Cultural Transformations in the English-Speaking World

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Edited by

Cécile Cottenet, Jean-Christophe Murat and Nathalie Vanfasse

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—The Editors

INTRODUCTION

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This volume is comprised of a selection of scholarly articles derived from papers presented at a symposium co-organised in March 2008 in Aix-en-Provence by Aix-Marseille Université and the LERMA (*Laboratoire d'Etudes et de Recherches sur le Monde Anglophone*), and the English Department at Oxford Brookes University. The essays, expanded and scrupulously revised, have been carefully selected and organised in a way that enhances their cogency and logical interconnections.

The essays herein included examine cultural transformations in the English-speaking world from the pre-modern to the post-modern eras. Culture is understood as the complex and multiple reality analysed by Raymond Williams in *Culture and Society* (1958) and *Keywords* (1975), that is to say intellectual, aesthetic and spiritual developments, but also a way of life specific to a people, a period, a group or humanity in general. It is analysed here through a dialectical relationship which, beyond the binary opposition between "high" and "low" culture, introduces a three-term debate between international, classic(al) and vernacular cultures in a context in which internationalisation of culture is developing on an unprecedented scale and at an unprecedented pace. Rather than ranking cultural practices according to their supposed degree of quality or importance, emphasis is laid here on a more anthropological understanding of culture as designating shared social practices and on the cross-fertilisation produced by their interaction in the transformative processes examined in this book. In the wake of the cultural theorist Stuart Hall in his introduction to *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices* (1997) culture itself is seen as a set of processes or transformations intended to produce meaning.

The book focuses on the way cultural transformations take place within language, which in turn influences those transformations. It purports to explore different forms of cultural transformations (transfer, adaptation,

cross-over, rewriting, republishing…), their outcomes (hybridism, generic transfers…) and their reception. Changes from lowbrow to middlebrow and highbrow cultures are considered diachronically and synchronically. Geographically, articles cover Great Britain, the Commonwealth and the United States taken separately or in connection with one another. A variety of cultural practices are scrutinised, ranging from the study of texts to the exploration of visual installations and architectural movements. Approaches to cultural transformations cover the transformations themselves and their meaning as well as responses to and interpretations of these transformations.

The book is divided into four parts. In the first part, "Channel-Crossing, Crossing Channels" – in which the word "Channel" is to be understood beyond its mere geographical sense – the essays illustrate how one reaches out to, adapts or refashions other cultures so as to present them in a form "suitable" to the expectations of a new public. Here, Sophie Alatorre shows how in the context of Renaissance culture, J. Hammond's English translation of *Alector ou le coq*, which manipulates as vernacular and national an emblem as the French rooster, aims at refashioning England's identity. Besides translation, other artists tunnelled aesthetic innovations across the Channel. In a similar bi-cultural perspective, Linda Pillière draws attention to the textual differences between British editions of novels and their US counterparts, and gives examples of such domesticating translations which imply not just interlingual but also intralingual translation. Tsu-Chung Su analyses Peter Brook's evolution from a conventional Shakespeare director to an avant-garde director after reading the French playwright and essayist Antonin Artaud's *The Theatre and Its Double* in 1958.

The second part of this volume, entitled "Culture and its Discontents" is devoted to various forms of protest against what may be perceived as imperial classicism and a check to the expression of national specificities or social subcultures. The need to vindicate, or conversely to criticise, dominant cultural practices, occasionally by using the very strategies and forms belonging to mainstream culture to produce oppositional statements, is here central. Protest can involve gender and ethnicity, as in Siham Arfaoui's close reading of Maxine Hong Kingston's novels *The Woman Warrior* and *China Men*, which demonstrates that the author's American stance shows a paradoxical need to preserve Chinese culture. These articles examine discontent in its very form and reasons. Michael Hinchliffe studies how the artist David Jones's aesthetic of clutter in both his writing and painting is itself a process of cultural transformation drawing on guerrilla tactics, and Audrey Sabathier examines how painters like Francis Bacon, Jean-Michel Basquiat and Tom Wesselman subversively

revisit canonical paintings and introduce lowbrow touches into supposedly highbrow artworks.

