punctum.
INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SEMIOTICS

ISSN 2459-2943
https://punctum.gr

06 | 01
2020

Translation and Translatability in Intersemiotic Space

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PUBLISHED BY
THE **HELLENIC**
SEMIOTIC SOCIETY

Illustrated translations longing for the Middle Ages, exemplified by modern french versions of *Aucassin et Nicolette*

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ABSTRACT

The relations between the verbal component, the visual component, and the translational aspect of a given text have been discussed and described by translation scholars and semioticians in a diversity of manners. A significant graphic element may be introduced during the translation production, usually in dialogue with the verbal one, thus creating a new intersemiotic text. Medieval manuscripts are known for offering their readers illustrations, miniatures, rubrics, decorated initials, colored and gilded details, and other visual ingredients. As a result, the codex functions as an essential interpretive agent rather than a passive container for verbal texts. This model of the intricate illuminated manuscript was imported into modern culture systems through transfer. However, in reality, most manuscripts exhibit simple decorative schemes or are plain and unadorned, which means that ornaments in their current versions most likely derive from the model mentioned above. The paper looks at the productivity of this medieval model by examining various visual components inserted into the printed modern French translations based on the unmistakably plain manuscript of the thirteenth-century work *Aucassin et Nicolette*. The analysis will focus on the illustrated translations, addressing the added elements and their characteristics, their relation to the model, the increased determinacy they create, and the resulting reading they seem to encourage. We will suggest that even the narration levels and the performative aspect of the text may be affected by the new, intersemiotic nature bestowed upon this ancient text through the integration of other modalities into its translations.

ARTICLE INFO:

Volume: **06**

Issue: **01:2020**

ISSN: **2459-2943**

DOI: **10.18680/hss.2020.0008**

Pages: **161-183**

By: **Hilla Karas**

KEYWORDS:

Aucassin and Nicolette

illustration

intersemiotic translation

cultural transfer

paratext

Punctum. International Journal of Semiotics | **06:01:**2020
ISSN 2459-2943 | DOI: 10.18680/hss.2020.0008 | **punctum.gr**

1. Introduction

The possible relations between the verbal, visual, and translational aspects of a given text have already been discussed and described by translation scholars and semioticians[1]. One possible combination of these three elements is achieved when significant graphic features are introduced during the translation production, usually forming a dialogue with the verbal or even completing it, thus creating a new intersemiotic text.

The various potential relations between the verbal, the visual, and the translational components of a given text have been the subject of much debate among translation scholars and semioticians alike. A significant graphic element may be introduced during the production of the translation, usually in dialogue with the verbal or even completing it, thus creating a new intersemiotic text.

Medieval manuscripts are known for offering their readers illustrations, miniatures, rubrics, decorated initials, colored and gilded details, and other visual ingredients. As a result, the codex functions as an essential interpretive agent rather than a passive container for verbal texts. This model of the intricate illuminated manuscript seems to have been imported through transfer into modern culture systems. However, in reality, most manuscripts exhibit simple decorative schemes or are plain and unadorned, which means that ornaments in their current versions most likely derive from the model mentioned above.

The current paper looks at the productivity of this medieval model by examining various visual components inserted into the printed modern French translations based on the unmistakably plain manuscript of the thirteenth-century work *Aucassin et Nicolette*. The analysis will focus on the illustrated translations, addressing the added elements and their characteristics, their relation to the model, the increased determinacy they create, and the resulting reading they seem to encourage. We will argue that even the narration levels and the performative aspect of the text may be affected by the new, intersemiotic nature bestowed upon this ancient text through the integration of other modalities into its translations.

The paper comprises six sections. First, it offers a brief overview of some correspondences between translation and semiotics, followed by a short discussion of the interaction between the visual and the verbal in the printed book. The intersemioticity of the medieval manuscript is then shortly described and compared to its representations in modern translations of medieval works, particularly those containing no graphic elements in the original. The article provides a possible explanation in terms of cultural transfer. Finally, we describe a case study where images play a considerable role in the modern translation, analyzing the insights this provides on the issue at hand. All the translations examined are based on the French-Picard work *Aucassin et Nicolette*.

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[1] *Cf.* Pereira 2008; Petrilli and Ponzio 2012; Kourdis and Kukkonen 2015; Weissbrod and Kohn 2019.

2. Translation, Semiotics, and Intersemiosis

Indeed, the relations between the three notions of translation, semiotics, and the various systems included within the phenomenon of intersemiosis have been the object of numerous debates. Petrilli (2015) argues that both semiotics and translation studies view the dialogical relation between signs, whereby one sign is interpreted by another, as conferring meaning and sense on the interpreted; we can therefore assume that the two paradigms interpret each other. Semiotics[2] can be taken to include both verbal and non-verbal, human, and non-human signs. Semioticians such as Eco (1976) and Barthes (1964) have pointed out the convergence between structures and items in verbal and non-verbal texts. The relative advantage of natural human languages is translatability, or the ability to operate as an easily convertible value. The Tartu-Moscow school of cultural translation, led by J. Lotman, even considered translation as the instrument of semiotic research.[3]

Relying on Peirce's theory of signs,[4] different types of signs maintain diverse relations with the signified: words are 'symbols,' used based on habits or convention, and drawings or photographs are 'icons,' bearing a resemblance to their signifier. In reality, all signs present some mix of more than one type (including the third type, 'indices'), and, most importantly, remain distinct from their object. It follows that the translative processes, both across texts and languages and between reality and fiction, involve interaction among the three types of signs according to Peirce or the three modalities of translation, according to Jakobson (1959).

