

Colombia

In brief



 SPA [Colombia](#)

origins

Adopted in February of 1819, the name *Colombia* was suggested by Simon Bolivar during the Congress of Angostura in the *Carta de Jamaica* ['Jamaica Letter'] as “*un tributo de justicia y gratitud al creador de nuestro hemisferio*” ['a tribute of justice and gratitude to the creator of our hemisphere'], Christopher Columbus.

other names

Historically, and as with other changing territorial entities, the territory that today is a part of la República de Colombia [The Republic of Colombia] has also been referred to as *Nuevo Reino de Granada* [New Kingdom of Granada], *Virreinato de la Nueva Granada* [Viceroyalty of New Granada], *Gran Colombia* [Greater Colombia], *República de Nueva Granada* [The Republic of New Granada], *Confederación granadina* [Granadine Confederation], and *Estados Unidos de Colombia* [United States of Colombia].

abstract


Translation and interpreting have been a part of the Colombian cultural and political spheres from much longer before what we now know as the Republic of Colombia ever existed. In this article, we will present an overview of the most relevant events, practices, and agents throughout the history of translation in this Latin American country. Tracing the history of translation in Colombia requires work along different lines, which may give an account of both translational practice itself and of those who have documented this practice, from both synchronic and diachronic perspectives. Our first line of work, then, will involve historical work, entailing the documentation of practices of translation and interpreting in the national territory. A second line of work, from a historiographical

perspective, will offer an account of the work presented by scholars at different points in time to document or study Colombian translations. Our third line of work is historical-discursive in nature, and will present the discourses that have taken translation as their object, particularly as it has an impact on the social, cultural, political, scientific, and literary spheres of Colombian life. Finally, we will present academic works that approach translation from the perspective of contemporary translation studies, a line of work that we have termed translational. By offering this overview, we intend to present the state of the art of translation history and historiography in Colombia. It is our ultimate purpose to provide an assessment of the practices and discourses surrounding translation so as to determine the various functions that this activity has had in the different spheres of Colombian culture.

 **record**

 Juan G. Ramírez Giraldo & Paula Andrea Montoya Arango

 2022

 Ramírez Giraldo, Juan G. & Paula Andrea Montoya Arango. Trans. Tess Anderson & Brianna Viñas. 2022. "Colombia" @ *ENTI (Encyclopedia of translation & interpreting)*. AIETI.

 <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.6364922>

 https://www.aieti.eu/enti/colombia_ENG/

Entry



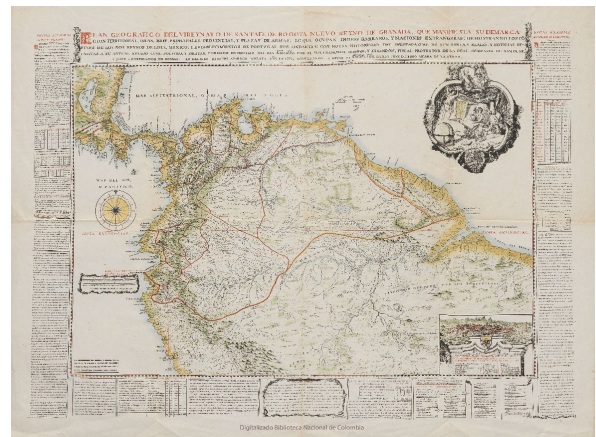
 SPA [Colombia](#)

contents

[Introduction](#) | [Historical front](#) | [Historiographic front](#) | [Discursive front](#) | [Translation Studies front](#) | [Research potencial](#)

Introduction

Translation and interpreting have been a part of the Colombian cultural and political landscape since long before the existence of the present-day República de Colombia. We present a journey through the outstanding facts, practices, and agents involved in the history of translation in this country. This requires study on different fronts that account for translation practices and an account of those who have documented them from synchronic and diachronic perspectives. One of the first *historical* fronts includes documenting the practice of interpreting and translation in the country. A second, *historiographic* front, accounts for academic works which document or study the translations of the past. A third *historical-discursive* front presents the discourses that have dealt with translation as a practice which impacts the Colombian social, cultural, political, scientific, and literary spheres. Finally, the academic studies dealing with translation are presented in the context of contemporary translation studies; we refer to this term as *translatological*.



Geographic plan of the Virreinato de Santafé de Bogotá [Viceroyalty of Santafé of Bogotá], Nuevo Reino de Granada (1772). Digital Map Library of the Biblioteca Nacional de Colombia. [National Library of Colombia]. ([Source](#))

We should not assume that the meaning of *Colombia* and *what it means to be Colombian* are shared by all. Historically and geographically, variations of the name *Colombia* have referred to territorial entities that today make up neighboring states. Similarly, variations of the name *Nueva Granada* have been used to refer to this

territory. Today, *Nueva Granada* and other territories are considered to be independent republics. For the purposes of this article, we will consider translations and discourses on translation produced in different moments in the place known variously as *Nuevo Reino de Granada*, *Virreinato de la Nueva Granada*, *Gran Colombia*, *República de Nueva Granada*, *Confederación granadina*, *Estados Unidos de Colombia*, and what we now refer to today as *la República de Colombia*. Comparably, texts produced and circulated in this territory are included even if they were not written or published by Colombians. This is particularly relevant to the colonial period and to intellectuals who have been exiled or have settled in the country.

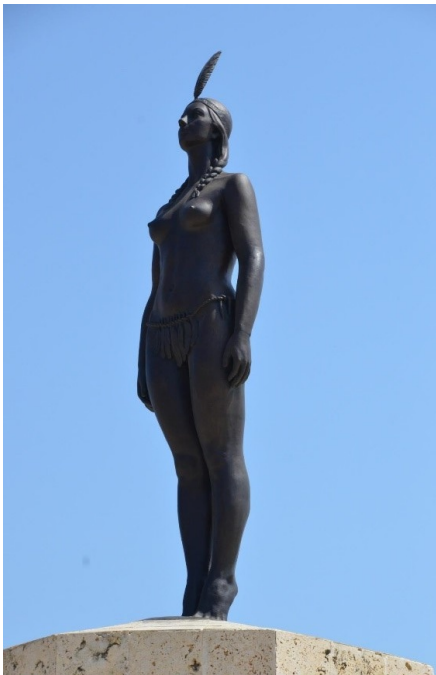
[back to top](#)

Historical front

We follow a more or less linear narrative to detail the main historical milestones of translation practice in Colombia, which concludes by presenting some trends in historical practices. Similar to the rest of the continent, Colombia experienced intercultural and interlinguistic processes marked by Spanish rule during the period of *encounter* and *conquest*, and the colonization from the fifteenth to the eighteenth centuries. The linguistic and cultural barriers were the first problems encountered by the first conquistadors and religious communities who arrived on the Colombian coast in the early 16th century. Many languages were spoken but none could be used as the lingua franca, which made the task more difficult. The languages they found on the coasts were not going to be the same as those in the hinterlands. Payas (2010) states that the people of this time period were the interpreters or the “mediadores lingüísticos orales” [“oral linguistic mediators,”], a complex figure that embodies multiple identities and reflects the struggles and power relations of the time. In the *crónicas* of the era, appellatives like *lenguas*, *lenguaraces* and *intérpretes* are frequently used. In [Fray Pedro Simón's](#) (1892: 84) work about historical conquest, one can read the following: “Hablóles el Capitán César con la *lengua* que llevaba, que, aunque no del todo, entendía algo de ella por los contratos ordinarios que solían tener los de esta Provincia con otras”. [“Capitan Cesar spoke to them in as best he could through the *lenguaa* [literally, *language/tongue*]. Although he did not entirely understand it, some of it he could due to the trade that the people of the Province often carried out with others.”].

These mediators were in some cases the captured indigenous people themselves, the first children of the *mestizaje* [i.e. of mixed race, European and Indigenous], soldiers brought by the conquistadors or clergymen, who in their evangelization or through their scientific interest, came into contact with indigenous languages and cultures. The intermediaries' main role was to further serve the interests of the conquistadors, who were mainly interested in gold and conquest. The intermediaries played fundamental roles in aiding further exploitation. Their role as facilitators contrasts with that of traitors, or of those who must be mistrusted, as Simon (1892: 293) suggests: “Por donde iba predicando en todas partes en nuestra lengua castellana con un intérprete, que algunas veces por ignorancia de nuestra lengua, ó por malicia, interpretaba mal y impropiamente lo que el santo predicaba”. [“he was preaching in our Spanish language everywhere with an interpreter, who sometimes out of ignorance of our language, or out of malice, misinterpreted what the saint preached.”] Reading these passages from another point of view reveals the resistance that

was arising in the communities, a way of recognizing the agency of the Other in the colonizer's own narrative.



Estatua A statue of La India Catalina in Cartagena de Indias [The city of Cartagena in Colombia]. (Lansing, Michigan), CC BY-SA 2.0. Source.

One of the symbols of syncretism of the time was [La India Catalina](#) [The India Catalina]. Native to the Zamba region and belonging to the [Mokana](#) culture, she was abducted as a child by Diego de Nicuesa and taken to Santo Domingo to learn the language and customs of the Spaniards. Nicuesa helped [Pedro de Heredia](#) in the conquering of Cartagena. Dressed in the clothes of the Spanish, La India Catalina served as a mediator between the conquistadors and the indigenous people of the Colombian Caribbean. She was seen as a diplomatic figure who diffused animosities while also triggering controversy. She is considered to be a symbol of mediation by some, and by others, of the annihilation of the indigenous people of the Colombian Caribbeanan símbolo de mediación o de exterminio de los pueblos nativos del Caribe colombiano.