The third part, entitled "Founding Texts, Founding Cultures, Founding Languages" explores the role of cultural transformations in the search for and establishment of specific cultural practices, national or social. The British Council Review *Britain To-day* is used by Alice Byrne to analyse the evolution of the idea of British culture from a popular and democratic post-war vision to a more elitist and pessimistic vision in the 1940s and 1950s. Besides British culture, transformations can also found hybrid cultures as in the study by Mélanie Joseph-Vilain of the novel by Charles Mungoshi *Waiting for the Rain* which resorts to a Western form, the novel, and a Western language, English, while incorporating essentially oral elements thus transforming both Zimbabwean and English cultures. Transformations also partake of the building of American culture. Cécile Roudeau looks at William Dean Howells's evolution from the promotion of the voice of the "common man" in American literature, and the questioning of New England's position as policeman of the national tongue in the 1880s, to the refusal of regional dialects, as difference shifts from territorial to non-territorial realms of gender, race and ethnicity at the beginning of the twentieth century. And Stephen S. Sawyer shows how American cities participated in the transformation of American culture in the 1890s. He opposes Daniel Burnham's imperialist vision of American architecture grounded in the tradition of European classicism to Louis Sullivan's defence of a specifically American phenomenon, the skyscraper, and its adaptation to American space and its people.

The last section, "Revisiting the Canon and Cultural Icons/ Revisiting Cultural Icons and the Canon", focuses on the subversion and manipulation of canonical languages as the very condition for their cultural survival. This part tackles the reworking of cultural references, some of them fundamental in the Anglophone world, through borrowing or even poaching, which infuses new life and meaning into them. In this section, Richard Phelan analyses the "rewriting" in 2002 by French artist Ernest Pignon of Sam Nzima's historic photo of the Soweto uprising in 1976, which linked the fight against AIDS with that against apartheid, and resulted in the creation of a new cultural icon. Elisabeth Jay's article looks at biblical quotations in the nineteenth-century novel and runs counter to Bakhtin's contention that Scripture resists creative play within a literary text. Jay shows that the incorporation of the Bible within literature was part of a process which destabilised the sacred text and allowed for increasingly personalised interpretations. The Bible is also the focus of Rob Pope's article which concentrates on the Biblical Ten Commandments,

from Babylon before Exodus to the current Babel of the World-Wide-Web, and defines transforming culture as what we do – not just observe.

The articles in this volume shed new light on the reasons why cultural transformations are made and by whom, as well as on the circumstances in which such changes take place. They also provide insight into how people use, respond to and interpret cultural transformations, the way cultural practices combine or intersect in these changes, and into what transformations say about the cultures which produce them.

They thus reveal that cultural transformations often partake of a quest for identity, a need to adopt a new culture and/or reject an old one, to reconcile conflicting cultures, or resist foreign ones. Self-fashioning or the re-fashioning of the self through cultural frames answers existential anxieties or concerns about changing social, economic and political conditions. Transforming objects, texts or practices related to specific cultures is also a way of putting them back into circulation, of preventing their fossilisation and preventing them from becoming invisible to our all-too accustomed eyes. Cultural transformations aim at awakening readers or viewers, challenging their perceptions, teasing their memory.

Furthermore cultural transformations can be seen as a way of engaging with cultural practices, a way of appropriating them or of developing oppositional readings. They are part of a negotiating process, of a way of interpreting culture, rejecting or reconfiguring it. They also convey social and/or artistic or political statements, question religious, literary or generic stereotypes, symbols and emblems, destabilise canonical texts, established discourses or icons, recycle them to give them a new essential and vital meaning in keeping with new social environments. This however raises questions about the future of the objects, texts or cultural practices which have undergone transformations. Do they disappear to be replaced by their transformed version or are they revived and rejuvenated in the process? Do transformations just twist and disfigure or do they reinvent? Do they revitalise masterpieces and other canonical sources by retelling them or do they merely deface and erase them? As shown by the articles in this volume, the answer to these questions depends on the objects considered.

At any rate, cultural transformations are shown to be a creative, often ongoing, process. Generic or gender displacements combine with chronological, linguistic and geographical transformations to produce a fluid and interactive process exemplified many a time in this book. Cultural transformations are also at times connected with fragmentation, *inventio* or bricolage, and the assembling of different styles gives them a composite quality which seems to be part and parcel of their very nature.

Last but not least, the very conditions of cultural transformations cannot be ignored. They prepare and account for these changes. Many of the articles in this volume show that transformations would not have taken place without specific political, social, artistic or financial conditions which in turn affect the nature of the transformations themselves.

