduction and explanatory notes to contextualise the translation. As a bare minimum – it may seem self-evident but it needs to be said! –, there should be a translator’s note clearly stating what edition of the source text the translation is based on, and whether the translator has in any way deviated from it.

If standalone translations often target a broader, but still cultured, readership, it does not follow that they should be ‘amateurish’ or have no scholarly value: many are infused with specialist scholarly knowledge, as indeed Jeanine De Landtsheer’s nimble and engaging Dutch translations of Erasmus show. At their most erudite, with an appropriate apparatus and commentary, and glossaries or indices where required, the translation can function like an edition, as envisaged by Celenza.¹⁰¹ Since in some areas, such as the history of science, political thought, or world literature, standalone translations risk displacing the source text, even at an advanced level of research, it is imperative that translations are produced to high standards and based on the best available edition(s) of the source text.

¹⁰¹ See, for example, Stephanus Junius Brutus [pseud.], *Vindiciae, Contra Tyrannos, Or, Concerning the Legitimate Power of a Prince Over the People, and of the People Over a Prince*, ed., comm. G. Garnett (Cambridge, 1994, online ed. 2010), destined for a specialist readership. The Editor’s Preface (at ix-xiv) lists a range of editorial and translational strategies, including giving key Latin terms in brackets, to compensate for the fact that ‘this is not a parallel-text edition’.

f. *Opt-Outs: When Not to Provide a Translation*

Apart from Charlet's remark about dictionaries and encyclopaedias, little critical attention has been paid to reasons for *not* providing a translation: these could include a desire to privilege the source language (e.g. for educational purposes or to facilitate corpus-based research) or practical considerations (such as production costs and the sheer volume of text, the formulaic nature of the source, or a lack of expertise in the ideal target language). The choice *not* to offer an accompanying translation for a newly edited Neo-Latin text – or long citations, for that matter – should always be carefully deliberated (and the reasons recorded), in function of both the nature of the source text and the target audience. Modern editions of humanist correspondences, such as those of Justus Lipsius, Johannes Reuchlin, Joseph Scaliger, or Isaac Casaubon, for example, have successfully established the use of summaries, allowing readers a quick assessment of the interest and gist of the source, but leaving detailed exploitation of the source texts to specialist researchers with the requisite linguistic skills.¹⁰²

A translation may also not be required when the Neo-Latin source text that is being edited is itself already a translation, reworking, or edition of another source text. The board of the *CWE*, for instance, decided early on not to include Erasmus's own translations into Latin of works in Greek (such as that of the New Testament), or to reproduce Erasmus's extensive editions of church fathers and classical authors in full.¹⁰³ Similarly, Enrique Fernández's edition of Gaspar Barthus's Neo-Latin translation of *Celestina*, the *Pornoboscodidascalus* (1624), transcribed the full Latin text, but only translated Barthus's lengthy prologue and notes into English, arguing that these would be of interest to *Celestina* scholars. Pragmatic and text-critical considerations, moreover, led Fernández not to include Barthus's Spanish source text, the 1599 Plantin edition.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰² A. Gerlo, M.A. Nauwelaerts, H.D.L. Vervliet et al. (ed.), *Iusti Lipsi Epistolae*, vol. 1-9, 13-14 (Brussel, 1978-); M. Dall'Asta, G. Dörner (ed.), *Johannes Reuchlin. Briefwechsel*, 4 vol. (Stuttgart, 1999-2013); P. Botley, D. van Miert (ed.), *The Correspondence of Joseph Justus Scaliger*, 8 vol. (Genève, 2012); P. Botley, M. Vince (ed.), *The Correspondence of Isaac Casaubon in England, 1610-14*, 4 vol. (Genève, 2018).

¹⁰³ Estes 2014 (as in n. 21), 147.

¹⁰⁴ *Pornoboscodidascalus Latinus (1624): Kaspar Barth's Neo-Latin Translation of Celestina*, ed., tr., comm. E. Fernández (Chapel Hill, NC, 2006), 37-39 ("Editorial Criteria"): 'We have not included the Spanish original text from which Barth translated *Celestina*, the Plantin 1599 edition, because it would make this edition unnecessarily long; additionally, this Plantin edition does not present significantly different readings. Any of the

Nevertheless, historic translations and reworkings can profit from modern translations of their own: such ‘back translations’ (Fr. *rétrotraduction*, *rétroversion*; It. *retrotraduzione*; Sp. *retrotraducción*; Ge. *Rückübersetzung*) allow us to evaluate the translator’s, paraphrast’s, or rewriter’s approach to the source text and/or form an aesthetic appreciation of the new target text, witness (for example) Roger Green’s bilingual edition of George Buchanan’s psalm paraphrases.¹⁰⁵

One final question, however, is how we best illumine the general significance of our translations for the purposes of the academic structures in which we operate and vis-à-vis peer reviewers and referees – not just for a translation to be accepted for publication but also in other contexts such as appointment and promotion committees, departmental reviews, or national and international research assessment exercises.

