

according to the variable constraints of time and place—for the first time in the Renaissance becomes explicitly linked to historicism as an interpretive principle.

Apart from matters of style, Eden outlines how inventive strategies for proving arguments, gathered from the ancient *stasis* system, lead to novel ways of conceptualizing the authorial self. Of particular interest here is the second chapter's discussion of Augustine and Petrarch's use of self-refutation—argued for, though not put into practice, in Plato's *Gorgias*—and how this strategy of proof lays the groundwork for the skeptical advancements of the essay made by Montaigne.

Eden's discussion of Montaigne's stylistics is notable as well. Here she makes a convincing case for Montaigne's reliance on the stylistic tactic of comparison, or *similitudo*. At the same time, though, Montaigne uses self-refutation to advocate for a distrust of comparison's ability to capture the diversity of reality and worries openly about his use of it. Self-refutation (proof), as it concerns comparison (style), for Montaigne becomes a means to articulate a self-critical analysis of style and to question the probative capabilities of rhetoric in general. Eden traces meticulously here a thread that reveals not only what ancient rhetorical techniques Renaissance writers picked up but also how these techniques were used to advance beyond the strictures of the ancient doctrines they originated from—in the case of Montaigne, to scrutinize, theorize, and innovate an entire genre.

Eden, in short, has developed a kind of rhetorical handbook of her own, aimed at a deeper understanding of the rhetorical architecture of Renaissance texts—one that scholars of Renaissance rhetoric and literature will find eminently useful. *Rhetorical Renaissance* does much to broaden our picture of the vast literary provinces over which rhetoric once so magisterially reigned. *Rhetorica Regina* indeed.

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*“An Ancient Psalm, a Modern Song”: Italian Translations of Hebrew Literature in the Early Modern Period.* Alessandro Guetta.

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In his essays in *Cultural Translation in Modern Europe* (2007), Peter Burke famously pointed out that “the study of translation is or should be central to the practice of cultural history” (38). Burke's statement well applies to the scope of Guetta's volume, which offers a counter to the preponderance of studies concerned with translation into Hebrew or, particularly in the Renaissance period, from Hebrew into Latin. We thus discover that in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Italy, Jewish translations from Hebrew having as target language the vernacular were not only a diverse phenomenon

but also a rich one that significantly contributed to the transmission of knowledge and the development of literary cultures.

Expanding on a series of previously published articles and book chapters, Guetta's treatment significantly contributes to the understanding of early modern Jewish engagement with the disciplines or genres to which the works translated belong, the translators that produced them, and the readership for which they were intended. It also tries to indirectly map the progressive abandonment by Italian Jews of Judeo-Italian—that is, the written language reflecting regional and dialectical variants that Jews used until around 1550—and the subsequent, more consistent embrace of a standardized vernacular, although still written in Hebrew letters.

Organized thematically, the book includes seven chapters, each of them offering finely contextualized case studies revolving around a different kind of translation from Italian into Hebrew. Thus, the first chapter examines dictionaries. Among the dictionaries discussed in this chapter we find pedagogic tools that enjoyed lasting popularity among the Jewish audience, such as *Dabber Tov* (or, based on its first entry, *Or-Lustro*), first published in Venice in 1579, but also the much more complex and ambitious *Tzemah Tzaddiq* (Venice, 1587), the Hebrew-Latin-Italian dictionary by David de' Pomis (1525–88), that had been composed with both the Jewish and the Christian audience in mind. Chapter 2 discusses biblical translations, by far the vastest corpus of extant Jewish versions in Italian. This group also includes several biblical glossaries compiled between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which, according to Guetta, allowed their authors to partly circumvent ecclesiastical prohibitions regarding the translation of the bible into vernacular by providing the intended readership diffuse interpretations of single passages.

Attention is here also devoted to the Italian version of the *Haggada*, made by the Venetian rabbi Leon Modena (1571–1648). First published in Venice in 1609, alongside the Yiddish and Ladino versions, the translation, as Guetta points out, reveals Modena's degree of comfort with the surrounding Christian culture when it renders *Shabbat* with *Sabato* and, even more surprisingly, *Pesah* with *Pasqua*. Philosophical lexicons and the Italian translations of two of the most influential philosophical works of the Middle Ages—that is, Maimonides's *Guide for the Perplexed* and Yosef Albo's *Book of the Principles*—are dealt with in chapters 3 and 4. Chapter 5 examines a variety of rhymed translations of liturgical and para-liturgical medieval Hebrew poems, while chapter 6 offers samples of Italian versions of traditional Sabbath songs. Finally, the last chapter deals with the Italian and Latin translations of the classical ethical Jewish work, *Chapters of the Fathers*.

While offering a thorough and valuable overview of early modern translations from Hebrew into the vernacular, Guetta's analysis leaves some questions at the margins. One of these questions has to do with the often unclear relationship between translation and imitation as a rhetorical genre (*imitatio*). Did the Jewish translators put the same emphasis on eloquence as did Italian theorists of the Renaissance who addressed the

practice of *conversio*? Another aspect that would have been worth exploring is the polyglot environment in which these translations were produced, at a time when the idea of an essential correspondence between Hebrew and Italian, rather than a relative similarity, led to the creation of several multilingual compositions, some of them simultaneously readable in the two languages.

These are line of inquiries that others will hopefully take on, for, indeed, a non-secondary aspect in Guetta's valuable study is that it indicates the many opportunities for further work on Hebrew into Italian translations and their place in the evolving cultures of early modern Jewry.

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*Ariosto and the Arabs: Contexts for the "Orlando furioso."* Maria Casari, Monica Preti, and Michael Wyatt, eds.

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Elegantly taking its title from a poem by Borges, this volume explores the representation of the Arab Other in Ariosto's *Orlando furioso* and digs into the possible relationships between the tradition of European chivalric romance and the non-Christian Mediterranean world. While analyzing how Ariosto recasts the image of the so-called Saracens that comes down to him from the *chanson de geste* tradition, the contributions of this volume also set themselves the objective to locate the *Furioso* in a much wider network of intercultural relationships that extends—on real as well as on imaginary maps—from India and China via Northern Africa to Italy and even to the Netherlands.

The volume begins with a section on the presence of Arabic language and culture inside the *Furioso*. After a careful inquiry, Mario Casari reaches the conclusion that Ariosto took little (if any) notice of the interest in Arabic among Italian humanists. Jacopo Gesiot's article takes up the question of language and argues that the voice of the Other becomes lexically much more prominent in the *Furioso*. The articles by Maria Pavlova and Stefano Jossa then tackle the issue of how Saracens and Islam are represented in Ariosto. As Pavlova demonstrates, Ariosto endows Saracen characters with a dignity unknown to earlier romances. Jossa points out that there are references to Islamic religious practices in the *Furioso*, but that they subliminally refer to Christian controversies of the early Reformation period.

The second section shifts the focus away from the *Furioso* to the intercultural contacts that may have impacted its production and reception. The scope of the enquiry now becomes very wide and often includes synchronous developments or contemporary contexts, for instance, the history of Arabic literature in Mamluk Egypt and Syria in