Through the prism of literary and linguistic analyses, of history, art history and creative writing, this interdisciplinary volume will help readers decipher cultural transformations which are not only a basic feature of contemporary life, as people and nations are brought closer together, but also a more historical trend which dates back to the Renaissance and even further. The papers move within and across cultures and mirror the wide array of approaches to the analysis of culture that have appeared in the past few decades thus producing a better understanding of the transformative power of English-language culture both within its own boundaries and on other European and non-European cultures, not to mention the reciprocal influence of those non English-language cultures on the English-speaking world.

PART I

CHANNEL-CROSSING, CROSSING CHANNELS

ENGLISHING *ALECTOR OU LE COQ*: ELIZABETHAN TRANSLATIONS AND CULTURAL TRANSFORMATIONS

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The concept and the practice of translation were both a vital part of Renaissance culture throughout Europe, partly stimulated by the growth in printing and reading, and by travel and the exchange of ideas across cultures. In England, Queen Elizabeth herself, having received a full humanist education and conversant in nine languages, enjoyed a rather impressive reputation as a scholar and translator of classical and Christian literature. Translations from the classics (including translations from Greek into Latin) took pride of place, but translations of major works of vernacular literature, from the *Orlando furioso* to *Don Quixote*, were also influential. In this context, French literature played an important role in England's search for a distinctive national literature. In the second half of the 16th century, the decision to translate a French work into English was often due to larger literary and cultural motivations. Foreign literatures were generally rendered in such a manner as to become English works themselves, and of course, Elizabethan authors have long shown a preference for Protestant authors such as Clément Marot,[1] Guillaume Du Bartas[2] or… Bartelemy Aneau.

John Hammond's translation of Aneau's book *Alector*, re-written and "domesticated" in 1590 (thirty years after the original), may well be a case in point.[3] Therefore, I would like to explore the margins of Elizabethan culture and literature, an exploration which requires the presence of two minor literary figures of the sixteenth century – a French one, Bartelemy Aneau, and an English one, John Hammond – whose careers nevertheless intersected with nearly all the major intellectual and aesthetic currents of the Renaissance.

Bartelemy Aneau, his translator-to-be, and *Alector*

Bartelemy Aneau, a humanist poet and educator who was born in Bourges, spent close to thirty years of his adult life in Lyons, twenty of which (1540-51, 1552-61) as principal of the municipally-controlled Collège de la Trinité. Competent in Latin, Greek, and French, Aneau translated into French many famous works such as Alciati's *Emblemata* (1548), the third book of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (1556) or Flavius Josephus' *Apologie contre Appion* (1562). He used all the literary devices of his time: myth, utopia, historical novel, pedagogical novel, children's novel, and even philosophical novel. Aneau upheld the humanist ideal of a liberal education based on eloquence while encouraging instruction in the vernacular and promoting the study of Greek. We can therefore situate our author in the Renaissance inquiry into symbolic imagery and in the quest for a perfect language.

When the French humanist wrote his novel *Alector*, John Hammond (*c.*1555–1617), his translator-to-be, was only five years old. Coming from a notable family, he became physician to James I[st], and then to Henry, Prince of Wales, a service for which he is best known. Hammond attended the prince in his last illness in 1612, and his signature is appended to the original record of the post-mortem examination. He was not known in the artistic world of his time and still today, hardly anyone is aware of his role in the history of translation during the Renaissance. Even the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*[4] says nothing of his version of Aneau's esoteric, utopian fiction.

Nowadays, *La Princesse de Clèves*, the work generally recognised as Madame de Lafayette's finest, is often regarded as the first modern novel… What if that were wrong?[5] Indeed, the long-awaited publication of Marie-Madeleine Fontaine's edition of Barthelemy Aneau's *Alector ou le coq: Histoire fabuleuse* (1560) has revealed a real masterpiece of Renaissance fiction. Aneau's circular story, conveying a very specific vision of the world, takes up the magical birth of Alector the cock, a national emblem that reaches back to the iconographical programmes developed during the early years of the reign of Francis I[st]. Drawing from various fields of knowledge, the learned author thus creates a new fictional genre, a blend of history and of the chivalric romance.

