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Translation textual cultural heritage: The translation of 27 Italian jokes of Domenichi in Greek in an 1812 Paris edition located in Kozani's library

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Abstract

This article presents a textual cultural heritage case study. In particular, in this study we describe an 1812 Paris edition produced by the typographer J. M. Eberhart that contains a collection of jokes. The title of the book is “Ἰεροκλέους φιλοσόφου αστεία” that means “Ierokles philosopher's jokes” and contains two parts:

1. a collection of the philosopher's jokes created by M. from Chios,
2. a 1574 published collection of 27 Italian jokes translated from Italian to Greek in 1812 by M. from Chios.

The text was located in Kozani's public library “Κοβεντάρειος Δημοτική Βιβλιοθήκη της Κοζάνης” from now on Kozani's public library. We argue that the presence of this small collection of 16th century Italian jokes translation in a Greek library constitutes an element of Italian-greek intercultural influence and relations, many years before the Greek and the Italian independence movements and the foundation of the Greek (1830) and Italian (1861) national States.

Key words: cultural heritage, text documents, translations, Italian jokes, cultural influence, collection

Introduction

In this article we are trying to depict how important, innovative and significant could be the role of the research in textual cultural heritage for the study of the translations and the history of translation. The definition of the cultural heritage is provided by the 1972 Paris Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage in its first article as follows:

For the purposes of this Convention, the following shall be considered as "cultural heritage":

- ⇒ monuments: architectural works, works of monumental sculpture and painting, elements or structures of an archaeological nature, inscriptions, cave dwellings and combinations of features, which are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science;
- ⇒ groups of buildings: groups of separate or connected buildings which, because of their architecture, their homogeneity or their place in the landscape, are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science;
- ⇒ sites: works of man or the combined works of nature and man, and areas including archaeological sites which are of outstanding universal value from the historical, aesthetic, ethnological or anthropological point of view.

It is not only cultural heritage, as generally considered by Unesco, but also textual cultural heritage that is important. In addition, texts can be conceptualized as data basis or cultural information banks. Preservation and study of our textual cultural heritage could prove really useful and educative in many ways such as the dissemination of knowledge about translations and history of translations. In this field, a few years ago, E. Kassapi presented an innovative model work of textual cultural heritage management concerning the preservation, digitization and dissemination of knowledge of Papafi's Archive (2007:1). Kassapi's work was an harmonic and innovative cooperation of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki with Papafi's institute "Meliteas" as an "Information Society" EU project.

Employing Kassapi's innovative model methodology in textual cultural heritage research, we will present in this article the case study of Eberhart's 1812 edition of the philosopher's Ierokles texts of jokes and the translations of some Italian jokes by the author M. from Chios, localized in Kozani's old public library, we will describe its characteristics and we will attempt to get textual cultural information in order to understand the intercultural influence and the relations between Italian and Greek humor in 18th-19th century.

Text characteristics

The code number of the book in Kozani's library is E 176107. Here it follows a table containing the bibliographical and textual characteristics of the edition:

Title: *Ιεροκλέους φιλοσόφου αστεία* [Philosopher's Ierokles jokes]

Subtitle: *οις προσετέθησαν βραχεία σημειώσεις και τινά των ιταλικών νεωτέρων αστείων υπό Μ. Χίου.*

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Writer: Ιεροκλής ο Αλεξανδρεύς (5th sec. A.C.), Ierokles from Alexandria.
Translator of Ieroklis jokes: M. from Chios with possible corrections of Adamantios Korais (1748-1833)
Translator of the Italian jokes: M. from Chios

Place of production-edition: Paris
Year of production-edition: 1812
Editor-typographer: J. M. Eberhart

Language of the original texts: Greek (EL) & Italian (IT)
Translations: from Greek to French (EL → FR) & from Italian to Greek (IT → EL)

Text type: satirical, humor
Classification of the text according Dewey's model: literature (category: 887)

EXTERNAL BIBLIOGRAPHICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Style framework: 8^o
Pages: 2 pages & λθ' pages of introduction & 32 pages.
Dimension: 200mm long
Book binding: paper binding
Condition: generally good

ΙΕΡΟΚΛΕΟΥΣ ΦΙΛΟΣΟΦΟΥ

, ΑΣΤΕΙΑ,

Οἷς προστέθησαν βραχεῖαι σημειώσεις, καὶ τινὰ τῶν Ἰταλικῶν
νεωτέρων ἀστειῶν,

ΥΠΟ Μ. ΤΟΥ ΧΙΟΥ.