Translation scholars have been looking at non-verbal signs for quite a while as well, as mentioned by Kourdis and Kukkonen (2015): Bassnett (1980), Baker (1992), Hatim and Mason (1990), and Munday (2004) look more closely at the semiotic variety with tools of translation studies. The latter also suggests that contemporary communication is multi-modal and thus also translational by nature.

The interpretant sign, or translation, does not just repeat the interpreted or converge with it, but always adds a new element. Interestingly, in general, translation is an indirect discourse usually masked as direct discourse (formulated as if pronounced by the first speaker). Still, at the same time, it is distanced from its enunciator, since confusion rarely occurs when the need arises to attribute the translation to its utterer. The creation and consumption of a translation amplify both its otherness and the creative relation between interpreted and interpretant. This condition seems to be particularly true for iconic signs (Petrilli 2015: 104). In the process of translation, understanding refers, above all, to taking a stance, taking responsibility, rather than just repeating.

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[2] Sebeok (2001: 1-43). See also Petrilli 2015.
[3] Lotman 1990, see also Kourdis and Kukkonnen 2015.
[4] Peirce (1932: 247).

Punctum. International Journal of Semiotics | **06:01:**2020
ISSN 2459-2943 | DOI: 10.18680/hss.2020.0008 | **punctum.gr**

Since translation emerges from difference and conserves it, it undeniably embodies a deferral of signifiers. Specifically, literary works presuppose the plurivocal otherness inherent in human discourse and are, therefore, in principle, open to the ethical dimension of semiosis. This observation is particularly relevant for parodic and carnivalesque nature texts because they involve internal dialogization, and as a result, self-awareness and even self-derision. These properties are very much present in the narrative treated here, *Aucassin et Nicolette*.

Another relevant point of view is suggested by Nielce Pereira (2008), who advocates that illustrations can function as intersemiotic translations of a verbal text, and, as such, we can approach them in the same way as "proper [interlingual] translations." Namely, we can appraise them as a "faithful" literal translation, as a means of emphasizing a particular narrative element, as an adaptation to a specific ideology or artistic trend. Therefore, these illustrations may apply all kinds of translational shifts - omission, addition, modification, explicitation, and more. While Pereira speaks of illustrations in general as translations, we take illustrations as an element that accompanies translations rather than originals.

In the particular context of the printed book, Gérard Genette (1987) mentioned numerous visual elements as components of the paratext: the layout of the text on the page (e.g., one or several columns), the characters or fonts used, line spacing, margin size, and of course the inclusion of illustrations, the space allocated to them and their content. Genette argues that the paratext provides a frame for the text, thereby guiding the reader to interpret the verbal text constituting the core of the work. Thus, in his view, both the illustrations and the additional graphic elements comprise a bigger whole, whose interaction with the main text must be accounted for. The importance of the paratext can be further explained through the perspective of Umberto Eco (1989 [1962]) and Wolfgang Iser (1978), who claim that a work of art, and particularly a literary work, possesses a certain degree of openness or indeterminacy, which is gradually reduced by several factors, including the concretization and determination provided by paratextual elements (Kovala 1996: 121). The relation between paratext and text criticism lies in the interaction between addresser and addressee, while the latter produces meaning. According to Iser's reception theory[5], the literary text provides a cluster of potential meanings. The reader finally executes his/her reading based on their knowledge, opinions, and other individual conditions and circumstances. A translation is frequently more determinate than its original since it involves interpretation; the paratext enhances this determinacy (Kovala 1996) since it contains implicit "reading instructions" that often lead us to understand the translator's motives or ideology. Such is the operation of the paratext, verbal or graphic.

[5] Particularly Iser (1978 [1976]).

Within translation studies, the connection between illustration and text has been discussed extensively in the context of children's books. For example, Tabbert (2002) regards illustrations as indicating the diverse orientations taken by different translations of the same piece, including tendencies to foreignize or domesticate the text. Oittinen (1990) studies the dialogue between the text and the illustration in children's books. Da Silva (1991) referred to this connection as a hidden problem of translation, in cases where the translated verbal text manifests a preference to domesticate the narrative but the illustrations opt for the opposite strategy or vice versa. The dialogue between the verbal and the graphic elements may be so influential that Tabbert (2002) claimed that translating picture books should be treated as cultural transfer, following Vermeer. He justifies this view by arguing that picture books' linguistic components are generally characterized by a higher degree of indeterminacy. In contrast, the pictures usually provide a more specific interpretation. Therefore, the translator allows himself certain freedom because of this indeterminacy, occasionally even explaining the text, inserting into the content some "missing" information based on the pictures.

