

*Abstract*

After providing an overview of the numerous and varying Latin translations of Fénelon's novel *Les Aventures de Télémaque*, first published in 1699, the article seeks to show that the publication of the earliest Latin translations was a consequence rather than a cause of the work's success. The article goes on to examine how the Latin translations of the novel, which from the outset shown a marked didactic linguistic interest, are forerunners of the similar aims of the translations of *Télémaque* in the course of the 19th century and can therefore be seen, paradoxically, as an avant-garde reactionary operation.