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Johann Jacob Bodmer, Interculturalist
Cultural realignment in the 18th century and the
role of a Zurich translator

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*A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy,
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Abstract

Johann Jacob Bodmer stands at the beginning of a new era that saw the establishment of major English literary influences in Germany along with the rise of English to become a language of importance of the European stage.

The particular importance of this eighteenth-century Zurich translator and literary scholar lies in his translation of a canonical work of English literature, *Paradise Lost*, and in his tireless efforts to develop appreciation of this work in the German debate on aesthetics and translation of the 1730s. Bodmer was strongly opposed by scholars wishing to establish in Germany the neoclassical aesthetic conventions prevailing in France, then the hegemonic power in Europe. By overcoming the advocates of French literary models he paved the way for the widescale translation of English authors such as Shakespeare, and the adoption of English models.

As a translator, Bodmer advocated norms of faithful translation that deviated from those advanced for Germany by the advocates of French literary models. This study explores the origin of the new Zurich ideas, and outlines the extensive debate on translation conducted in Germany in the 1730s, in which Bodmer and his colleague Johann Jacob Breitinger overturned the arguments of Johann Christoph Gottsched and his supporters. In a number of respects, Bodmer and Breitinger's ideas on translation can be seen as precursors of the 'foreignising' approach to translation developed by German thinkers such as Friedrich Schleiermacher at the end of the eighteenth century.

My study also investigates Bodmer's translation practice in detail, based on analyses of his German translations of *Paradise Lost*. It gives particular attention to the way in which the debates of the 1730s prompted changes in his thinking on translation. Of especial interest here are his ideas on the translation of metaphor, to which he appears to have devoted more attention than any thinker before him.

My study applies a new approach to studying translation history currently being developed by translation scholar Anthony Pym. Pym's 'professional intercultural' ideas focus particular attention on individual translators and groups of translators, and the importance of their debates and discussions for negotiating translation norms.

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I consider myself particularly fortunate to have been able to count on the invaluable assistance of Professor Anthony Pym, of the Universitat Rovira i Virgili in Tarragona, Spain, particularly with regard to theoretical aspects of the work. He devoted considerable time to my project at important stages in its evolution, provided the right direction at the right moments, and read many of the chapters.