In France, *Alector* stands as a founding fiction of national myths. Let's remember that Gaul was the common name for France in antiquity, and it was associated with the Latin word *gallus*, meaning cock. Later, the cock became the symbol of the French nation. Of course, the Englished version did not have the same echoes, for nothing in England's mythic history can

be linked with a cock. Logically then, *The cock. Containing the first part, of the most excellent, and mythologicall historie, of the valorous Squire Alector* (1590), did not compete at all with fictions of national myths, and this aspect completely disappeared from the English text.[6]

According to Marie-Madeleine Fontaine, its author, John Hammond, was, the "Cock's first cuckoo" ("*le premier coucou du coq*", "Introduction", CXV), since he never acknowledged his debt and re-wrote the story as if it had been his own, possibly relying on John Palsgrave's bilingual dictionary to check his French.[7] At the time, such a practice was no exception. Literary re-appropriations were frequent, and one did not feel obliged to quote one's sources. From the receiver's point of view, translation was a form of gain, enriching the host culture as a result of skilful adaptation. From the originator's point of view, translation was a form of loss, sometimes leading to misunderstanding and doing violence to the original. But times have changed… *Alector* was only published in 1590, and it has never been re-translated into English since then, contrary to so many Renaissance books that were "Englished" several times during the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries. This may account for the fact that, so far, very little work has been done about this Elizabethan form of rewriting.

Alector's main narrative thread

The source-text could be defined as a kind of French Odyssey reminiscent of Rabelais's style, in which several narrative threads are interwoven. This is the reason why it is quite difficult to summarise. It is an extraordinary testimony to the power of Renaissance imagination: the reader embarks on a winged hippopotamus named Durat for a fabulous journey with Gaul's founding hero, Franc-Gal. Durat (from the Latin "duratus" meaning "becoming hardened"), a quick-tempered, grotesque and fantastic animal, is of prime importance in the book, for it obviously alludes to such fabulous beasts as Pegasus or Orlando Furioso's hippogryph.[8] Hammond understood such cultural references and was probably attracted by Aneau's skilful debunking of well-known myths. So, in order to escape the Flood, Franc-Gal travels throughout the world and across different periods of time as well. His mission consists in civilising wild peoples, and nothing, even the birth of his son Alector (which means "cock" in Greek), will be able to interrupt such a noble task. Therefore, he leaves Alector's mother, a fantastic creature, half-woman half-snake. Here, one needs to remember that, during the Renaissance, the snake was linked to lechery and immodesty; it was the case, for instance, in Valeriano's

Hieroglyphica [1556], Book XIV). Queene Priscaraxe will soon be left by her son, too, and Alector's departure will cause her tears. The seventeenth chapter of the original text is quite eloquent about the mother's grief; through the skilful use of direct speech, readers can share her feelings while at the same time getting a more precise idea of the end of the story:

> Alector, mon beau filz, mon cher filz Alector, si je larmoye, n'en soyez esbahi; car, ayant passé bien brief temps de joye en la compagnie de Mon Seigneur Franc-Gal, vostre pere, je me consoloie d'avoir tel gage de luy et de sa promesse du retour, comme est vostre personne engendrée de son sang. Or maintenant, voyant que vous avez volunté de le suyvre et de m'abandonner, et que par celeste destin ainsi le fault, me sentant à ceste heure preste d'estre desemparée et de mary, et de filz, les deux plus cheres personnes qui me soient au monde, si je suys triste et esplorée, ce n'est pas de merveille, car les angoisses de perpetuelle orbité[9] jà environnent mon ame. Et mon cœur me dict et les songes me presagissent que jamais ne vous ne luy ne reverray. (Aneau 1560, 126)

The valediction was already part of a long literary tradition in France as well as in England. The Elizabethan translator acknowledged the pathos underlying the passage as a whole, and chose a mirror rewriting of his source, even copying the global length and structure of the French sentences, as can be seen in the initial chiasmus :

> Alector my fayre Sonne, my deare Sonne Alector, If I shed teares be thou not abashed: for having passed short time with joy in the company of my Lord Franc-Gal thy father, I somewhat consolated my selfe to have such a pawne of him and his promised returne, as is thy person engendred of his bloud. But now seeing thou art enclined to abandon mee and followe him, and that by celestial destiny it must needs be so, feeling my selfe at this instant as it wer bereaved both of husband and sonne the two dearest persons to me in this world, no mervaile it is though I bee sad, for the anguishes of perpetuall want do already environ my soule; my heart telleth me, and my dreams presage that I shall never see either of you both againe. (Hammond 1590, 117-18)

Literalism is prominent here, and the target-culture does not seem to impose its norms: Hammond makes the original author speak English while preserving as much as possible of Aneau's syntax.

In both French and English versions, the young boy is depicted as a very precocious child who is naturally endowed with golden spurs. Very early in his life he becomes a squire and decides to travel up and down the world in quest of his father. Thus, the reader follows the parallel adventures of the two heroes, the old Franc-Gal and his son, who both

fight against monstrous beings, are told various mythological narratives and will receive philosophical teachings. Both father and son are eventually united in the city of Orbe, the book's utopian town in which men try to dominate chaos and injustice.

