

ROUTLEDGE RESEARCH IN TRAVEL WRITING

Travel Narratives in Translation, 1750–1830

Nationalism, Ideology, Gender

Edited by
Alison E. Martin and Susan Pickford



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Routledge Research in Travel Writing

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Introduction

Alison E. Martin and Susan Pickford

TRAVEL WRITING AND TRANSLATION

Samuel Johnson, one of the eighteenth century's most renowned travelers (but overlooked translators), defined the verb "to translate" in his *Dictionary of the English Language* (1755) as "to transport; to remove", offering as secondary meanings "to transfer from one to another; to convey", "to change", "to interpret in another language" and "to explain".¹ Johnson's direct association of translation with travel essentially traces this term back to its etymological root in the Latin word *translatio*, indicating the movement of people or objects across space. But by aligning translation with the activity of travel, Johnson's dictionary acknowledged links between the two in ways which now seem highly modern. Over the past two decades, travel writing scholarship has itself 'traveled' widely, to draw on other disciplines such as sociology and anthropology, geography and history, literary and gender studies.² Recent new impulses have in particular come from Translation Studies, which Peter Hulme and Tim Youngs acknowledge in *The Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing* (2002) has added another dimension to travel, "giving thought not only to translation between languages but also to translation between cultures".³

One of the translation scholars who has stressed most emphatically the links between translation and travel is Susan Bassnett, who understands the connection between them in these terms:

Translation can be seen as a kind of journey, from one point in time and space to another, a textual journey that a traveller may undertake in reality. Moreover, both translation and travel writing are hermeneutic activities, which involve processes of exploration, of uncovering and discovering. Both are activities that involve different kinds of cross-cultural contact. Travel necessarily involves some form of translation, and many early travel accounts detail attempts to render in the language of the explorers, the undiscovered, the unknown, the new and unfamiliar.⁴

Thus while travel writing is associated with recasting the foreign textually and visually for readers back home, translation is similarly concerned with

transporting the foreign into the target language and culture and adapting it to meet the target audience's expectations. Travel writing therefore shares with ethnography an interpretative view of foreign cultures and societies, while translation refracts the act of interpretation still further.⁵ By analogy, the translator and the traveler are also figures moving between languages and cultures in comparable ways. The traveler from the very outset adopts the role of translator and interpreter of a given culture, and the translator, as Michael Cronin has observed, moves "between disciplines, between the allusive language of general culture and the hermetic sublanguages of specialisms", making them "practitioners in a sense of the encyclopedic culture of travel".⁶

While scholars of Translation Studies have arguably been slower to acknowledge the relevance of non-fictional travel writing for their field, the addition of a lemma on "Mobility" to the most recent (second) edition of the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies* emphasizes the contribution that research into travel writing has made to Translation Studies over the past decade. In her exploration of the nexus of translation and mobility, Loredana Polezzi has examined issues of self-translation and writing in a foreign language, the construction of self in a foreign culture, as well as related issues of inclusion and exclusion, invisibility and marginalization.⁷ She has emphasized above all the intercultural aspects of translation, drawing on debate stimulated by Mary Louise Pratt's 'contact zone', or Homi K. Bhabha's understanding of translation as the "performative nature of cultural communication".⁸ In so doing, Polezzi amply demonstrates how influential such interpretations of "translation" have been in a postcolonial context. This metaphorical relationship between travel and translation has therefore allowed fruitful comparisons to be drawn between these two activities, highlighting their mutual concern with notions of borders and border-crossing, migration and displacement, identity, alienation and integration.

But both Polezzi, adopting a Translation Studies approach, and Youngs, from a Travel Writing Studies perspective, have queried how valuable such all-encompassing metaphors for 'translation' and 'travel' really are. In a special issue of *The Translator* devoted to translation, travel and migration, Polezzi has commented that a "tendency to use such terms in a rather loose and often figurative manner has resulted in a frequent shift of attention away from actual practices and their protagonists", while Youngs has likewise warned that the application of metaphors to travel and travel writing "can distract from the specific material contexts in which travel happens and from the relationship between the language employed to describe it and the actualities of that travel".⁹ It is precisely this development toward understanding translation and travel in purely metaphorical terms that the present study seeks to counter. By investigating the 'actual practices' and protagonists at work in translating travel literature, it builds on recent investigations of knowledge transmission which have been highly critical of

the notion that ‘knowledge simply travels by itself’ and which have instead argued that the circulation of knowledge is a practice located in the routines of everyday life and in the interaction between agents who are themselves in specific networks which allow for knowledge to travel.¹⁰