According to Tabbert, unlike picture books, novels and short stories may get brand new illustrations when translated, and these can slightly change the sense of the text, add particular types of humor, etc. The changing balance between foreignness and domestication, the information conveyed through text and image, and the play of various interpretive orientations can be seen more clearly in the examples given below. It would be much more prominent in the case of Hémard's illustrations, which will be discussed at length.

3. The Layout and Graphics of Medieval Texts

Medieval manuscripts are known for often offering a combination of graphic and verbal elements. As an indication, let us look at the non-textual items that philologist Stephen Nichols (2010) had to consider in the Rose manuscripts' Romance digitization project. In his view, while print culture could hardly reproduce medieval manuscripts combining diverse types of materials within the same space, digital technology was much better equipped to do so[6]. The main manuscript components which required special attention during the digitization were:

- The division of the text in two or three columns.
- Miniatures or illustrations (illuminations), often in color and with gilded elements, and the space allocated to them, including the adjusted caption size.
- Red-colored titles, known as rubrics.

[6] Nichols (2010: 64).

Punctum. International Journal of Semiotics | **06:01:**2020
ISSN 2459-2943 | DOI: 10.18680/hss.2020.0008 | **punctum.gr**

- Decorations on the margins of pages, known as border illuminations, often in the form of vines or climbing plants.

These elements make the manuscript "an interpretive agent in itself," so that "the Codex is not just a passive receptacle for texts and images, but it plays a role itself and offers a new way of presenting a work to the reader"[7]. Nichols emphasizes the importance of scholars gaining familiarity with the manuscript itself, beyond what is needed to classify it or to trace it is itinerary and stemma. The manuscript as a whole is of great interest not only for art experts but also for anyone specializing in textual, linguistic, and sociological aspects of the ancient text (Nichols 1990).

Another thought-provoking account of the analogies between the layout of medieval manuscripts and a modern format – comics – was offered by Martha Rust (2008). She describes how the narrator in Chaucer's story (*The book of the Duchess*) arrives, in his dream, in a world of texts (covering the walls) and pictures (on stained-glass windows). In this dream, words have color and form, and Rust suggests that Chaucer envisages the ideal manuscript as endowed with equally important visual and textual features. Her paper draws parallels between medieval manuscripts (apparently referring to the more elaborate and complex ones) and modern comic strips: both use various visual and material elements, such as the division of the page space, holes, and linear or non-linear order of appearance.

This complexity of the medieval manuscript, as opposed to the normally plain look of the printed book, has been discussed by scholars of book culture and historians of the early print era, such as Gillespie (2006), Rust (2007) or Nolan (2013). It should be noted that the above list by Nichols is particularly relevant for the magnificent and expensive manuscripts. However, many medieval manuscripts, including some of the best-known ones, have very few graphic elements. For example, *Beowulf*'s one and only manuscript[8] is fairly bare.

4. Visual Paratext in Translations of *Aucassin et Nicolette*

Therefore, it is interesting to examine the fate of the medieval text as it is made accessible to the modern audience through translation. One crucial factor to bear in mind would be the expectations of the target audience; these expectations are primarily based on different accepted conventions among present-day readers regarding the medieval manuscript's characteristics and the literature it delivers. This paper will explore some of the options observed in the 19th and 20th-century translations of the 13th-century French work *Aucassin et Nicolette*. This short text seems to have survived in a unique

[7] Nichols (2010: 65).
[8] British Library, Cotton Vitellius A. xv.

Figure 1. A folio from the manuscript of *Aucassin et Nicolette*

manuscript, perhaps the only one which ever existed.

Several textual aspects make this piece unique and bear relevance to the present discussion. One is the singular structure that lent it the name "chantefable" – the alternation between prose chapters and versed stanzas, an unprecedented model. Another particularity would be the reversed gender roles, where the noble young man is often passive and emotionally fragile, while his beloved damsel is full of initiative and ingenuity. This is complemented with a variety of short 'samples' from other literary genres, paradoxical episodes, and clear irreverence towards accepted norms, including racial and societal hierarchies or the catholic faith and church[9]. These relevant features will be elaborated below in the context of cross-cultural interlingual intersemiotic translations.

This sole manuscript does not offer any elaborate graphic elements, as mentioned above, other than ornate initials and a text arranged in two columns. Alongside the verbal text, it also included a musical notation to be used for the work's sung stanzas. Therefore, it is unlikely that the visual components of the source text inspired translators to reproduce them in their target version.

We shall look here at examples of modern French translations of this text, from the 19th and the 20th centuries. All of their graphic components seem to derive from the translating agents and their personal initiatives rather than a desire to restore specific characteristics of the original. Evidently, quite a few translations did not provide any added visual element, starting from the 18th-century translators (La Curne de Sainte Palaye 1752, Legrand d'Aussy 1781) and including many 19th and 20th century ones.[10] Other translations, however, were enhanced through a variety of elements, which we will discuss below.