She was not the only woman who played this role. This figure of the woman-interpreter is common in the Spanish American context, as is the case of “una india ladina cristiana, llamada [Ines](#), y intérprete de los nuestros”[“a Christian Ladino Indian, called [Ines](#), and interpreter of our people”] (Simon [1892](#): 293). Correspondingly, the work of interpreters in the central areas of communities of slaves brought from Africa to Cartagena, which

were led by the Spanish Jesuit [Pedro Claver](#), is key to understanding the process of mediation between slaves and the local community. The Jesuit not only had to face a significant variety of languages, but also had to denounce the mistreatment and injustices perpetrated on slaves. Claver highly valued interpreters as he saw them as being key factors in evangelization and in meeting the needs of slaves.

During the colonization (the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries), in the midst of the religious conquest and with a marked presence of the written word, the Franciscan, Jesuit, and Dominican communities would be indispensable to the physiological, anthropological, geographical, and translational production. In general, this was of great value to the cultural and scientific heritage of the continent (Pulido 2011). Grammars, catechisms, vocabularies, relationships, and travel stories leave their mark where translation begins to show its important role as cultural activity writ broadly. In la *Gramática en la lengua del Nuevo Reyno, llamada mosca* [Grammar in the General Language of the New Kingdom, called Mosca], [Fray Bernardo de Lugo](#) makes a unique description of the Muisca language in comparison with Latin and Castilian languages (Pérez 2014).

With the arrival of the [printing press](#) and political paradigm shifts, the cultural and intellectual landscapes begin their significant transformation. On the one hand, classical studies, inherited from the Spanish tradition and humanist studies, dominated Europe. This work was a great influence; Latin poets were translated to cultivate the intellect, but also to deepen the local language and grammar. Studies of the Spanish language begin to have a particular interest for identity. The translations of [Horace](#), [Virgil](#), and [Cicero](#) were popular among politicians and writers. [La Eneida](#)

[The Aeneid] is the oldest known translation from Latin by the hand of “cierto autor neogranadino” [“a certain Neo-Granadian author”] (Rivas 1993:270). Among these scholars and translators of Latin poets are Francisco Mariano Urrutia, Jose Rafael Arboleda y Arroyo. The first non-literary translations from Latin are two classic works *Historia del Christo paciente* [History of the Patient Christ] (1787), by [Jose Luis de Azuola y Lozano](#), and *El traductor, retrato de los franc-masones* [The Translator Portrait of the Freemasons] (1824). The great Colombian Latinist, [Miguel Antonio Caro](#), was also one of the most prolific translators of English and French works of the nineteenth century. His translations include [Hugo](#), [Lamartine](#), [Sully Prudhomme](#), [Longfellow](#), and [Bryant](#). Another language scholar in the nineteenth century was [Ezequiel Uriceochea](#). He specialized in indigenous languages, Arabic, and German.

With the transition that led the former colonies to become independent republics, new European and American influences inspired intellectuals to build their own nation and identity. In the political, literary, scientific, and institutional aspects, real changes were afoot and translation was a strategy in the renewal of ideas. The political texts translated included *Los derechos del hombre y del ciudadano* [Declaration of the Rights of Man] (1793) written by a military precursor of independence, [Antonio Narino](#), which led to his exile, and those by [Florentino Gonzalez](#), texts that promoted *liberal ideas in Colombia*. Many of these translations were published in Chile and Argentina. His translated works include *El gobierno representativo* [Considerations on Representative Government] by [John Stuart Mill](#) (1865), *Constituciones de algunos estados de la Unión Americana* [Constitutions of Some States of the American Union] (1870), and *Naturaleza y tendencia de las instituciones libres* [Nature and Tendency of Free Institutions] (1887). [José María Vergara y Vergara](#), who was one of the great intellectuals and newspaper editors of the nineteenth century, also translated to spread the ideas of [Destutt de Tracy](#), [Montesquieu](#) and [Thomas Paine](#); and [Antonio Llano](#), living in the United States since the late nineteenth century, translated American works of political science in his periodical *El pensamiento contemporáneo* [Contemporary Thought] (1891) and in monographs such as *Democracia y seudodemocracia* [Democracy and Pseudo-Democracy] (1940) and *El desarrollo de las ideas en los Estados Unidos* [The Development of Ideas in the United States] (1941).

In the nineteenth century, two lines of work attract attention in the field of Colombian translation: literary and specialized texts. The latter has remained less explored from the point of view of recovering texts for analysis. In the Colombian cultural sphere, literary translation was central to bringing attention to new authors and literary movements, thus renewing and enriching the cultural sphere. Colombian translators are writers and intellectuals or editorial agents (newspaper publishers or publisher owners). Their main source of knowledge dissemination came from books and the press. Interest tends to revolve around certain authors. European [romanticism](#) has a strong impact and French poets are the favorites for translation. The attention to Victor Hugo, as reflected in numerous translations and retranslations of his works, is noteworthy. [Rafael Pombo](#) was an exceptional translator of many authors such as [Lord Byron](#) and Henry W. Longfellow, although the poet's most well-known translations were those of children's stories from the English-speaking world. Other translators of Longfellow were Ruperto Gomez, Cesar Conto, Miguel Antonio Caro, Diego Fallon, and [Ismael Enrique Arciniegas](#). The theatre translations by [Lorenzo Maria Lleras](#) and the travel literature translations are of special note, such as [Joaquín Acosta's](#) *Viajes científicos a los Andes Ecuatoriales* [Scientific Travels to the Equatorial Andes] by [M. Boussingault](#).

In modernism, noteworthy translators include Ismael Enrique Arciniegas, the translator of Jose Maria de Heredia, Víctor Hugo, Albert Samain and Paul Gerald are noteworthy; as well as Guillermo Valencia, translator of Far Eastern poetry, Wilde, Baudelaire, Verlaine, Goethe, and Stefan George. Cultural projects such as magazines or literary gatherings were important at that time in making translation visible while renewing aesthetics. For example, the translations of José Joaquín Borda appeared in the literary periodical *El Mosaico* [The Mosaic]; Jorge Gaitán Duran published several translations in the journal *Mito* [Myth]. The journal *Pan* [Bread] published several translations of Enrique Uribe White, the translator of Omar Khayyam's *Rubaiyat*; Pierre Louÿs's *Las canciones de Bilitis* [The Songs of Bilitis]; and Wilde's *Balada de la cárcel de Reading* [Ballad of Reading Gaol]. The journal *Gris* [Grey] was also an important cultural showcase for translators. Literary groups such as *La Gruta simbólica* [The Grotto] saw the emergence of Víctor M. Londoño; *Los Cuadernícolas* [The Notebooks] featured Andres Holguin, a great translator of French poetry; *Los Panidas* included the great poet Leon de Greiff and his brother Otto de Greiff. And *Los Nuevos* included translators such as Jorge Zalamea Borda, translator of *Requiem for a Nun* [Réquiem para una mujer] by William Faulkner, the work of Saint-John Perse, as well as works by Camus, Sartre, and Gide.

During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Colombia underwent profound changes, which were reflected in the importation of models and therefore, in the translations of specialized texts. Advances in education and medicine received strong European influence in the mid-nineteenth century. The production of specialized and informative translations was broad and multidisciplinary. Aureliano Gonzalez Toledo translated *El principio de utilidad* [Principle of Utility] by John Stuart Mill; Manuel María Madiedo translated *La religion natural* [Natural Religion] which is based on Bentham's work and Zaborowski's *Origen del lenguaje* [Origin of Language]. In education, many books and textbooks were translated by intellectuals such as Venancio G. Manrique (*El deber*) [The Duty] by Samuel Smiles, César C. Guzmán's *La Economía política popularizada* [The Popularized Political Economy], José Belver's *Tratado de higiene para los niños de ambos sexos* [Treatise on Health for Children of Both Sexes], Mariano Marinque's *Las maravillas de la aritmética* [The Wonders of Arithmetic] by J. Graillat, Manuel Z. de la Espriella's *Crédito agrícola* [Agricultural Credit], Salvador Camacho Roldán's *El ahorro* [Savings], and Martin Restrepo Mejía's *La ciencia del lenguaje* [The Science of Language] by Max Müller. In medical sciences, doctors themselves became translators. Jose Felix Merizalde, a student of José Celestino Mutis and one of the nation's first doctors, translated *Elementos de higiene* [Elements of Health] by Étienne Tourtelle. Pablo Garcia Medina translated a work entitled *Patología*; Juan de D. Carrasquilla L's translated *Tratamiento de la lepra* [Treatment of Leprosy], by Dr. P. G. Unna and Juan B. Londono translated *el Manuel de la comadrona y de la enfermera de Touvenaint* [The Manuel for the Midwife and Nurse] by Touvenaint.

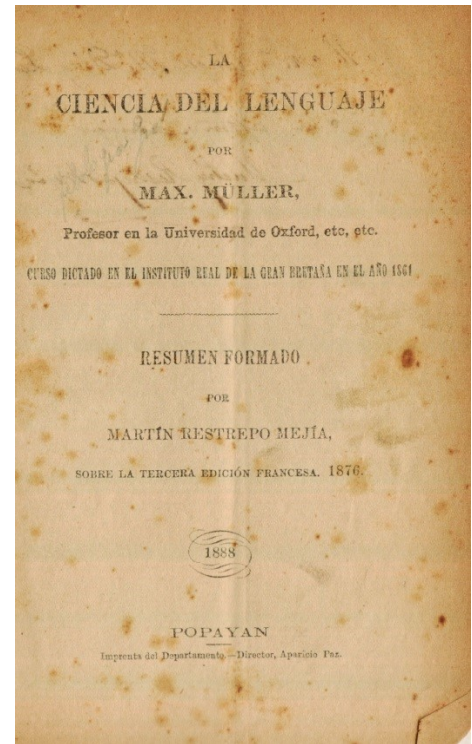
By the 20th and 21st centuries, renowned authors translated as they did in the 19th, and commercial, academic, and independent publishers took an interest in translation. José

Manuel Arango translated poems by Han-shan entitled *El solitario de la montaña fría* [Cold Mountain Hermit], and poems by Emily Dickinson. Other author-translators include Carolina Sanín, Piedad Bonnett, Elkin Obregón, Héctor Abad Faciolince, Santiago Gamboa, Juan Gabriel Vásquez and Pablo Montoya.

