

Jørgensen, S. B., Lüsebrink, H. (2021). *Cultural Transfer Reconsidered: Transnational Perspectives, Translation Processes, Scandinavian and Postcolonial Challenges*. Brill Rodopi. <https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004443693> (pp. 257)

One of the books in the series *Approaches to Translation Studies*, *Cultural Transfer Reconsidered* is fascinating, enlightening, and presents various aspects of trilateral and multilateral transfers. It provides new perspectives to examine cultural dynamics of translation and transfer, which makes publication of this book a timely and great resource for its intended readers.

Apart from an introduction, this book comprises ten chapters that are divided into three parts. The introductory section elaborates on the cultural transfer approach to redefine its research objects and paradigms, followed by reviewing the three primary cultural transfer research trends over the past several decades. The book then presents a brief outline of the cultural transfer paradigm within a Scandinavian context before giving the contents of the subsequent chapters.

Part 1 (Chapters 1–4), *Transnational Processes of Cultural Mediation*, “advocates for a transnational view of cultural and literary history, providing examples from a European context with a particular attention to Scandinavian cases” (p. 12). Chapter 1 demonstrates the need to move away from the paradigm of comparativism, and underlines the importance of cultural transfer to modify the receiving culture. It then presents cultural transfers between German, Scandinavian, and Russian spheres during the nineteenth century to highlight the contributions of cultural transfers to postcolonial studies and the importance of transfer process dynamics.

Focused on literature, Chapter 2 discusses the problem of methodological nationalism as it relates to cultural transfers. Using Ibsen’s reception in Europe in the late nineteenth century as an example, this chapter criticizes the national paradigm, and unravels the concrete process how national categories were historicized. By analyzing the agents that facilitated the spread of Ibsen’s drama, this chapter proposes an agent-driven approach to cultural transfers. It concludes that it may provide a more precise picture of how literature moves to abandon methodological nationalism and employs a network-based concept of literary history.

Chapter 3, pointing to the crisis of the literary historiography, proposes to study and compile the transnational literary history from the perspective of cultural transfer studies. This chapter views the notion of world literature as a highly Western-oriented concept and argues the importance of cultural transmitters, especially the individual transmitters. In particular, it presents different categories of cultural transmitters and concrete phases of transmission. It concludes that a more nuanced understanding of cultural transmitters is essential to write transnational literary history.

Chapter 4 focuses on art history to discuss the relevance of cultural transfer notions and hybridity. Using cultural transfer as an analytical tool, it demonstrates how pictorial modernity spread rapidly across Europe at the end of the nineteenth century. It then analyzes the processes of how Finnish and Norwegian women artists travelled to France to

practice new painting techniques and how they made significant contributions to renew their home countries' painting styles, drawing our attention to a particular kind of cultural transmitters.

Part 2 (Chapters 5–7), *Aspects of Textual Transfers*, primarily focuses on the mobility of literary texts and works from micro perspectives. Chapter 5 discusses the relationship between the concepts and critical practices of cultural transfers and intertextuality. It initially discusses the definitions and methodological interrelationship of intertextuality, inter-discursivity and inter-subjectivity. It then discusses the case of Malian novelist Yambo Ouologuem and his work *Le Devoir de violence* (*Bound to violence*, 1968), in which Ouologuem rewrites or reinterprets several textual references from Europe, Africa, and Arabia. In conclusion, this chapter argues that “intertextuality in sub-Saharan African literatures and the creative processes they provoke, are direct consequences of cultural transfers” (p. 120).

Chapter 6 concentrates on aphorism to show that “genre is an instrument of intercultural communication that is transformed and subverted in processes of cultural transfer” (p. 125). It starts with an overview of genre cultural transfer and illustrates its evolution, requirements, and functions. Through an analysis of New Caledonian writer Déwé Gorodé's *Par les temps qui courent* aphorisms, this chapter argues that Gorodé's aphorisms are a result of a complex cultural transfer which has produced critical effects.

Chapter 7 focuses on transfer and translation processes. Based on three examples of avant-garde strategies of literature in the 1960s, it proposes that “strategies of translation as rewriting may pave the way for new thinking about the complexity of cultural transfer as process” (p. 140). Finally, it argues that translation and rewriting imply strongly the reader's position as a potential rewriter and literature as an essential remedy for a sense of loss and exile.

Part 3 (Chapters 8–10), *Perspectives - Types of Distance and Proximity*, discusses the distance and proximity both in geographical and more conceptual senses, and argues that “transfer processes do not only depend on more or less immediate cultural exchange between neighbors, or even of an intracultural kind, but also on intellectual and ideological norms” (p. 16). Chapter 8 first reflects on the notion of cultural transfer, viewing it as a paradigm for cultural analysis. Then, it elaborates on the three components of this paradigm, namely the subject or agent of a cultural transfer, the act of transferring, and the object of cultural transfers. Through the case study of the Baroque, it concludes that the transfer of the same cultural material may have different results under different historical circumstances.

Chapter 9 highlights the importance of circulation between the continents. It discusses the reception process of the cultural transfer concept in Brazil and demonstrates how the concept was imported, discussed, and resemantized. It analyzes various mediators in Brazilian cultural transfers and argues the notion of resemantization and its translation mirror its reception process in Brazil.

Chapter 10 investigates the cultural triangular relations between Scandinavia, Germany, and France. After introducing its research topic and objectives, theoretical and methodological

premises, it discusses the ways in which cultural transformations were conducted by translations and literary-historical scholarship. Through that investigation, it concludes that “geography and political and socio-cultural traditions underwrite a relatively stable triangle of cultural-historically relevant activities” (p. 242).

This book profoundly rethinks the notions, approaches, and perspectives of cultural transfer studies, providing readers a new appreciation and deeper understanding of cultural transfer. Primarily, its outstanding contribution lies in providing the transnational and dynamic perspectives of cultural transfer studies from global settings to micro-analyses, which enriches perspectives and approaches to cultural transfer studies. Secondly, this book offers a series of cases from a variety of fields such as literature, painting, and history, which makes it interesting and accessible to readers. Meanwhile, case studies in this book provide readers with new insights to consider cultural transfer as a multidisciplinary approach that deserves to be studied from various methodological frameworks. Moreover, the authors provide definitions related to cultural transfer studies, such as “the act of writing transnational literary history” (p. 70), which makes the notions of cultural transfer much easier to read and understand.

On the other hand, some minor inadequacies should be mentioned. For example, as one of the book series *Approaches to Translation Studies*, this book should pay more attention to the relevance between cultural transfer studies and translation studies. The structure of Chapter 6 is unbalanced and divided into just two sections. Section 6.1 provides an overview of genre cultural transfer, while section 6.2 features a case study that constitutes the vast majority of this chapter.

All in all, this book will be a valuable reference to postgraduates and academics in culture studies, translation studies, and neighboring disciplines.

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