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Elisa Segnini and Michael Subialka (eds), *Gabriele D'Annunzio and World Literature: Multilingualism, Translation, Reception*, Edinburgh, Edinburgh U.P., 2023, pp. 424, ISBN 9781399506854

Adopting a global and cross-cutting lens, *Gabriele D'Annunzio and World Literature: Multilingualism, Translation, Reception* focuses on D'Annunzio's transtemporal influence as the most charismatic as well as controversial, but internationally known, Italian figure in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. From a transnational perspective, Elisa Segnini and Michael Subialka state that D'Annunzio's appropriation of foreign literature and engagement with multilingual and translingual writing denotatively conveys a syncretic approach towards various forms of art and poetry. Within the logic of these considerations, translation and adaptation must be regarded as a representative transnational phenomenon of Decadence and Symbolism. In the context of the European *fin de siècle*, D'Annunzio's *oeuvre* is said to go beyond linguistic, cultural and political borders, fostering an ambivalent tendency to both cosmopolitanism and nationalism. If his polyphonous writing and "poetics of fusion", as Segnini and Subialka assert, promote a recontextualisation of the author within World Literature, highlighting the degree of the circulation and reception of his works, D'Annunzio's longing to internationalise Italian literature helps us put new emphasis on his "complex legacies" (p. 19) and affiliations with aesthetic models across the globe.

In order to provide a polycentric view of this prominent figure, Segnini and Subialka bring together the reflections of different scholars from twelve countries (Italy, France, Belgium, Austria, Spain, UK, USA, Canada, Russia, Egypt, Argentina, and Japan). This interesting volume is divided into four sub-topics which revolve around the international networks and literary exchanges allowing to place D'Annunzio in a World Literature framework.

The first section, "A Poetics of Fusion: Cultural Appropriation, Multilingualism, Translingual Writing", explores D'Annunzio's customary blending of artistic and literary material from variegated sources. The critical dialogue with Latin and Greek masterpieces, the use of Japanese poetic forms, the translation and rewriting of European authors are the main practices that converge in his vision of *Weltliteratur*. In this respect, Pietro Gibellini's contribution on "D'Annunzio and the Greek and Latin Classics" calls attention to D'Annunzio's knowledge of classical literature, alongside those of Italy and France, and to the echoes of Homer, Virgil, Seneca, Horace, Sappho, Ovid and Pindar in his work, situating him at the threshold of both the ancient and modern world. Mariko Muramatsu's chapter, "D'Annunzio and Japonism", tracks traces of Japanese culture and literature in D'Annunzio's poetry, uncovering the exoticism of

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his artistic focus as well as a broader aesthetic fascination with European *Japonisme*.

After this deep reflection on the incorporation of Orientalism in D'Annunzio's poetics, Elisa Segnini highlights how the multilingual aspect of his *oeuvre* relies on a perceptive outward gaze and a dialogue with foreign languages. More specifically, her chapter "Il *Piacere* as a Multilingual Text and its Afterlife in Translation" deals with the tension between cosmopolitanism and nationalism, the role of translation and the various intra- and interlinguistic stratifications of D'Annunzio's 1889 novel. Sarah Zappulla Muscarà and Enzo Zappulla's "'The essence of the race': *La figlia di Iorio* and Italian Dialects" concentrates on *La figlia di Iorio* and its translation into dialects as a way to boost the play's popularity, taking the examples of the Sicilian version by Giuseppe Antonio Borgese, the adaptation in Abruzzo dialect by Cesare De Titta and the Neapolitan dialect parody by Eduardo Scarpetta. At the end of this part, Filippo Fonio's contribution on "The 'Latin sister': D'Annunzio's Relationship to the French Language" offers an exhaustive overview of D'Annunzio's 'extraterritoriality' in connection with his Francophone writing and an innovative literary strategy based on linguistic experimentation.

