

Reviews

Printers without Borders: Translation and Textuality in the Renaissance. By A. E. B. COLDIRON. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2015. xv + 339 pp. £65. ISBN 978 1 107 07317 3.

THIS IS A BOOK ABOUT TRANSLATION and book history, about translators and printers, and about how they together shaped the trajectory of English literature between William Caxton's earliest enterprise, during the 1470s, and the late sixteenth century. A. E. B. Coldiron offers a compelling challenge to traditional source-influence models of literary history, by showing how printers and translators negotiated the sense of the foreign and England's place within a polyglot European intellectual and textual society. The book is organized around a series of case-studies. These reveal translators grappling with the comparative paucity of England's vernacular creative tradition while at the same time seeking ingenious ways to position the English language as a viable participant in wider cultural and literary-aesthetic debates. The book also shows how printers manipulated paratext, such as prefaces, typefaces, and *mis-en-page*, in order to accentuate and negotiate these very senses of the foreign. Along the way, Coldiron explores the specific relationship among diverse languages, especially English *vis-à-vis* French and Latin; prominent genres, literary modes, and poetic forms common in those and other vernaculars; and material textual features present in the printed books (and broadsheets) that contain translated works. By bringing together insights from the overlapping subfields of the history of the book and translation and philological studies, Coldiron convincingly examines the position of vernacular texts within their own received traditions and places both texts and traditions in dialogue around evolving questions of identity and foreignness. The book argues that 'fundamental phenomena, processes, and patterns of literary change' (p. 284) and a more 'accurate picture of what was actually being written, produced, and read' (p. 283) emerge most clearly when scholars approach the overlapping subjects of early modern translation and the book trade in this fashion.

Printers without Borders begins with discussion of Caxton's career, and devotes particular attention to the ways in which subsequent printers framed their reprint editions of works that Caxton had translated and himself printed. The first book printed in English, Caxton's translation of Raoul Lefèvre's *Recuyell of the Hystoryes of Troye* (1473), emerged from a specific Burgundian context. It gave meaning to the work's exploration of the morality of Trojan conflict, and in particular to the problematic position of women as both responsible for conflict (Helen of Troy) and as the book's dedicatee (Margaret of York). In a dynamic which Coldiron describes as a 'catenary' pattern of printed translations, printers use Caxton anachronistically to signify both Burgundy and Troy for English readers, in reprint editions of the *Recuyell* into the seventeenth century. Caxton's edition of the *Dictes*

or *Sayengis of the Philosophres* (1477) derives originally from an eleventh-century Arabic work; according to his printer's epilogue, Caxton's translator, Anthony Woodville, Earl Rivers, omitted a misogynistic passage said to be by Socrates, which Caxton duly restored to his edition. As he does so, both gender and the representation of Socrates as a 'foreign' sage frame Caxton's interest in wider issues of social and textual authority. Shifting uses of paratext in Caxton's printed translation (1483) of Alain Chartier's anti-court *Le Curial*, and a 1549 edition of the same, reveal printers adapting the work to differing, partisan topical problems.

The book turns to the Lyon printer Jean de Tournes, and his six near-simultaneous printed vernacular translations of Claude Paradin's *Quadrins historiques de la Bible* (1553), a figure-book consisting of illustrations and poems from Genesis and Exodus. In his version, Peter Derendel, translator of the *True and Lyuely Historyke Purtreasures of the Woll Bible* (1553), explicitly defends English on a par with the vernacular languages of Europe. Coldiron explores differences of tone and specific nationally-informed literary debates mentioned by each translator as a means of framing the book for specific language markets. Such 'radiant' transnationalism allows the printer to aim versions of the work in different directions, toward more and less elite dedicatees, and in the case of the English text, to defend the role of images in a holistic reading aesthetic. John Wolfe's polyglot Italian-French-English edition of Castigliano's *Il Cortegiano* (1588) is the subject of the fourth chapter. Thomas Hoby's English translation shares the page equally with these vernaculars because of Wolfe's *mis-en-page*, which is modelled on continental polyglot books and encourages direct visual engagement with alterity from a level playing field. Form also supports content through Wolfe's approach, in that readers are confronted with the kind of 'compressed' polyglot fluency demanded in sixteenth-century royal courts. Wolfe deliberately selects paratextual elements from previous sixteenth-century printed editions, and rejects others, in order to equalize English alongside the foreign.