The traveler’s relationship to language lies at the very heart of some of the most commonplace experiences (and difficulties) encountered by those traveling through a foreign country. Michael Cronin has played a seminal role in (re)affirming the centrality of language to narratives of travel. In *Across the Lines: Travel, Language and Translation* (2000), a study of the role of language in late twentieth-century travel writing, he complains, “Indifference to the question of language in many of the key texts on writing and travel that have been published over the last two decades has led to a serious misrepresentation of both the experience of travel and the construction of narrative accounts of these experiences”.¹¹ Cronin cites by way of example James Clifford’s *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century* (1997) in which Clifford uses ‘travel’ as “a translation term” defined as “a word of apparently general application used for comparison in a strategic and contingent way”.¹² Cronin contends that this work “managed to completely ignore the entire body of scholarly work on translation in a work allegedly discussing the question of translation and travel” and by reducing the language dimension simply to a minor element of the travel experience failed to acknowledge the complex (and potentially creative) role played by linguistic mediators operating between cultures and languages.¹³ For as Rainer Schulte has argued, all translations “carry the imprint of the translators’ particular interpretive visions and the pulse of the linguistic moment of their time”.¹⁴

Despite growing recognition by scholars of Translation Studies of the importance of *fictional* travel writing as a genre for study, comparatively little attention has been paid to how *non-fictional* travel accounts were translated, by whom and with which audience in mind. Carmine Di Biase’s edited collection of essays titled *Travel and Translation in the Early Modern Period* (2006), for instance, makes no distinction between fictional and non-fictional travels, and indeed between travel writing and other genres, juxtaposing articles on Erasmus’s travels in England and Karl Grünem-berg’s pilgrimage to the Holy Land with studies of Milton’s translations of Petrarch, Barker’s *Dyssputacion off the Nobylytye off Wymen*, and Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*. As Di Biase writes in the introduction, the aim of the collection is to explore “how travel generates culture”¹⁵—an ambitious remit reflected in the diversity of topics covered in the collection.

The history of translation has, then, largely been written by specialists in literature and language, who continue to explore with far greater energy the tensions and conflicts that arise from translating fictional literature than from the considerable body of non-fictional writing (historical, political, philosophical, economic or scientific) that was equally avidly read in any given period. The notion that non-fictional travel writing could

serve as little more than a source of historical information and should not be understood as a literature in its own right persisted late into the twentieth century. Katherine Turner argues that this neglect of travel writing had much to do with its ambivalent status (was it really ‘literature?’), the ‘occasional’ nature of much of the writing, and the fact that many travel writers in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were working on the fringes of literary culture.¹⁶ Thus while the ‘canonical’ texts such as Laurence Sterne’s *Sentimental Journey*, Tobias Smollett’s *Travels through France and Italy*, Samuel Johnson and James Boswell’s Scottish tours, or Mary Wollstonecraft’s *Letters Written during a Short Residence in Sweden, Norway and Denmark* have received due recognition, scant attention has been paid to the hundreds of European travelogues which were composed by an often diverse body of amateur and professional writers, largely middle class, whose narrative of travel was their only venture into authorship. Nevertheless, as the chapters in this collection amply demonstrate, such works give us valuable insights into how travelers perceived themselves and the foreigners they encountered, how they conceived of their own (national) identity, and how they reflected on a range of political, social, cultural, religious, and aesthetic issues.

