

## Short Notices

**Brentjes**, Sonja, Jens **Høyrup**, and Bruce **O'Brien**, eds, *Narratives on Translation across Eurasia and Africa: From Babylonia to Colonial India* (Contact and Transmission, 3), Turnhout, Brepols, 2022; hardback; pp. 406; 2 b/w illustrations, 5 tables; R.R.P. €110.00; ISBN 9782503594897.

The contributions in this volume are uniformly well-written, promoting ease of understanding (allowing for the fact that some chapters tackle more abstruse subjects than others). Although its common thread is translational activity within the sciences, the miscellany is wide-ranging both geographically and chronologically. It is unlikely any reader will be expert in every field addressed: these range from Maribel Fierro's exploration of rulers' motives in sponsoring translation in medieval al-Andalus to Dhruv Raina's account of translation in Raj India. The shared theme is opinions about translation itself, held by contemporary translators or modern scholars. The book comprises two parts, the first part is devoted to 'Observer Narratives', and the second part to 'Participant Narratives'. The latter are translators' views, expressed in prefaces, for example; observer narratives are interpretive models advanced by later scholars.

Most contributions should benefit specialists in the culture in question, but outsiders will find some more readily accessible than others. Chapters in Part 1, on observer narratives, range from those offering a new take on the subject to ones that survey the historiography. Overview chapters are probably more valuable to non-specialists, especially Miriam Shefer-Mossensohn's account of evolving scholarly attitudes to the Abbasid Caliphate's push to translate texts into Arabic. Matteo Martelli similarly reviews the translation of Greek texts into Syriac. Miriam Lindgren Hjälms surveys early Bible translations into Arabic; Imre Galambos covers changing perceptions of Tangut-language translation from Chinese. Other contributions are more polemical. C. Jay Crisostomo suggests scholars have missed the point about cuneiform word lists equating terms in Sumerian and Akkadian: scribes were showing off their linguistic proficiency, not offering translations. As regards the Bible's Septuagint translation, Benjamin G. Wright III urges scholars to integrate methodologies from Classics, translation studies, and Septuagint studies. Götz König propounds his own hypothesis about Zoroastrian translation of Greek texts.

The second half concerns translators' own views. Emiliano Fiori, for instance, inspects Phokas of Edessa's preface to a translation of Dionysius the Areopagite, concluding that Phokas broadly adheres to his self-imposed task of rendering Dionysius literally, though his efforts sometimes yield inferior results to a freer earlier translation. Christopher Braun examines the motives behind spurious claims in Arabic alchemical tracts that the works were originally Greek. Likewise,

Eva Wilden examines why Tamil texts are often claimed to be translated from Sanskrit. Lucia Finotto investigates Jewish translation activity in medieval Sicily. Some contributions address translators' objectives. Eric Gurevitch considers Indian texts translated into New Kannada language to explore the motives and methods involved; Alexander Fidora's interrogation of prologues to the 'Talmud dossier's' translations is comparable. Teresa de Soto, in possibly the best chapter, scrutinises the aims underlying Joseph Morgan's 1720s' translation of an Islamic doctrinal work. Another worthwhile contribution is Nicolas Carpentieri's, who shows how Ibn al-Quff used his ability to translate Persian medical terms to imply competence as a physician. In Isaac Aboab da Fonseca's preface to his Hebrew translation of a Castilian Kabbalistic work, argues Federico Dal Bo, the translator displays an awareness of having disregarded the original author's decision to confine his writings to a specific language and cultural group. Rebekah Clements returns to the opening chapter's link of written with spoken language, looking at Chinese logographic writing, which Japanese scholars treated as merely archaic Japanese script, needing no translation. All told, this volume seems likely to interest scholars who specialise in translation studies, the history of science, and the topics addressed in specific chapters.