The publishing houses that produced translations included Voluntad (now part of Norma), Norma, Panamericana, Oveja Negra and Edilux (now defunct); specialized presses such as Temis, iteraturel on legal topics; academic presses such as Universidad de Rosario, Universidad de Antioquia, Universidad de Uniandes, and independent presses such as Fallidos Editores, who sponsored a literary translation prize, and Lasirén Editora, which translated Caribbean literature. Together with the traditional role of writers as practitioners of translation, the professional translator, devoted exclusively to the craft, was consolidated in this era.

It would prove impossible to render a complete account of the translations produced in Colombia throughout its history. Nevertheless, at the risk of oversimplifying, a major corpus of historical translations (1787-1950) in which 295 translations were collected in book form, albeit focused on the 19th century, illustrates some trends in translation. The most productive period for translations was between 1850 and 1899, coinciding with the development and consolidation of a national identity. Most of the 123 translations carried out during this period were literary works (41), while 33 were in education, primarily textbooks in areas such as astronomy, morality, foreign language, music, health and military tactics. The output of translations of scientific texts also reached its apex during this period: 29 in philosophy, medicine, history and economy. From 1900 to 1950, given the research emphasis on the 19th century, the total number of translations dropped to 63, most of which were scientific treaties (23), literary texts (20) and textbooks (11).

Before 1810, the task of translation was concentrated in iterature publications. Only three monographic volumes appeared—the aforementioned *Historia de Christo Paciente* [History of Patient Christ], from the Latin; and two scientific texts, *Historia de las ciencias naturales* [History of the Natural Sciences] (1791), from the French, and *De la fuerza de la iteratu humana* [On the Powers of Human Fancy] (1793), from the Italian, both translated by the dean of the cathedral of Santafé de Bogotá, Francisco Martínez. The next period saw more translation, and outstanding works would provide a model or inspiration for the emerging nation, such as *Constitución de los Estados Unidos de América* [the *Constitution of the United States of America*] (1811), by Manuel de Pombo, and *Guillermo Tell o la Suiza libre* [William Tell or Free Switzerland] (1822), by a “citizen of Cartagena”. The primary translations in this era are religious works, commissioned by the Catholic Church, such as the above-mentioned *El traductor* [The Translator] and *Palabras de iteratu de un sacerdote iteratur* [Words of Freedom from a Christian Priest] (1835). French is the language from



Cover of La ciencia del lenguaje [The Science of Language] by Max Müller, with an introductory summary by Martín Restrepo Mejía. It was common for translations not to follow the original exactly and to insert changes or translators' notes. Photograph by the authors.

which the most translations I in all periods. It reached its zenith 1850-1899, during which more than half (68) of the 123 translations published were from French, while 38 works were translated from English.

In the period under examination, and certainly continuing to today, the great Colombian hub of translation lay in Bogotá. Out of the 295 translations that make up this corpus, 219 were published in the capital, evincing the central role the publishing houses played in the country, and the special influence of Bogotá in the cultural life of Colombia. Medellín was far behind, with 22 translations. Oddly, other than Bogotá, more translations carried out by Colombians were published abroad than in any other Colombian city; the heart of Colombian translations in foreign countries was Paris, with 11 translations, followed by New York, Madrid, and Buenos Aires with 4 each, more than any other Colombian city except Bogotá and Medellín.

[back to top](#)

Historiographic front

This section summarizes historical efforts to document or study translations from the past. It includes the work of academics outside translation studies who, due to their philological, literary, or historical concerns, dedicated themselves to recovering lists, translation histories, or texts about translation that until then had not been systematically collected. The works are divided into three fronts: a) bibliographic lists or catalogs, b) anthologies and collections, and c) historical studies. The works in this section can serve as a basis for researchers to account for the history of translation in Colombia.

Bibliographic lists or catalogs about translations are part of the basic documents for building a national history of translation (Pym 1998: 41). Pym also points out that the lack of translation history is particularly frustrating in countries with a weak bibliographic tradition, as is certainly the case in Colombia. None of the lists presented has the sole purpose of translation (they are more centered on the bibliographic production of authors or institutions in general). They hardly meet Pym's criteria (1998: 47-48) for bibliographic catalogs: to function like a database from which to extract information; to aspire to completeness; and to explain the method of compilation and the identification of gaps. One of the first efforts to build a national production catalog was undertaken by [Isidoro Laverde Amaya](#) (1852-1903), one of the first Colombian bibliographers. In his *Apuntes sobre bibliografía colombiana* [Notes on Colombian Bibliography] (1882), Laverde presents bio-bibliographic sketches of 580 national authors. He collects translations starting from *Historia de Cristo paciente* [History of the Patient Christ] (1787), translated by Jose Luis de Azula and Lozano, which was printed on the country's second printing press. He closes by documenting the translation that Rafael Pombo began of Horace's odes in 1879 (unpublished at that time). Laverde published an update of his work, *Bibliografía colombiana* [Colombian Bibliography] (1895), of which only one volume appeared.

The [32nd Law of 1886](#) provided for a "general registry of literary property" to be created in the Ministry of Public Instruction. A report from the Ministry, from 1911, offers a list of Colombian publications registered between the creation of the registry, in 1886, and 1911, for which 179 records of works with author and year of publication appear. Twenty-six of them were translations. Under the same law, the translator is the owner of his or her translation and in charge of the registry.

Thus, the list presents the name of the translator as the author with the word “translator” next to it. Similar records may be the most reliable sources for bibliographic exploration in translation.

The Universidad del Rosario, one of the oldest universities in the country, compiled an institutional list in two volumes: *La producción iteraturel de los rosaristas* [The Intellectual Production of the Rosaristas] (2004). The first volume covers the years 1700 to 1799 and the second, from 1800 to 1899. Both feature the authors related to this institution and classify the works by genre, distinguishing articles, books, and other forms, and including a section for translations. Of similar scope, *Desarrollo del campo de los estudios literarios en la Universidad de Antioquia* [Development of the Field of Literary Studies at the University of Antioquia] (2015) collects the translations of authors affiliated with this institution founded in 1803.

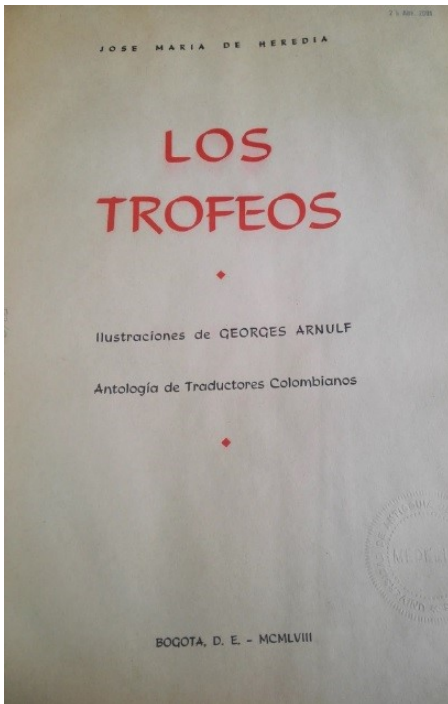
Finally, some lists appear in studies on the intellectual, artistic, literary, or academic life of authors who have translations among their works. These are valuable resources inasmuch as they allow a more complete overview of the translations of individual authors. Studies on Rafael Pombo (Orjuela 1975), [Candelario Obeso](#) (Prescott 1985) or Jorge Zalamea Borda (López 2014) offer lists of this sort.

Anthologies are compilations of texts that are diverse in nature and authorship, while collections include translations by a single author. The documents found can be classified into a) those that use translation as the main selection criteria; b) those that include translations as part of an author’s works; and c) others that, with a more general scope, include translations. The latter is the case of one of the first anthologies of Colombian lyric poetry. In *Parnaso colombiano* [Colombian Parnassus] (1886), in addition to the national production of just over one hundred poets, single-author translations are included, such as Hood (Rafael Pombo), Byron (Clodomiro Castilla and by Arcesio Escobar), Longfellow ([Cesar Conto](#)), Hugo (Ismael Enrique Arciniegas) and Moore ([Jorge Isaacs](#)). The published translations are indicated in the biographical reviews accompanying the included authors.

The first exclusive collection of translations in monographic format is *Víctor Hugo en América* [Victor Hugo in America] ([1889](#)). Compiled by the Chilean Jose Antonio Soffia and the Colombian Jose Rivas, this work brings together Spanish-American translations of the work of the French polygraph. Colombian translators (the most recurrent nationality in the collection), feature a mix of more recognized translators such as Caro, Pombo and Arciniegas, and those of lesser stature. In 1936, another collection of Colombian translations appeared, titled *Los poetas (de otras tierras)* [The poets (from abroad)], in which Guillermo Valencia was added to the names raised to the canon of national translators. In the same collection, la Biblioteca aldeana, appears *Traducciones teatrales* [Theater Translations] (1936), which includes two works translated by [Roberto Macdouall](#) and [Victor E. Caro](#).

In 1954, the *Antología de la poesía francesa* [Anthology of French Poetry] was published in Colombia, compiled and translated by Andres Holguín, which included works from genres ranging from *chansons de geste* to modern authors. In 1958, an anthology of the Colombian translations of Heredia’s *Los trofeos* [The Trophies] was published. In addition to the now-classic translators mentioned other names can be added that came to be recognized translators in the twentieth century: Otto de Greiff and Holguin himself. *Traductores de poesía en Colombia* [Translators of Poetry in

Colombia] (2000) collects versions of 75 national translators. This anthology is the most complete to date in terms of the periods and the spectrum of translations, as it does not restrict selections to one author or work, or on national scope.



Cover of the “*Antología de traductores colombianos*” [Anthology of Colombian Translators] from *Los trofeos*, by Jose Maria Heredia. Photograph by the authors.

