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Translating Europe: Cultural Imports in *The Dutch Courtesan*

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【摘要】

本文探討英國劇作家約翰· 馬斯頓的喜劇《荷蘭高級妓女》劇中的外國人與外國文化影響的議題。該喜劇如同大部分同時期的英國戲劇，是以外國故事為藍本改寫而成，因此某種程度上也可視為文化進口的產物。這齣戲特別突顯了英國社會如何回應外國人與進口文化存在的現實。

【關鍵字】

進口、翻譯、外國人、前現代歐洲

【Abstract】

This essay looks at John Marston's most accessible comedy, *The Dutch Courtesan* (1605). The main plot is derived from a French romance by Nicolas de Montreux. In addition, over twenty set speeches in the comedy are quotes or paraphrases of Montaigne's essays in John Florio's English translation. In fact, the majority of Renaissance English dramas were translations, adaptations, or reworking of Latin, French, and Italian plays, short stories, and histories. In this play Marston is more explicit than other playwrights about the importance of European imports in English life, situating the plot in the London where foreigners and foreign merchandise form part of the fabric of urban living. Without actually declaring his play an import, Marston nevertheless makes the reception of what comes from abroad a major concern in this comedy. A close examination of the play reveals how the playwright envisages the place and function of foreign influences in the theatre and the playgoing society.

【Keywords】 import, translation, foreigner, early modern Europe

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I. Introduction: Translation as Import

In his overview of the history of literary translation in English during the period 1550-1660, Gordon Braden points out "a serious trade imbalance": whereas few English works were translated into other languages, translations from Latin and European vernaculars accounted for a sizable portion of books printed in English, amounting to a quarter of the total output in some years (3). Enthusiasm for English books was thin on the ground simply because few people on the Continent knew any English. As the Elizabethan translator John Florio puts it, "[English] is a language that wyl do you good in England, but passe Dover, it is woorth nothing" (qtd. in Braden 3). The flourishing of translation into English corresponded, especially in the sixteenth century, to a sense of the inadequacy of the target language, described as "rude" or "barbarous" by some educated people. French was a more refined language fit for literature, whereas Latin dominated grammar school and university education. English was deemed unsuitable for intellectual discourses because it lacked technical vocabulary, expressiveness, and stability (Barber 48).

A similar imbalance existed in the trading of goods in later Elizabethan and early Stuart England. Whereas four-fifths of its trade value consisted in one major export—woollen cloth, England imported a variety of goods: wine from France, linen wares and metal goods from central Europe, foodstuffs from the Mediterranean, and raw materials from the Baltic region. Moreover, before the seventeenth century, England could only export unfinished woollen cloth to be dyed and finished in the Low Countries and then sold to customers in other parts of Europe because the necessary skills were lacking in the country (Davis 5-8). "The dependence on imports reflects the relative technological backwardness of England at this date": English printing industry and craft manufacture of gold jewellery and pottery, for instance, lagged behind European standards (Archer 412-13).

In short, before the English Civil War, England relied heavily on cultural, material and technological imports to satisfy the public's demands for quality goods and access to classical and modern knowledge. However, imports also caused anxiety in certain quarters of society. Overseas trade was controlled by a few trading companies. The market conditions were such that merchants chose to export unfinished products and import finished ones in order to make profits. This practice exacerbated the problem of poverty as the unskilled labour could not find

employment. Therefore, Elizabethan commentators argued that the trend should be reversed by exporting finished goods at higher prices and importing cheaper, unfinished ones (Sacks 401). In addition to economic arguments, the bodily trope was frequently used to voice anxiety about trade. In *Sick Economies* Jonathan Gil Harris argues that the economic is compared to the bodily in early modern English literature. Contact with foreign commodities is compared to contamination with diseases (2). Other scholars have also found that smoking tobacco was imagined as inhaling the alien, while wearing Indian calico meant allowing one's body to be wrapped in a foreign fabric.[1]

Similarly, the prevalence of translations in the book market was a matter of concern in the eyes of linguistic purists. Translators often needed to coin new words, mostly from Latin roots, to convey expressions for which there were no English equivalents. Although translations thus enriched the English vocabulary, they made the English tongue a "mingle mangle," a "gallimaufray or hodgepodge" of other languages (qtd. in Clarke 20-21). In addition to linguistic influences, to those concerned with the health of English culture, imports of ideas and lifestyles could have corrupting effects on society, symbolized by the Italianate Englishman. In *The Schoolmaster* (1571) Roger Ascham bemoans the harmful items brought back from Italy by English travellers: In his anxious vision, he sees an honest young Englishman returning from abroad an ungodly, debauched Machiavellian figure. Despite Ascham's serious misgivings, however, England continued to import Italian cultural products. Italian culture enjoyed royal patronage at the Elizabethan court: the queen herself was fluent in Italian and preferred Italian entertainments.[2]

The English society's dependence on imports was duly reflected in the offerings of the commercial theatre. The majority of plays were translations, adaptations, or reworkings of Latin, French, and Italian plays, short stories, and histories. Borrowing plots and characters from literary sources allowed theatre companies to build speedily a store of productions that were offered to the public on a regularly rotating basis. Players had to perform a different play every day and bring out new plays frequently. The Admiral's Men, for instance, staged thirty-eight plays in their 1594-5 season,

[1] See Kristen G. Brookes, "Inhaling the Alien: Race and Tobacco in Early Modern England." Gitanjali Shahani, "'A Foreigner by Birth': The Life of Indian Cloth in the Early Modern English Marketplace."
[2] See Michael Wyatt, *The Italian Encounter with Tudor England*, chapter 3.