The anthology *Travel Writing 1700–1830* edited by Elizabeth A. Bohls and Ian Duncan gives the modern reader an excellent insight into the sheer range of authors, destinations, motivations and subject matter to be found in eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century British travel writing and amply illustrates what Bohls and Duncan term travel writing’s “generic and discursive hybridity”.¹⁷ Long considered to contain little more than the dry enumeration of fact, non-fictional travel writing has recently been the subject of a range of studies which forcefully demonstrate that travel writers actively located their work within the prevailing literary discourses of the period, calling on rhetorical strategies as sophisticated as any to be found in fiction.¹⁸ Travel literature is a rich field of research for those working both in Translation Studies and Cultural Studies, precisely because, Susan Bassnett declares, “this is the genre in which individual strategies employed by writers deliberately to construct images of other cultures for consumption by readers can be most clearly seen”.¹⁹ In the present volume, the individuality both of the original authors and the translators comes under close scrutiny as we explore the motives underpinning translators’ textual choices, their translation strategies, and the individual political, aesthetic, or gendered agendas to which they work.

As Paola Smecca has argued, a travel narrative is not a “mere impersonal sequence of things seen”, but the interweaving of descriptions which could be cast by different individuals in profoundly different ways and which played an important role in the narrative construction of the author’s identity.²⁰ Smecca maintains that such subjectivity is an essential element in travel writing which is precisely what makes it a literary genre, distinct from purely informative texts.²¹ Non-fictional travel writing is indeed beginning to edge

its way into Literary Studies, if not the literary canon, gaining increasing institutional recognition, for instance, with the founding of specialist journals and research centers from the 1990s on. It is likewise gratifying to see in the fourth volume of the *Oxford History of Literary Translation in English* (2006) that non-fictional travel writing is discussed in Laura Dassow Walls' contribution on "Exploring the World"—which focuses largely on Constantin Volney's highly politicized narrative *Les ruines, ou méditations sur les révolutions des empires* (1791) [*The Ruins, or A Survey of the Revolutions of Empires*], Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's Romantic, visionary account the *Italienische Reise* (1816–29) [*Italian Journey*] and Humboldt's synthesizing, holistic scientific work *Kosmos* (1845–62) [*Cosmos*].²² One might, however, question just how emblematic of the travel narrative genre the three texts she examines really are, given that while these have an iconic status in the travel literature of the period, they ill represent the much larger corpus of travel writing penned by far less illustrious travelers that was what actually fed the publishing market and filled journals from the mid-eighteenth century onward.²³ Dassow Walls rightly acknowledges that translators "not only opened up the globe to all eyes but also, in an age of increasingly scientific specialization, helped turn the new discoveries . . . into the talk of the street, the salon, and the Victorian parlour".²⁴ But much more investigation remains to be done into the sheer scale of translation in this period, the dynamics of translating non-fictional (scientific) travel writing, the mediating individuals and publishing houses involved, as well as the topographies of knowledge forged by translators, printers, publishers, and readers.²⁵ Data recording the production and consumption of travel writing in translation await researchers in a wide range of sources, from specialist library holdings, lending library catalogues, and sales listings of private libraries to bibliographies of travel narratives such as Boucher de la Richarderie's compendious *Bibliothèque Universelle des Voyages* (6 vols, 1808) and multi-volume anthologies such as John Pinkerton's *General Collection of the Best and Most Interesting Voyages and Travels* (17 vols, 1808–14).

One such study is Yasmine Marcil's work on reviews of travel writing in the French periodical press from 1750 to 1789. Though not specifically devoted to reviews of works in translation, her work nonetheless sheds light on broader patterns in the production, distribution, and consumption of foreign culture over the period. Reviews of German travel narratives increase dramatically over the period, from 4 in the period 1750 to 1759 to 47 for 1780–1789, reflecting Germany's growing cultural significance over the latter half of the eighteenth century.²⁶ Conversely, significant narratives struggled for visibility when written in "minor" languages: Linnaeus's *Skoenska Resa* [*Scanian Journey*] (1751) received only one review in the French press. English accounted for nearly half of all reviews of travel literature in 1750–1759 (12/21), but less than a third (34/110) 30 years later, being displaced in large part by German (47/110) and, to a lesser extent, by

Italian and Spanish (8 and 3 titles, respectively). Swedish almost vanished altogether, falling from six reviews to one; Dutch maintained a peripheral presence, with one review in each period, unlike Portuguese, which had no reviews in the latter period.²⁷ These figures, though limited in themselves, nevertheless hint at ways into exploring wider trends in the centrality vs. marginality of European languages and their cultures over the course of the period: Marcil's data reflects the relative place of various languages and regions of Europe in the constantly evolving cultural hierarchy that formed the "World Republic of Letters", to borrow Pascale Casanova's phrase.²⁸