Ultimately, the compilations of translations by a single author stand out, usually posthumous publications or tributes during the author’s life. Publishing volumes of translations or poetic versions (as they are usually titled) certainly underpins the processes of consolidation of translators in the canon. Such has been the case with Miguel Antonio Caro and several volumes of his *Obras iteratur* [Complete Works 1918-1945], which includes his translations: *Flos poetarum* (v. I), in which his Latin translations are published, *Sonetos de aquí y de allí* [Sonnets From Here and From There], *Traducciones poéticas y Poesías de Sully-Prudhomme* [Poetic Translations and Poetry of Sully-Prudhomme] (v. 8). Las *Poesías originales y traducciones poéticas* [The Original Poetry and Poetic Translations] by [Antonio Jose Restrepo](#) appeared in 1899. Rafael Pombo had his translations published in the posthumous volume *Traducciones poéticas* [Poetic Translations 1917]. Ismael Enrique Arciniegas brought out his *Traducciones poéticas* [Poetic Translations] in 1925. In 1937, *Obra literaria: verso y prosa* [the Literary Work: Verse and Prose] by Víctor M. Londoño appeared with his translations, published and unpublished, during his lifetime. The French, German, English, and Italian translations of Otto de Greiff appear as *Versiones poéticas* [Poetic Versions] in 1975. Finally, in 1997, *Obra ajena: recreaciones, paráfrasis y traducciones* [Foreign Works: Recreations, Paraphrases, and Translations], by [Eduardo Carranza](#) was published. It is notable that the collected works focus exclusively on poetic works. To date no compilations of translations from other genres have been found.

Finally, the motivations for the studies published by various authors seeking to recover or analyze translations or texts about translation from the past, transcend the current concerns of translation studies but constitute clear antecedents. [Antonio Gomez Restrepo](#) is one of the predecessors of the historical research on translation in Colombia. In volume I of his *Historia de la iterature colombiana* [History of Colombian Literature] (1938), he gives an account of perhaps the oldest translations from Nueva Granada, one of the first books of the *Aeneid* and another of *Phaedra*, by Racine. The only reference to a possible dating of the translations is the allusion to the fact that they are written “en letra del siglo XVIII (“in eighteenth century handwriting”) and both appear in the same volume of the Biblioteca Nacional archive. Years later, in *El latín en Colombia* [Latin in Colombia 1949] (3rd ed. 1993), Jose Manuel Rivas dwells meticulously on the first translations from Latin to Spanish that emerged in the colony until the beginning of the nineteenth century (pp. 269-280). He subsequently traces them to contemporary times. Victor Sanchez, in 1958, sketched a profile of “un traductor olvidado” [“a forgotten translator”], the classicist [Leopoldo Lopez Alvarez](#) (1891-1940), translator of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, of the *Seven tragedies of Aeschylus* and of the complete works of Virgil.

Finally, in 1966, Fernando Caro published an article in which he described in detail the prologue to [Gonzalo Jimenez de Quesada](#)'s book, the *Antijovio* [A Refutation of Paul Jovio] (1567). Perhaps it is the first text written on translation in Nueva Granada. Although the text had already been known and analyzed (even republished a few years earlier), Caro was the first to draw attention to the Spanish conquistador's views on translation.

This section has shown the sporadic efforts to build a Colombian translation studies historiography or 'translatography'. To these works, which can be interpreted as direct antecedents of translation studies, we add the discourses on this field of inquiry in the next section.

[back to top](#)

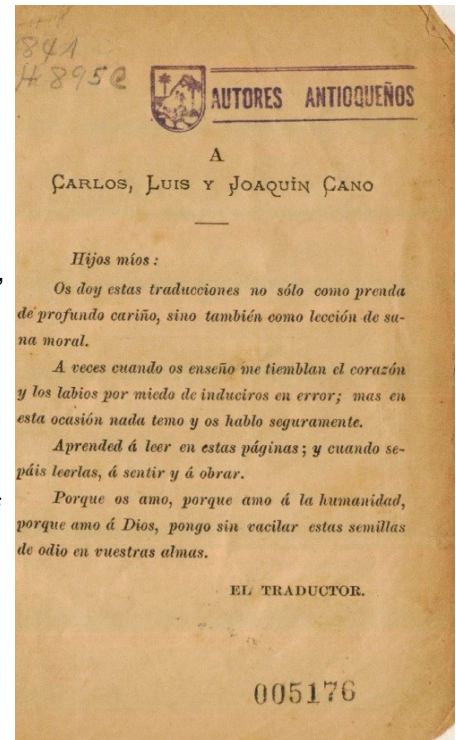
Discursive front

Paul St.-Pierre (1993: 62) understands discourse as a "a linguistic event produced by a subject within a specific historical context; as such, it is dependent upon laws and rules which determine not only what can be said but also the way in which it can be expressed", and, teasing out the elements of the definition, studies translation as the discourse of history. He carefully explores the modes in which those who have written *about* translation throughout history are producing historically contextualized discourse ruled by conventions determining the content and forms of how the task is conceptualized. This section addresses discourses around translations produced in Colombia. After a historical review, we analyze the discourses on translation as an activity with different layers that 1) conforms to different denominations and that distances itself from other concepts; 2) is conceptualized with definitions and metaphors; 3) assumes different modes of practice; and 4) is embedded in a tradition. By modifying the categories presented by Fernández y Sabio (2004), these discourses appear in the form of 1) paratexts (prologues, prefaces, postfaces, translators' notes, etc.); b) normative texts (in our case, mostly treatises on rhetoric); and c) critical metatexts (texts published subsequent to specific translations).

It is no simple matter to decide on the texts for inclusion in this section. Many geographical and historical problems make delimitation difficult and prove that studying translation can scarcely be circumscribed within clear national boundaries. Let us revisit the year 1567, when Gonzalo Jiménez de Quesada published in Spain a book known popularly as *El Antijovio* [A Refutation of Paul Jovio], in which he condemns the fact an Italian text offensive to the spirit of his nation was translated into Spanish. The text was published in Spain, but the manuscript could have surfaced when the Spanish colonizer was in the Americas. In the work he is identified as "Adelantado del Nuevo Reino de Granada y capitán general de él en las Indias Occidentales" [Adelantado of the New Kingdom of Granada and its General Captain in the Western Indies]. In 1690, Matías Ruiz Blanco's *Conversión en Píritu de indios cumanagotos y palenques* [Conversion of Cumanagoto and Palenque Indians in

Piritu] was published. The Franciscan relates in the text how he translated a doctrine to the language of those nations. A century later, the translation entitled *Historia de las ciencias naturales escrita en el idioma francés por Mr. Saverien* [Historia of the Natural Sciences Written in the French Language by Mr. Saverien] (1791), one of the first published in Colombia, was accompanied by a preface from a “priest avid for the public good” explaining the importance of the translation of sciences for “both Spains, the European and the American” (8). Dean Martínez himself published in 1795, between issues 207 and 214 of *Papel periódico de Santafé de Bogotá*, a series of installments on the publication of the Bible into vernacular languages. At the dawn of the 19th century in the publication *Correo curioso, erudito, comercial y mercantil de la ciudad de Santafé de Bogotá* appeared a couple of texts on the translation of Horace that exhibit divergent conceptions and practices of translation at length. After the national independence, several figures arrived on the political and cultural scene to devote their minds to the craft of translation. Presidents such as Mariano Ospina, Miguel Antonio Caro, José Manuel Marroquín, Carlos E. Restrepo; intellectuals on the order of Baldomero Sanín y Rafael Gutiérrez; celebrated writers such as Rafael Pombo, Guillermo Valencia, Jorge Zalamea; and personages from public life such as Fidel Cano and Rafael Uribe, all would join the chorus of voices singing translation’s praises, or repudiating it.

Translation is delimited both by what it *is* and by what it is *not*. Several writers characterize it with labels so arbitrary that they often denote opposite referents. Without exception, the words *traducir*, *traducción*, or *traductor* [to translate, translation, or translator] are used to refer to the action, effect or product and to the agent of the translational process. The first documented use, occurring in a text by Jiménez de Quesada, uses the spelling *traducción* [rather than the standard *traducción*]. On occasion, unobvious synonyms such as *aclimatar* [to acclimate], *trasladar* and its nominal form, *traslación* [to shift (v.), shift (n.), respectively], *pasar* [to move], *poner* (into x language) [to put into], or *refundir* [to recast]. Some peculiar designations include “poetas de inspiración refleja” [poets of reflected inspiration] (Antonio Gómez), or the derogatory *truchimán* [interpreter; scrupulous slick-talker] (Isodoro Isaza) to refer to translators; *transfundir* [to transfuse] (editors of *El tradicionista*) to translate; *transposición* [transposition] (Hernando Téllez) o *trasponer* [to transpose] (Jorge Zalamea). More specific terms denote translation in a single language (such as *españolizar*, to Spanish) or the use of one era in particular (such as *modernizar*, to modernize). *Verter* [to render] is used indiscriminately as a synonym of *traducir*, to translate, but some authors designate with a nominal form, *versión* [version] something qualitatively different from what is denoted by *traducción* [translation]; in such cases, it refers to an excessively free translation that does not reach a given level of similarity with the original. In other cases, *versión* corresponds to the generic *traducción* and contrasts with *imitación* [imitation]. Translations that hew too closely to the original are called literal or *calco* [lit., tracing, by ext., slavish], and occasionally, the verb *copiar* [to copy] is used. On the other end of the spectrum, the most common term is *traducción libre* [free or loose translation] or *paráfrasis* [paraphrase]. For these loose translations the term *imitación* [imitation] is employed at



Dedication of the translation of El cadalso by Victor Hugo by his translator, Fidel Cano. Photograph by the authors.

times, but in treatises on rhetoric this latter concept refers to a practice that does not align strictly with translation, though it shares elements with it.