[9] For a general discussion of the work, see Lot-Borrodine (1913), Cobby (1995), Langenbruch (2017), and the bibliographies by Hover (1977) and Sargent-Baur (1981).
[10] Such as Cohen (1954) or Dufournet (1973).

Punctum. International Journal of Semiotics | **06:01:**2020
ISSN 2459-2943 | DOI: 10.18680/hss.2020.0008 | **punctum.gr**

A. **Large illustrations by artists** (often occupying a whole page):

1. Alexandre Bida's (1830) illustrations: Bida was widely known as an Orientalist painter. Translation was not a craft he was particularly experienced in, but his version was endorsed by the well-known philologist Gaston Paris. Bida's translation features his illustrations in the same style that he was famous for, typically exhibiting an oriental flavor that is not necessarily compatible with the text's content. However, this combination may have met book buyers' expectations who looked for more works in the familiar style, offering a somewhat fantastic, orientalist take on the story. Bida's translation presented nine full-page illustrations.
2. Maurice Pons' (1960) expressive translation presented full-page etchings by Walter Spitzer, which depicted medieval characters with a modern flair.

B. **Frontpage with decorated title, often surrounded by ornamental elements**

1. Pauphilet's (1932) translation was published in an anthology by the Piazza publishing house in Paris, known for its artistic productions. An opening page carrying just the title of the work precedes it, with elegantly decorated letters. The first page of the piece included a short elongated strip with a decorative three-dimension-looking geometric design over the work's title, written in old fashioned letters.
2. Bida's (1830) translation had on its front page an illustration of two winged hearts carrying the initials A and N, which stand for Aucassin and Nicolette. This small light-hearted, and modern detail seems external and anachronistic in relation to the fictional world.

Figure 2. Etching by Walter Spitzer, Pons (1960: 13) (this translation is not divided into stanzas)

Figure 3. Embellished title with a geometric design, Pauphilet (1932: 95)

C. Titles written in embellished letters

1. The title of Pauphilet's (1932) translation is presented in outmoded serifed letters, and the initial opening of the first segment (the preface of the singer) is quite big and elaborately ornate.
2. In Coulon's (1933) version, the titles of the main segments of the text (introduction, work, notes) use a stylized font.
3. Pons' (1960) translation presents the first sentence of each chapter in small capital letters.[11]

D. Borders and other plant-style elements framing the text

1. In Pauphilet's (1932) rendering, each of the main segments of the text closes with a branch bearing leaves. Every one of these drawings is unique. An elaborate geometric design frames the front page of the entire book.
2. In Williams' (1933) renewed edition of Bida's translation, the beginning of every major segment of the book (the work, the notes) is marked by a drawing of a branch carrying flowers.

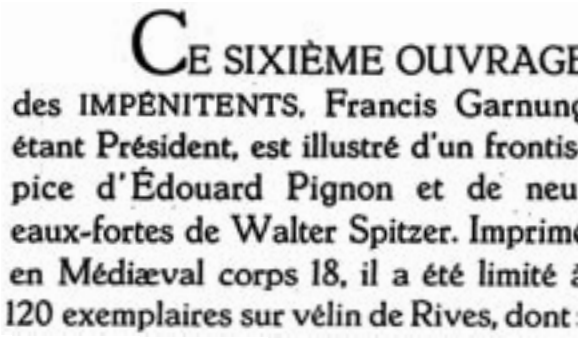
CE SIXIÈME OUVRAGE
des IMPÉNITENTS. Francis Garnun
étant Président, est illustré d'un frontis
pice d'Édouard Pignon et de neu
eaux-fortes de Walter Spitzer. Imprim
en Médiæval corps 18, il a été limité
120 exemplaires sur vélin de Rives, dont

Figure 4. Information about the letter design in Pons (1960: 79).

E. Special characters

A passage on the inside back cover of Pons' (1960) translation explains that the publishing house used a special character font named Médiæval. This explanation is mentioned along with information regarding the number of copies on different quality papers, indicating that the font selection was an equally important factor in producing this patently artistic publication. The letters seem to mimic the neat and stylish handwriting of skillful medieval scribes who contributed to the better known magnificent manuscripts.

[11] See more information on the font used below.

Punctum. International Journal of Semiotics | **06:01:**2020
ISSN 2459-2943 | DOI: 10.18680/hss.2020.0008 | **punctum.gr**

Even this brief sample of graphic elements makes the similarity between medieval manuscripts' list and the visual components in the modern translations rather obvious. In the absence of any parallel source material, this warrants a more thorough clarification.

5. A medieval model, or a model of the medieval

One perspective that may offer a motivation for the added visual aspects would be that of cultural studies. Specifically, one may argue that a *transfer* process has taken place here beyond verbal translation. Applying Even-Zohar's taxonomy, what was inserted in the scrutinized translations without having any antecedent in the source text consists of different elements belonging to the 'medieval manuscript' model. A model familiar to the modern reader, since it has been incorporated into the 19th century (and later) repertoire due to cultural transfer. The way a 'medieval manuscript' is supposed to look is subject to norms known to 20th and 21st-century readers thanks to information popularized from philology, art history, paleography, and codicology. In turn, these disciplines served as cultural mediators, importing repertoire items from a source culture that no longer existed, save its traces.[12]

Furthermore, the examples discussed above show that the model now functions in the target system as a *cultural tool*, continually manufacturing new images, artifacts, and other products. Umberto Eco (1990) makes a similar observation about the ever-present productivity of medieval models in culture. We can distinguish such cultural tools from cultural goods, which may be imported or exported to other cultural systems but do not play a part in making new items (Even-Zohar 2010: 10-13).