A sequel had already been planned by Aneau, and it is interesting to note that his interpreter, mentioning "the first part" of *Alector* in his Englished title, also implied that a second part would soon follow. But Hammond was probably aware that intolerance would never allow the French author to fulfil his task: Aneau was murdered for heresy in 1561. The Elizabethan translator probably knew of his violent death at the hands of a Catholic mob. So why, then, let potential readers wait for other adventures involving Alector? Did Hammond intend to write his own sequel but lacked the time to do it? Such questions, today, are bound to remain unanswered.

The French originalities and their Elizabethan rendering

One of the original characteristics of French fiction was that Aneau had claimed to translate his entirely new story from antique fragments. Indeed, one could read on the work's frontispiece : *Alector, Histoire Fabuleuse, Traduicte en François d'un fragment divers, trouvé non entier mais enterrompu, & sans forme de principe*. The Elizabethan translator might have perceived the irony of the process consisting in producing a genuine translation out of a fake one… But he chose to conceal Aneau's primary goal by completely concealing the fact that the source-text was presented as an "ancient fragment". Moreover, even the full title of *Alector*'s Englished version is different from and much longer than the French one: *Alector. The Cock. Containing the first part, of the most excellent, and Mytheologicall Historie, of the valorous Squire Alector; Sonne to the Renowned Prince Macrobius Franc-Gal; and to the Peerelesse Princesse Priscaraxe, Queene of High Tartary*. No mention of any fragment here: the translator obviously focuses on the exotic side of the book as well as on its mythological and theological undertones.

Aneau's humanist fiction is especially innovative because, contrary to many 15th-century works, it is full of dialogues endowed with a sometimes comic, sometimes argumentative, sometimes psychological dynamics. Just like his French counterpart, Hammond pays special attention to the learned speakers who constantly intervene in the narrative process.

What is striking in Hammond's text is that, since he suppresses any reference to fragments in the title of the book, the English reader cannot find any fragments, or "*propos rompus"*, at the beginning of the story. The

English book directly starts with chapter I, i.e. without Aneau's preliminaries which were supposed to give an esoteric tone to the whole fiction. However, if Hammond betrays the original at the beginning of his translation, he does not erase the many "*propos rompus*" which can be found within the story itself, and scrupulously respects the variety of dialogues which can be found in the book.[10]

Bakhtin could not have found a better example of dialogism than Aneau's *Histoire Fabuleuse* where multiple discourses compete with one another. Beyond the title, the "*propos rompus"*, i.e a number of undecipherable, fragmented discourses of indeterminable origin, pepper the text. The inclusion of the "*propos rompus*" belies the apparent wholeness of the central narrative. Intervening at moments of narrative impasse where a multiplicity of voices has already overcome the narrative voice, the "propos rompus" occasionally serve as a confirmation of a certain discourse. More often, however, there is no attempt to resolve their apparent exteriority which eventually undermines the authority of the narrative voice. Although the characters of Franc-Gal and Croniel Archier are able to construct a narrative by combining their voices, the shape of this narrative is constantly threatened by external voices that refuse to comply with the narrative rules they have established.

Hammond's faithfulness

At the beginning of each chapter, just as in the French original, one finds a short summary narrating the events to be developed in the chapter. The Elizabethan text can here be defined as a faithful translation, and if we look at the first sentence of each book, we notice that no major change can be found in the English version. The French text reads:

> Le pavé de marbre blanc en la basse court du palais des Gratians, Seigneurs citoiens Orbitains, avoit changé sa blanche couleur en rougeur sanguinolente par l'effusion du sang humain et en plusieurs endroictz estoit couvert de corps occis, gisans à l'entour du preux Alector, comme l'herbe abbatue autour du faucheur, les uns du tout oultrez, les autres encore tirans le jarret et jectant les derniers soupirs. (Aneau 1560, 17)

Now, here is Hammond's rendition:

> The pavement of white marble in the lower court of the palace of the Gratian Lords, and Citizens of Orbe, had changed the snowie hewe into sanguinolent red, by the effusion of humaine blood, and was covered in many places with dead bodies lying round about he valerous Alector, as

> the grasse abated by the Mower: some being slaine out right, and others yet drawing breath, and yielding up the ghost. (Hammond 1590, 1)

White, red, green: the colours catch the reader's attention. The violence of the scene is intact, and Hammond's graphic description sends us back to the original.