By placing greater emphasis on the wider contextual considerations underpinning the transfer of texts from one language and culture to another, scholars in translation studies have most recently been able to discuss the sociocultural dimensions of source and target text production in terms of a 'sociology of translators'. As Anthony Pym defines it, this approach explores "who is doing the mediating, for whom, within what networks, and with what social effects".²⁹ Translation is necessarily embedded within a range of different social contexts which determine how texts are selected, produced, and distributed, all of which themselves influence in turn the strategies adopted by the translator. As Michaela Wolf observes, the application of the framework offered by the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu concerning power relations and driving forces in society—notably his notion of 'habitus'—to the theory and practice of translation, goes some way to enabling us to understand dominant social factors governing the texts selected for translation.³⁰ Indeed, Daniel Simeoni's seminal 1998 essay, "The Pivotal Status of the Translator's Habitus", gave translation studies an important new impulse in calling for greater attention to be paid to the norms which translators themselves sustain and use as controls upon their own translation behavior.³¹ But as Wolf has also stressed, it is not only translators who are the chief agents in the translation process. A series of participants are active in the translation enterprise, from the initiator of the project to the commissioner, source, and target text producers, users, and receivers, all of whom emphasize the multi-faceted nature of mediating a text between one language and culture and another.³² This notion of 'agency' in translation has been taken up by John Milton and Paul Bandia in their recent edited collection which explores the role played by a range of mediators, not least translators, in introducing new elements into the target culture. But as Milton and Bandia argue, translators are not only 'gatekeepers' (to borrow Bourdieu's term), deciding on what can be allowed to enter, but also deliberately use translation for their own stylistic, political and cultural ends.³³

Similarly, historians have only relatively recently begun to delve into translations as a means by which to better understand interaction between regions, nations and cultures. Fania Oz-Salzberger's work on the impact of Scottish Enlightenment thinkers in the German states is a valuable exception to this general trend. It emphasizes the importance that the translation

of historical and political texts held in fostering intellectual exchange and explores the transformations and transmutations that such texts underwent as they moved into a different language and society.³⁴ Peter Burke and R. Po-chia Hsia's 2009 edited volume on cultural translation in early modern Europe also makes significant strides in this direction. Burke and Hsia have deliberately focused on non-fictional writing—notably the translation of books on religion, politics, history, and particularly science (or 'natural philosophy' as it was known at the time)—with the aim of understanding the practice of translation within a wider cultural historical context. As they rightly observe, "the turn towards history in Translation Studies has not yet been matched by a turn towards the study of translation on the part of historians", adding that those working in the history of translation "have less to say about the contrasts between cultures than between individual translators, less about long-term trends than about short-term processes, and less about the history of practice than about the history of theory".³⁵

The present volume therefore endeavors to address some of these lacunae by exploring how travel writing was translated across the best part of a century, by ranging across major Western European languages (notably French, as well as English, German, and Spanish) and more minor ones (Portuguese), and by looking closely at the actual practice of translation in this period. The chronological span of the study, 1750 to 1830, offers a fertile ground for the study of these issues for a number of reasons. It witnessed the birth of modern translation theory, notably that of Friedrich Schleiermacher, who in his seminal essay *Ueber die verschiedenen Methoden des Uebersetzens* (1813) [*On the Different Methods of Translation*] defined translation in spatial terms: "Entweder der Übersetzer lässt den Schriftsteller möglichst in Ruhe und bewegt den Leser ihm entgegen, oder er lässt den Leser möglichst in Ruhe und bewegt den Schriftsteller ihm entgegen" [Either the translator leaves the writer alone as much as possible and moves the writer toward the reader, or he leaves the reader alone as much as possible and moves the writer toward the reader].³⁶ The practice of translation also underwent a significant paradigm shift over the course of the period, which begins with *les belles infidèles* and ends when the Romantic debate on the nature of translation was in full swing, leading to the foregrounding of fidelity as the primary virtue of the translated text and, concomitantly, to the subalternisation of translation as a form of authorial practice.