It should be noted that compared to the source text, whose main component was verbal, the translations analyzed here present a communication channel that was absent from their original. Therefore, to use Gottlieb's definition (2005: 34), the translations in question are not just intersemiotic but also supersemiotic.[13]

Furthermore, since the different ornaments and their diverse forms imply medievality as collectively perceived, rather than derive from the specific original text itself, one might say that it involves a kind of *simulacrum*. In this phenomenon, a sign is based on another sign but distorts it so it can become, in a way, more real than the original. According to Baudrillard (1992), who coined the term, this generates a hyperreality, a system

[12] For an explanation of cultural transfer in the framework of polysystem theory, see Even-Zohar (2010: 44-60).
[13] Our translations omitted the musical notation; therefore, one could have claimed that we are dealing with a diasemiotic translation – having the same number, but not the same nature of communication channels. However, there is a difference between musical notation and musical performance. This element's space and length were relatively minor compared to the verbal text; hence, we opted for the term supersemiotic.

of self-referential signs that create the very reality they are supposed to represent.

It is possible that the makers of the translations (translators, illustrators, publishing houses) deemed it necessary to create the impression of a typical medievality, perhaps to enrich the reading experience, to augment the assumed authority or authenticity of the text (although this particular piece, *Aucassin et Nicolette*, largely violates the accepted conventions about its period). It may also be that their overall goal was meeting readers' expectations and thereby increasing sales. A very prominent example can be a translation that seems to have made an obvious effort to look like a medieval artifact – that of Michael West's English translation of the work (possibly from 1917), which combines the middle ages' style with the flair of art nouveau.

Figure 5. West 1917, front page

However, this explanation cannot apply to all the examples discussed. Some of them do not directly imitate the medieval models even if they display illustrations or illustrated initials (e.g., Pons 1960) since they execute them in a very personal or modern fashion. In other cases, the reader might wonder or even assume that the graphic elements derive from the original manuscript. This hypothesis may be particularly compelling when the added visual elements attempt to reconstruct the ancient style, as, for example, in Pauphilet's (1932) decorated titles or Pons' (1960) specially designed letters.

It is noteworthy that the significant variety in the modern French translations of Aucassin – timing, the identity, and professional orientation of the agents involved, the different emphasis they put on textual and graphic aspects – does seem to provide a somewhat representative picture of the 20th-century translations of this type. However, this is not the case when we turn to the 1936 publication of Sainte-Palaye's translation.

Punctum. International Journal of Semiotics | **06:01:**2020
ISSN 2459-2943 | DOI: 10.18680/hss.2020.0008 | **punctum.gr**

6. Case study: Hémard's graphic intervention in Sainte Palaye's and Roques' translation (1936)

This section discusses a translation published in 1936 by Librairie Lutetia, Paris, a publishing house specializing in art. The book includes two major textual elements: a critical edition, without a scientific apparatus, by renowned philologist Mario Roques, based on the original manuscript; and a modern French translation published initially (anonymously) in 1752 by one of the first French philologists, Jean Baptiste de la Curne de Sainte-Palaye. The two versions are displayed in a facing-page format. Next to them, around them, and between the different segments, the reader finds numerous graphic features, all by the artist Joseph Hémard ("Ymages et ornements par Joseph Hémard").

Before we look into this modern version's details and its visual elements, we should point out that it must not be considered a typical case. Instead, it is a remarkable example of an extreme application of the medieval model in an innovative and multilayered manner, which, in turn, generates its own interpretive implications. Other translations may have ventured only in some of the paths taken by this exemplar, which combines numerous paratextual elements, illustration styles, and narrative levels, as shall be explained below.

There are quite a few indications for the great importance that the publishers attribute to the book's material and visual aspects. First, the copies (of the first edition) were all numbered. Also, we are informed that there is one copy carrying the original illustrations, 40 copies on Japanese paper (fine, silky paper), 20 of which carry original illustration by Hémard, and 625 copies on Arches (vellum) paper (made of 100% cotton, created especially for art prints). All these details imply that the book is sold as a work of art *per se*. It has been traded or auctioned as a rare book priced at several hundreds of euros in recent decades.

At this point, it is essential to introduce the illustrator Joseph Hémard (born 1880; died 1961), a prolific artist who was active mainly in the early 20th century. His work often exhibits a humorous perspective, representations of erotic themes or situations, and unique, original imagination. His body of work ranged from comic strips to illustrations for classic literature (like Rabelais, Voltaire, or Balzac), encompassing drawings for technical reference books (e.g., a pharmacist's guide or law books) and even costume design. His fame lay in his book illustrations, which managed to keep their mildly erotic and humorous nature in both literature and nonfiction pieces one would not expect to find illustrated (Katz 2006). By the time our translation was put together, Hémard already enjoyed a considerable reputation, which created expectations for a specific added value in his illustrations, and anticipation for his famous style and favorite topics.