The second section of the book, "Translators as Transcultural Negotiators", examines D'Annunzio's collaboration with his translators and the value of the translation process as "an inter-cultural practice that should retain the 'foreignness' of the original" (p. 21). In "Gabriele D'Annunzio and Georges Hérelle: Virility, Machismo and the Homoerotic", Clive Thomson presents some relevant aspects of Georges Hérelle and D'Annunzio's multi-layered interactions, drawing on their correspondence and other documents preserved by the translator. If Thomson focuses on Hérelle's intellectual admiration of and homoerotic drive towards the Italian author, in "After Hérelle: André Doderet, the (In)visible Translator" Annalisa Ciano shifts the attention to André Doderet, a French translator but also a playwright and novelist, who furthered the resurgence of interest in D'Annunzio's work after the events of Fiume, associating him with "a voice of the new Latin Renaissance" (p. 141). Stefano Evangelista's "'An Artist in Translation': D'Annunzio, Arthur Symons and Symbolist Drama" sheds light on the translation strategies applied by the poet and critic Arthur Symons to three of D'Annunzio's dramas (*The Dead City*, *La Gioconda*, and *Francesca da Rimini*). Evangelista underlines that, while Symons advocated the importance of producing unexpurgated versions of these works, their English reception was attenuated by the famous actress Eleonora Duse, who succeeded in making "D'Annunzio's art accessible to a morally scandalized audience" (p. 22). The personal and professional relationship D'Annunzio had with his translators is also the main topic of Adriana Vignazia's "Gabriele D'Annunzio and Karl Gustav Vollmoeller: From Classical Culture to the Attractions of Motor Power". In particular, she considers the German translations by Vollmoeller, the reception of D'Annunzio's *oeuvre* in German-speaking countries, and the link between creative writing and translation.

The third section, "D'Annunzio's Global *Fin-de-siècle* Reception", focuses on the impact of D'Annunzio's personality and the dissemination of his aesthetic principles all around the world. The appropriation of Dannunzian style and artistic vein paved the way for a literary renewal in various geopolitical areas in the name of a so-called

'modernity's transformation'. Noriko Hiraishi's "Fin-de-Meiji as *Fin-de-siècle*: D'Annunzio and Japanese Literature" examines D'Annunzio's influence and reception in *fin-de-siècle* Japan, underlining how his writings are able to designate new values and images of 'modern' men and women (for example, that of a *femme-fatale* heroine). The reconfiguration of gender models as part of D'Annunzio's innovation is also a point traced in Assumpta Camps's chapter on "D'Annunzio's Feminine Archetypes, Nationalist Ideology and Catalan Modernism". Exploring the Catalan reception of D'Annunzio's female archetypes, Camps tries to identify the distinctive elements of Catalan Modernist production derived from the Dannunzian feminine prism. Instead, a political overview is central to Arturo Larcati's "Gabriele D'Annunzio and the Austrian Reception after Italy's Entry into the War", which demonstrates how "D'Annunzio became the most important polemical target for the reactions of Austrian writers" (p. 233). During the "intellectual war", he was associated with Italy's entry into the Great War by the Austrian literary establishment, embodying all the negative features attributed to Italians. Only the figure of Stefan Zweig swam against the tide through his effort to separate D'Annunzio's artistic brilliance from his politicised persona.

The fourth section of the book, "Complex Legacies", delves into D'Annunzio's global reception and includes a selection of case studies based on different geographical, cultural and social contexts in order to illustrate the impact and popularity dating back to, and following, this inimitable author's lifetime. In "D'Annunzio and Argentina: from Elitism to Mass Nationalism", Sandro Abate sheds light on the reception of D'Annunzio's works in Argentina and the crucial role of the Italian diaspora for the poet's access to the Spanish-speaking world. In addition, Abate maps out three different stages from the 1890s up to the Second World War, emphasising D'Annunzio's relationship with some key figures as Guido Boggiani and Giovanni Del Guzzo. On the contrary, a political point of view is offered in "Gabriele D'Annunzio in the United States: Politics and Stereotypes", where Guylian Nemegeer and Mara Santi claim that D'Annunzio had gained considerable authority in the USA before the 1930s thanks to his reputation as an excellent opinionist and his role in both the First World War and the Fiume episode. However, the increasingly widespread misconceptions regarding D'Annunzio's correlation with Italian Fascism were to fuel scepticism and reservations about him, regardless of the repeated attempts to reconsider his poetic profile in American academia.