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Helen Baumer

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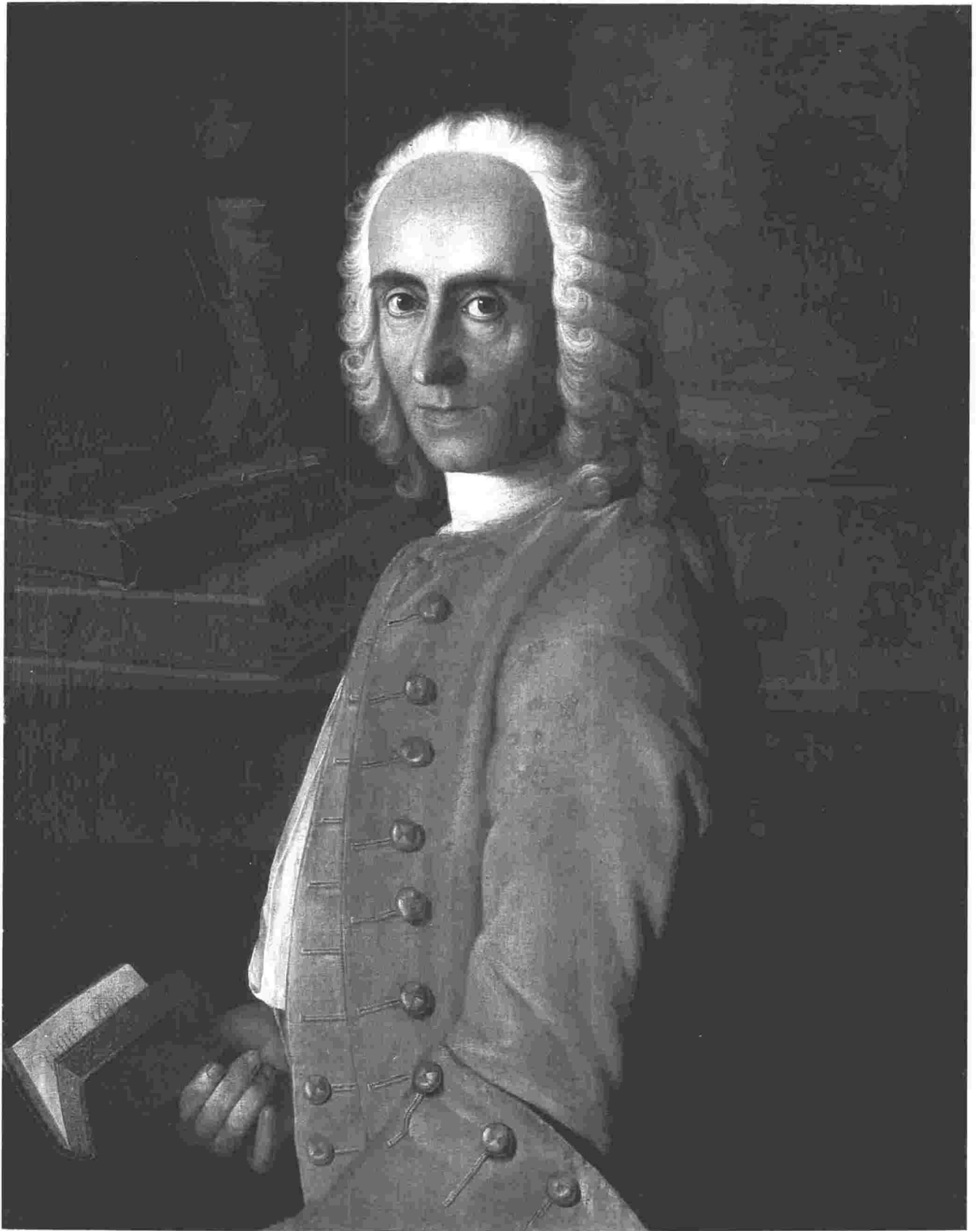
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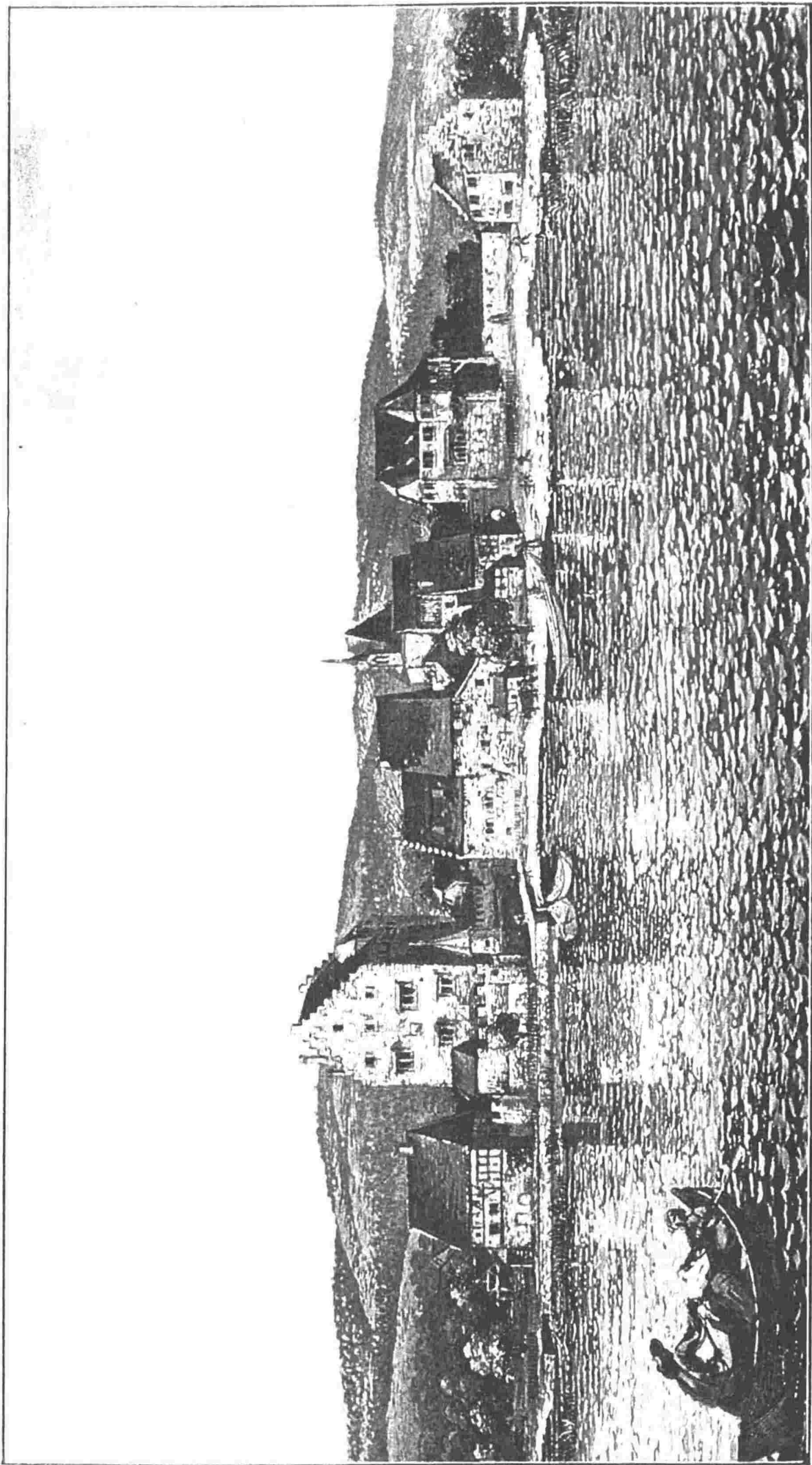
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GREIFENSEE, BODMERS GEBURTORT.

Nach einem Kupferstich von F. Hegli.

Monsieur et Mrs. Louvre Amy.

Ich habe mich sehr über die Mitteilung Ihrer Abreise in
Vergangenem gemacht, und gleich mir noch sehr häufig übersehen
gemacht. Ich habe in Ansehung der gütlichen Überzeugung
zu willkürlich in Ihnen geglaubt, das ist die Gefahr Ihres
Spruchs über die Anwesenheit zurückzuführen. Sie werden nicht
gerne in einem Ueberzeugung darüber La Sierra nehmen, und
es in gleichmäßigen Absichten zurückzuführen, wie sie die Sprache
und auch dabei auch über die Regel zurückzuführen.
Sie glauben nicht, das ist mit Ihnen sehr schön, und die
meine Abreise von der Welt der Erde gemacht worden, aber die
Landschaften sind sehr schön und schön, aber aber die
auf nichts Gutes zurückzuführen. Es ist auch in sehr
Menge so gut gemacht, als wir möglich machen, und ich
sagen will, dass der andere sie auf besten machen können, aber
besser ist, als die Sprache. ganz, wenn sie zurückzuführen, dass die

Johann Jakob Bodmer