ΕΝ ΠΑΡΙΣΙΟΙΣ,

ΕΚ ΤΗΣ ΤΥΠΟΓΡΑΦΙΑΣ Ι. Μ. ΕΒΕΡΑΡΤΟΥ.

Α. Ω. Π. Β.

Imagine 1. The book front page title “Ιεροκλέους φιλοσόφου αστεία” [Philosopher’s Ierokles jokes].

Ierokles jokes and the italian jokes of lodovico domenichi

Unfortunately, we know nothing about the person that belonged the text and imported it in Kozani’s public library. The old books corpus of the Kozani’s public library is dated from 1494 to 1912. We also ignore the exact date of the entrance of the text in the library. Another book was located in the University library of Crete and its identity number is 18362.

Ieroklis was a neoplatonic philosopher of the 5th century. He studied under [Plutarch](#) (the Neoplatonist) at [Athens](#) in the early 5th century, and taught for some

years in his native city. He seems to have been banished from [Alexandria](#) and to have taken up his abode in [Constantinople](#), where he gave such offence that he was thrown into prison and cruelly flogged. The causes of this are probably for being neoplatonic and pagan. According to wikipedia: the only complete work of his which has been preserved is the commentary on the [Chrysa Epe \(Golden Verses\) of Pythagoras](#). It enjoyed a great reputation in the [Middle Ages](#) and the [Renaissance](#), and there are numerous translations in various European languages. Several other writings, especially one on providence and fate, a consolatory treatise dedicated to his patron [Olympiodorus of Thebes](#), are quoted or referred to by [Photius](#) and [Stobaeus](#). Ierokles argued against astrological fatalism on the basis that it is supported by an irrational necessity rather than a divine, rational Providence of God. For the same reason, he opposed theurgist and magic practices as they were attempts to supersede the divine providential order. Although he never mentions [Christianity](#) in his surviving works, his writings have been taken as an attempt at reconciliation between Greek religion traditions and the Christian beliefs he may have encountered in Constantinople.

The author M. from Chios attributes to the Greek neoplatonic philosopher these opera's:

1. *Περί ειμαρμένης*
2. *Περί προνοίας*
3. *Υπόμνημα εις τα χρυσά έπη του Πυθαγόρου*
4. *Αστεία* [jokes]

The jokes of Ierokles was translated in French by M. from Chios after some possible corrections made by Adamantios Korais. The 27 Italian jokes that consist the second part of the book translated in Greek from M. from Chios, were part of Domenichi's Italian jokes collection published in Venice in 1574 in a 46 pages edition. According to M. from Chios, he used this book collection of Italian jokes because that was the only book of jokes that he had (1812: στ'-ζ').

According to the Italian bibliographic OPAC SBN public catalogue¹ the Italian jokes collection belongs to Lodovico Domenichi² (Piacenza 1515 – Pisa 1564) an Italian humanist, translator, editor and intellectual. Domenichi has left a very reach and important work of various opera's, translations and editions. The Italian jokes that published in 1574 in Venice was entitled: *“Facetie, motti, et burle, di diuersi signori et persone priuate. Raccolte per m. Lodouico Domenichi, & da lui di nuouo del settimo libro ampliate. Con una nuoua aggiunta di motti; raccolti da m. Thomaso Porcacchi, & con vn discorso intorno a essi, con ogni diligentia ricorrette, & ristampate”*. The editor of the book was Niccolò Moretti and the Venetian typographer of the publication was Iacomo Leoncini. The translation in Greek of the Domenichi's Italian jokes reports the spirit and the humour of the writer and also confirms the common cultural background of the two nations that can both understand and laugh with the same jokes. The translation of the 27 Italian jokes, at the moment, it's the first known translation of Domenichi (generally considered as a minor author) in Greek since the 16th century, but despite of this constitute a further prove of the

¹ http://www.sbn.it/opacsbn/opaclib?foffset=&db=solr_iccu&rpquery=%2540attrset%2Bbib-1%2B%2B%2540attr%2B1%253D1003%2B%2540attr%2B4%253D6%2B%2522Domenichi%2BLodovico%2522&select_db=solr_iccu&Invia=Avvia+la+ricerca&saveparams=false&ricerca=base&rpnlabeled=+Autore+%3D+Domenichi+Lodovico+&searchForm=opac%2Fficcu%2Fbase.jsp&refine=4031%7C%7C%7C1574%7C%7C%7C1574%7C%7C%7CAnno+di+pubblicazione&do_cmd=search_show_cm d&resultForward=opac%2Fficcu%2Ffull.jsp&nentries=1&&fname=none&from=1

² http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lodovico_Domenichi.

powerful intercultural influences and relations between Italian and Neohellenic cultural systems.

