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Guide to the Use of the Database

Introduction

This user guide aims to present the content of the database on economic translations included in the EE-T website, and to provide some practical suggestions on how to use the database for further research, thesis work, project work etc.

The database has been realised thanks to the contribution of a large number of researches from the European universities and research centres participating in the EE-T project. Rather than a finished product, this database is an ongoing project that will be progressively enriched of new contents. Despite the development of online databases and library catalogues, a large amount of bibliographical information is still contained in offline sources like library catalogues, bibliographical repertoires, or must still be collected by browsing journals, encyclopaedias, collections and series. It is one of the aims of the EE- project to make all this information public.

Nevertheless, the task of completing this database is too large to be managed by the members of the EE-T research team only. That is why the philosophy of this database is an open one. Contributions from researchers, students and all those who are interested in the history of economic thought are welcome, as explained below in section 5.

The present guide contains the following sections:

1. The content of the database
2. How to read an entry
3. How to search the database
4. Uses of the database
5. Crowdsourcing the database

1. The content of the database

This database contains the records of a large number of translations of **economic texts** published between the beginning of the 18th century and the mid-20th century. By economic texts we mean works of economics (or, as it was originally called “political economy”), and its sub-disciplines.

When speaking of translations, an important distinction is between **base text** and **destination text**. The base text is the original work that is translated; the destination text is the translation that is made of the source text. For example, in the case of a translation from Adam Smith, the base text is A. Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (Edinburgh 1776), in



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English, and a destination text is for example A. Smith, *Recherches sur la nature et les causes de la richesse des nations* ((La Haye 1778-79), in French.

Any base text in any European language that has been translated at least once is included in the database. As to destination texts, so far the database only includes records of translations into the languages of the project, i.e.:

- French
- German
- Greek
- Italian
- Portuguese
- Romanian
- Spanish
- Turkish

Each record contains detailed information about one single translation (destination text). Different editions of the same translation are recorded as different entries. In this way the database allows the comparison among editions, showing the differences among them (for example: new introductions, inclusion of new chapters from a later edition of the base text, etc.).

One of the assets of the EE-T database is that it contains information on various types of documents. The main types of translations included in the database are the following:

- books, treatises, textbooks
- articles published in journals
- chapters included in edited books or collections of articles
- entries in encyclopaedias

While information on translations of books can be easily drawn from the online catalogues of the main national libraries or specialised libraries, online indexes and tables of content of journals are still a rarity and their search is very often laborious. We hope that this database will make the bibliographical research of those interested in the history of economic thought easier.

2. How to read an entry

This sections explains how to read a single entry to the database.

In order to open an entry, the following procedure is the easiest one:

1. access the “**Database**” section of the EE-T portal by using the menu on the top left of the home page;



2. once you are in the Database section, scroll the page containing the full list of records, until you find the entry you are interested in. The list is organised by author and shows information about the author of the base text, the title of the translation and the year of publication of the translation;
3. click on any point of the entry description. In this way you will open the full record of the entry.

Once you are inside the entry, you will find an initial section entitled “**BASE TEXT**”. This section contains information about the original source of the translation. Carefully consider the three fields contained in this section:

- The first field contains information about the author, title and year of publication of the first edition of the base text. For example, in the case of Adam Smith’s *Wealth of Nations*, this field provides information on the first edition of 1776.
- The second field contains information about the edition of the base text that has been used by the translator as source for his or her translation. For example, the French translation of Smith’s *Wealth of Nations*, dating from 1790-91, was based on the fourth edition of this work, published in 1786. If this field is empty, this means that the translation is based on the first edition.
- The third field, when present, indicates the actual base text of the translation when the latter is in a different language from that of the original, i.e., when the final translation is in turn based on a translation of the original text. In the 18th and 19th century, French was the language of communication among scholars from different countries, and sometimes French translations of British or German texts were more read and used than the originals. It was natural for translators to use these versions as bases for their translations. Later in the 19th and early 20th centuries, German translations of texts written in a Scandinavian idiom, or English translations of texts written in German, were equally used as bases for translations in other languages. For an example see the Italian translation of Smith’s *Wealth of nations*, published in 1851, and based on the French translation of 1843.

The remaining part of the entry is devoted to the translation.