twenty-one of which were new productions (Gurr 103). Without sources of ready storylines, companies could not have been able to meet the demand for new plays. Since the foreign settings of the original stories were normally retained in the dramatic adaptations, the theatregoing public was exposed to a great variety of stage foreigners, foreign costumes, allusions to remote places and peoples, and even foreign languages occasionally. Apparently, there existed an "appetite for foreignness" on the part of both playwrights and spectators in early modern England (Fleck 205). On the other hand, this appetite did not go unchallenged, as Stephen Gosson complained in *Playes Confuted in Five Actions* (1582):

> I may boldely say it because I have seene it, that the Palace of pleasure, the Golden Asse, The Oethiopian historie, Amadis of Fraunce, The Rounde Table, bawdie comdies in Latine, French, Italian and Spanish, have been thoroughly ransackt to furnish the Playe houses of London. (qtd. in Soule 117)

In his survey of early modern European translation practice, Peter Burke notes that the early modern Dutch, like the English, also translated a lot from the major European vernaculars. This was to be expected: the country was a small trading nation "with a culture that was relatively open to foreign influences" (22-23).[3] English theatre, likewise, was quite open to continental materials. However, it was qualified openness because of the myriad ways in which playwrights freely altered, combined, or condensed their sources to produce dramas that might differ considerably from the original stories in theme, characterization, and emphasis. A close examination of the alterations that go into the composition of a play from sources can reveal how the playwright might envisage the place and function of foreign influences in the theatre and the playgoing society.

This essay looks at John Marston's most accessible comedy, *The Dutch Courtesan* (1605), written for the Children of the Queen's Revels, the boy company playing at the Blackfriars theatre. The main plot is derived from one of the interpolated stories in the first book of *Les Bergeries de Juliette* (1585), a French romance by Nicolas de Montreux.[4] The story is set in Venice, where a Venetian nobleman and his

[3] This was also true of seventeenth-century Sweden and eighteenth-century Russia (Burke 18-19).
[4] The fifth book of the romance was translated into English by Robert Tofte, but the first book probably never had an English version. See John J. O'Connor.

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French friend fall in love with the same courtesan: when the Venetian gives the courtesan up out of friendship for the Frenchman, the abandoned woman swears vengeance. Marston follows this storyline. However, unlike many playwrights of his time who also work from literary sources, he alters the plot's setting, shifting it from Venice to London. It is a London familiar to the privileged audience at the Blackfriars. Significantly, into this locale the playwright introduces a single foreigner, the Dutch courtesan. Whereas the courtesan in the original story is a native of Venice, the Dutch courtesan is a foreigner in an English community. Moreover, although early modern plays set in London occasionally include non-English characters, it is rare to find a foreign character in the title role of this type of drama. Its rareness suggests foreigners or foreignness could be an important theme of this play.

For *The Dutch Courtesan* Marston borrows more than the main plot. Over twenty set speeches in the comedy are quotes or paraphrases of Montaigne's essays in John Florio's English translation (Pascoe 165). The French writer's essays exert such an influence on Marston's thought that "they must count almost as a second source" for this play (Crane xiii). One essay in particular, "On some lines of Virgil," in which Montaigne contemplates his own experience of love and sexual passion, provides the playwright with the theme: the "difference betwixt the love of a courtesan and a wife" as stated in the *fabulae argumentum* of the drama. Quoting Montaigne so persistently indicates Marston's admiration for the quality of the Frenchman's arguments.

Marston, like many of his contemporaries, understands the value of importing foreign writing into English: "Translators . . . doe striue to bring / That stranger language to our vulgar tongue" (qtd. in Pascoe 168). *The Dutch Courtesan*, of course, is not a translation in the modern sense of the word: the original story is dramatized and relocated and a subplot of the playwright's invention is added. Yet, Marston's approach to his narrative source is not dissimilar to those adopted by many early modern translators. In the sixteenth century, "translation meant manipulation in a much more literal sense": translators felt entitled to cut, add, and alter parts of the original texts. To be sure, religious texts must be treated with utmost care; on the other hand, secular writings were regarded as "a big storehouse of more or less memorable stories, to be picked up and reworked at will." The seventeenth-century gentleman translators even took pride in being "imitators" rather than slavishly translating every line, confident that the "spirit" of the original could be reproduced in

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English (Morini 4-7). Moreover, the freedom to alter the source text as the translator deemed necessary was not an English phenomenon but a widespread practice in Europe right into the eighteenth century. It was not uncommon for a translator to seek to "improve" the original text. The French translator of Richardson's *Pamela*, Abbé Prévost, writes in his preface to the translation (1760):

> I have not changed anything pertaining to the author's intention, nor have I changed much in the manner in which he put that intention into words, and yet I have given his work a new face by ridding it of the flaccid excursions, the excessive descriptions, the useless conversations, and the misplaced musings. . . . I have suppressed English customs where they may appear shocking to other nations, or made them conform to customs prevalent in the rest of Europe. . . . To give the reader an accurate idea of my work, let me just say, in conclusion, that the seven volumes of the English edition, which would amount to fourteen volumes in my own, have been reduced to four. (Lefevere 39-40).

Prévost at least warned readers about the changes he made. Some other translators did not: they quietly omitted certain sections, probably for religious or political reasons (Burke 31).

If early modern translators exercised so much freedom in making alterations, those who did not claim to translate a text but simply used it to compose their own works felt absolutely no need to explain or justify their approaches to the source. For one thing, the source is not even acknowledged. Translations are usually identified as such in the titles or prefaces, however briefly. In contrast, the published playscripts by Elizabethan dramatists never mention any sources; it sometimes requires scholarly investigation in later generations to reveal the connection between a play and a possible source text, especially if the latter is not by a classical author. Moreover, a playwright might produce a script out of several sources. Shakespeare is adept in this method. *Romeo and Juliet*, for instance, derives from such literary genres as Roman comedy, medieval romance, Italian novella, as well as the Petrachan sonnet tradition (Belsey 265). Consequently, the dramatic works of Shakespeare and his contemporaries have been received as original works.

