

Translating Renaissance Experience

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INTRODUCTION

Translating Renaissance Experience: Conceptual Considerations

Anja Müller-Wood, Tymon Adamczewski and Patrick Gill

Taking as its point of departure the assumption that any engagement with the past is a form of translation, this introductory chapter elaborates on the conceptual considerations raised when the notions of translation, Renaissance, and experience are explored together. Extending contemporary interest in Translation Studies in translation as a process of cultural interaction (rather than straightforward textual transposition), it emphasises how this interaction is shaped by experience both on the level of production and of reception, and can be illustrated by investigations of how, in the Renaissance, real experience was translated into text, or how concrete Renaissance sources, or the idea of “the Renaissance” more generally, are reconfigured retrospectively.

Keywords: Experience, reconfiguration, Renaissance, translation, Translation Studies

TRANSLATING TEXTS AND CONCEPTS

Literary Trends and Two Early Modern English Translations of Eneas Silvius Piccolomini’s *Historia de duobus amantibus*

Csaba Maczelka and Ágnes Máté

The paper investigates the sources and context of two early modern translations of Piccolomini’s *Historia de duobus amantibus*. After an overview of the sixteen translations of this immensely successful love story, categorised by form and Latin sources, we examine the English translations by William Braunche and Charles Alleyn, showing they used two very different Latin versions of *Historia*, both in geographical and chronological terms. Braunche’s and Alleyn’s versions and their respective contexts are then compared. Braunche’s work is associated with the Elizabethan vogue of euphuism and Richard Helgerson’s “prodigality” model. The absence of a comparable embeddedness in Alleyn’s later rendition suggests significant changes in the experience of translation, and a gradual transition from domestication to foreignization.

Keywords: Piccolomini, translation, sources, Euphuism, domestication, foreignization

Golden Worlds and Brazen Lies: Comparing Astronomy and Poetry in English Renaissance Poetics

Florian Klaefer

At a time when ‘science’ and ‘art’ had not yet emerged as separate systems, English Renaissance writers on poetics refer to astronomy and its close cognate, astrology, with remarkable frequency. They compare the work of poets to that of astronomers in order to define the nature and effects of poetry more precisely. This essay charts, very briefly, their purposes in choosing astronomy as a foil for poetry, and suggests common denominators that made the comparison salient. One key concern was the process by which the two domains translated experience into knowledge differently; another is the object of experience itself.

Keywords: Renaissance poetics, astronomy, early modern astroculture, early modern literature and science, mimesis

TRANSLATING SPIRITUAL AND MATERIAL EXPERIENCE

Milton's Literal Muse: Divine Inspiration as Compositional Experience

Allen Rice

John Milton genuinely believes God inspires him as he composes *Paradise Lost*. First-hand accounts from his amanuenses and from Milton himself demonstrate that Milton held to what I term an "Arminian" philosophy of inspiration, whereby he worked with his muse in the process of composition. At times, Milton translates his muse's inner promptings into Blank Verse, and at other times, he simply speaks aloud to his amanuensis the words his muse had dictated to him as he slept. Milton's belief that he was literally inspired did not merely provide a framework for his compositional process; instead, it completely controlled it. Keywords: John Milton, divine inspiration, prophecy, compositional experience, muse, Arminian, scholarship, biography

Translations of Experience in Sidney's Two Arcadias

Joachim Frenk

This essay discusses the ways in which Renaissance experience was translated into literature in the two very different *Arcadias* by Sir Philip Sidney. It starts out doing this by focusing on the circumstances of Sidney's life and death that contextualised his writing habits as well as the circulation and publication of the *Arcadias* in manuscript and print. One example of Sidney's subtle translations are his shifting representations of love and sex in the *Arcadias*. The essay ends with an excursion into the very different (non-)endings of the *Arcadias* and a last glance at the generic dimension of Sidney's pastoral romances.

Keywords: Sir Philip Sidney, Old Arcadia, New Arcadia, life writing, manuscript, print, rewritings, love/sex, endings

TRANSLATION, MODALITY AND POTENTIALITY

Impossible Worlds: Modality and Agency in the English Renaissance Sonnet

Patrick Gill

This essay argues that the modernity the sonnet epitomises according to some critics can be traced to the argumentative structures it represents, the modalities it employs, and finally the various grades of agency it bestows on its various speakers. In assessing the sonnet's use of its poetic form as well as of ideas of modality and agency, the present essay argues that in its movement towards introspection, the history of the Renaissance sonnet in England is testimony to subtle shifts in people's lived experience and becomes itself a prime vehicle for the translation of that experience into literary form.