No introduction precedes the work itself, while there is a final section by Mario Roques (no page number), where he presents the translation by Sainte Palaye. The

translation is not entirely accurate, he says, and may not match Roques' edited version of the source. However, it is still valuable as a guide to understanding the original story, albeit not in all its expressive details. Sainte Palaye's translation also represents how the 18th century interpreted the Middle Ages and this specific piece.

This section is followed by another one, titled "of Aucassin and Nicolette" (p. 3b),[14] apparently written by the publisher. It portrays the text as a dramatic work of the genre called 'mime', based on Roques' research. The reader is encouraged to see the translation as a performance, a presentation, of the work. First, the section describes how they used to put on stage this type of play at the time: it was intended not for a small performing company, but for one narrator accompanied by a singer/musician or two. The narrator/*jongleur* did not just speak but also act, depicting the diverse characters through movements, emotions, gestures, changes in voice, tone and pitch, and the flexibility and clarity of facial expressions (mimicry). This was accompanied by a few key words meant to invoke the collectively imagined decor. This specific mime is a "chantefable" (poem-story): a story, dialogue, plot, and poetry that the creators of the book performed "in their own way" (p. 2b).

We asked, he says, our "master of images" to provide us with a "jongleur" who would breathe life into the work and the two accompanying musicians, who support him and play short ritournelles when he pauses. With his spirited zest, his relentless imagination, his unmistakable erudition, Hémard has given the readers these three modest but prestigious entertainers, the text says. Also, through 21 large illustrations, he brought to life the faces and bodies of the players who, through their performances, agitated the hearts of viewers and listeners (page 2b).

The richness and brilliance of the hand-painted colors ensure, according to the publisher, a perfect reproduction of the graphics. Finally, a special font was used to reproduce the unique "'archaic aroma' of the double text" (p. 3b). At the end of this segment, its writer mentions the expert printer's skillful technique and expresses his thanks to all the participants in the "show": the author, the translator, the editor, the illustrator, the craftsmen, and lastly, the impresario – himself. He repeats the original author's closing words – "here ends our 'chantefable,' I have nothing more to say" (p. 3b).

Hémard also decorated the book: 20 full-page illustrations mark each sung section's end, presenting what 13th-century viewers and listeners were supposed to imagine – landscapes and scenes from the fictional universe of the work. The illustrator provided decorative motifs, borders, and other ornaments, creating a space where characters, performers, and audience all intertwine, living their silent lives.

[14] After page 154, there is a new series of numbered pages starting again at 1. We will refer to these pages as 1b, 2b, etc.

Punctum. International Journal of Semiotics | **06:01:**2020
ISSN 2459-2943 | DOI: 10.18680/hss.2020.0008 | **punctum.gr**

The paratexts reviewed so far, including mainly the verbal elements which explicitly refer to the graphic component, constitute an effort to portray the book as belonging to two types of art:

i. Visual static art: the items are numbered just like original prints or lithographs, and the object is a book in terms of structure and other characteristics;

ii. Performing art, whose products used to be more readily available than written text in the middle ages, is conveyed by integrating various semiotic systems that build together an 'artistic performance'. Of course, this particular show does not vary from one performance (reading) to another, like a live show or musical. Still, there is a complex, elaborate attempt to reproduce even such a show's unique dynamic aspects.

Now let us look at the characteristics and content of the different graphic elements themselves and the types of information they convey.

Figure 6. An illustration at the top of stanza,Sainte Palaye 1936[15]

a. *Relatively small illustrations at the top of some stanzas* describe how the story is staged or present the main characters, consisting of faces and the upper body only.

b. *Larger illustrations at the top of some stanzas* depict the singer and his two musicians sitting on two lions (it is not clear whether these are chairs or sculptures) under a tree. These illustrations present two types of information:

i. The facial expressions of the (fictional) protagonists seem to reflect the content of the text, and in other cases, they are drawn as jumping or dancing (p. 91), probably representing the performers. In stanza 31, the singer and musicians are openly laughing, possibly reacting to the episode they are recounting, that of the battle of cheese and mushrooms in Torelore.[16]

[15] Some of the figures presenting graphic elements from this book are in black and white while others are colored, depending on the availability of relevant images through various sources.

[16] Interestingly, this illustration can be juxtaposed to the illustration at the end of this episode, displaying both parties soldiers fighting with great drama, as Aucassain and the queen are arriving from a distance on their horses.

ii. In several illustrations in this category, the musicians can be seen "breaking character," engaged in prosaic actions that are generally related to the circumstances of their performance. For example, the singer gets wet with drops falling from a bird on the branch above him (p. 41), or one of the musicians turns back and spits. These drawings strengthen the impression that the reader is witnessing a real-life performance rather than reading a book. In another image, the vocalist and the musicians look up at two birds singing their song, with surprise or dismay. Meanwhile, in this same stanza, Nicolette sings to the star above her (p. 101), possibly symbolizing the lovers' anticipated encounter.