Similarly, we could pay attention to one of the turning points in the story, in Chapter 14. Let's compare the two little short summaries of each version. In the original one, we can read:

> De la prevision du Cataclysme et du Hippopotame Cheval fluvial, sur lequel Franc-Gal surmonta les eaux, d'ond il fut surnommé Gal, et de la cognoissance qu'il eut avec Priscaraxe, femme serpentine. (Aneau 1560, 88)

In the English text, this is what we find:

> Of the prevision of the Cataclysme, of Durat Hippopotame the sea horse, whereon Franc-Gal surmounted the waters, whereby he was surnamed Cocke, and of his encountrie with Priscaraxe a my-serpentlike woman. (Hammond 1590, 79)

If proper names are never translated in the Elizabethan saga,[11] here, we can notice a major difference with the original summary: Franc-Gal's nickname is not "Gal", but "Cocke". Aneau explains what "Gal" means in the following pages:

> Adonc commença mon cheval marin à nager [...] et a estendre ses ailes [...] lesquelles [...] nous transporta en diverses contrées et régions [...] à la grande merveille des peuples [...]. Ils nous escrioient de tous costez à plusieurs et hautes voix GAL, GAL, GAL, qui en leur langage Araméen est à dire Surmontant les eaux, par admiration de ce que ilz me voioient grand et puissant, hautement monté à cheval sur les profondes eaux comme sur la terre ferme. (Aneau 1560, 90)

Curiously, while Hammond chose to ignore Franc-Gal's real nickname in his summary, he nonetheless translated the French explanation quite faithfully, and this time, did not feel the need to replace "Gal" by "Cocke":

> My Hippopotame was elevated upon the waters [...]. Then began my marinall horse to swim [...]. Having once taken the aire and winde, [his wings] transported us into divers Countries and Regions [...] to the great marvell of the people [...]. They cried to us of all sides with loude voices, Gal, Gal, Gal, which in their *Armenian* language signifieth, Surmounting

> the waters: by admiration thereof, that they saw me great and puissantly mounted on horse backe upon the profound waters, as it were ofn firme land. (Hammond 1590, 81)

The translation does not betray the original text, but Hammond somewhat reduces the scale of the French text by speaking of Armenian language instead of the language of divine worship, the Aramaic, alluded to by Aneau. The transmission of the cultural values cultivated by the French author is a delicate task, and all his learned references are not always respected by the Elizabethan re-writer. However, he takes for granted the fact that most of the French puns are likely to be understood by his English readers. The repetition of "Gal, Gal, Gal", for instance, shows a play on the word "gal" coming from "gallus" (meaning both "the cock" and "the Gaul", as mentioned earlier) and also from the Aramaic root signifying "surmounting the waters" and alluding, of course, to Noah's ark.

Throughout his rewriting, Hammond generally does not suppress the clichés and the images used in the first version. Stereotypes are duly reproduced; when Aneau in chapter VIII describes "un homme incogneu, d'assez laide figure et noir comme un Aithiopian" (Aneau 1560, 59), Hammond similarly speaks of "an unknowen man, ill shaped and blacke like to an Aethiopian" (Hammond 1590, 48). This expression is of course an old cliché to designate the skin colour of an African, and both writers stick to the Renaissance prejudice linking the colour black with evil. Cultural deformations remain the same in France and in England: no transformation is thus needed when distorted visions of the Other are concerned.

A Utopian vision

Actually, it seems that Hammond, by translating his French source, possibly had one major goal in mind: he may have wanted to contribute to the development of utopias in his own country, paving the way for Bacon's *New Atlantis* (1627).[12]

The end of the narrative focuses on the city of Orbe, and the twenty-fourth chapter is devoted to its chorography:

> La cite d'Orbe estoit ainsi nommée pour sa forme et figure ronde, située sur une montaigne bien peu haulte, mais fort large en demie rondeur comme un demi globe, tellement que le mylieu estoit le plus hault et le plus eminent, descouvrant facilement tous ses environs descendans non en precipice roide, mais peu à peu en douce vallée pendante de tous costez si

> coulamment que ny au monter, ny au descendre, presque on ne s'apercevoit point de l'elevation du mylieu, ne de la depression des entours, tant doucement alloit devallant judques aux arriere-murs et aux murailles d'ond elle estoit close en parfaite circularité, fondées et basties des dures pierres de roche, massonnées à cimet, de la hauteur de trente toises et de l'espesseur de trois, remparées de dix neuf gros boulevardz avec leurs Chevaliers et faulses brayes, garniz de tours et sentinelles [...]. (Aneau 1560, 169)