Keywords: sonnet, mood, agency, interiority, grammar, potential, optative

From Dramatic Text to Theatrical Experience

Anja Müller-Wood

In this article I argue that Renaissance drama contains pointers to the way it is meant to be experienced (that is, to the cognitive-emotional responses by spectators intended by the playwright), and that these responses can be deduced from plays through their close reading. Such a close reading must take into account not only what happens and is said on stage, but also how this information is disseminated. Using Thomas Middleton's *The Revenger's Tragedy* (1606) as an example, I illustrate how the playwright seeks to orchestrate spectators'

experience of his play by making use of their fundamental informative superiority regarding the action, thereby generating either suspense or surprise.

Keywords: Thomas Middleton, *The Revenger's Tragedy*, audience response, discrepant awareness, disguise, dramatic irony, suspense, surprise, theatrical communication

TRANSLATION, RECONFIGURATION AND ADAPTATION

Repurposing Shakespeare's Plays in Twenty-First Century Revisionary Adaptations

Özlem Özmen Akdoğan

This chapter argues that notions of universality, originality and authenticity attributed to Shakespeare are constantly scrutinised by adaptations of his works. Adaptations of his works also reveal that his plays are products of a specific age, and cannot be considered as relevant for all subsequent periods. To illustrate this, three contemporary adaptations, Tim Crouch's *I, Cinna (The Poet)* (2011), Gareth Armstrong's *Shylock* (1999) and Donmar Warehouse's *Shakespeare Trilogy* (2012) are analysed. As these adaptations demonstrate, Shakespeare's texts are continuously rewritten to emphasise issues that are more central to our day than earlier concerns of the Renaissance.

Keywords: Shakespeare, Universality, Adaptation, Tim Crouch, *I, Cinna (The Poet)*, Gareth Armstrong, *Shylock*, Donmar Warehouse, *Shakespeare Trilogy*.

The Renaissance in Contemporary Video Game Design

Jacek Mianowski

The Renaissance is seen as a rich and prolific period in terms of adaptation, but it has nonetheless to be repurposed and reshuffled to measure up to the expectations of the digital-oriented audience. Reusing Renaissance in video games goes beyond its visual, aesthetic, philosophical or scientific accomplishments, by adding different layers of elements that seek to immerse and engage. The main goal of this article is to show how different aspects of this historical period, or the idea of "Renaissance" itself, are incorporated into video games. I will argue that there are three distinctive paradigms of adaptation that serve as a toolbox for the engagement, immersion and reshuffling of key aspects of the Renaissance.

Keywords: Renaissance, game studies paradigms, adaptation, suspension of disbelief, reinterpretation, cultural reshuffling, *Deus Ex*, *Assassin's Creed*, Anno 1404

MULTIMODALITY AND INTERACTIVITY

The Shape of Things to Come: On the Renaissance Roots of the Multimodal Literary Experience

Tymon Adamczewski

This article offers a reading of selected early modern texts from the perspective of multimodality. It is devoted to tracing the origins of contemporary interest in materiality as an important element of the literary text and a particular type of privileging of the physicality of the written medium. This interest in materiality may be seen as going against various dematerializing procedures in thinking about literature and allow for creating new connections with readers and reading experience over time.

Keywords: multimodality, materiality, writing, experience, liberature

Shakespeare, Nietzsche, Wars, and Jigging Fools
Jeremy Tambling

This article discusses Nietzsche's reading of selected Shakespeare's plays as a form of translating Renaissance concepts. Focusing on Julius Caesar and Hamlet, it illustrates the philosopher's provocative reading of characters like Brutus, who typify an independence of soul of particular interest to the author of *The Gay Science*. The text highlights various conflicting aspects within Nietzsche's reading, including transgressions or 'jigging,' to point to the forms and repressive consequences of limitations put on the poetic playing with words, of which Shakespeare's texts seem to be acutely aware.

Keywords: Nietzsche, Shakespeare, genius, spirit, ghost, greatness, melancholia, futurity, poetry, eroticism, comedy

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