Nevertheless, it is worth reading many early modern English plays as

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translations, even if very loose ones, in the sense of products of a process that carries texts across linguistic and generic borders. Such plays can be treated as cultural imports, *The Dutch Courtesan* being one of them. However, in this play Marston is more explicit than other playwrights about the importance of European imports in English life, situating the plot in the London where foreigners and foreign merchandise form part of the fabric of urban living. Without actually declaring his play an import, Marston nevertheless makes the reception of what comes from abroad a major concern in this comedy.

II. London as a Dramatic Setting

Like his fellow dramatists working from ready-made stories, Marston does not mention his source.[5] In his reworking of the source narrative, the Venetian nobleman Dellio, his French friend the Sieur de la Selve, and the Venetian courtesan Cinthye are transposed to London and become Freevill, Malheureux, and Franceschina respectively. The change of the setting to a locale familiar to the target audience is a step toward domesticating or naturalizing a foreign text. However, in this respect *The Dutch Courtesan* departs from the usual practice of English playwriting that uses Latin, Italian, or French sources. The Mediterranean region is clearly English playwrights' preferred backdrop of dramatic actions, whether comic or tragic. Marston himself sets his *Antonio* plays (1599/1600), as well as *What You Will* (1602), *The Malcontent* (1604), and *The Fawn* (1604), in the same Italianate court world. Among Italian locations, Venice stands out in early modern European imagination as a city of great architectural beauty, vibrant economy, political liberty, ethnic diversity, and sensual pleasure.[6] This is an excellent background for great dramas, as attested by Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* (ca. 1596) and *Othello* (1604), and Jonson's *Volpone* (1605).

There is a scholarly view that downplays the significance of the Venetian location, arguing that Shakespeare's Venice is "a refracted projection of London" (Salingar 173). Yet, if a continental urban setting serves only as a thinly disguised version of the English capital, dramatic location should never be an issue and no one would mind if any play is ever set in London. However, we find that Jonson draws

[5] As O'Connor remarks, scholars have long tried to locate the source.
[6] See Graham Holderness, *Shakespeare and Venice*, chapter 1.

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attention to the distinctive feature of his comedy *The Alchemist* by announcing in the Prologue: "Our scene is London, 'cause we would make known / No country's mirth is better than our own." The announcement proclaims confidence in the English capital as a setting with a sufficient variety of colourful characters ("your whore, / Bawd, squire, imposter, many persons more") to furnish a dramatic entertainment. The rise of city comedy in the early seventeenth century was based on this confidence, a belief which developed alongside London's growth as a centre of commerce and international trade.

One aspect of early modern London frequently observed in scholarship is the city's growth during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries from a commercial centre within the British Isles to a leading player in European and global trade. In *Theater of a City*, a study of the interactions between social change in London and early modern English drama, Jean E. Howard begins by quoting a description of the English capital written by Frederick, Duke of Wirtemberg, on his visit to London in 1592: "London is a large, excellent, and mighty city of business, and the most important in the whole kingdom; most of the inhabitants are employed in buying and selling merchandize [*sic*], and trading in almost every corner of the world. . . ." (1). Barbara Sebek compares two texts published within half a century of each other that offered advice to overseas traders. The first edition of one text published in 1589 was seventy pages long and dealt mainly with trade to Spain and Portugal. The other text, first published in 1638, was over 700 pages long and aimed at merchants operating around the world (1-2). The difference in scope between these two books is a good indicator of the remarkable speed of England's trade expansion in this period.

Despite the spectacular rise of London's commercial strength within two centuries, Derek Keene argues that, in 1600, London was still a follower rather than leader in terms of international trade and its future prominence was by no means guaranteed. It was through the Low Countries that London was linked to the outside world. Antwerp in the early sixteenth century became the trade centre between the Mediterranean and North Sea regions, with infrastructure such as storehouses, merchant houses and showrooms to support trade throughout the year. A host of goods passed through Antwerp to London: textiles, glassware, metal goods, leather, furniture, and furnishings made in Italy, the Low Countries, Germany, and Spain (64).

Given early modern London's reliance on trade connections with the Low Countries, it is not too surprising that Marston designates the only foreigner in his

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comedy as a Dutch woman. However, the Dutch connection does not predominate over allusions to other countries. Although there is only one foreigner, references to things foreign abound in *The Dutch Courtesan*, which paints an early modern London intimately involved in European economy and culture. For one thing, the existence of the Dutch courtesan signals the participation of foreigners in London's economy. From the list of her international clientele, "the Spaniard, Don Skirtoll; the Italian, Master Beieroane; the Irish lord, Sir Patrick; the Dutch merchant, Haunce Herkin Glukin Skellan Flapdragon; and . . . the greatest French" (2.2.14-17),[7] we know that other foreigners also live in or visit London. Not only foreigners but also foreign commodities come to London: the vintner Mulligrub imports wines from Italy, Spain, and France. He also wears an expensive Spanish leather jerkin. Even foreign spectacles are imported. The vintner is greatly excited by the (fake) news that twenty-five couples of Spanish horses can be seen dancing to the tunes played by six flute-playing Flanders mares (2.3.60-63). In other words, European products are available on the London market for consumption. Moreover, imports are not limited to goods. The vintner is not only an importer of European wines but also a member of the Family of Love, a religious sect of Dutch origin. The courtesan's bawd is another member of this sect. The city jester Cocledemoy, who plays tricks on the vintner and consorts with the bawd, loves infusing his speeches with words culled from other European languages. In short, the cosmopolitan character of London is unmistakably displayed in this comedy.