Invoking the etymology of the word *traducción*, the definitions often bring out the idea of passage from one language to another. By contrast, images of emptying into a mold and those of the pouring of a liquid (perfume, wine, etc.) from one container to another illustrate the conception of translation as a change of form with greater or lesser loss of content, according to the esteem in which the activity is held; José María Restrepo Millán (1936) even suggested that the form is contained in the liquid poured into it, and takes the image further by denying the possibility of translation altogether. Sometimes translations appear to be attacks on the target culture, particularly in light of their contamination with alien elements. Other definitions imply a rapport or identification with the author, often in opposition to the reader's role. Moreover, the implication goes so far as to suggest that the resulting translation is, or could be, a poem in its own right, but different from the original. Similarly, the artistic nature of the task is wont to be vindicated, particularly through metaphors that associate the translator's work with that of the painter, sculptor, or poet. However, another school of thought sees translation not as artistic work but as copying or imitating an original painting while maintaining some of its traits but only giving a partial idea of it. Another metaphorical strand in Colombian texts on translation calls up the imagery related to jewels, whether their extraction from the bowels of the earth, their plunder from other cultures for the national heritage, or the painstaking work of precious metal craftwork required to set them or show them off. Metaphors relating translation to agricultural work of sowing and harvesting are also common, as are those associated with fashion, such as dressing a foreign author in the style of the day or that of the target culture. Finally, military images should be noted; in these the translator does battle, whether against the original author or against sense.



Article in *El Oasis* in which the editor Isidoro Isaza condemns

The type of translation most appealing to translation specialists is not in keeping with the most perennial of the translation types described in the first section. Literary translation--particularly poetry translation--and specifically the translation of the classics, has been a recurrent theme in these reflections, and Colombia is no exception. The majority is in agreement, some with conditions, on the translatability of literature, though the question of whether poetry can or should be translated in prose or in verse, and in the latter case in which metric form, give rise to the most lively debates. On the most radical extreme on the matter of translatability we can place Hernando Téllez (1976), who does not deny translation's practical utility, but considers it a lost cause in that the principle of identity cannot be achieved. Other authors such as Restrepo Millán (1936) extend this impossibility to a new freedom in which translation takes meaning only when this goal is abandoned and a new form is sought with the

translations for their deleterious effect on the young. Photograph by the authors.

resources of the target language. A middle way, such as that espoused by Bernardo Arias (1936), takes for granted a partial aesthetic loss, but acknowledges some degree of likeness with the original. Finally, for authors such as Miguel Antonio Caro (1888), Enrique Uribe (1952) or Andrés Holguín (1967), poetry translation not only is possible, but it constitutes an aesthetic object unto itself and can, in the words of the publishers of the newspaper *El tradicionista*, "equal and even surpass the original itself" (1875: VIII).

By comparison, authors such as Gonzalo Jiménez de Quesada (1567), Isidoro Isaza (1868), José Manuel Morroquín (1875) and Diego Rafael de Guzmán (1883) do not concern themselves with whether translation, of poetry or other genres, is possible, but instead indicate its corrupting power over language, particularly among the youth, and recommend that translations of all kinds not be read. The other texts that do not address poetry translation focus on Bible translation, such as those of Francisco Margallo (1825) and José Manuel Groot (1874), written in response to Evangelical Bible societies' attempts to promote the free public scrutiny of the Gospels. Other exceptions include texts on translation in second language learning (Mariano Ospina [1874], Carlos E. Restrepo [1909]), philosophy (Gabriel Rosas [1886], Rafael Gutiérrez Girardot [1951], history (Rafael María Madieto [1868]), and the sciences (Deán Francisco Martínez [1791]). Finally, most of the texts focused on translation, with the exception of those that treated the conversion or "*reducción*" [colonial resettlement] of the Indigenous communities; these include the treatises by Matías Ruiz (1690), Juan Nepomuceno Rueda (1889) and Rafael Uribe (1907).

One might conclude that the debate over translation in the Colombian 'proto-theoretical' texts does not differ much from the one underway in the West starting from the first writings on the subject. Naturally we would err in seeking some trace of originality or disruption in a discourse that, after all, arose in the context of the national intellectual elite who were in continuous contact with their counterparts in the northern hemisphere. In fact, were we to ascribe an essential characteristic to this discourse, it would be *traditional*, in the two senses set forth by Antoine Berman: "First, it comes to us from the depths of Western cultural tradition. Second, it belongs to a world in which translation is considered one of the pillars of traditionality, that is, of humankind's way of being, determined by something we can call tradition" (1989: 672). Colombian discourse on translation, in its evocation of Western values and traditions, is therefore a means of imagining for itself a way of being Western and a furtherance of its tradition, thus Ismael Enrique Arciniegas went so far as to declare that "in Colombia we all translate" (1925: 29). In these texts works on translation by authors beginning with St. Jerome are invoked, continuing through Fray Luis de León,



Goethe, Valéry, Chateaubriand, Croce, and reaching Ortega y Gasset, Walter Benjamin and Georges Mounin. Commonplaces from the very depths of the Western conception of translation are excavated, such as Cervantes' inverse of the tapestry, the French image of the *belles infidèles*, the quotation attributed to various authors whereby to translate one needs no more than a dictionary and daring, or the adage *traduttore, traditore*.

In the discourse on translation in Colombia, translations such as those of Fray Luis de León of Horace are canon, as are Pope's Homer and Delille's Virgil, and a national canon is constructed in which are consecrated translators such as Caro, Pombo, Arciniegas and Zalamea. The translator is above all a master of the tradition of translations of the text being translated, and proceeds in contravention to it; Enrique Uribe (1952: 95) asserts that "we translators believe two things; to wit: that we can outdo the author, and that no one before us translated the work at hand so perfectly." Beyond the well-known (and strategic) performances of humility by translators (of which the previous quote serves as a contrast), to build a discursive space in which this tradition is recognized works at the same time as a way of exalting one's own translation and of forming part of the tradition into which, and against which, one writes. Berman (1989:672) describes this traditional discourse of translation as uneven, reduced and shot through with dissension (between adherents to the word and defenders of sense); in sum, it is "rarely 'theoretical' in the modern sense". The following section takes up the work of researchers who have approached the history of translation from a fully modern theoretical and methodological perspective, derived particularly from translation studies.

Ismael Enrique Arciniegas (1865-1938), the translator of Horace, Byron, Longfellow, Hugo and Eugénio de Castro. Cultura Banco de la República, CC BY 2.0.

[back to top](#)

Translation Studies front

Translation research, and particularly on the history of translation in Colombia, is a new field and a strictly interdisciplinary one. Colombia has a long tradition of translations, but training and research in translation reduces the full range of topics to a few foci: universities with undergraduate or postgraduate degrees in translation (which are few in comparison to other countries in Latin America) that produce theses and dissertations on historical aspects of translation in Colombia (other training contexts, not necessarily in translation, require theses on topics related to the history of translation); research groups that work directly or tangentially on translation. Worthy of note in this connection is the Grupo de Investigación en Traductología at the Universidad de Antioquia, the only group working on the history of translation as its field of inquiry; academic journals (*Ikala* and *Mutatis Mutandis*, affiliated with the School of Languages at the Universidad de Antioquia; the latter is the only academic journal in translation and translation studies in Colombia), and university publications, some of them transnational, that have addressed translation history. In 2012, Francia Elena Goenaga published *Poéticas de la traducción* [Poetics of Translation], a compilation where two trends in research in translation history in Colombia are observed: 1) the intellectual and translative labor of translators who left their mark on the cultural history of Colombia; and 2) the literary and cultural periodicals wherein translation had a far from insignificant presence. Also worthy of note are some researchers working outside of Colombia. A large group of foreign publications is

extant (including considerable grey literature) that aimed to study the history of translation in Colombia.



First issue of the journal [Mutatis Mutandis](#), [Revista latinoamericana de traducción](#), serial that debuted in 2008 and is the only specialized journal in translation and translation studies in Colombia.

year, Andrés Jiménez published *Ciencia, lengua y cultura nacional. La transferencia de la ciencia del lenguaje en Colombia, 1867-1911* [Science, Language and National Culture: The Transfer of the Language of Science of Language in Colombia, 1867-1911], which shows the interest in studying the construction of national processes based on their contact with other cultures.

In the research panorama there are studies that seek to compile all that was translated in a given period, publications centered on translators and intellectuals in particular, others that study translations and their circulation in journals and literary and cultural venues, as well as texts that deal with specific genres. Translation research can be found on languages native to Colombia and written on historico-cultural aspects, such as those appearing in the special issue of the journal *Amerindia* devoted to the topic, in which the translation of the 1991 Colombian constitution into indigenous languages is taken up; this is one of the fields in which Colombian Translation Studies must explore further.

One of the recent general studies is the entry on Colombia in the *Diccionario histórico de la traducción en Hispanoamérica* (Lafarga & Pegenaute 2013), which sums up several aspects of the history of translation from the 18th to the 20th centuries. In the same publication are presented several profiles of Colombian translators. This work is complemented by the [Biblioteca de Traducciones Hispanoamericanas](#) (Pegenaute & Lafarga 2012) wherein, in addition to translator profiles, studies on translations such as “‘Himno al sol’, ‘A Dartula’ y ‘Temora’ de James Macpherson ([Ossian](#)) en las traducciones de José Joaquín Borda y Lorenzo María Lleras” [“‘Himno al sol’, ‘A Dartula’ y ‘Temora’ by James Macpherson ([Ossian](#)), in the translations of José Joaquín Borda and Lorenzo María Lleras”] and “Lamartine en la traducción de Vicente Holguín y Rafael Pombo (1859-1864)” [Lamartine in the translation by Vicente Holguín and Rafael Pombo (1859-1864)], a work by Ana María Agudelo. Similarly, there are publications that seek to collect the philological production of the colonial period.