4. Translating Neo-Latin Texts as Scholarship

Efforts to counter the undervaluation of translations have long been made in other fields, particularly in Modern Languages, but also in Classics and, of course, Translation Studies.¹⁰⁶ They are beginning to bear fruit at an international level: in 2009, the American Professor of French Catherine Porter, for example, chose translation as the official theme of her year-long term as President of the Modern Language Association (MLA) and pushed, with others, for greater recognition of ‘translation as scholarship’.¹⁰⁷ In 2011, the MLA issued a formal statement on this topic, arguing for the recruitment of translation scholars and practitioners of translation within higher education and setting out guidelines for the peer-reviewing of translations ‘by faculty members facing personnel decisions’.¹⁰⁸

current critical editions of *Celestina* will allow the reader to see the text Barth had in front of him when he was translating. However, wherever the Plantin edition presents a variant reading, we have stated it in our editorial notes.’

¹⁰⁵ R. Green (ed., tr., comm.) 2011 (as in n. 60).

¹⁰⁶ E.g., S. Bassnett, *Reflections on Translation* (Bristol, 2011), ch. 12 “Pride and Prejudices” (first published 2008).

¹⁰⁷ J. Howard, “Translators Struggle to Prove their Academic Bona Fides” [newspaper article], *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 17 January 2010. C. Porter, “Translation as Scholarship”, *ADFL Bulletin* 41.2 (2009), 7-13; Ead., “Translation as Scholarship”, in E. Allen, S. Bernofsky (ed.), *In Translation: Translators on their Work and what it Means* (New York, 2013), 58-66.

¹⁰⁸ Modern Language Association (MLA), “Evaluating Translations as Scholarship: Guidelines for Peer Review” (February 2011), <https://www.mla.org/Resources/Advocacy/>

The MLA statement, in turn, gave rise to a British manifesto on ‘Translation as Research’, which between 2015 and 2020 gathered 28 signatures from leading scholars and international associations based in the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, and France, covering various fields in Modern Languages, Translation and Interpreting, Classics, Philosophy, and Theology and Religious Studies.¹⁰⁹

Nevertheless, in the British REF2021, the most recent national evaluative ‘Research Excellence Framework’, submissions classified as ‘translations’ averaged only 0.11% of the research outputs that participating universities had chosen to submit to the main humanities panel (Panel D, comprising Modern Languages and Linguistics, English language and literature, History, and Classics, among others), compared to 40.26% for journal articles, 24.16% for authored books, 16.59% for chapters in books, or 5.32% for edited books (that is, mostly multi-authored volumes).¹¹⁰ Although some of these other types of publications – particularly ‘books’ – also contained translations, the low figure suggests an enduring diffidence on the part of scholars and/or their institutional advisors towards submitting translations as a potentially high-ranking scholarly output.¹¹¹ Whilst there was no separate category for ‘Neo-Latin’, the Classics sub-panel noted that, just as in the previous assessment round (REF2014), submissions ‘were again dominated by monographs, journal articles, chapters in books, edited collections and scholarly editions [...]’. But one cannot help being struck by this committee’s rather muted comment that ‘there were very few standalone translations, although some editions and commentaries included translations that were considered to have contributed

Executive-Council-Actions/2011/Evaluating-Translations-as-Scholarship-Guidelines-for-Peer-Review.

¹⁰⁹ Diverse signatories, “Translation as Research: A Manifesto”, *Modern Languages Open* [online journal] (2015), DOI: 10.3828/mlo.v0i0.80; N. Harrison, “Notes on Translation as Research”, *Modern Languages Open* [online journal] (2015), DOI: 10.3828/mlo.v0i0.78.

¹¹⁰ *REF2021 Overview Report by Main Panel D and Subpanels 25 to 34* (2022) [online document], 22 (Table 6: Types of output assessed by each sub-panel), <https://ref.ac.uk/media/1913/mp-d-overview-report-final-updated-september-2022.pdf>.

¹¹¹ Note the comments of the Theology and Religious Studies subpanel regarding ‘textual commentaries, scholarly editions, dictionaries, grammars and translations’, *REF2021 Overview Report* (as in n. 110), 147: ‘[...] we were made aware of some perceptions in submitting institutions that particular output types were unlikely to receive high grades’. Yet the subpanel noted earlier about ‘books’ that ‘it should not be assumed that a particular output form will necessarily receive higher grades’ (ibid.). See also Harrison 2015 (as in n. 109), point 2.

positively towards their significance'. More encouragingly, 'in terms of translation-as-research', the Modern Languages sub-panel acknowledged that '[British] institutions are increasingly providing support for scholars working on translations and that this research activity is seen as being of equal value and quality'. This sub-panel also indicated that

the strongest outputs in this category exhibited *a deep insight into the source material, while drawing on and reflecting specialist knowledge of its historical, political, social and cultural contexts*. Research was often, as a result, reflected in the critical apparatus associated with a translated text. [my italics]¹¹²

However, 'where research was inherent in the translation process itself, submissions did not always fully explain this research content in comments provided' (ibid.).