The Dutch courtesan herself is imported goods, part of the economic life of the capital. Her bawd prides herself on her shrewd management of the courtesan's work: "I ha' made as much o' your maidenhead—and you had been mine own daughter, I could not ha' sold your maidenhead oft'ner than I ha' done" (2.2.10-12). Buying and selling is normal in the city of commerce. A prostitute is called "a money-creature, / One that sells human flesh" (1.1.96-97). Prostitution, on the other hand, can be defended as a job like any other: "Every man must follow his trade, and every woman her occupation." Prostitutes sell their bodies, "but do not better persons sell their souls?" (1.1.100-01,124-25). As for the buyers, money is better spent on women than on land, houses, clothing, or wine. The city jester praises the bawd as a profession of higher status than the twelve major livery companies in London because she sells the best

[7] All citations of *The Dutch Courtesan* are taken from the edition by David Crane.

commodities such as virginity and modesty. The bawd is compared to a great wholesale merchant rather than a petty retailer (1.2.30-40).

The dramatic portrayal of cosmopolitan London, where foreigners and foreign trade are much in evidence, indicates a keen awareness of foreigners' presence in the country in general. Though not a big player on the European socio-political scene before the seventeenth century, England could not avoid repercussions coming from the continent. Because of wars and social upheavals, cross-border movements of people were frequent. In the second half of the sixteenth century, religious refugees from the Netherlands, Flanders, and France made their way to England, bringing with them their forms of worship and their crafts. Some settled in the adopted country and eventually became citizens. Some historians of early modern immigration have observed that the English, especially non-elite Londoners, were inherently xenophobic. Immigrants were said to take away jobs, and the natives responded with riots as well as petitions to the authorities to limit immigrants' rights (Ward 80). Even the Elizabethan government, which allowed the immigrants to set up their churches and practice their own rites and ceremonies, would sometimes warn them not to stir up religious trouble in England by admitting dissident Englishmen into their congregations (Collinson 63). However, other historians have questioned the extent of English xenophobia. There is evidence showing that London artisans were ready to welcome immigrant skilled workers as long as the latter observed the rules of their trade (Ward 81). In Norwich and Canterbury, two provincial cities with large immigrant populations, the arrival of Dutch and Walloon workers helped revive the local economy; and relations between the native and migrant communities in these two towns were not so much hostile as ambivalent (Collinson 60-61).

Though shifting the setting of the source story to London, Marston does not allow his audience to forget what lies across the English Channel. In this play London is closely linked by trade with continental Europe. In addition to the many imports mentioned in the comedy, we must also count the play itself as a type of cultural import, deriving as it does from foreign sources. It is therefore rather curious that imported goods meet with the characters' disapproval. The character most associated with foreign commodities, the vintner Mulligrub, is also the target of continuous practical jokes and sarcasm. The gallants sneer at his pretentious taste in Spanish clothing; the wily jester accuses him of importing foreign wines to the "subversion,

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staggering, and sometimes overthrow of many a good Christian" (5.3.109-10). As for the Dutch courtesan herself, she is finally sent to prison and driven out of the English community. If these jeering and hostile sentiments toward foreign imports are meant to be shared by the audience, should the playwright's work, *The Dutch Courtesan*, be similarly received?

In fact, ambivalence better characterizes the attitude encouraged by the play toward imports. It is true that the audience is supposed to laugh at the vintner's self-importance, his fall into the jester's traps, and his ultimate humiliation. However, the gallants' sneer is directed at Mulligrub's sartorial pretension, not at the foreign outfit. The accusation of his corrupting the English population with imported wines is spoken tongue-in-cheek by the city jester disguised as a sergeant, who later explains that all the practical jokes on the vintner have been done "for wit's sake" (5.3.137). The hostility shown by the English community to the Dutch courtesan, on the other hand, is more serious and unambiguous. However, as will be discussed later, the playwright qualifies this character's perceived wickedness by emphasizing her vulnerability as a foreigner. In other words, the play does not allow easy judgment on the merits or otherwise of letting in people or goods from abroad.

III. The Image of the Foreigner

As mentioned earlier, a foreigner in the title role is a rarity in early modern plays about London life. Yet, the Dutch nationality of the courtesan serves hardly any purpose with regard to plot development. The name Franceschina is that of the flirtatious maid in *commedia dell'arte* (Jackson and Neill 295). Her passionate temperament and desire for revenge are stereotypical images of people from the Mediterranean region. In fact, her characterization is more Italian than Dutch, yet she also speaks a kind of stage Dutch. In other words, Marston is not concerned about portraying a realistic Dutch woman, but he wants this character to be a foreigner in an English setting.

Marston's source story has a foreigner, too. It is the Malheureux character, who, being a Frenchman in Venice, risks misunderstanding the locals and their customs. The story is therefore a cautionary tale warning travellers abroad against dangers in foreign countries. In Marston's adaptation, however, a contrast is established between Franceschina, the promiscuous, tempestuous, murderous Dutch courtesan and

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Beatrice, Freevill's chaste, patient, loyal English fiancée. The playwright seems to reiterate a conventional xenophobic antithesis between the virtuous English and the wicked foreigners. At the end of the play the Dutch courtesan's plan to have Freevill killed is exposed and she is sent to prison: the final festivity celebrates not only the unions of young lovers but the restoration of safety and harmony in the English community. This is a familiar narrative: the commercial theatre in fact has a repertoire of history plays featuring scheming foreign women who plot against Englishmen. In Shakespeare's *Henry VI* trilogy, for instance, Queen Margaret is an evil and cruel Frenchwoman, while Marlowe's Queen Isabella in *Edward II* is another female villain from France (Hoenselaars 35-37). The damage they can inflict on the English nation should give patriotic Englishmen many sleepless nights.