The theoretical, methodological and thematic approaches to the history of translation are varied and interdisciplinary, as historians of culture and literature and researchers in linguistics have taken an interest in translation as a contact zone shared with creation, intellectual production, and the development of local literatures, publishing output and the production of knowledge. In 2018, a group of researchers studying publishing, reading and print circulation published *Lectores, editores y cultura impresa en Colombia. Siglos XVI–XXI* [Readers, Publishers and Print Culture in Colombia: From the Sixteenth to the Twenty-first Centuries], in which translation's role in the circulation of texts and knowledge transfer is acknowledged. That same

Research by Pulido (2011, 2012) on the Franciscan work in Colombia illustrate this fertile philological, scientific, and translational inquiry. These works add to the archeological work and open new fields for translation studies in Colombia, for much of the material is still awaiting study from more explanatory and historical perspectives. Interest in indigenous languages is burgeoning, especially during the 1991 Colombian Constitution when several indigenous languages were translated (Landaburu 1997). This historical and political milestone has piqued the interest of anthropologists and historians (Oróstegui 2008; Sarrazin 2014), for the cultural and political role of translation in a hegemonic context where native languages and cultures are minoritized is perpetually controversial, all the more so when nations wish to impose laws concerning them.

Similarly, there are publications that seek to collect the philological production of the colonial period. Research by Pulido (2011, 2012) on the Franciscan work in Colombia illustrate this fertile philological, scientific, and translational inquiry. These works add to the archeological work and open new fields for translation studies in Colombia, for much of the material is still awaiting study from more explanatory and historical perspectives. Interest in indigenous languages is burgeoning, especially during the 1991 Colombian Constitution when several indigenous languages were translated (Landaburu 1997). This historical and political milestone has piqued the interest of anthropologists and historians (Oróstegui 2008; Sarrazin 2014), for the cultural and political role of translation in a hegemonic context where native languages and cultures are minoritized is perpetually controversial, all the more so when nations wish to impose laws concerning them.

Research on translators is, along with the field of the history of translation, one of the most explored fields and the most voluminous in terms of publications. Aguirre (2004) analyzes the context of one of the most important female translators in Colombia, Soledad Acosta de Samper, a pioneer in translating topics related to women, family, and education in the 19th century. Studies on Candelario Obeso, Rafael Pombo, Miguel Antonio Caro and Baldomero Sanín (Montoya, Ramírez & Ángel 2006; Montoya & Ramírez 2011) reflect the vast output of translations by these 19th-century intellectuals, as well as the cultural functions of their translations. Obeso is one of the first black Colombian poets of a certain renown; he translated Shakespeare's *Othello*, an artillery manual, and manuals from English, French, and Italian. Pombo was a versatile translator, widely known for his adaptations and stories from the Anglophone tradition, a major translator of French, English and American poets, in addition to being an eminent promoter of education in Colombia and cultural mediator in the 19th century (Montoya 2010). Miguel Antonio Caro is one of the most studied translators; he was President of Colombia and is the preeminent Colombian Latinist and grammarian; translation always enabled him to reflect deeply on the particularities of Spanish (Castellanos 2012). His figure and work forged a bold conservative, classical, and Catholic vision through which Colombia achieved modernity, and his work in translation was not no less prominent (Ángel 2012; Serrurier 2017). Authors such as Deas (1992) and Rodríguez (2004, 2010) have shown the relationship between translation and power in Caro's work as a translator. His efforts as a grammarian and Latinist were fundamental to his exercising of power during the Regeneración, the era at the end of the 19th century that led Colombia to be constituted as a nation. Contemporary translators who exemplify that deep relationship between translation and creation in Colombian

literature are also objects of study, such as the work of Juan Gabriel Vásquez (López 2012), José Manuel Arango (Hoyos 2012) and Pablo Montoya (Orozco 2009; Weber 2020).

Finally, in the area of serials and cultural journals, the growing research opens compelling new areas of inquiry into the history of translation in Colombia. In 19th-century publications such as *El Nuevo Tiempo Literario* (Bedoya 2012) and *El Papel Periódico Ilustrado* (Vallejo 2010, 2012), a sizeable number of translations of the same Colombian writers for whom translation is one more expression of their creative process. Journals such as *Mito, Eco* (Restrepo 2012; Roja 2012) and *Espiral* (Montoya 2012) were veritable windows onto what was happening in European literature in the mid-twentieth century and served to disseminate it. These journals were characterized by translations of poetry and by the promotion of literary criticism and reflection. This wide-ranging production of translation should be seen as cultural enrichment, a strategy to renew local aesthetics and to import topics and models, as can be observed in the translation of another literary genre, the short story, in publications such as *El Gráfico* (Marín 2018), *Chanchito* and *Crónica* (Agudelo & Guzmán 2017). Tipiani (2017) offers a feminist appraisal of translation in periodicals such as *Letras* and *Encajes*, where translations appeared that gave impetus to the earliest women's political movements in Colombia. Other, more contemporary journals such as *El Malpensante, Número* and *Revista Universidad de Antioquia* (Orozco, Aguilar, Gómez *et al.*, 2007; Gómez 2010) evince the fact that tradition is undying and that the cultural magazine can be a major driving force behind translations. Moreover, the production of specialised translations in periodicals or books constitutes one of the new topics in which a greater contribution is expected. In venues such as *La Escuela Normal*, a large number of pedagogical and scientific dissemination texts were published (Montoya 2018). López-Bermúdez (2018) explores the translation of a text on geography written by Francisco Javier Vergara, while Verdejo (2014) engages with the reception of translations of John Stuart Mill carried out by Aureliano González. Research in the history of the translation of non-literary texts remains an unstudied area of inquiry.

[back to top](#)

Research potencial

From this journey through the history of translation in Colombia, we can conclude confidently that much of it has focused on archaeological work. Although there are already advances, the translations produced in Colombia and the discourses that have arisen around them have yet to be discovered and documented in a systematic way. Of particular interest is documenting translations in periodicals. Except for the cases mentioned here, the vast majority have not been explored. The history of non-literary translation remains a fertile ground for research. This line of research is favored by the fact that institutions such as the National Library and the Biblioteca Luis Ángel Arango have digitized part of their collections. However, the work continues to be complex and time

consuming due to the nature of the material and the poor conservation conditions in some institutions.

Similarly, non-literary translation research emerges as a field of interest with valuable antecedents already referenced. An opportunity to expand historical research on this front is interdisciplinarity, in order to explore the articulation of translation with other cultural forms, such as publishing, reading, criticism, writing, and scientific research and dissemination. This opportunity is not limited to perfecting historical research methods, but also to enriching the analysis based on the conceptual contributions of other disciplines.

The study of translation in Colombia has been characterized by almost exclusively addressing written texts and excluding other forms of translation and interpretation. Similarly, the work of cultural and political elites in translation has been almost exclusively the object of attention. No methodological or theoretical tools have been developed to better report, for example, everyday translation in migrant communities, popular movements and transnational activists, pre-Hispanic, and contemporary indigenous communities, and within revolutionary political projects. All of this material can illuminate and allow different conceptualizations to critically contrast the translation tradition that we have been able to document fully. In view of these facts, decolonial and gender perspectives are welcome in the area, as well as the implementation of new sources and methods that account for the unstable and ephemeral nature of these practices.

Finally, the historical investigation of the emergence of the figure of professional translators and interpreters (in contrast to the translator-intellectual or translators from the disciplines in which they translate) also opens as a new avenue of investigation. Certainly, the work of interpreters outside the colonial context (which may still receive more attention) is a gap for researchers in the area.

[back to top](#)

References



Academic bibliography

Agudelo, Ana María & Diana Paola Guzmán. 2017. "La traducción del cuento policiaco en dos revistas colombianas de primera mitad del siglo XX: Chanchito y Crónica". @ *Literatura: teoría, historia, crítica* 19/2, 51-77. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15446/lthc.v19n2.63368> [\[+info\]](#) [\[quod vide\]](#)

Aguirre Gaviria, Beatriz Eugenia. 2004. "Soledad Acosta de Samper y su papel en la traducción en Colombia en el siglo XIX". @ *Ikala* 9/15, 233-267. [\[+info\]](#) [\[quod vide\]](#)

Arciniegas, Ismael Enrique. 1925. *Traducciones poéticas*. París: Editorial Excelsior. [\[+info\]](#)

Bedoya Sánchez, Gustavo Adolfo. 2012. "La traducción como práctica moderna de lo literario. El caso del suplemento *El Nuevo Tiempo Literario* (Bogotá: 1903-1915, 1927-1929)". @ Lafarga, Francisco & Luis Pegenaute (eds.) 2012. *Lengua, cultura y política en la historia de la traducción en Hispanoamérica*, 31-39. Vigo: Academia del Hispanismo. ISBN 9788415175438. [\[+info\]](#)

Berman, Antoine. 1989. "La traduction et ses discours". @ *Meta* 34/4, 672-679. DOI: 10.7202/002062ar [\[+info\]](#) [\[quod vide\]](#)

Caro Molina, Fernando. 1966. "Traducción literaria según un escritor español del siglo XVI: Gonzalo Jiménez de Quesada, descubridor del Nuevo Reino de Granada". @ *Boletín cultural y bibliográfico* 9/10, 1926-1938. [\[+info\]](#) [\[quod vide\]](#)

Castellanos Prieto, Doris. 2012. "Miguel Antonio Caro como poeta-traductor". @ Goenaga, Francia Elena (ed.) 2012. *Poéticas de la traducción*, 13-35. Bogotá: Universidad de los Andes. ISBN 9789586957625. [\[+info\]](#)

Deas, Malcolm. 1992. "Miguel Antonio Caro and friends: grammar and power in Colombia". @ *History Workshop Journal* 34/1, 47-71. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1093/hwj/34.1.47> [\[+info\]](#)

Fernández Sánchez, Manuela & José Antonio Sabio Pinilla. 2004. "Pour une mise en valeur de la connaissance historique : une anthologie de textes portugais sur la traduction". @ *Meta* 49/3, 669-680. DOI: 10.7202/009385ar [\[+info\]](#) [\[quod vide\]](#)

Girón López, María Stella. 2015. *Desarrollo del campo de los estudios literarios en la Universidad de Antioquia*. Medellín: Fondo Editorial Biogénesis. ISBN: 9789588890456. [\[quod vide\]](#)