Elda Garetto and Sofia Lurie's chapter, "The Myth of Gabriele D'Annunzio in Russian Culture, 1890-2010: From 'Songs of the Native Land' to the 'Winged Cyclops'", shifts the attention to D'Annunzio's reception in Russia: after the notoriety achieved between 1900 and 1914, he totally disappeared from the literary scene during the Soviet era, with his personality starting to entice the public again from the 1990s to the present. A study on D'Annunzio's reception in the Arabic-speaking world is carried out in "From 'Great Italian Poet' to 'Fascist Writer': D'Annunzio and Arabic Culture" by Hussein Mahmoud and Christine Samir Girgis. This chapter illustrates how D'Annunzio's image has been shaped by the Arabian media, cultural magazines and academic establishment from the 1930s to nowadays. Although D'Annunzio's involvement in colonial history and his link with fascism ended by obscuring his deeper

political and literary identity, “he was known in Egypt as ‘the Great Italian Poet’ until the late 1930s” (p. 24). In his chapter on “Morlach’s Blood in Fiume’s *Mensa*: D’Annunzio and the Intimate Adriatic”, Russell Scott Valentino analyses the relationship between Italy and independent territories that would become Yugoslavia through the Luxardo brand’s trajectory from Zadar (Croatia) to Italy. The name ‘Luxardo’ is reported on the ‘maraschino’ bottle “where, just beneath ‘Cherry Brandy’, one finds the words *Sangue Morlacco*, below which appears this explanatory phrase: ‘Il liquore cupo che alla mensa di Fiume chiamavo ‘Sangue Morlacco’” (p. 316). Valentino speaks in terms of ‘Dannunzian Marketing’ in order to show how D’Annunzio’s popularity has survived in the worldwide public imagination. Ikuho Amano’s “Infatuated with *Il Vate*: Mishima’s Transnational Mimesis of D’Annunzio as Decadent Poet, Patriot and Celebrity” deals with the transcultural impact of D’Annunzio on Yukio Mishima, considering that “the personality and aesthetic credos of the Japanese writer attest to undeniable synergies with his Italian Modernist predecessor” (p. 330). Moreover, Amano uses the concept of ‘transmisis’ in order to weigh the impact of the Dannunzian model on Mishima’s literary adaptation and public persona, detecting a useful example of cross-cultural translation and emulation.

In the last chapter of the volume, “D’Annunzio in the Twenty-First Century”, Elisa Segnini and Michael Subialka concentrate on the role of translators with an eye to our contemporary context, sharing a diversified set of interviews about the translation of D’Annunzio’s texts all around the world. Assuming that “the global reception of D’Annunzio continues to unfold with new translations, adaptations and responses” (p. 357), Segnini and Subialka want to emphasise the boundless interpretations his *oeuvre* and artistic vision still lend themselves to.

In conclusion, *Gabriele D’Annunzio and World Literature: Multilingualism, Translation, Reception* unveils global reception dynamics and the multifaced dimensions of Dannunzian Decadence, “bridging aesthetic and political modernity in provocative but challenging ways” (p. 3). By encouraging scholars to rethink D’Annunzio in the World Literature context, the volume seeks to demonstrate how his output must be re-read through a new planetary map, a transnational territory based on multilingual interweavings. Engaging with D’Annunzio’s open attitude and outward gaze also means foregrounding his tendency towards transculturation and syncretism within a complex system of translation, adaptation, and circulation. In this light, the contributions gathered in this book succeed in re-evaluating D’Annunzio with a ‘denationalised’ eye and in tracing a deep line of continuity between the international networks of Decadent exchange and various artistic expressions of mobility and migration, colonialism and politics.