Yet, what is the threat posed by Franceschina? She is warmly described by her former lover as "a pretty, nimble-eyed Dutch Tanakin; an honest, soft-hearted impropriation; a soft, plump, round-cheeked frow" (1.1.147-49). This portrait resembles more an English rose than an exotic dark beauty. The association of her name with a *commedia dell'arte* character, also, suggests more mirth than threat. It is rather her occupation that connotes a foreign origin and danger for men. The famous Venetian courtesans are "a female symbol of sexual license, elegance, beauty, and social unruliness" (Rosenthal 2). Their fame was spread by early modern tourists who visited Venice and wrote about the lifestyles of the Republic's inhabitants. Travellers from England and France marvelled at the great number of Venetian courtesans, their elegance and sophistication, and their upward mobility. These honest courtesans (*cortigiane oneste*) employed the same skills—music, poetry, conversation—as the courtier (*cortigiano*) to seek patronage and advance themselves socially and politically (Rosenthal 6).

Successful courtesans attracted the patronage of powerful aristocratic men. This in turn made them more attractive to other men wishing to demonstrate their wealth and status by purchasing the services of distinguished courtesans. Stories, real or imagined, related how courtesans could select certain clients and reject others. To be rejected by a courtesan could mean a serious loss of face for the man. In other words, if a courtesan could exercise the freedom of choice, she had power over the men who staked their reputation and self-esteem to obtain her favour. She should therefore be feared. Hence in the imagination of the Renaissance, "attraction for the courtesan

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easily became fear, beauty quickly slid into ugliness, and the honest aristocratic courtesan could rapidly turn into the demeaning, dishonoring whore" (Ruggiero 282).

Marston's Dutch courtesan is also a beautiful and cultured woman. Skilled in the art of entertainment, Franceschina represents the artistic sophistication of Italy: she can sing, dance, and play the lute. Her musical performance must have been specifically written to show off the skills of the boy actor who played her in the first Blackfriars production. The musical fame of the Italians was a convenient excuse for the display of boy actors' talents. In contrast, the passive Beatrice has no such talents. She admits she is "void of skill", but qualifies her deficiencies as "unsullen silence", "unaffected modesty", "secure simplicity", and "sober ignorance", whereas the courtesan's conversational skill is described as "forced discourses" or "nice art of wit" (2.1.13-24). Although there is a convention that interprets lack of sophistication as modesty and goodness, it is obvious that the representative of English womanhood is not as artistically accomplished as the Dutch courtesan. More importantly, the gentlemen recognize the attraction of refined arts and entertainment performed by a skilled European courtesan. However many misgivings the English may have about foreign imports, they are undeniably attracted by European, especially Italian, cultural products.

Equally notable is Franceschina's art of seduction. When Malheureux arrives to claim his reward for "killing" Freevill, she advises him not to hurry: the more slowly the pleasure is taken, the greater the delight will be. Malheureux can only exclaim: "What, you're a learned wanton, and proceed by art!" (5.1.33). However, the real power of this courtesan is demonstrated in the way Malheureux falls for her. A fierce critic of the immorality of prostitutes, he is astonished by Franceschina's beauty on first seeing her and even more astonished by his own change of heart. The man who asserts that "The most odious spectacle the earth can present is an immodest, vulgar woman" (1.1.154-56) finds himself arguing that "I never saw a sweet face vicious" (1.2.137).

What faces Malheureux is a danger posed by a courtesan, "namely her ability to make some men lose self-control and perhaps at a deeper level literally to lose themselves in love" (Ruggiero 287). He keenly feels the shame in loving a prostitute: in his soliloquy of twenty-six lines in 2.1 "shame" is used four times. He dreads "the world's eye": everyone can see his error. Yet, he must love her; it is unavoidable, "though folly worse than madness" (2.1.143). His madness makes him go

dangerously near to promising to kill his friend on behalf of the courtesan. He explains to Freevill that it is his lust, not himself, that has made the promise: "I do malign my creation that I am subject to passion" (3.1.245). Until his lust is satisfied, he cannot regain self-control. He frankly admits: "I am not now myself—no man" (4.2.29). This is the nadir of a man's self-esteem. That a courtesan should be the cause of his fall only adds to his sense of degradation. Hence, no other word can better express the terror and evil of the courtesan's seductive power than "devil". In the final scene when Franceschina's plot is uncovered, Malheureux calls her "thou source of devils" (5.3.23) and Freevill refers to her as "this fair devil / In shape of woman" (5.3.44-45).

The accusations levelled at Franceschina could be interpreted as xenophobic: after all, she is a foreigner working in an occupation of foreign origin. To emphasize her alien status, the playwright makes her speak broken English in a heavy accent that isolates her from the rest of the characters. Her first speech, greeting her lover Freevill, shows a poor command of English grammar and pronunciation: "O mine aderliver love, vat sall me do to requit dis your mush affection?" (1.2.81-82). The stage Dutch used here includes a foreign term, wrong use of pronoun case, and substitution of harsh consonants *s* and *d* for *sh* and *th*. The foreign word "aderliver", an English version of the Dutch *alderliefest* meaning "dearest", [8] is thrown in for realistic effect but does not hamper the audience's comprehension since the context is clear. In her scenes with Freevill, she speaks this type of broken English that marks her foreignness without causing incomprehension.