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**Cleland, Katharine, *Irregular Unions: Clandestine Marriage in Early Modern English Literature*, Ithaca, NY, and London, Cornell University Press, 2021; ebook; pp. x, 196; R.R.P. free download; ISBN 9781501753480.**

Katharine Cleland's monograph concerns a topic fundamental to everyday life as well as fiction: marriage. It contextualises its literary marriages admirably against history and historiography, and so it will be of value to historians, not just literature scholars. Critical to Cleland's study is the fact that, unlike other Protestant states, England did not abandon Roman canon law when breaking with Rome. Roman law permitted couples to marry by private consent, without a ceremony or even witnesses. That remained the case. Until 1753 marriage needed no betrothal, banns, or formal wedding, permitting clandestine marriages that carried risks to the principals, their families, and the community. Moreover, couples who omitted the specifically English rites of the Book of Common Prayer risked suspicion of religious heterodoxy. Cleland explores how writers around 1600 responded to these circumstances.

Every chapter examines one work or compares two. Cleland focuses on previously neglected or unrecognised clandestine marriages—her findings can therefore be usefully applied to better known cases, Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure* for instance, the marriage contracts in which have provoked dispute and confusion. Chapter 1 discusses Edmund Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, arguing that whereas scholars treat the Redcrosse Knight's relationship with the shady Duessa in Book 1 as a 'dalliance' (p. 24), contemporaries would have understood

it as clandestine marriage. Realising that fact changes one's perspective on both the story and the complications the liaison brings the Knight—hence Cleland's argument for close attention to clandestine marriages and their implications. Spenser, she argues, whose leanings were Calvinist and who notably wrote about marriage, certainly knew Calvin opposed Roman canon law. Using the Redcrosse Knight's dilemma, Spenser urged England to follow other states in abandoning Roman law.

Other chapters scrutinise other works similarly. Chapter 2 features Christopher Marlowe's *Hero and Leander* and George Chapman's continuation of the poem: Marlowe rejected Elizabethan love poetry's Petrarchan tendencies, which glorified distant, unconsummated love, in favour of clandestine marriage sealed by sex; Chapman warned against the dangers, especially for women, since clandestine marriages could later be disavowed. In Chapter 3, Shakespeare's *A Lover's Complaint* is an 'easily overlooked fiction of clandestine marriage' (p. 63), whose forsaken heroine counterpoints the publicly married bride of Spenser's *Epithalamion*. Chapters 4 and 5 deal with clandestine marriage's role in Shakespeare's interracial unions. In *The Merchant of Venice*, a comedy, ill effects are averted because Lorenzo's Jewish wife Jessica is given the opportunity to keep house at Belmont while its owners are away, signifying her acceptance into Christian society: clandestine marriage prevented couples setting up house together, the action by which husband and wife demonstrably joined the married community. In *Othello*, tragedy ensues when the lovers must marry secretly, without pledging faith before the community; this leaves Othello susceptible to insinuation his wife is unfaithful. The monograph concludes by examining the incestuous betrothal pact in John Ford's *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*.

Cleland's scholarship is nuanced, more than can be summarised here. Sometimes (for example, in Chapter 3) she possibly attributes more significance to a relationship than it deserves: is the author genuinely arguing a case about clandestine marriage or simply using this particular marriage as a plot device? Perhaps English works with clandestine marriages should be compared with analogous works from Catholic states or Protestant ones that did abolish Roman law. How are things different? In general, though, the monograph is insightful, thought-provoking, and likely to apply to texts it does not itself examine.

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**Trevisan**, Sara, ed., *Mythical Ancestry in World Cultures, 1400–1800* (Cursor Mundi, 35), Turnhout, Brepols, 2018; hardback; pp. ix, 196; 12 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. €70.00; ISBN 9782503580098.

Sara Trevisan's book *Mythical Ancestry in World Cultures, 1400–1800* is a wonderful exploration of mystical ancestry as a global phenomenon, and looks to understand how individuals and communities take meaning from their history, and how these meanings, in turn, shape their understanding of the past, the present, and the future. The book focuses on the early modern period, where mythical

ancestry was often used to support pedigrees of power, whether by demonstrating intact lineages to important historical figures or by crafting etymology designed to illustrate genealogical links to ancestors.