Gómez, Norman. 2010. "Visión de los "reescritores" sobre la traducción literaria en Colombia". @ *Lenguaje* 38/1, 209-233. [\[+info\]](#) [\[quod vide\]](#)

Gómez Restrepo, Antonio. 1956. *Historia de la literatura colombiana*. 4ª. Ed. Bogotá: Ministerio de Educación Nacional. [\[+info\]](#)

Guzmán Méndez, Diana Paola; Paula Andrea Marín Colorado; Juan David Murillo Sandoval & Miguel Ángel Pineda Cupa (eds.) 2018. *Lectores, editores y cultura impresa en Colombia. Siglos XVI-XXI*. Bogotá: Centro Regional para el Fomento del Libro en América Latina y el Caribe, Editorial Universidad Jorge Tadeo Lozano. ISBN: 9789587252286. [\[+info\]](#)

Hoyos, Jairo. 2012. "¿Cómo casi sobrevivo a un gran amor? La traducción como testimonio en José Manuel Arango". @ Goenaga, Francia Elena (ed.) 2012. *Poéticas de la traducción*, 45-54. Bogotá: Universidad de los Andes. ISBN: 9789586957625. [\[+info\]](#)

Jaramillo de Zuleta, Pilar. 2004. *La producción intelectual de los rosaristas. 1700-1799. Catálogo bibliográfico*. Bogotá: Editorial Universidad del Rosario. ISBN: 9789588225043. [\[+info\]](#)

Jiménez Ángel, Andrés. 2018. *Ciencia, lengua y cultura nacional. La transferencia de la ciencia del lenguaje en Colombia, 1867-1911*. Bogotá: Pontificia Universidad Javeriana. ISBN: 9789587812374. [\[+info\]](#)

Jiménez de Quesada, Gonzalo. 1952. *El antijovio*. Bogotá: Intituto Caro y Cuervo. [\[quod vide\]](#)

Lafarga Maduell, Francisco & Luis Pegenaute Rodríguez (eds.) 2013. *Diccionario histórico de la traducción en Hispanoamérica*. Madrid/Frankfurt: Iberoamericana/Vervuert. ISBN: 9783954871186. [\[+info\]](#)

Lafarga Maduell, Francisco & Luis Pegenaute Rodríguez (eds.) 2012. *Lengua, cultura y política en la historia de la traducción en Hispanoamérica*. Vigo: Academia del Hispanismo. ISBN: 9788415175438. [\[+info\]](#)

Landaburu, Jon. 1997. "Historia de la traducción de la Constitución de Colombia a siete lenguas indígenas (1992-1994)". @ *Amerindia* 22, 109-115. [\[+info\]](#) [\[quod vide\]](#)

Laverde Amaya, Isidoro. 1882. *Apuntes sobre bibliografía colombiana*. Bogotá: Imprenta de vapor de Zalamea hermanos. [\[+info\]](#) [\[quod vide\]](#)

Laverde Amaya, Isidoro. 1895. *Bibliografía colombiana*. Bogotá: Imprenta y librería de Medardo Rivas. [\[+info\]](#) [\[quod vide\]](#)

López Bermúdez, Andrés. 2014. *Jorge Zalamea, enlace de mundos. Quehacer literario y cosmopolitismo (1905-1969)*. Bogotá: Universidad del Rosario. ISBN: 9789587385656. [\[+info\]](#)

López-Bermúdez, Daniel. 2018. "La traduction d'ouvrages géographiques comme outil de consolidation de l'idée de nation. Le cas de la partie traitant de la Colombie dans la Nouvelle géographie universelle d'Elisée Reclus". @ *Íkala* 23/2, 307-317. DOI: 10.17533/udea.ikala.v23n02a07 [\[+info\]](#) [\[quod vide\]](#)

López Folgado, Vicente. 2012. "Juan Gabriel Vásquez, novelista y traductor". @ Lafarga, Francisco & Luis Pegenaute (eds.) 2012. *Aspectos de la historia de la traducción en Hispanoamérica: autores, traducciones y traductores*, 195-202. Vigo: Academia del Hispanismo. ISBN: 9788415175391. [\[+info\]](#)

Marín, Paula Andrea. 2018. "Cuento, traducción y transferencias culturales en la revista colombiana ilustrada *El Gráfico* (1925-1941)". @ *Íkala* 23/3, 521-534. DOI: 10.17533/udea.ikala.v23n03a08

[\[+info\]](#) [\[quod vide\]](#)

Montoya, Paula Andrea. 2010. *Rafael Pombo: La Traduction Comme Mediation Interculturelle*. Alemania: Éditions Universitaires Européenes. ISBN: 6131528810. [\[+info\]](#)

Montoya, Paula Andrea & Juan Guillermo Ramírez Giraldo. 2011. "Rafael Pombo y Candelario Obeso: Traducciones e intercambios culturales en la Colombia del siglo XIX". @ Pagni, Andrea; Gertrudis Payàs & Patricia Willson (eds.) 2011. *Traductores y traducciones en la historia cultural de América Latina*, 159-174. México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México. ISBN: 9786070224980. [\[+info\]](#)

Montoya, Paula Andrea; Juan Guillermo Ramírez Giraldo & Claudia Ángel. 2006. "Una investigación en historia de la traducción: cuatro traductores colombianos del siglo XIX". @ *Ikala* 11/17, 13-30. [\[+info\]](#) [\[quod vide\]](#)

Montoya, Paula Andrea. 2018. "Transferencia cultural y traducción en el discurso pedagógico del liberalismo radical: el caso de la prensa educativa". @ Guzmán Méndez, Diana Paola; Paula Andrea Marín Colorado; Juan David Murillo Sandoval & Miguel Ángel Pineda Cupa (eds) 2018. *Lectores, editores y cultura impresa en Colombia. Siglos XVI-XXI*, 188-217. Bogotá: Universidad Jorge Tadeo Lozano. ISBN: 9789587252286. [\[+info\]](#)

Montoya Durana, María José. 2012. "Transfórmase el amante. El oficio del poeta-traductor en la revista *Espiral*". @ Goenaga, Francia Elena (ed.) 2012. *Poéticas de la traducción*, 103-112. Bogotá: Universidad de los Andes. ISBN: 9789586957625. [\[+info\]](#)

[n.n.] (Redactores de *El tradicionista*). 1875. "Prólogo". @ Marroquín, José Manuel. 1875. *Obras escogidas en prosa y en verso, publicadas e inéditas*, III-XIII. Bogotá: Imprenta y librería de "El tradicionista". [\[+info\]](#) [\[quod vide\]](#)

Orjuela, Héctor H. 1975. *La obra poética de Rafael Pombo*. Bogotá: Instituto Caro y Cuervo. [\[+info\]](#)

Orozco, Wilson. 2000. "La traducción en el siglo XIX en Colombia". @ *Ikala* 5/9-10, 73-88. [\[+info\]](#) [\[quod vide\]](#)

Orozco, Wilson; María Cecilia Aguilar; Norman Gómez & Alejandro Ramírez. 2007. "Traducción literaria en *Revista Universidad de Antioquia, Número y El Malpensante* (1996-2006)". @ *Contextos* 19/38, 187-198. [\[+info\]](#)

Orozco, Wilson. 2009. "Manipulación ideológica y formal en la traducción literaria de Pablo Montoya Campuzano". @ *Íkala* 14/21, 39-55. [\[+info\]](#) [\[quod vide\]](#)

Oróstegui Durán, Sandra Liliana. 2008. "Traducción de la Constitución colombiana de 1991 a siete Lenguas Vernáculas". @ *Reflexión Política* 10/19, 164-175. [\[+info\]](#) [\[quod vide\]](#)

Payàs, Gertrudis. 2010. "Tras la huella del intérprete en la historia colonial hispanoamericana". @ Grupo Alfaqueque (ed.) 2010. *Los límites de Babel. Ensayos sobre la comunicación entre lenguas y culturas*, 77-99. Madrid/Frankfurt: Iberoamericana/Vervuert. ISBN: 9788484895138. [\[+info\]](#)

Pérez Blázquez, David. 2014. "La actividad lingüística y traductora de Fray Bernardo de Lugo". @ *In-Traduções* 6, 131-142. [\[+info\]](#) [\[quod vide\]](#)

Prescott, Laurence E. 1985. *Candelario Obeso y la iniciación de la poesía negra en Colombia*. Bogotá: Instituto Caro y Cuervo. [\[+info\]](#)

Pulido, Martha Lucía. 2011. "Registro de la bibliografía franciscana que se encuentra en las bibliotecas colombianas: aproximación histórica". @ Bueno, Antonio & Miguel Ángel Vega Cernuda (eds.) 2011. *Lingua, cultura e discorso nella traduzione dei francescani*, 507-520. Perugia: Università per Stranieri di Perugia. ISBN: 9788890652400. [\[+info\]](#) [\[quod vide\]](#)

Pulido, Martha Lucía. 2012. "Apuntes sobre la traslatio en los saberes curativos en América". @ Vega Cernuda, Miguel Ángel (ed.) 2012. *Traductores hispanos de la orden franciscana en Hispanoamérica*, 63-72. Lima: Universidad Ricardo Palma. ISBN: 9786124609930. [\[+info\]](#)

Pulido, Martha Lucía & María Victoria Tipiani. 2012. "La práctica de la traducción literaria en Colombia desde la década de los noventa hasta hoy". @ Adamo, Gabriela (ed.) 2012. *La traducción literaria en América Latina*, 67-81. Buenos Aires: Fundación TyPa/Editorial Paidós. ISBN: 9789501256161. [\[+info\]](#)

Pym, Anthony. 1998. *Method in Translation History*. London: Routledge. ISBN: 9781900650120. [\[+info\]](#)

Restrepo, Melisa. 2012. "Mito y Eco: traducción de literatura, transformación de la cultura". @ Goenaga, Francia Elena (ed.) 2012. *Poéticas de la traducción*, 113-129. Bogotá: Universidad de los Andes. ISBN: 9789586957625. [\[+info\]](#)

