

Cultural Dissemination and Translational Communities: German Drama in English Translation 1900-1914

Katja Krebs

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The early twentieth century is widely regarded as a crucial period in British theatre history: it witnessed radical reform and change with regard to textual, conceptual and institutional practices and functions. Theatre practitioners and cultural innovators such as translators Harley Granville Barker, William Archer and Jacob Thomas Grein, amongst others, laid the foundations during this period for - what is now regarded to be - modern British theatre.

In this groundbreaking work, Katja Krebs offers one of the first extended attempts to integrate translation history with theatre history by analyzing the relationship between translational practice and the development of domestic dramatic tradition. She examines the relationship between the multiple roles inhabited by these cultural and theatrical reformers - directors, playwrights, critics, actors and translators - and their positioning in a wider social and cultural context. Here, she takes into consideration the translators as members of an artistic network or community, the ideological and personal factors underlying translational choices, the contemporaneous evaluative framework within which this translational activity for the stage occurred, as well as the imprints of social and cultural traces within specific translated texts. Krebs employs the examples from this period in order to raise a series of wider issues on translating dramatic texts which are important to a variety of periods and cultures.

Cultural Dissemination and Translational Communities demonstrates that an analysis of stage-translational practices allows for an understanding of theatre history that avoids being narrowly national and instead embraces an appreciation of cultural hybridity. The importance of translational activity in the construction of a domestic dramatic tradition is demonstrated within a framework of interdisciplinarity that enhances our understanding of theatrical, translational as well as cultural and social systems at the international level.



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