In the drawing preceding stanza 35 (p. 131), a string in the left player instrument is torn. The singer's expression remains serious while his musician is wholly concerned with this mishap; in other words, the singer stays "in character" but not his companion. Introducing the final stanza (p. 151), there is an illustration where all musicians are happy and "in character," including the one who has managed to fix his instrument. We are therefore offered a series of episodes narrating what happens to the performers while they are busy putting on the show. This story-within-a-show breaks the focus on the fictional world and reminds us that the actors are the actual bridge between two worlds and operate within both of them.

Figure 7. Illustration at the beginning of stanza XIII, Sainte Palaye 1936

c. *At the end of the sung stanzas, relatively large size illustrations* occupy the entire page, often presenting scenes from the story in a rectangular frame. The frame itself is surrounded by a small plant's repetitive image – a flower or a leaf (a border). These illustrations display the characters differently, focusing on dramatic and romantic events in the plot rather than on the comic details.

d. *In the closure of most stanzas, one finds illustrations of various objects* related to the contents (such as swords, a flag or a horn that warriors or knights may carry) or decorative items such as a snake climbing a plant, just a plant, or purely ornamental drawings. After the final episode, instead of an illustration belonging to the fictional universe, we see the musicians looking behind as they get up and leave, just what

Punctum. International Journal of Semiotics | **06:01:**2020
ISSN 2459-2943 | DOI: 10.18680/hss.2020.0008 | **punctum.gr**

Figure 8. Illustration at the end of stanza V, Sainte Palaye (1936: 17)

Figure 9. Large decorative elements at the end of stanzas, Sainte Palaye 1936

the audience watching the show might have seen. The familiar bird also accompanies them from above. This final illustration constitutes an exception to the pattern established up to this point.

e. *At the bottom of each page is a small ornamental element*; they are all quite similar but clearly drawn individually.

f. *On top of the text mentioned above by the publisher and preceding it*, one meets the company again, but the musicians are not playing and seem rather tired. The vocalist sings and waves his hat. Above them, we can read the very opening lines of the work ("Dear Sirs and Ladies, please come close and listen to a beautiful love story"). The three look like actors summoned for an unwanted encore.

The combination of the different graphic elements in this book, along with their implementation through distinct illustration styles and the explicit verbal discussion regarding them, seem to reveal the singularity of this book. It is rather unique not only in the context of artistically-oriented translations but also as a beau-livre of its period.

7. Conclusion: Graphics as translation and performance

The analysis of the different graphic elements conducted so far indicates that this particular translation by Sainte Palaye, Roques, and Hémard, exemplifies, like other translations in this paper such as Bida (1878), Coulon (1933), and Pahuphilet (1932), the trend of reconstructing portions of the medieval manuscript model. However, in this case, it is done with the unique humor which characterizes Hémard and allows – combined with the textual elements, of course – a glance into several layers or "reality" levels. They are:[17]

- The narrator's universe: The text states it emanates from old and ancient events, so the narrator is external to the fictional world described.
- Stage instructions: The original text itself provides instructions to the performers about which stanzas should be sung ("Now we sing") and which should be spoken ("Now we speak, tell and recount"). They are not part of the first narrator's reality, since they already point at the breach between the latter and the next level of story transmission, that of acting.
- The fictional universe of the work itself, where Aucassin and Nicolette live and act. This universe is depicted in the text but also in the rectangular more realist, full-page illustrations.
- The universe in which the performance is carried out by the singer and the musicians, the make-believe world which exists on stage. This world exists mainly through the illustrations, and potentially consists of the environment where they perform, their instruments, and their audience. However, the audience is not depicted in the illustrations, which may indicate that the readers are the actual audience in this case. Also, if we consider the publisher's afterword, one may claim that this universe is also found in the ornamental elements, the shape of the letters created for the book and in the layout, as the textual equivalent of the music, singing and acting. Just like any element positioned on stage, fonts and page design create an atmosphere, a mood, and even a type of commentary, relating to the content of the narrative.
- The world where the performers act not in service of the narrative, they are supposed to transmit, but while they "break character." This world is outside of the fictional reality that actors and audience agree to step into, the one they are all willing to ignore for the show's pleasure. This reality includes what viewers do while watching the play, anything that happens to transpire during the show around them. Indeed, whatever the actors have to do is unrelated to their performance. This is the universe in which several mishaps take place, such as the torn-and-then-fixed string.

[17] Genette's terminology (1967; 1983) or other narratological hierarchies will not be applied here because the paper focuses on how the book allows for different performances.

Punctum. International Journal of Semiotics | **06:01:**2020
ISSN 2459-2943 | DOI: 10.18680/hss.2020.0008 | **punctum.gr**

It is therefore apparent that Hémard's contribution is very significant, partly because of the comic aspects he adds to some of the illustrations, and his ability to draw in more than one style. Based on the reputation he had already built for himself when the book was published, it is likely that his contributions to the book were both intentionally selected by the publisher and attentively noted and deciphered by the readership.