However, her broken English is not consistent. When she tries to manipulate Malheureux into killing Freevill, her English is almost perfect with just a slight hint of accent. She feints a reluctance to press on her request: "Dear, dear breast, by this most zealous kiss—but I will not persuade you—but if you hate him that I loathe most deadly—yet as you please, I'll persuade noting" (2.2.175-77). Then she suggests how the murder could be carried out successfully: "O, done safely; a quarrel sudden picked, with an advantage strike; then bribe—a little coin, all's safe, dear soul. But I'll not set you on" (2.2.189-91). In her exchange with Malheureux, she comes across as a clever, calculating woman, the image of an Italian machiaval fully in control of her head and

[8] Editorial note in *The Dutch Courtesan*.

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her tongue.

Though Franceschina's alien status is clearly established, the playwright also qualifies and limits her threat. With her beauty, her passionate reaction to her lover's change of affection and her desire for revenge, Franceschina ought to be a heroine of a tragedy. Yet, her broken English undermines her seriousness and makes her sound rather comical instead. She speaks a mixture of several European languages but masters none. Her catchphrase, "ten tousand divels," must have been uttered so often that Freevill correctly predicts this is what she will say when she learns of his marriage plan. Her linguistic excess and harsh accent create a most comical juxtaposition of hatred and love:

> FRANCESCHINA. O Divela, life o' mine art! Ick sall be revevnged! Do ten tousand hell damn me, ick sall have the rogue troat cut; and his love, and his friend, and all his affinity sall smart, sall die, sall hang! . . .
>
> *Enter* FREEVILL *and* MALHEUREUX
>
> FREEVILL. Franceschina!
>
> FRANCESCHINA. O mine seet, dear'st, kindest, mine loving! O mine tousand, ten tousand, delicated, petty seetart! Ah, mine aderlievest affectioin! [*kisses Freevill*] (2.2.42-51)

The transition from curses to affectionate greetings is so abrupt that one doubts whether the speaker knows what she is saying. If Franceschina is not being hypocritical, then she must be momentarily uplifted by the thought that perhaps Freevill's marriage is merely a rumour after all. Yet her hope is dashed soon enough. Her anger returns, which gives Freevill the opportunity to call her a "punk rampant", a "witch", and leave her to her rage. Franceschina's poor control of emotions equals her poor command of English.

It is clear Freevill is not in thrall to her charm. As to the besotted Malheureux, he is only temporarily persuaded by Franceschina's eloquence to agree to kill Freevil but immediately afterwards resolves to disclose the murder plan to his friend. In short, Franceschina is far from the hard-hearted, dangerous creature from hell that the young men imagine her to be. On the contrary, she is vulnerable because of her isolation. Franceschina's impassioned words often fail to connect her to the other characters. Her ardent greetings, "Ah, mine aderlievest affection", are answered by Freevill's nonchalant command: "Why, monkey, no fashion in you? Give entertain to my friend" (2.2.52-53). When she believes her murder plot to be successful, she cries out

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triumphantly in her harsh accent: "Now sall me be revange. Ten tousant devla! Dere sall be no Got in me but passion, no tought but rage, no mercy but blood, no spirit but divla in me. Dere sall noting tought good for me, but dat is mischievous for others" (4.3.41-44). This is incriminating language: she proclaims herself a devil, an enemy of humanity. Yet, the audience knows that she has been betrayed by both Freevill and Malheureux and is soon to be publicly humiliated.

Franceschina, whose strong foreign accent is most distinct when her words are ineffective, is analogous to a translation that is not fully domesticated. One of the metaphors frequently used in early modern discourse on translation is the citizenship metaphor, which compares translations to foreigners coming to England: "Successful translations are said to be denizens, 'free denizens,' or even full citizens who gain 'enfranchisement'" (Coldiron 112). Florio, for instance, describes his role as translator of Montaigne's *Essays* as "having transported it from *France* to *England*; put it in English clothes; taught it to talke our toungue" (qtd. in Morini 27). The citizenship metaphor emphasizes that the criterion for judging a translation a success is its acceptance by the target culture; in other words, the target community wields enormous power in granting or withholding its approval. Seen in this respect, Franceschina's inability to talk like the English and her ultimate rejection by the English community can be regarded as an extended citizenship metaphor of translation. By giving the title role to such a foreigner, Marston seems to acknowledge not only the central place in English theatre occupied by translation but also the precariousness of that position.

IV. Quoting Montaigne

The Dutch courtesan fails to pass herself off as an Englishwoman due to an inadequate command of spoken English. Another foreigner, in contrast, blends in with the dramatis personae of the comedy in perfect English. In Florio's English translation of Montaigne's *Essays*, from which Marston quotes many sentences to furnish the characters' speeches, the French philosopher is, as it were, taught to speak English. Thus translated, the philosopher's words gain wide currency in English writings. Shakespeare, for one, is deemed to have been influenced by Montaigne, at least with regard to vocabulary (Taylor 5). Gonzalo's speech about a utopian society in *The Tempest*, closely based on a passage in Montaigne's "Of Cannibals", is a commonly agreed example of Shakespeare's verbal borrowings. If we extend the citizenship

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metaphor to the quoting of Montaigne in English dramas, we could say the playwrights were keen to invite the Frenchman over as an honoured guest, if not to turn him into a naturalized Englishman.