Ptolemy's distinction between Geography and Chorography made so much sense that it was adapted by Renaissance writers. Geography is concerned with the mapping of countries, chorography with the mapping and description of counties, cities, and other smaller divisions. In this passage, the translator does not mention a chorography (from *khŏros*; "place" + *-graphein*, "writing"), contrary to the original title of the chapter, but simply speaks of a "description" which reminds us of the archetype of the utopian city as conceived by Thomas More in 1516:[13]

> The Citie of Orbe was so called for the round forms and fashion of the same: situated upon a little high mountaine, yet nevertheless verie large, in halfe roundes like to a demie Globe in such sort as the mids was the highest most prospective easily discovering round abouts, and descending not headlong but by a little pleasantly going downe-ward in such sort as neither mounting nor descending one could scarce apperceive the elevation of the mids nor [...] so easily descendeth it unto the outward most walls wherewith it was enclosed in pefect circularities, founded and builded of the barb stones of the rock, of the hight of 30 fathomes and of the thicknes of three: ramped with 19 grosse bulwarks with their knights and false lope holes, and garnished with towers and places of sentinels. (Hammond 1590, 161-62)

The round shape of the ideal town had been traditional since Plato's utopia, where the city was already a circular one. But Plato's Republic was merely an elite-running system, not a universal, ubiquitous country for all human beings.[14] His Republic even tended to be dictatorial. It was during the Renaissance that a new humanist view of utopia with a lesser degree of hierarchy emerged.

In the above-quoted passage, Hammond obviously took pleasure in re-writing the original version almost verbatim and scrupulously respected the measures given by his model, since the English reader could also imagine the city's gigantic bulwarks, more than fifty-eight metres high and almost six metres wide. By describing local places, chorography implicitly called to mind descriptions of the wider world, thereby encouraging the

English to define themselves as self-contained and separate from their Continental counterparts. Here, both French and English writers try to describe an ideal city which could remind many of us of the search for the perfect town in Renaissance Italy. This search testifies not only to a strong interaction between urban planning and its socio-political institutions, but also to a lively dialogue between architectural treatises and utopian texts. But clearly enough, while in the ideal cities described in literary utopias the social structure appears to be of primary concern and the urban arrangement of secondary importance, in the ideal city that was imagined and designed in architectural treatises things are in fact the other way round. In *Alector*, Aneau focused on the social structure characterising his city and made errors on the urban arrangement; for instance, he did not make any difference between the Theatre and the Arena in chapter XXIV (Aneau 1560, 180). Hammond did the same and merely repeated the errors of his predecessor, indifferently mentioning the "Theatre and the Sands" (Hammond 1590, 172).

Before examining Hammond's rewriting in depth, I thought that it should first be necessary to explore the shift between different discursive registers and competing ideologies within some of the European cultures in the Renaissance. In order to do this, a comparative study of Aneau's narrative and its reformulation in the English language may have been regarded as a first tentative exploration. Indeed, Hammond's strategies and manipulations of his source may have betrayed fundamental cultural transformations aiming at refashioning England's identity at a time when Shakespeare's contemporaries needed to apprehend their own peculiarities thanks to, but also against, those of their French neighbours. However, a close reading of Hammond's work soon revealed that my expectations were only partially true, in that they were not really the right ones. Hammond chose to rewrite his source in a mirror, as it were, because he did not feel the need to change anything in the French system of cultural values. He shared their stereotypes, visions and mythical references, and simply wanted to take over Aneau's ideas.

The main object of translation remained the same, i.e. to make available to the national literature all the riches of eloquence and thought from various foreign countries, so that Hammond, by translating his French source, also contributed to the development of the Utopian genre in England. Like others before him, even though he respected Aneau's choices most of the time, he had to follow a double process of decontextualisation and recontextualisation, first reaching out to appropriate something alien and then "Englishing" it. But his very faithful translation

marks the end of an era. Impatience with mere fidelity to the original soon increased. Translators had to throw a shade over the blemishes of their source but also had to copy its beauty. They could neither follow the original too closely nor abandon it through too much literary boldness.