This explicit and remarkable preoccupation of the book creators, presenting the textual and visual translation as a new, independent performance of an existing work initially intended for the stage, extends the theoretical notions presented in the first part of the paper. The new text exemplifies well the interpretation of one sign through its translation into another sign, both on the linguistic (Old into modern French) and the intersemiotic level (French into a variety of visual signs), thus enabling a novel performance (in book form) instead of just guidelines for one (text and musical notation as tools for the stage). Indeed, in agreement with Petrilli's assumption, the new performance with its witty atmosphere befits this specific work given the carnivalesque nature of the original, its acute self-awareness, and even self-derision as a text criticizing the surrounding society, literature, and culture. It has been mentioned that translation is essentially governed by a logic of dialogue and otherness. This has undoubtedly been demonstrated here: readers are invited to compare the two textual versions in this bilingual format, and they both interact in a dynamic dialogue with the diverse "realities" expressed through the visual component. While the critique of medieval society and culture is maintained in the text, it is also expressed through the gap between the style and content of the framed illustrations depicting the fictional world and the smaller illustrations presenting the actors, both in character and while breaking it. Overall, the very inclusion of graphic components with no 'source' results in a product that repeats the original, deviates from it, and elaborates it simultaneously.

An application of these semiotic concepts in translation studies is Wang's (2009) proposed category of cross-cultural interlingual intersemiotic translations. For a translation to be included in it, it has to meet three requirements:[18]

- It must be the translation crossing the boundary between different languages;
- It must be the translation or interpretation crossing the boundary between different cultural traditions;
- It must be the translation or interpretation crossing the boundary between different arts and disciplines

The Roques-Sainte Palaye-Hémard translation seems to fulfill the requirements. Wang's definition puts an emphasis on the synchronic level, referring to apparently

[18] Wang (2009: 42).

monolithic "languages" or "traditions" rather than, for example, linguistic codes or simply "cultures". In our case, variations over time within both language and culture differentiate between the source and target systems: the contrast between Old and modern French, or medieval and modern culture in France, is quite clear[19]. Finally, since it was the translation that introduced all the visual elements and the implied stage performance, the third requirement is also met.

Tong King (2013) reflects on Wang's category, adding that it may be particularly relevant for literary products of experimental nature, such as poetry combined with sounds or sculpture. It may well be said that the original work in our case, *Aucassin et Nicolette*, is experimental, for two main reasons. The first being its form, namely that the *chantefable* presents sung stanzas alternating with narrated ones (in prose) throughout the text; it is unprecedented in French and probably also in world literature, so much so that the term is used to describe texts of this style from all over the world[20]. The second reason for claiming the text is experimental would be its content: the work uses a combination of established genres, including epic poetry, courtly novel, idyllic novel, the *pastourelle*, possibly examining those from a parodic perspective[21]. As mentioned above, it has been suggested that the abundant references to diverse models aim to criticize the contemporary culture and its literary expressions, including, for example, gender roles, religious issues, and social status.

On the other hand, the translation product seems less experimental than its original, but it reflects the subversiveness of the original in different ways. For example, readers in the early 20th century may be less shocked by episodes questioning the class gaps in a feudal society or challenging paradise and hell's ideas. However, they would easily connect with Hémard's illustrations, which disrupt and ridicule the apparent seriousness of the characters' actions and representations. Readers familiar with Hémard's work were ready and equipped to catch his clues and connect them into a broad, however indirect, statement.

In conclusion, the examples discussed above, particularly that of Hémard's 1936 illustrations, show how the modern conventional perception of the medieval manuscript operates in contemporary French versions. The model encourages the introduction of graphic elements attributed to medieval manuscripts. These additions, however, were often executed in new or very individual styles. These inserted visual components allowed the printed book to reconstruct dialogues that could typically occur between verbal and visual texts in manuscripts. Notably, images and decorative elements were introduced even in the lack of parallel source text material, thus creating another semi-

[19] See Karas 2016 for a discussion on intralingual translation in general and diachronic translation in French in particular.
[20] Cf. Baptiste Wan 2004, Bender 2003.
[21] See Jodogne 1959, Harden 1966, Carreto 2008.

Punctum. International Journal of Semiotics | **06:01:**2020
ISSN 2459-2943 | DOI: 10.18680/hss.2020.0008 | **punctum.gr**

otic channel or a supersemiotic translation. These new graphic aspects supported various novel interpretations of familiar texts. Finally, in the particular case of the Sainte Palaye-Roques-Hémard translation, this textual-graphic synthesis created a performative element with no antecedent in the source text, and then even enhanced and elaborated it, generating a multitude of interwoven realities. In light of the above, one can say that these iconic supplements to the verbal component repeat the original, its dialogic model of verbal-graphic interaction, and their translation, in a new way which interprets and extends all of these elements. Thus, the intersemiotic translation takes place both between the ancient and the modern version and within each one of them.

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ISSN 2459-2943
http://punctum.gr

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SEMIOTIC SOCIETY