Restrepo Millán, José María. 1936. "Nuevo rumbo en la traducción de Horacio". @ *Revista Javeriana* 6, 327-338. [\[+info\]](#) [\[quod vide\]](#)

Rivas Sacconi, José Manuel. 1951. *El latín en Colombia: bosquejo histórico del humanismo colombiano*. Bogotá: Instituto Caro y Cuervo, 1993 (3ª ed.) [\[+info\]](#)

Rodríguez, José María. 2004. "The regime of translation in Miguel Antonio Caro's Colombia". @ *Diacritics* 34/3-4, 143-175. [\[+info\]](#)

Rodríguez, José María. 2010. *The City of Translation. Poetry and Ideology in Nineteenth Century Colombia*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. ISBN 9780230111783. [\[+info\]](#)

Rojas, Gabriel. 2012. "El Occidente de La Revista Eco. Notas sobre los primeros quince años de la publicación". @ Goenaga, Francia Elena (ed.) 2012. *Poéticas de la traducción*, 131-137. Bogotá: Universidad de los Andes. ISBN: 9789586957625. [\[+info\]](#)

Ruiz Blanco, Matías. 1892. *Conversión en Piritú de indios cumanaotos y palenques*. Madrid: Librería de Victoriano Sánchez. [\[+info\]](#) [\[quod vide\]](#)

Sánchez Montenegro, Víctor. 1958. "Un traductor olvidado". @ *Boletín cultural y bibliográfico* 1/10, 335-339. [\[+info\]](#) [\[quod vide\]](#)

Sarrazin, Jean Paul. 2014. "Las hojas sabias en otra casa. Análisis de la traducción de la Constitución Política colombiana a la lengua indígena inga". @ *Signo y Pensamiento* 65/33, 16-31, DOI:10.11144/Javeriana.SYP33-65.hsoc [\[+info\]](#) [\[quod vide\]](#)

Serrurier, Cécile. 2017. "Usos de la poesía francesa en Antonio José Restrepo (Poesías originales y traducciones poéticas, 1899) y Miguel Antonio Caro (Traducciones poéticas, 1889)". @ *Poligramas* 45, 117-132. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25100/poligramas.v0i45.6308> [\[+info\]](#) [\[quod vide\]](#)

Simón, Fray Pedro. 1892. *Noticias historiales de las conquistas de tierra firme en las Indias occidentales*. Bogotá: Casa editorial de Medardo Rivas. [\[+info\]](#) [\[quod vide\]](#)

St-Pierre, Paul. 1993. "Translation as a Discourse of History". @ *TTR* 6/1, 61-82, DOI: 10.7202/037138ar [\[+info\]](#) [\[quod vide\]](#)

Téllez, Hernando. 1976. "Traducción". @ Ruiz, Jorge Eliécer & J. Gustavo Cobo-Borda (eds.) 1976. *Ensayistas colombianos del siglo XX*, 155-156. Bogotá: Colcultura. [\[+info\]](#)

Tipiani Lopera, María Victoria. 2017. "Translation with Fluctuating Feminist Intention. *Letras y Encajes: A Colombian Women's Magazine of the 1930s*". @ von Flotow, Luise & Farzaneh Farahzad (eds.) 2017. *Translating Women: Different Voices and New Horizons*, 90-102. London: Routledge. [\[+info\]](#)

Uribe White, Enrique. 1952. "La traducción". @ Wilde, Oscar. 1952. *La balada de la cárcel de Reading*, 91-103. Bogotá: Antares. [\[+info\]](#)

Vallejo, Olga. 2010. "Una propuesta de lectura del Papel Periódico Ilustrado (1881-1888). El tema de la imagen". @ Laverde Ospina, Alfredo & Ana María Agudelo Ochoa (eds.) 2010. *Observaciones históricas de la literatura colombiana. Elementos para la discusión. Cuadernos de trabajo III*, 155-186. Medellín: La Carreta Literaria. ISBN: 9789588427522. [\[+info\]](#)

Vallejo, Olga. 2012. "Victor Hugo en *El Papel Periódico Ilustrado*. Aporte al estudio histórico de la traducción en Colombia". @ Lafarga, Francisco & Luis Pegenaute 2012 *Aspectos de la historia de la traducción en Hispanoamérica: autores, traducciones y traductores*, 195-202. Vigo: Academia del Hispanismo. ISBN: 9788415175391. [\[+info\]](#)

Vega, Miguel Ángel. 2014. "El escrito(r) misionero como objeto de investigación traductográfica". @ *In-Traduções* 6, i-xiv. [\[+info\]](#) [\[quod vide\]](#)

Verdejo Segura, María del Mar. 2014. "Las traducciones al español de *El utilitarismo en el siglo XIX*: la versión de Aureliano González Toledo vs la versión de Antonio Zozaya". @ *1611 Revista de historia de la traducción*. [\[+info\]](#) [\[quod vide\]](#)

Weber, Élodie. 2020. "La traducción de *El extranjero* de Albert Camus por Pablo Montoya: ¿una traducción para lectores latinoamericanos?" @ *Íkala* 25/2, 513-532. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17533/udea.ikala.v25n02a12> [\[+info\]](#) [\[quod vide\]](#)

Cited translations

Añez, Julio (Comp.) 1886. *Parnaso colombiano. Colección de poesías escogidas por Julio Añez*. Bogotá: Librería colombiana de Camacho Roldán. [\[+info\]](#) [\[quod vide\]](#)

Arango, Jorge Luis (ed.) 1958. *Los trofeos. Antología de traductores colombianos*. Bogotá: Imprenta Nacional. [\[+info\]](#)

Arias Trujillo, Bernardo. 1936. "Variaciones en torno a la Balada de la cárcel de Reading". @ Wilde, Oscar. 1936. *Balada de la cárcel de Reading*, 12-47. Manizales: Casa editorial y talleres gráficos Arturo Zapata. [\[+info\]](#)

Azula y Lozano, José Luis de. 1787. *Historia de Cristo paciente*. Bogotá: Imprenta Real de don Antonio Espinosa de los Monteros. [\[+info\]](#) [\[quod vide\]](#)

Caro, Miguel Antonio. 1918-1945. *Obras completas de don Miguel Antonio Caro*. Bogotá: Imprenta Nacional. [\[+info\]](#)

Carranza, Eduardo. 1997. *Obra ajena: recreaciones, paráfrasis y traducciones*. Bogotá: Ediciones Casa Silva. ISBN: 958952866X.

De Greiff, Otto. 1975. *Versiones poéticas*. Bogotá: Instituto Colombiano de Cultura. [\[+info\]](#)

García Maffla, Jaime & Rubén Sierra Mejía (ed.) 1999. *Traductores de poesía en Colombia. Antología*. Bogotá: Casa Silva. ISBN: 9589528678. [\[+info\]](#)

Holguín, Andrés (ed. y trad.) 1954. *Antología de la poesía francesa*. Madrid: Guadarrama. [\[+info\]](#)

Londoño, Víctor M. 1937. *Obra literaria: verso y prosa*. Bogotá: Imprenta Nacional.

[n.n.] 1791. *Historia de las ciencias naturales escrita en el idioma francés por Mr. Saverien y traducida al castellano por un sacerdote amante del bien público*. Santafé de Bogotá: D. Antonio Espinosa de los Monteros. [\[+info\]](#) [\[quod vide\]](#)

[n.n.] 1936. *Los poetas (de otras tierras)*. Bogotá: Editorial Minerva.

[n.n.] 1936. *Traducciones teatrales*. Bogotá: Editorial Minerva.

Pombo, Rafael. 1917. *Traducciones poéticas*. Bogotá: Imprenta Nacional. [\[quod vide\]](#)

Restrepo, Antonio José. 1899. *Poesías originales y traducciones poéticas*. Lausana: Imprenta de Georges Bridel & Ca.

Soffia, José Antonio & José Rivas Groot (ed.) 1889. *Victor Hugo en América: traducciones de ingenios americanos*. Bogotá: Casa editorial de M. Rivas. [\[+info\]](#).

Credits



Juan G. Ramírez Giraldo

Juan G. Ramírez Giraldo is an Assistant Professor and researcher at Universidad de Antioquia, Medellín, Colombia, where he currently coordinates the Translation Studies Research Group and the M.A. in Translation. His current research focuses on historical discourses on translation produced in Colombia, and he is preparing an anthology on the matter. His research interests include translation history, translator training, translation in the fields of social science and the humanities, and comparative literature.



Paula Andrea Montoya Arango

Paula Andrea Montoya Arango holds a B.A. in translation (English-French-Spanish) from Universidad de Antioquia, an M.A. in Translation from the University of Ottawa (Canada), and a Ph.D. in Translation and Translation Studies from the University of Montreal (Canada). She is a professor at the B.A. and M.A. in Translation programs at Universidad de Antioquia, where she is also a member of the Translation Studies Research Group. Her recent research projects and publications have focused on the history of translation in Colombia. She is currently Director and Editor-in-chief of *Mutatis Mutandis. Revista Latinoamericana de Traducción*. Her research interests include the history of translation in Colombia, translation theory, research methodologies in translation studies, translation in the humanities field, and translator training.



Tess Anderson (translator)

Tess Anderson is a school interpreter in Ohio, USA. She is currently enrolled in a dual degree Master of Business Administration and Masters of Arts in Translation at Kent State University. She has worked as a language teacher in Japan, and has studied at the Pontifical Catholic University in Chile.

Brianna Viñas (translator)

Brianna Viñas will receive her Masters of Arts in Translation (Spanish) from Kent State University (USA) in May of 2022. She received her Bachelor of Arts Degree in 2018 as a

Summa Cum Laude Graduate in Spanish Literature, Culture, and Translation from Kent. Brianna's experience is in legal and immigration translation in addition to legal and localization project management.

Licensed under the [Creative Commons Attribution Non-commercial License 4.0](#)

[Asociación Ibérica de Estudios de Traducción e Interpretación \(AIETI\)](#)