I still think that much can be learned about the Elizabethan mind by a study of the manner in which late 16th-century writers treated their sources, but it is necessary to extend this study beyond the great figures of Thomas North, John Florio, and Arthur Golding. In the impression of Elizabethan translation created by the editors of the Tudor Translations series and Francis Otto Matthiessen, it is the dramatic quality of the translations, and of Elizabethan prose in general, that is emphasised: the eye for specific detail, the substitution of concrete images for abstractions, and the use of transitive verbs. The translators are seen as shaping the language of Shakespeare. This exaltation of Elizabethan prose through its association with drama, this praise of language for its rhythm and colloquial vigour, meant that the works of fiction are regarded by these critics as distinctly inferior. Such a judgement, today, appears unfair. Hammond, through his translation, gives a new life to a very rich and complex romance, and shows that classical authors are not the only ones worth rewriting. One could speak, here, of a humanist endeavour to write vernacular literary style into an "alternative canon" – one that does not prioritise classical literature.

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Notes

[1] Anne Boleyn, the second wife of Henry VIII, even patronised reformers such as Nicholas Bourbon and Clément Marot. See Anne Lake Prescott, "The Reputation of Clément Marot in Renaissance England", in *Studies in the Renaissance*, 18, 1971: 173–202.

[2] See for instance the work of his Renaissance translator: Josuah Sylvester, *The Divine Weeks and Works of Guillaume de Saluste Sieur Du Bartas.* 1605. 2 vols. Ed. Susan Snyder (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979).

[3] For the original version, see Marie-Madeleine Fontaine, ed., *Alector ou Le Coq, Histoire Fabuleuse*, 2 vols (Geneva: Droz, 1996). All my references to Aneau's text will rely on M-M Fontaine's edition. For the English translation, see Hammond 1590.

[4] H.C.G. Matthew, Brian Harrison, ed., *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography.* (Oxford: O.U.P, 2004). On-line version available at http://www.oxforddnb.com/.

[5] However, scholars differ in their opinions, since Spanish writer Miguel de Cervantes (1547–1616) also frequently receives credit for writing the first modern novel, *Don Quixote* (1605 and 1615).

[6] It is worth noting, though, that the title was all the same quite attractive for the English readers, since they could expect to read the adventures of a truly heroic character. Indeed, one of the meanings of the word "cock" listed in the *OED* is: "leader, head, chief man ruling spirit; formerly, also, victor [...]". This former meaning would date back to 1542 (the *OED* gives the following instance: " N. Udall *Erasm. Apoph.* 164: The contrarye [side to dice] to this… was called Venus, or Cous, and yt was cocke, the beste that might be cast").

[7] John Palsgrave, [1530/1569], *Lesclarcissement de la langue francoyse* (Aldershot : Scholar Press facsimile).

[8] The main character in cantos 33-35 is Astolfo, and he starts his journey by riding upon a hippogryph. A hippogryph, in mythology, is a flying animal having the wings, claws, and head of a griffin and the body and hindquarters of a horse. Astolfo rides this winged horse for quite a while journeying through many different lands.

[9] A French synonym could be *privation*.

[10] The notion of "betrayal" is all relative when applied to an Elizabethan translation. As Warren Boutcher puts it: "What, though, if we read Renaissance translations as "original" works by authors who happen to be translating?" (Warren Boutcher 2001, 46).

[11] The word *hippopotame* is almost considered as part of Durat's proper name and remains in French, which might have betrayed the real nature of Hammond's enterprise. However, this might have not been the case since at the time, spelling was fairly erratic (the *OED* mentions "ypotame" as an earlier English form dating back to the 13th century).

[12] Unlike many of his other major works, Bacon wrote his book in English and then had it translated into Latin. In his *New Atlantis*, Bacon presented the first model society based on empirical science and on Machiavelli's critique of classical utopias. As such, he did not present a utopia as More and Hammond did, but he set

forth what he considered to be a realisable city of peace and prosperity founded on a scientifically inductive study of nature and of "humanity."

[13] Written in Latin and first published in 1516, *Utopia* was not translated into English until 1551.

[14] The *Republic* (ca. 370-360 B.C.) is the first great extant utopian work that specifies the institutions of an ideal social order. It is not, however, the first of such speculations in Greek culture, for Aristotle, in his *Politics* (Book II, Chs. 7 and 8, 1266a-1268b), mentions Phaleas of Chalcedon who, as he says, "was the first to affirm that the citizens of a state ought to have equal possessions," and Hippodamus of Miletus "who was the first person not a statesman who made inquiries about the best form of government." The *Republic* appeared at a time when the *polis*, or city-state, was proving a fairly inadequate institution.