While colonial expansion in the Elizabethan period encouraged the translation of travel writing as a way of understanding more about world geography and the economic potential of overseas territories—as Michael Householder's study of Richard Eden's English rendering of parts of Sebastian Münster's *Cosmographia Universalis* (Basel 1544, Paris 1550) has shown—it would be a good two centuries before travel literature began to be translated on any substantial scale in Britain.³⁷ The period from 1750 to 1830 was one of the most sustained and intense periods of cultural transfer through travel writing in translation. It witnessed a vast expansion in

the publishing market. Research based on the Nineteenth-Century Short Title Catalogue (NSTC) has shown that historical and geographical texts represented almost a fifth of the translations on the British book market in 1790, a figure which had halved 20 years later (as these domains competed, unsuccessfully, with Romantic poetry), but which had recovered by mid-century to even reach a slightly higher percentage than 60 years previously.³⁸ The industrialization of printing, new transport technologies, and the increasing internationalization of commercial exchanges—not least in publishing—led to a considerable upturn in the rate of translation in general. By drawing on just some of the hundreds of travelogues that lie forgotten and unread in libraries across Europe,³⁹ representing an astonishingly rich vein of material almost entirely untapped by contemporary research, the present volume aims to give some sense of the dynamics of translation and sheer range of travel accounts being translated in this period.

No single work can hope to offer a comprehensive account of the translation, circulation, and consumption of non-fictional travel writing in late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Europe. While a full exploration of the macro-trends in the cross-European translation of travel writing, addressing broad questions such as which travel narratives were translated, by whom, from and into which languages, and for what readership, is an important research project that still remains to be undertaken, it is not within the scope of the following chapters. We are aware that our focus is very clearly on Western Europe, and that in this collection Scandinavian or Eastern European travelers and translators have not fallen within our purview. We are also aware that the issue of readership has been little touched on. Our goal, however, has been to offer a detailed analysis of one geographical area of knowledge exchange and transmission across a relatively broad time-span, and examine at close quarters which agents—translators, editors, publishers—were responsible for enabling knowledge to travel. In so doing, we aim to stimulate further research in the area of non-fictional travel writing in translation that will open up new and exciting perspectives both for scholars of Travel Writing and Translation Studies. Focusing on a period that was essentially the golden age for the travel narrative, we provide a series of close readings of case studies that shed light on three significant nexuses at the heart of continental and extra-European travel: nationalism, ideology, and gender.

TRANSLATION, IDENTITY, AND IDEOLOGY

In the words of Ralph Griffiths, writing in the *Monthly Review* for March 1768, “Of all the various productions of the press, none are so eagerly received by us Reviewers, and other people who stay at home and mind our business, as the writings of travellers”.⁴⁰ Travel writing was indeed one of the most widely read genres of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth

centuries, whether in monograph or serialized form. It was also one of the most important genres of the day to reflect implicitly or explicitly on issues of national identity, individuality, and character. As Katherine Turner has demonstrated in the case of Britain, travel writing played a central role not only in shaping Britain's emerging sense of national identity, but in pointing up how complex and heterogeneous this notion really was.⁴¹ European travelogues penned by Britons were rarely straightforwardly nationalistic or consistent in their understanding of what constituted the "foreign". Indeed, she suggests, travel writing often presented a challenge to discourses of national unity.⁴² Roger Ellis and Liz Oakley-Brown, in their 2001 study of translation and Englishness, have noted that while issues of identity, representation, and subjectivity have been thoroughly explored from a postcolonial standpoint—as for example in Eric Cheyfitz's *The Poetics of Imperialism* (1991), Tejaswini Niranjana's *Re-Siting Translation* (1992), and Michael Cronin's *Translating Ireland* (1996)—relatively few publications have explored how translation has contributed to the construction of identity within Europe and specifically England.⁴³ Taking the case of Britain, they examine how translation from classical and European languages operated within a variety of matrices, including those of nation, gender, science, religion, and class, with translation often operating as a reaction to a perceived intellectual or cultural lack, which the translator hoped the translated text would make good.⁴⁴