ΕΤΕΡΑ ΑΣΤΕΙΑ

ΑΠΟ ΙΤΑΛΙΚΗΝ ΑΣΤΕΙΩΝ ΣΥΛΛΟΓΗΝ.

1.

ΠΑΡΑΠΟΝΟΥΜΕΝΟΣ τις εἰς τὸν πενθερὸν αὐτοῦ, ὅτι ἡ
συμβία του δὲν ἦτο σώφρων, ἔλαβε ταύτην τὴν παρηγορίαν «Μὴ
» λυπεῖσαι, γαμβρέ μου· ὑπόφερε τὴν ἀκόμη ὀλίγον, καὶ
» ἀφ' ἑαυτῆς θέλει παύσειν καὶ σὲ ἀτιμάζει, ὡς ἔκαμε καὶ ἡ
» μήτηρ αὐτῆς, ἡ συμβία μου, ἀφοῦ ἐγήρατε ».

2.

Εἰς ναυαγίου μέγαν κίνδυνον, ἐπρόσβαζεν ὁ καραβοκύριος
τοὺς διαβάτας καὶ ῥήξωσιν εἰς τὴν θάλασσαν διὰ τὰ βόρρη, διὰ
καὶ σωθῶσιν. Εἰς ἀπ' αὐτοῦ ἐπῆρε πρώτην τὴν γυναῖκα του,
καὶ τὴν ἐβόρρηξε, λέγων, ὅτι παρ' αὐτὴν ἄλλο βαρύτερον καὶ ῥήξει
δὲν εἶχε.

3.

Ἐφερε τις εἰς τράπεζαν μέγα σκεῦος οἴνου διὰ τοὺς συμ-
πότας. Εἰς ἀπ' αὐτοῦ τὸ ἐπῆρε πρῶτος, καὶ βλέπων εἰς
αὐτὸ μυῖαν κολυμβῶσαν, τὴν ἔσυρεν ἔξω μετὰ τὸ θάκτυλον, καὶ
ἀφοῦ ἔπιε, τὴν ἔβαλε πάλιν εἰς τὸ σκεῦος, καὶ τὸ ἔδωκεν εἰς τοὺς
ἄλλους. Ἐρωτώμενος τὴν αἰτίαν, ἀπεκρίθη « Ἐγὼ μυῖας εἰς
» τὸν οἶνον δὲν ἀγαπῶ· ἀλλὰ δὲν εἶμαι βέβαιος, ἂν μὴδ' αἱ ἄλλοι
» δὲν τοὺς ἀγαπῶσι ».

Ε 2

Imagine 2. The 1812 translation of the Italian jokes collection in Neohellenic by M. from Chios.

The study of the translation history and the translation textual cultural heritage is not only an exciting part of the translation research but can also constitute a useful methodology in understanding our culture, the cultural evolutions and the intercultural influences and relations in Europe. The 1812 Greek translation of the Italian jokes of Lodovico Domenichi proves the existence of intercultural relationships and connections between Italian and Neohellenic culture, many years before the foundation of the Italian and the Hellenic national States. The translations routes and

their cronotopical characteristics can be mapped in order to understand better these particular cultural evolutions in a framework of cultural system analysis³.

The translations are part of the intangible textual cultural heritage of a cultural system as a concrete cultural capital value that can be conserved, reclaimed and developed. The translations also shows the interconnections and the relations between the various cultural systems and their influence and power as an important factor in geopolitics of culture. The cultural footprint⁴ of the translations can be studied, described, measured and analyzed in the framework of the geopolitics of translation in order to understand better the value of our textual cultural heritage.

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³ Lagopoulos, A. & Boklund-Lagopoulou K. 1992. *Meaning and geography. The social conception of the region in Northern Greece.* Berlin – New York: Mouton de Gruyter, p. 39.

⁴ Portoles, J. & Madorran E. 2011. *Approaches to a cultural footprint. Proposal for the concept and ways to measure it.* Bruselles: Centre Maurits Coppieters, p. 8-9.