In France, the 2023 governmental guide on research outputs and activities for the 'Culture et production culturelles' panel considers 'monographies et ouvrages scientifiques, éditions critiques, *traductions*' [my italics] as one, leading category to indicate major research contributions. 'Scholarly translations' (*les "traductions scientifiques"*) are hereby defined as 'les traductions d'ouvrages scientifiques et de documents écrits dans des langues rares qu'accompagne un paratexte rédigé par le ou les traducteurs (introduction, appareil de notes, index, etc.)'.¹¹³ For the entire category, indicators of quality include: the choice of publisher in function of the envisaged audience; the presence of an editorial board or peer reviewers; critical reviews in scholarly journals or the press; translation into another language; and the award of a prize.

Each institution, funding organism, or regional or national government may set its own parameters, but as European organisations at least are working towards greater harmonisation in the evaluation of academic research,¹¹⁴ the general direction of travel is clear: for a translation of a Neo-Latin text to be appreciated as a scholarly endeavour in itself, and

¹¹² REF2021 *Overview Report* (as in n. 110), 75. 'Critical apparatus' is to be understood broadly here.

¹¹³ Haut conseil de l'évaluation de la recherche et de l'enseignement supérieur (Hcéres), France, *Guide des produits de la recherche et des activités de recherche*, Panel: SHS5 – cultures et productions culturelles [online document] (2023), 7, https://www.hceres.fr/sites/default/files/media/files/guide-des-produits-de-la-recherche-et-des-activites-de-recherche-panel-shs5-cultures-et-productions-culturelles_0.pdf.

¹¹⁴ Note, for instance, the European "Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment", 20 July 2022, <https://coara.eu/agreement/the-agreement-full-text>.

not merely as an aid to research (for instance, in the preparation of a critical edition), its translators must, just like their counterparts working with other languages, be able to demonstrate their activity's 'hermeneutic' dimensions. Whether it concerns a bilingual edition (including those in digital format) or a standalone translation, the target text should be properly framed, and its specialist accomplishments highlighted. If we take (for instance) the MLA's recommendations as a guide, the introduction and/or translator's note (or any separate case study or research report, where appropriate) should thus draw attention to: (i) the significance of the source text as a work of literature or scholarship or as a cultural document, and the potential impact of the translation; (ii) any differences between the Neo-Latin author's readership and the modern, target-language audience that have called for adjustments or adaptations; (iii) any special challenges posed by the form, style, or content of the source text, along with examples and explanations of the solutions adopted in the translation process; and (iv) any theoretical considerations that influenced the translator's overall strategy. Personal research reports may in addition need to provide (v) any relevant information about the publisher or the series in which the translation appears, along with information about the publisher's review process and any special requirements imposed by the series editor or publisher.¹¹⁵

Conclusion

Working with the Neo-Latin source texts in their original language must surely remain fundamental in our field: to do otherwise would be a *contradictio in terminis*. It is also crucial that we equip new generations of scholars with the linguistic skills to do so. We have seen, however, how translation functions within Neo-Latin Studies at various levels and for different purposes: as a pedagogical tool; as a checking mechanism in text editing; as a conduit to in-depth analysis of the source text or the mindset of the source culture; and, more and more frequently, as a way of transmitting this rich vein of literature to non- or less-Latinate readers, whether that is to enable new insights in neighbouring fields, or to allow the broadest possible readership to discover unfamiliar texts. Translating

¹¹⁵ For the MLA guidelines, see the link quoted in n. 108 above. I have adapted the order and some of the wording of the MLA's guidelines.

Neo-Latin sources is thus no longer something that Neo-Latinists should do grudgingly or that they can consider a mere by-product: it is a legitimate research activity and an opportunity we should embrace. Just as for critical editions, we should consider very carefully what texts we ought to translate (or re-translate), what kind of translations are best suited, what format they should be presented in, and whether the source text should be provided alongside. We should continue to reflect on the various challenges that translating Neo-Latin sources poses and debate our approaches for different genres and different audience. We cannot stand on the side-lines and watch new translation technologies and research policies emerge without participating in those sorts of discussions too. The first steps towards a true emancipation of translations of Neo-Latin texts, however, must consist of an unequivocal acknowledgement of the scholarly input that such renderings require as well as greater transparency over the aims and purpose of each translation and the strategies we adopt to achieve them.

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