Introduction

Translation as "Transformission" in Early Modern England and France*

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Among the various forms of "transformission" that mark the transmission and transformation of early modern texts when they move from one context to another, translation ranks high. The term *transformission*, coined by Randall McLeod to describe the permutations and variations that occur in the passage of a text through print and reprint, edition and re-edition, may indeed be fruitfully applied to translations, protean texts *par excellence*. The textual remediation that they represent does not solely concern linguistic change, nor is it simply a question of crossing social and ideological boundaries; it most often involves changes of a cultural, material, and visual nature. Early modern translations could be refashioned to a sometimes surprising degree through various forms of manipulation and adaptation: by employing encoding strategies pertinent for the new readership, reframing the text by the judicious choice of paratexts of both a discursive and visual nature, and applying a range of editorial and commercial tactics favourable to marketing the work.

This collection of essays focuses on a discussion of some of these "transformissioning" strategies as practised by English and French translators, editors, printers, and booksellers in the years 1540 to 1660. It presents various and varying modes of transformission: textual, generic, discursive, and material. The ways in which these modes

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function are explored in a range of works, as are the textual and material vehicles employed by the various agents involved in the production of the "transformitted" translations.

The collection opens with Anne Coldiron's assessment of how the McLeodian material-bibliographical concept of "transformission," influenced by and articulated in response to previous developments in textual studies and editorial theory, is particularly relevant to the study of early modern translation. Drawing on a variety of translated works, from Christine de Pizan's *Morale Prouerbes of Cristyne* printed by William Caxton in 1478 and re-edited almost a half century later, through the early decades of print to Thomas Hoby, Edmund Spenser, and Sir John Harington, she argues that we must "regard translations as 'variant versions variously transformitted'"; to do so is to realize the potential value of McLeod's theory for translation studies and to move towards new and more flexible ways of understanding the translation process.

The first two essays discuss translations produced and printed in France in the 1540s, noting the textual changes that occur but also taking generic considerations into account, namely the emergence of the poetic forms of epic and lyric within the world of French humanist poetry that these translations facilitated. John Nassichuk examines the stages marking the evolution of Huges Salel's "epic in the making" ("chantier épique"), the first metrical version of Homer's *Iliad* in French. Using an earlier Latin translation by Andreas Divus as a mediating text, Salel first translated Books I and II, printed in 1542, then Books III-X, and printed all ten books in 1545. The transformations he wrought concerned both textual matters, particularly the handling of Homeric epithets, and discursive paratextual features, containing Barthélemy Aneau's praise of his work and his own long poem to Francis I. However, Salel's translation also underwent a generic transformation. Divus's had played a philological role, being presented as a text to aid scholars of Greek and delineated as such in his and his editor's paratexts; Salel's vernacular version became an object of literary admiration among young French poets and members of the court, as well as a means by which printers and booksellers could take advantage of an increasing interest in Classical epics.

Humanist poetics also played an important role in Jacques Peletier du Mans's translation of twelve of Petrarch's *Canzoniere*, which he refashioned into a French lyric form at some time between 1545 and 1547. As Riccardo Raimondo demonstrates, in *Les Douze sonnets* Peletier engages not only with Petrarch, but also with that poet's first French translator, Clément Marot. His *Six sonnetz de Pétrarque sur la mort de sa dame Laure*, published several years before, functioned as a mediating text, although Peletier's translation presented a different choice of poems in a different metrical form and imparted a novel and heuristic version of Petrarch. Furthermore, Peletier's *Douze sonnets* represented a vehicle for change, not only in terms of his poetics, but also in his conception of translation itself, one that would find its full expression in his later *Art poétique*.

