

[1] Prof. Connon suggests that the source of 'belles infidèles' should be explained (in spite of or in fact because of the sexist origin).

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PART 1

## POLEMICAL TRANSLATION, TRANSLATING POLEMIC: ANNE DACIER'S RHETORIC IN THE HOMER QUARREL

**A06308** The seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries in France were no strangers to polemics about translation, particularly of classical texts. The question of whether to assimilate an ancient text to French standards of taste or retain its original culture fuelled debates about literary value, modernity, and national identity in this period, often seen as a time of transition from the retrospective gaze of the Renaissance to Enlightenment modernity. This transition made itself felt in the emergence of the increasingly popular, but not uncontested, 'domesticating' method of translation, known as the 'belles infidèles' or 'faithless beauties';<sup>1</sup> in the Quarrel of the Ancients and Moderns of 1687, which centred on questions of legitimate adaptation of ancient texts and their relative value compared with French works;<sup>2</sup> and in the *Querelle d'Homère* (1711–19), often seen as the Quarrel's 'second phase', which focused on Homer's significance and the translation of his epics into French. The Homer Quarrel was initiated by a dispute between Anne Dacier, who had produced a scholarly prose translation of the *Iliad* in 1711, and the *académicien*, librettist, and playwright Antoine Houdar de la Motte, who provoked outrage with his freer verse translation of the *Iliad* in 1714.<sup>3</sup> Translation, therefore, was frequently the subject of debate in this period, and translators' choices often made them agents of change.

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The *Querelle d'Homère* was also a case of a 'translated Quarrel' as it had a parallel in England, the Battle of the Books, which occurred in early eighteenth-century London, involving authors and critics such as Jonathan Swift, Alexander Pope, and William Wootton.<sup>4</sup> Anne Dacier and Alexander Pope represent a point of interaction between the two contexts, and translation played a central role in their exchange. Pope made use of Dacier's 1711 translation of the *Iliad*. This article was funded by support from the Leverhulme Trust. I would also like to thank Hugh Roberts and Kate Tunstall for their generous feedback on earlier versions.

<sup>1</sup> Gilles Ménage in reference to Nicolas Perrot d'Ablancourt's 1654 translation of Lucian in *Ménagiana*, 2nd edn, 2 vols (Paris: Delaulne, 1694), I, 306.

<sup>2</sup> On the Quarrel see Joan DeJean, *Ancients against Moderns: Culture Wars and the Making of a Fin de Siècle* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997).

<sup>3</sup> Anne Dacier, *L'Iliade d'Homère*, 3 vols (Paris: Rigaud, 1711); Houdar de la Motte, *L'Iliade, poème avec un discours sur Homère* (Paris: Dupuis, 1714). Further references to both translations will be given in the text.

<sup>4</sup> Alexis Tadié, 'Peut-on traduire les Querelles? De la Querelle des Anciens et des Modernes à la Battle of the Books', in *Le Temps des querelles*, ed. by Jeanne-Marie Hostiou and Alain Viala (= *Littératures classiques*, 81 (2013)), pp. 211–26.