The book next takes up *Ad Serenissimam Elizabetham Reginam* (1588), an extraordinary polyglot broadside which commemorates the defeat of the Spanish Armada and survives in the British Library printed on vellum. This item prints a celebratory Latin epigram to Elizabeth, by the Protestant theologian Théodore de Bèze, and includes on the same single sheet seven translations of the poem, into Hebrew, English, Greek, Dutch, Italian, French, and Spanish. With considerable fluency, Coldiron explains how each formally distinct translation draws upon specific poetic traditions in each respective language, and in so doing takes a different nuanced view of the relationship of monarch and nation. Content remains essentially the same in these versions, but difference emerges in the juxtaposed verse forms, from the English sixain to Spanish hendecasyllables to a French sonnet. Each poem takes up the subject from the vantage point of its own literary-historical system, in which each mode of verse signifies differently in ways that are fully explored. As a result, England's naval power is celebrated, but its cultural accomplishment in verse sounds forth more ambiguously through this particular juxtaposition. *Printers without Borders* concludes with a discussion of printed macaronic, or mixed-language, poetry. Coldiron's examples range from Caxton to late-Tudor macaronics, and she reveals them to be the most compressed kind of printed inter-lingual contact in this period. In particular, macaronic verse can either harmoniously amplify, or offer

discordant descant, upon Latin *sententiae*, depending upon the ideologies that underlie each poetic composition. Ludic satire can also characterize the forced contact with the foreign required by this kind of verse. As is always the case in this book, Coldiron provides ample discussion of medieval precedent.

Printers without Borders is an impressive and learned work of scholarship. At once witty and deeply thought, its thesis carries far-reaching implications that impinge upon material textual and translation studies as well as wider issues in canon formation and the nature of the literary Renaissance itself. It must be read by anyone interested in these topics.

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Printing Colour, 1400–1700: History, Techniques, Functions and Receptions. Ed. by AD STIJNMAN and ELIZABETH SAVAGE. (Library of the Written Word: The Handpress World, 41.) Leiden and Boston: Brill. 2015. xxx + 248 pp. €150. ISBN 978 90 0426968 2; E-ISBN 978 90 0429011 2.

HISTORIES OF PRINTED COLOUR have generally concentrated on full-colour printing where a limited number of pure colours combine to reproduce the full spectrum, pioneered in the early eighteenth century by Jacob Christoph Le Blon. *Printing Colour* is about the period before 1700. The title is well chosen: this is about printing colour rather than colour printing. The appreciation of the role of colour in early modern graphic art was given a huge boost in Susan Dackerman's eye-opening exhibition *Painted Prints: The Revelation of Colour in Northern Renaissance and Baroque Engravings, Etchings and Woodcuts* at the Baltimore Museum of Art in 2002. The editors of *Printing Colour* take the position that the colour blindness of art history to the hand-colouring of prints is equally apparent in studies of printed colour.

Advertised as 'the first handbook of early modern colour printing before 1700 (when most such histories begin)', *Printing Colour* brings together the study of artefacts with distinct historiographies, printed books, and single sheet prints, the separate worlds of bibliographers and art historians. The 'material turn' in historical studies demands that we look at physical objects and their production. In this case, the editors propose that the interpretation of books and single sheets with printed colour should be based on their production, where previous studies have privileged authors and artists. The emphasis is not on *style* in an art-historical sense, but on the techniques the printmakers used to achieve the effects we see in the surviving books and prints. The argument is that since the two technologies available for picture printing in this period, relief and intaglio, were used for making both books and single sheet prints, it makes sense to study them in parallel and look for connections. The assumption is that book printers who used colour also printed single sheet prints with colour.

The editors have brought together twenty-three contributors (including themselves) to write twenty-two short chapters (Preface, Introduction, nineteen numbered chapters, and a Conclusion). The organization is chronological after the first three chapters which draw out general themes across genres and time periods.