The two essays following Raimondo's discuss transformissions of a discursive and an interpretive nature, brought about by the inclusion of new or changed paratexts. Alessandra Petrina compares the marginalia in some English manuscript translations of Machiavelli's *Principe* with marks in early printed Italian, Latin, and French versions of the work circulating in Britain. She demonstrates how the manuscript marginalia functioned, amongst other things, to change the nature and purpose of the source text, providing space to express conflicting views of the text and author, but also to point up the usefulness of the work as a language manual for those wishing to learn Italian. Marks in printed books, too, can bear witness to a shift from the moral or political emphasis of the original to that of the language in which it is expressed. As a result of what Petrina calls a "horizontal reading" of various annotations in the printed editions and marginalia in the manuscript translations, Machiavelli's text appears "fluctuating, flexible, and eloquent," its margins proving a perfect vehicle for transformission.

Another vehicle is the more formal printed discursive paratext, as found in Anthony Munday's three translations discussed by Brenda Hosington. All were participants in the transnational and transcultural phenomenon known as the *querelle des femmes*, but their paratexts, in typically metamorphic and shapeshifting mode, reframed the debate through the translator's use of certain strategies. Amongst these were the appropriation and domestication of the foreign text for an English readership, a change in the ideological or political views presented in the source text, and a reworking of the sociocultural context in which the text was created. Reinforcing these transformations were the new and markedly different material features introduced by the printers, editors, and, possibly, in the case of Munday, the translator—collaborators in transformission.

Widening the focus from discursive paratexts to a combination of four modes of transformission, the authors of the two following essays discuss the textual, discursive, material, and visual features of their chosen texts. Marie-Alice Belle demonstrates how a 1631 translation, *Raleigh his Ghost*, reframes a work by the Flemish Jesuit theologian Leonard Lessius "written against atheists, and politicians of these dayes." By evoking the memory of the accusation levelled at Sir Walter Raleigh and his "school of atheism" some forty years earlier, and of his execution in 1618, the translation transforms the theological treatise into a weapon in ongoing Catholic and anti-Catholic—more particularly, Jesuit and anti-Jesuit—polemics, fuelled by similar translations and pseudotranslations being published at the time. The recuperation of Raleigh's ghost in these texts demonstrates how cultural transfer and transmission, via the media of print and manuscript, the practice of translation, the complex use and manipulation of various discursive and material features and visual elements, and the exploitation of print-specific encoding strategies, result in textual transformission.

The second illustration of how texts can be refashioned through multiple modes of transmission and transformation is provided in Line Cottegnies's study of the

translations of two works by Cyrano de Bergerac in the 1650s. In the first, several modes operate: generic, as the translator recast the French work in the tradition of the English "Characters"; textual, since the translation places greater emphasis on the work's satiric dimension and omits Cyrano's play at the end of the work; and discursive, in the form of added paratextual materials. In the second translation, the modes are visual, due to a new and different frontispiece; textual, since the work is set alongside a similar English one; and discursive, on account of a new paratext that transfers the setting of the work to Scotland. The function of all these changes is to repackage Cyrano, the French wit, as an English cavalier, thus making him attractive for royalist readers and marketable for printers.

The final essay widens the meaning of "translation" and extends the concept of "transformission" in its discussion of the early modern cabinet of curiosities. Brent Nelson applies both terms to the collections of rare and curious objects in the early modern period. In acquiring these through pan-European networks, he says, collectors often transformed and transferred material objects; the transmission of those objects brought about the remediation of cultural practices; collected objects were literally translated from one place to another and often underwent transformation and transmutation; and the collections themselves constituted attempts to "translate" into visual language the representation of a rapidly expanding and changing world of experience. The modes of transformission are thus both material and visual, but also linguistic. New words were necessary for the new objects being discovered and collected; they often came into being through "a kind of translation by paraphrase," but they also needed a new nomenclature.

The cabinet of curiosities, then, like the composition of the written texts and translations discussed in this collection, can be seen as "an act of editing the material world" but also one of translating it; both actions transmit and transform, thus operating a "transformission" on both object and word, in ever-shifting patterns of what Anne Coldiron calls "translations in motion."

Note

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