

---

Peter Bush and Kirsten Malmkjaer. *Rimbaud's Rainbow: Literary Translation in Education*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1998, 202 pp.

---

*Rimbaud's Rainbow* is a compilation of 14 edited papers describing the main lines of discussion from the First International Colloquium on Literary Translation in Higher Education held on the Warwick campus in the UK in 1994 to focus on raising the profile of literary translation within universities. This gathering of 170 translators and academics from over 25 countries was organized by a sub-committee of the Institute of Translating and Interpreting's Committee on Education and Training, a committee of British academics who teach translation, translate, and theorize translation.

The editor, Peter Bush, from the University of East Anglia emphasizes the great gap between profession and academy of translation in Europe in his introduction, "Literary Translation Changing Boundaries." He feels that there is an urgent need for collaboration between scholars and practitioners of translation in a world full of new socio-economic realities such as the globalization of the world economy. He stresses the importance of training literary translators within the university system. Translation, for Bush, plays a vital role in framing transnational communities because it works as a "nodal point in a network of social and cultural practices."

*Rimbaud's Rainbow* is divided into three sections:

- 1) Translation and Pedagogy,
  - 2) Translating, and
  - 3) Translation Studies.
- Each section communicates the teaching, process, and theory of translation respectively, bridging the schism between academy and

practice as desired by Bush. The first section dealing with translation and pedagogy includes essays by Nicholas Round, Edwin Gentzler, Jean Boase-Beier, Douglas Robinson, and Andrea Papp and Aniko Sohar. In "Monuments, Makars, and Modules: A British Experience," Nicholas Round from the University of Sheffield provides a historical sense of the teaching of translation and the change in pedagogies in Great Britain. He describes the complete lack of university courses offered in translation about a generation ago. The subject began to emerge in courses treating "prose composition" or "unseen translation" and later gained importance in foreign language and literature departments. Today, according to Round, translation is viewed among leading foreign language and literature departments, "as an activity in which language students have much to learn."

Along with greater attention to the study of translation in universities, Round notes a huge shift in pedagogies. From a strict adherence to the written word, today's strategies present a more creative approach, including computer-assisted exercises and oral interpreting. Round concludes with

the idea that translation is a process of interchange and communication. He describes the Warwick colloquium as an ideal setting for the debate and interchange of ideas about translation in contrast to the workplace where competition and the market orient this discussion.

The second and third sections address translating and translation studies. Steve Ellis, Keneva Kunz, and Maria Angeles Conde-Parilla write about their ventures in translating. Kunz describes the problem of translation as a market-oriented phenomenon. In his article, "No one but a Blockhead ever Translated, Except for Money," he uses examples from his translation of the *Sagas of Icelanders* to demonstrate his thesis. Questions arose about who the readership would be and how much foreignness they could accept. A translation, says Kunz, must gain the acceptance of editors, publishers, reviewers, and, of course, the readers. Therefore, he concludes, seeking the "golden translation at the end of the literary rainbow" is futile due to the market forces governing the process of translation.

An outstanding essay written by Else Ribeiro Pires Vieira from The Federal University of Minas Gerais, Brazil, concludes the book. Along

with authors Susan Bassnett, Kirsten Malmkjaer, Masako Taira, Dirk Delabastita, and Ian Craig, Vieira's essay comes under the heading of translation studies. Her contribution, "New Registers for Translation in Latin America," focuses on the similarity between translators and colonized peoples in that both occupy marginal spaces in a Brazilian context. According to Vieira, "...translated texts and colonized cultures, both marginal spaces and, conventionally, considered derivative, tend to be evaluated by what they fail to be in relation to the originating text or culture rather than by what they are." Translation for Vieira is a creation or recreation and includes a duality of history and authorship as opposed to a concealing or a univocity of the history or author and translator. In that way, the translator and the author of the source text are valued equally and one does not eclipse the other.

Vieira gives an account of the movements in translation studies in Brazil from the Anthropophagous Movement of the 1920's to present day poststructuralism and postmodernism. She gives intriguing examples of translations from these movements, including *Rimbaud's Rainbow*, a translation of Rimbaud's

famous poem "Voyelles" done by Augusto de Campos and Arnaldo Antunes into Portuguese. It is an example of a very visual, computer-aided translation, that consists of seven arched couplets, each a different color with "Rimbaud" written down one side and "Rainbow" down the other. The importance of color is stressed in the printed version of this translation because, in Rimbaud's sonnet, each vowel sound is related to a color. The highly-creative translation by De Campos and Antunes is an excellent example of translation as, "(re)creation of the origin(al)." Vieira's essay is definitely the highlight of this book, and to see *Rimbaud's Rainbow* printed out as a poem in full color on page vi is spectacular.

It may be that this book is more appropriate for teachers than for students since much of it is dedicated to experiences in teaching literary translation in higher education. However, as Peter Bush relates in his introduction, bridging the gap between scholarship and practice is imperative to translation study, and training prospective translators is an important step in that process.

The First International Colloquium on Literary Translation in Warwick brought together

academics and translators from all over the world for the purpose of raising the profile of literary translation in higher education. *Rimbaud's Rainbow* brings to light some of the most contemporary concerns in the field of translation studies such as the gap between the profession and scholarship as well as the importance of training literary translators in a world of newly-forming transnational communities.

Each article offers many insights into the nature of translation. In her article, Vieira notes Augusto de Campos's important thoughts on this process: "Translation for A. de Campos entails a relationship of interrelatedness and double transformation: translation both feeds from and supplements the original, translation is bound to the original inasmuch as it has its own autonomous continued existence."

Nell E. Ketchum  
St. Lawrence University