Marston quotes mostly from "On some lines of Virgil" (the fifth essay of the third book of *Essays*). In this essay Montaigne candidly discusses human sexuality: "The whole movement of the world tends and leads toward copulation. It is a substance infused through everything; it is the centre toward which all things run" (281).[9] He argues that women are born more lustful than men. "We realize that women have an incomparably greater capacity for the act of love than we do and desire it more ardently" (277). Montaigne writes how, one day, his teenage daughter was forbidden by her governess to pronounce a word which sounded like a vulgar word meaning "to have sex". The father believes that the governess's reprimand would surely lead his daughter to figure out for herself the meaning of the offending word. Women do not need to be taught sexual knowledge: they know instinctively (280). "If the ferocity of their desires were not somewhat reined in by that fear for their honour with which all women are endowed, we would all be laughing-stocks" (281). Montaigne's portrayal of women's sexual appetite is very much a caricature. However, he acknowledges the existence of double standards with which men seek to constrain women's natural desires: women alone should resist sexual passion, "not simply as a vice with its true dimensions but as an abomination and a curse, worse than impiety and parricide." In contrast, men can indulge in such passion "without blame or reproach" (278). Italian marriages are cited as examples of the harsh rules imposed on women. Italian customs forbid wives from having even the slightest acquaintance with any man other than their husbands; as a result of such repression, if the wives break out of domestic prisons, their sexual desire becomes uncontrollable. Therefore, Montaigne remarks, men should allow women a little more freedom (312). The philosopher concludes his essay by saying that men and women are "cast in the same mould" (329). If receiving the same education as men, women can be taught virtue just as well.

Montaigne's essay provides an angle from which Marston reinterprets his source story that emphasizes the friendship between two young men. It is out of friendship that Dellio is willing to give up his courtesan mistress when he realizes his friend has fallen

[9] All citations of Montaigne come from *The Essays: A Selection* translated and edited by M. A. Screech.

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helplessly in love with her. However, such an uncomplicated friendship does not exist in Marston's adaptation: Freevill and Malheureux are friends in name only. Freevill has been engaged to a gentleman's daughter when he introduces Malheureux to the Dutch courtesan. By goading his friend to approach the courtesan, Freevill hopes to be rid of her quickly. He thus resembles the trickster in city comedy: clever, manipulative, and ruthlessly self-centred. Noble sentiment has no place in his character.

What drives a wedge between the two friends in Marston's play is the difference between their conceptions of sexual passion. Malheureux initially denies the hold such passion has on human behaviour, and Freevill is determined to prove him wrong. The opening scene presents a debate between them about the necessary evil of prostitutes. The debate follows the pattern of legal prosecution and defence familiar to the Inns of Court men, who formed the main contingent of Marston's audience at the Blackfriars Theatre. Freevill even concludes their debate by jokingly demanding a lawyer's fee for his defence of prostitutes. In 2.1, with many quotes from Montaigne, he successfully convinces Malheureux of the inevitability and reasonableness of allowing sexual passion to dictate one's action.

However, given Freevill's advocacy of obeying nature's command, later in the play his moral posture, his so-called well-meaning attempt to teach his friend not to succumb to the flesh, is inconsistent with his initial libertine argument and therefore unconvincing. In the concluding scene when Freevill reveals his manoeuvres that almost send his friend to the gallows, he justifies his actions as the only way to save his friend from damnation that "no requests, / No arguments of reason, no known danger, / No assured wicked bloodiness" could prevent (5.3.37-39). Malheureux is similar to Angelo in *Measure for Measure*, while Freevill plays the role of the disguised duke to teach the sexually repressed young man a lesson. Yet, Freevill visibly enjoys his superiority over his friend, overhearing Malheueux's soliloquy and deliberately causing his friend to be threatened with the death sentence. In other words, Freevill imagines himself as a disguised duke with a mission to uncover the hypocrisy of his friend. Nevertheless, his action is closer to that of the play's trickster, who often congratulates himself on his cleverness. Freevill is mirrored by Cockledemoy, who claims to play tricks in order to reform his victim.

Wouldn't the audience feel uncomfortable about a protagonist that treats people close to him dishonestly and callously? Wouldn't the humanist-educated Inns of Court

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men find Freevill deficient in moral authority? Hunter, in his introduction to *The Malcontent* by Marston, observes that the Inns of Court "were not simply places of study; they were also the metropolitan centres of intellectual fashion. Residence there provided a standpoint of wittily detached knowingness about all the affairs of the age." In the beginning of his literary career, Marston wrote satirical poetry, trying to "represent states of insane disgust or prurient delight, in combination with a stance of philosophical (Neo-Stoic) detachment and dismissive superiority" (xix). This literary pose of detachment and superiority can be seen in the characterization of Freevill as opposed to that of Malheureux. The latter is all earnestness whether in his condemnation of the moral depravity of prostitution or in his anguished acknowledgement of his sexual needs. Freevill, in contrast, sees no need to hide his liaison with a courtesan, nor does he suffer any regret about ending that relationship. He is able to make witty remarks about the sin of the flesh, speaking tongue-in-cheek about the rationale of prostitution. Freevill, in short, speaks for young men who might delight in showing off their unconventionality in thought and behaviour.

However outrageous Freevill's defence of prostitution may sound in the first act, in 2.1 he sings a completely different tune, swearing eternal love to his wife-to-be. The married life, to him, means "modest pleasures of a lawful bed, / The holy union of two equal hearts, / Mutually holding either dear as health, / The undoubted issues, joys of chaste sheets, / The unfeigned embrace of sober ignorance" (5.1.68-72). In this ideal picture of marriage, a man's peace of mind is guaranteed: the union is upheld by law, and the family fortune will be inherited by rightful heirs. Montaigne speaks of marriage in the same vein: a good marriage "is a pleasant fellowship for life, full of constancy, trust and an infinity of solid useful services and mutual duties" (274). Nevertheless, Montaigne does not idealize marriage as Freevill does. On the contrary, the philosopher is sceptical about this institution, considering it inimical to personal freedom and unsuitable for people who, like him, find restrictions intolerable: "By my own design I would have fled from marrying Wisdom herself if she would have had me. But no matter what we may say, the customs and practices of life in society sweep us along." All the same, fidelity should be upheld: "We should tend our freedom wisely; but once we have submitted to the marriage-bond we must stay there under the laws of our common duty (or at least strive to)" (275). Whereas Freevill rhapsodizes about the joy of an irreproachable marriage, Montaigne sees only duties

and ties. We may attribute this contrast to their difference in age. Although the sharpest mind in the play, Freevill is a very young man after all; the middle-aged philosopher's observations about the sacrifices involved in a marriage completely elude him.