The first set of synthetic information – entitled “**TRANSLATION INFO**” – indicates the language of the base text and of the translation, type of original and destination text, and time line. An image of the document is added to give a flavour of the original text. These fields can be used for quantitative research on the phenomenon of economic translations, and as keywords and filters for searching the database (see below, section 3). It may be useful to remark that sometimes works of political economy originally published as books were translated as chapters in collections or translated in instalments in journals. Vice-versa, articles originally published in journals may have been translated as pamphlets or books, or as chapters in collections.

After this set of information, there is a section entitled “**BIBLIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION FOR**



DOCUMENT”, which contains the usual bibliographical data of the translation, and another very important section – entitled **“TRANSLATION ADDITIONAL INFORMATION”** – which includes any additional information on the nature, structure and editorial apparatus of the translation. While most of the ordinary bibliographical information on these texts can be drawn from library catalogues, the additional information provided in this section results from a careful analysis of these texts, revealing the active role of editors and translators in editing and publishing their versions. Typical phenomena that are observed in this section are abridgements, the omission of chapters, parts, the footnotes, the addition of prefaces, introductions, footnotes, in-texts comments that contextualised or adapted the text to to intended public of readers, adaptations and free translations, and even forms of plagiarism.

The last section of each entry – entitled **“OTHER USEFUL INFORMATION”** – contains indications for retrieving the text: indication of the library and call mark where a copy of the book is conserved, link to already existing e-texts, or to e-texts originally furnished by the EE-T project. These e-texts can be found in the section of the portal devoted to them (see the section entitled **“e-Translation”** in the menu on top left of the home page).

A final field mentions – if available – the specific secondary literature that exists on the translation or any useful work on the author and context of the translation.

3. How to search the database

To search the database is very simple. There are two access points to the various search engines offered by the EE-T portal. One is the **Homepage**, and another is the top of the **Database** section.

There you find various options to search the database:

1. by **Timeline**: by selecting one of the three centuries, you will obtain a list of all translations published **in that century**, even those based on a source text of a former century;
2. by **Author**: by selecting one letter, you will obtain a list of all translations of the works of authors whose surname begins with that letter;
3. by **Title**: by inserting any keyword in the search window, you will obtain a list of texts that includes both those *translations* containing that word in the title, and those translations whose *base text* contains that word;
4. by language of the base text (**Translation from**): by selecting a language, you will obtain a list of all translations whose base text is in that language;
5. by language of the destination text (**Translation into**): by selecting a language, you will obtain a list of all translations composed is in that language;
6. by **Type of publication**: through this option you can obtain lists of translations of a certain type, whether books, or pamphlets/essays, or articles, or chapters in books, or dictionary/encyclopaedia entries.



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4. Uses of the database

This section suggests only some uses of the database, available both to students, PhD students, and researchers. Obviously the uses of the lists and entries provided by the database are virtually infinite.

The database can be used for project work, theses, research papers and books on the following topics:

- history of editions: the database can facilitate the editing of critical editions of original works and translations;
- bibliographical research on the international circulation of the economists' work throughout the world: by tracking the translations of an author, you can get an idea of his or her popularity in various areas and ages;
- research on the international circulation of certain types of texts like textbooks, manuals, dictionary entries.

5. Crowdsourcing the database

This section contains an invitation and some practical information. The invitation addressed to all users of this database. This is a tool addressed to the community of scholars, researchers undergraduate and graduate students, and simple amateurs. All those who find this database useful are invited not only to utilise it but to contribute to enrich it with new contents. The philosophy of the database is non-proprietary, no-profit and based on peer production. All contributions are intended as donations and will be acknowledged in the **Social Area** section of the portal.

The following are some suggestions of useful contributions to the database:

- single entries of translations not yet included in the database
- amendments and integration of existing entries
- systematic browsing of journals, encyclopedias and collections not yet examined, and entries containing the translations found in them
- sets of entries concerning translations into languages not included in the EE-T original project (see above, section 1).

Any other suggestion or contribution is welcome.

The database is moderated by the EE-T project managers. In order to submit contributions to it, please fill the form included in Appendix 1 of this guide and submit it. You will receive an username and password that will allow you to insert and edit the entries you have offered.



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Appendix 1

Contributor's form

Name and surname	
Age	
Title of study	
Institution granting the title of study	
Current profession	
Current professional affiliation	
Brief description of the intended contribution	
Email for correspondence	