Translation had a pivotal role to play in the construction of national identity in the period that this study covers. From the second half of the eighteenth century on, notions of what 'nation' and 'nationhood' might constitute were rapidly developing, particularly in Britain. These terms tended to be allied with issues concerning who created culture and literature, how it should relate to a national ideology and how this should be institutionalized, as well as more ambivalent (or less tangible) ideas concerning what constituted a 'national spirit'. Certainly French supremacy in cultural matters well into the second half of the eighteenth century continued to overshadow these debates and in the German-speaking states, which lacked a political and cultural center, ideas about 'nation' were far slower to develop. But the decline in French as a prestige vernacular, coupled with the emergence of English as the new international language of communication, saw a shift both in the dynamics of exchange between cultures and languages and in the way in which translators conceived of the activity of translation. The free, creative, translation style of the *belles infidèles*, although not universally accepted, had nevertheless shaped approaches to translation across Europe. Under the influence of German thinkers, translation saw a return to literalism in the Romantic period. For as Harald Kittel and Andreas Poltermann note, German writers and translators had come to resent what they perceived as the distorting effects of French mediation.⁴⁵ As Friedrich Schlegel argued, only by translating every detail could justice be done to the original in its entirety:

a translation should aim for fidelity to the source text, while offering a creative transformation and naturalization of the original in accordance with the expectations and requirements of the target culture. In Britain too, as Roger Ellis and Liz Oakley-Brown demonstrate, the shift away from considering France as a cultural centre and French modes of translation as exemplary allowed a new self-understanding of the role of the translator to emerge.⁴⁶ They argue that a strong domesticating approach shaped British translators' agendas, which was very much in line with the imperial projects of the age.

But if the crystallization of the concepts of *nation* and *nationality* was a key development in late eighteenth-century Europe, it is just as important to remember that this was also the period in which ideas concerning *internationality* began to emerge. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the word 'international' was coined by Jeremy Bentham in 1780, and was itself an indication of the growing awareness of a wider political, juridical, literary, and cultural identity that was beginning to develop.⁴⁷ Translation had a vital role to play in ensuring that knowledge in a range of different fields could circulate amongst scholars and laymen alike. Goethe's use of the term 'Weltliteratur' [world literature] in 1827 to describe the growing international corpus of literature available to the contemporary reader also demonstrates how the mass of translated texts being produced in the period could give one readership access to a whole range of works belonging to other traditions. This allowed an international spirit of intellectual exchange to evolve which flouted national and linguistic limitations. And for authors too, it had far-reaching consequences: it compelled them to conceive of their audience in much broader terms and to think beyond national borders to what Armin Paul Frank has described as "the art of writing with an awareness of possible readers' responses abroad".⁴⁸

Preoccupations with identity, self and Other, thus lay at the very heart of notions of domestication and foreignization in Romantic translation theory. Schleiermacher not only reflected on how texts 'travelled' between source language author and target language reader in translation. He also addressed important questions regarding the extent to which foreign texts could and should be divested of their foreignness in translation, thus facilitating or complicating their entry into the target culture. Issues of 'domestication' and 'foreignization' were therefore implicit in Schleiermacher's question of whether the author should be brought closer to the reader or vice versa. This 'domesticating' method has been described by Lawrence Venuti as "an ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to target-language cultural values, bringing the author back home", while the 'foreignizing' approach constituted an "ethnodeviant pressure on those values to register the linguistic and cultural difference of the foreign text, sending the reader abroad".⁴⁹ Domestication also involved an actualizing approach which adapted the translated text to the values and norms of the target culture,

while ‘foreignization’ sustained the socio-historical differences that characterized the source text, thus enabling readers to gain insight into the source culture and ideology. As Venuti cogently argues, foreignization can act not only as a form of resistance against ethnocentrism, racism, and imperialism, but also as a form of resistance to textual exclusion by domestic literary canons.⁵⁰ Translation therefore has the power to enrich a nation’s literary canon by offering a domesticating rendering of a foreign travel account which enables it to comply with prevailing norms and audience expectation (sometimes even appearing to eradicate the translated narrative’s status as translation). Alternatively it can disrupt the cultural codes prevailing in the target language to emphasize difference and a refusal to adhere to the dominant discourses in the target language.