The book's first chapter by Lisa Balabanlilar, 'The Mythical Ancestry of the Mughal Dynasty', argues that the powerful Chingisids, Timurids, and Mughals actively drew upon ancestral power and charisma to justify their own 'continued imperial aspirations' (p. 29). Genealogy as a tool for social classification is explored further in Jean-Paul Zuniga's chapter 'The Idol of Origins: Myth, Genealogical Memory and Law in Hispanic America', which ties territorial conquest to origin narratives from the Incas to the Castilian elites. The use of genealogical evidence in the creation of identity in Florence is explored by Christiane Klapisch-Zuber's chapter through the perspective of various 'merchant-authors'. These writers often reflect upon their own lineage within the context of the city itself, creating fascinating insights into a city more well-known for the histories of the elites rather than of obscure merchants. Similarly, Jane Hathaway's 'Origin Myths and Ethno-Regional Solidarity in Ottoman Egypt: An Unexpected Finding' sets out how terminology, symbolism, and myth came to reflect rival factions in Ottoman Egypt, offering another perspective on origin narratives.

Sara Trevisan's own chapter, an original study on an anonymous genealogical roll that traces the genealogy of King James VI of Scotland and I of England is also fascinating in that it explores the relationship between biblical and mythical ancestors in the context of the political and national identity of both the state and royalty, a theme also found in Ewa Kociszewska's chapter on the construction of French noble identity via the myth of Trojan origins. Borverto Bizzocchi and Ermina Irace's concluding chapter, entitled 'Mythical Ancestry, Genealogy, and Nationalism in Eighteenth-and Nineteenth-Century Europe', explores how national identities and nationalism were shaped by discourse of mythical ancestry, particularly at a time in early modern Europe during which there was a shift in understanding how ancestry and genealogy provided linkages to power structures within society.

*Mythical Ancestry in World Cultures, 1400–1800* provides fascinating insights into how biblical and mythical ancestors have shaped understanding of identity, and have contributed to constructions of, and narratives around, power and hierarchy.

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**Yalom**, Marilyn, *The Amorous Heart: An Unconventional History of Love*, New York, Basic Books, 2018; hardback; pp. vii, 277; 32 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. US\$16.99; ISBN 9780465094714.

The iconography of the heart as a symbol of romantic love has a long history in Western culture. In *The Amorous Heart: An Unconventional History of Love*, Marilyn Yalom surveys the meaning of the heart metaphor and the development of its visual lexicon from antiquity to contemporary popular culture. Identifying

the ancient Egyptian belief that the heart was ‘the seat of the soul’ (p. 2) as her starting point, Yalom traces an association between the heart and love, and the development of the heart icon, drawing on examples from religious thought, literary and philosophical traditions, decorative and visual arts cultures, and social rituals. In twenty short chapters with black and white illustrations, Yalom’s interdisciplinary study focuses mainly on canonical examples of heart-centred discourse and imagery from Western culture, including poetry by Sappho, Ovid, Chrétien de Troyes, and Dante Alighieri; Renaissance art depicting Venus and Cupid; literary texts by William Shakespeare, Samuel Richardson, Jane Austen, George Sand, and Charlotte Brontë; and philosophical and medical theories by Aristotle, Galen, Andreas Vesalius, William Harvey, René Descartes, Blaise Pascal, Thomas Hobbes, and John Locke. Where lesser-known figures such as Saint Gertrude the Great of Helfta (1256–1302) and Francesco da Barberino (born as Francesco di Neri di Ranuccio in Tuscany in 1264) appear, they are included as contemporaneous examples of otherwise well-known heart-centred iconography: the Sacred Heart of Jesus for Saint Gertrude and the figure of Cupid for Barberino. A single chapter on Arabic songs from the pre-Islamic period focuses on non-Western sources; examples of the iconography of the religious heart are drawn primarily from Catholic devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and Protestant and Catholic responses to this heart iconography during the Reformation. These examples suggest that the book’s subtitle, ‘An Unconventional History of Love’, is perhaps intended to speak more to a popular audience unfamiliar with scholarship on the heart as a significant metaphorical and iconographical symbol. Yalom’s engaging style does mean, however, that the book offers an accessible survey of key shifts in the cultural history of the heart as a symbol of multiple kinds of love in Western culture.

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