Seen from Montaigne's point of view, the reserve and chastity of Beatrice in *The Dutch Courtesan* would be most unnatural: she would have to hide what she knows and desires with her uttermost strength. If Montaigne is right about women's sexual drives, then Freevill's dream of living with Beatrice in blissfully contented seclusion is probably mere fantasy: the wife could be dissatisfied with her sex life even if the husband, having consorted with a mistress, is ready to abandon "all those weak under-branches / Of base affections and unfruitful heats" (2.1.6-7). To expect "a chaste, reserved privateness" (2.1.120) in marriage is to ask the wife to maintain the sexual repression learned in her girlhood. Here we can see the conflict between Marston's two sources. The romance framework of the original Venetian story requires a happy ending, a marriage between two virtuous lovers. But Freevill, whose unconventional remarks on sexuality come from Montaigne's essay, is not a virtuous innocent in a romance. In 2.1 Freevill's early morning serenading Beatrice is immediately followed by his persuading Malheureux to give in to sexual desires. One moment he speaks as a romantic hero, and the next moment a confirmed libertine, as if conjugal love and sexual passion can be easily compartmentalized.

To divert attention from the contradiction in the character of Freevill, Marston creates a character in *The Dutch Courtesan* that can speak more directly for Montaigne. This is Beatrice's sister, Crispinella, who has no other function in the plot than to express candid opinions that shock the very conventional Beatrice. Crispinella regards as false modesty some women's habit of refraining from certain topics; and she openly comments on distasteful men and the undesirability of marriage, much to the embarrassment of her sister. Beatrice talks of a "virtuous marriage," but Crispinella immediately corrects her: "There is no more affinity betwixt virtue and marriage than betwixt a man and his horse" (3.1.84-85).The plain-speaking Crispinella is not one to deny her sexuality; the more readily this aspect is acknowledged by her future husband, the more likely their marriage would be a success. In contrast to the romantic Freevill, Crispinella's suitor Tysefew has a more realistic vision of a workable marital relationship and proposes accordingly: "My purse, my body, my heart is yours; only be

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silent in my house, modest at my table, and wanton in my bed" (4.1.79-81). His unaffected proposal is immediately accepted. Cripinella's forthright commentary on marriage derives mainly from paraphrases of Montaigne's essay. Moreover, her proud declaration, "I give thoughts words, and words truth, and truth boldness" (3.1.37-38), echoes Montaigne's stance on the relationship between thought, speech, and writing: "I have . . . bidden myself to dare to write whatever I dare to do: I am loath even to have thoughts which I cannot publish" (266). Marston, no doubt, embraces the same attitude.

V. Conclusion

Early modern London's demographical, financial, and cultural dynamism gives playwrights such as Jonson, Middleton, and Dekker inspiration to write about the city's energetic pursuit of wealth. Marston, in contrast, seldom explores issues in this area. Apart from *Eastward Ho* (1605), his collaboration with Jonson and Chapman, *The Dutch Courtesan* is Marston's only city comedy. Unlike Jonson, who observes London in order to criticize it, or Middleton, who records the workings of market economy in the English capital, Marston is more drawn to London's cosmopolitanism than to manifestations of early capitalism. Marston's London is a city closely linked to continental Europe through trade, travel, and immigration, with continental goods circulating in the market and foreigners visiting or living in the metropolis. Londoners are shown to behave ambivalently toward what comes from abroad, enjoying the novelty of things foreign but hoping to keep them out as well.

Marston's comedy also differs from many plays of the period in being self-conscious about its affinity to translations. The fact that many plays derive their plots from Latin, Italian, French, or Spanish sources is never acknowledged by playwrights. However, in terms of carrying something across linguistic and generic borders, early modern playwriting may be seen as a type of extremely loose translation and contributes to England's cultural deficit with Europe. Marston does not mention his source, but he creates the Dutch courtesan, who can be compared to an import and therefore is a metaphor for translations.

In the characterization of Franceschina, Marston dramatizes the resistance of a foreign original to domestication as well as the stakes of introducing foreign works to England. The courtesan's beauty and musical skills alone are insufficient to win her the English community's acceptance; she has to adopt the locals' language, too. In

other words, she has to be translated in order to function in an English-speaking environment. Yet, Franceschina's accent is as difficult to shake off as her quick temper. Although, when laying a trap for Malheureux, she can manage to speak English correctly, her broken English returns as soon as she abandons herself to emotions. Part of her character remains stubbornly foreign and, like words that have no equivalents in English, difficult to translate without some distortion. The locals conclude that this woman is an evil influence that must be expelled, and the fact that she is a foreigner makes her expulsion perfectly natural in the eyes of the community. Franceschina represents those unsuccessful translations that, for all their original merits, ultimately fail to gain acceptance in the target culture.

In contrast to Franceschina, Crispinella is an example of successful cultural import. The latter speaks for Montaigne, quoting frequently from *Essays*. Yet, she is never mistaken for a foreigner; her place in the community is never in doubt. By means of this character, Marston is able to suggest that foreign writers of Montaigne's stature naturally deserve respect and welcome in England. Indeed, the French philosopher's analysis of human sexuality informs Marston's reinterpretation of Montreux's story as a process of testing various moral positions on sexual passion by educated young men. Unlike his play's English characters who are anxious about what a foreigner might do in their midst, the playwright lets a foreign writer's voice be heard distinctly to comment on English social mores.

本論文於 2013 年 10 月 4 日到稿，2014 年 5 月 30 日通過審查。

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