Like Burke and Hsia, who understand translation as a “double process of decontextualisation and recontextualisation, first reaching out to appropriate something alien and then domesticating it”, Stefanie Stockhorst also stresses the importance of translation as a process of negotiation, in which texts not only change their language, but their cultural frame of reference.⁵¹ Stockhorst has recently examined the role played by translation in the European Enlightenment, exploring not only the establishment of different national tendencies and traditions that emphasized faithfulness or originality, but also international transmission routes, translation at one remove (i.e., translations performed not from the original but from a translation), as well as conditions of publishing and the book market.⁵² Drawing on the model of ‘cultural transfer’ espoused by Michel Espagne and Michael Werner and reflecting an increasing shift on the part of cultural historians away from reductive national histories towards comparative and transnational approaches,⁵³ Stockhorst emphasizes how this approach allows us to move away from the assumption that national cultures are clear-cut, distinct entities, and toward a more international understanding of cultural exchange as a complex, fluid, undertaking.⁵⁴ However, the great value of Stockhorst’s edited collection lies primarily in its recognition that while fictional texts may differ from non-fictional writing in their diffusion, the dissemination of ideas across language boundaries necessarily requires translation. By looking beyond the translation of literary works by Richardson, Goethe, or Voltaire to German translations of the British agriculturalist Arthur Young and the Scottish moral philosopher Adam Ferguson, or Dutch translations of works on experimental philosophy, Stockhorst’s volume paints a much more comprehensive picture of knowledge transmission through translation in the European Enlightenment than has hitherto been the case. The aim of the present volume is to offer a less refracted picture of non-fictional writing in translation by focusing on just one genre, and by exploring its development well beyond the artificial watershed of the end of the Enlightenment, to ask how it was influenced by the radical processes of change that shaped the transition to the Romantic age.

EXTRA-EUROPEAN TRAVEL AND TRANSLATION

While it is a commonplace to associate late eighteenth-century travel writing with the Grand Tour, this was also the period in which scientific travel and exploration became firmly established. As leading powers in eighteenth-century Europe expanded their colonial interests out to South America, Africa, India, and many smaller lands besides, such extra-European voyages grew increasingly utilitarian, Roy Bridges has argued, as their motivations became concentrated around issues of trade, diplomacy and prestige.⁵⁵ Mobility, Paul Smethurst stresses, was crucial to European imperialist projects, “through which knowledge was garnered and returned, often haphazardly, to imperial centres, where it was refined, systematised, and used to inform further exploration and discovery”.⁵⁶ This mobilization of knowledge itself encouraged the publication of further travel accounts which would sate readers’ curiosity for the exotic. Western travelers repeatedly affirmed their narrative authority over the distant places, peoples, and cultures they described in their travel narratives, by describing them according to Western cultural, religious, political, and aesthetic norms. Another binary opposition which began to develop emphasized “the West’s mobility, science and *progress* versus the geographical *stasis* of ‘the Rest’”.⁵⁷ Travel writing was therefore seminal to the Western subjugation of the exotic through narrative as much as visual representational practices such as mapping or defining the extent and bounds of imperial ownership: text and language were integral to imperial meaning-making processes.

In her seminal study *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (1992), Mary Louise Pratt has paid close attention to the processes by which language and scientific systematization enabled Western travelers to impose their rationalizing forces on the exotic Other. She has shown how the emergence of natural history as a knowledge-building structure—particularly the taxonomy which Linnaeus described in the *Systema Naturae* [*System of Nature*] (1735)—epitomized the aspirations of European scientists to describe and categorize the world.⁵⁸ Deliberately drawing on a Latin nomenclature, which was nobody’s national language but everybody’s *lingua franca* in Western science, Linnaeus’ systematizing project popularized scientific enquiry across Europe.⁵⁹ Its impact on travel and travel writing was immense, as men and women alike took to botanizing, collecting, and classifying. Such scientific enterprises, whether amateur or otherwise, involved language on a variety of different levels, not just in the narration of scientific voyages, but also in the invention of new terms to describe the hitherto unknown, with all the concomitant difficulties this entailed for translators required to put the strange, wonderful and sometimes downright obscure into a foreign tongue.

But Pratt has also been careful to avoid representing colonial discourse as a closed system in which the voices of indigenous peoples were wholly stifled, and to distance herself from the suggestion that European