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## Chapter 13

### Morphings at Meta-Levels: Ovid, John Dryden, and the Art of Likeness in Translation

Kerstin Maria Pahl

#### 1 Introduction

In 1680, poet and translator John Dryden wrote in the preface to a multi-authored translation of Ovid's *Epistles*:

The sense of an Author, generally speaking, is to be Sacred and inviolable. If the Fancy of *Ovid* be luxuriant, 'tis his Character to be so; and if I retrench it, he is no longer *Ovid*. It will be replied, that he receives advantage by this lopping of his superfluous branches, but I rejoyn, that a Translator has no such Right: when a *Painter* Copies from the life, I suppose he has no priviledge to alter Features, and Lineaments, under pretence that his Picture will look better: perhaps the Face which he has drawn would be more Exact, if the Eyes, or Nose were alter'd, but 'tis his busineß to make it resemble the Original.<sup>1</sup>

The *Epistles* was the first translation enterprise undertaken by Dryden and his long-time publisher Jacob Tonson. Famously, it was also one of the author's earliest theoretical approaches to translation and features a trope to which he would regularly return in his writings: the equation of translation with painting and, in particular, with portraiture. Like portraitists, translators had to work 'from the life' and thus be faithful to the original, making the translator the portraitist and the original work the 'sitter', replete with 'character'. The ultimate goal was resemblance between the original and its derivative, which could either be a portrait and a person or an original-language book and its translation.

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<sup>1</sup> Dryden John (ed.), *Ovid's Epistles. Translated by Several Hands* (London, Jacob Tonson: 1680), "Preface" n.p. (c. 6r-10r).

John Dryden's achievements both as a translator and a theorist of translation are well known and have received abundant attention.<sup>2</sup> For Dryden, authors from antiquity, and Ovid and Virgil in particular, were not only revered poetic predecessors to be known, quoted, and imitated; they also provided a rewarding challenge for anyone venturing into translation because by translating their works, one could show that they had mastered not only foreign languages, but also their own mother-tongue, in this case English. One proved their aptitude in capturing an author's literary 'character' by 'portraying' them, not by showing their face but their style.

While Dryden's interest in 'literary pictorialism' and the relationship between the visual and the verbal arts has been noted,<sup>3</sup> less attention has been given to the links between a theory of art, especially portraiture, and a theory of translation. Dryden's joining of the two, his understanding of translation as a portraying practice, and the central role that Ovid's *Metamorphoses* played in his theorising will be the subject of this article.

Ovid loomed large in 17th-century English literature.<sup>4</sup> While his reputation in literature and the visual arts had begun to wane in the second half of the century, in line with a broader anti-allegorical, neoclassical turn towards sobriety following the Restoration,<sup>5</sup> Ovid's work continued to inspire English writers and artists. Importantly, the *Metamorphoses* and its translations also provided

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<sup>2</sup> On Dryden and translation see for instance Brown C. S., "John Dryden as Comparatist", *Comparative Literature Studies* 10, 2 (1973) 112-124; Rosslyn F., "Dryden: Poet or Translator?", *Translation and Literature* 10, 1 (2001) 21-32; Tomlinson C., "Why Dryden's Translations Matter", *Translation and Literature* 10,1 (2001) 3-20; Tissol G., "Dryden's Additions and the Interpretative Reception of Ovid", *Translation and Literature* 13, 2 (Autumn 2004) 181-193; Davis P., *Translation and the Poet's Life: The Ethics of Translating in English Culture, 1646-1726* (Oxford: 2008) 127-233 (chapter "Dryden and the Bounds of Liberty"); Reynolds M., *The Poetry of Translation: From Chaucer & Petrarch to Homer & Logue* (Oxford: 2011) 73-118.

<sup>3</sup> 'Aware of the powerful effects to be achieved by the interrelations of the verbal and the visual arts, John Dryden was an important proponent of literary pictorialism and applied that principle in his own poetry and translations. [...] The changes Dryden made in his translations of Virgil and Chaucer were the direct result of his pictorialist concerns'. Doederlein S. W., "Ut Pictura Poesis. Dryden's *Aeneis* and *Palamon and Arcite*", *Comparative Literature* 33,2 (Spring 1981) 156-166, 156. See also Brown, "Dryden as Comparatist" 117: 'The relationship of literature to the other arts was a lifelong if casual interest of Dryden's, quite aside from his "Parallel of Poetry and Painting." References to music are slight and negligible, usually taking the form of concern with the problems of writing texts for composition, but the comparison of poetry and painting was constantly used to sharpen his critical points.'

<sup>4</sup> Hardin R. F., "Ovid in Seventeenth-Century England", *Comparative Literature* 24,1 (1972) 44-62. On Ovid translations in English literature before 1700 see in particular Brown S. A., *The Metamorphosis of Ovid. From Chaucer to Ted Hughes* (New York: 1999) 1-140.

<sup>5</sup> Hardin R. F., "Ovid" 44, 50-51. This has also reflected on scholarship, which tends to favour medieval and Renaissance receptions of Ovid. See Fielitz S., *Wit, Passion and Tenderness*.

a theoretical platform, a vehicle for reflection on what transformation and morphing meant on an abstract, theoretical, and methodological level.<sup>6</sup> In Dryden's case, transformation and morphing often meant translation, which he saw as akin to portraying: taking a likeness, but producing an original work. In the preface to *Sylvæ* (1685), an anthology of translations, Dryden again used the translation-portraiture analogy with reference to Ovid:

[...] the Style and Versification of *Virgil* and *Ovid*, art very different: Yet I see, even in our best Poets, who have Translated some parts of them, that they have confounded their several Talents; and, by endeavouring only at the sweetness and harmony of Numbers, have made them both so much alike, that if I did not know the Originals, I shou'd never be able to ludge by the Copies, which was *Virgil*, and which was *Ovid*. It was objected against a late noble Painter, that he drew many graceful Pictures, but tevv of them were like. And this happen'd to him, because he always studied himself, more than those who sate to him. In such Translatours, I can easily distinguish the hand which perform'd the Work, but I cannot distinguish their Poet from another.<sup>7</sup>

Like a portrait, translation should not be too dissimilar from its source material. The 'late noble Painter' mentioned by Dryden was Dutch native Peter Lely, the preeminent and popular, but notoriously pompous, portraitist of the English Restoration whose portraits were, according to Dryden, all similar because the individuality of the subjects was lacking.

In addition to Dryden's translations of the texts themselves, Ovid, and in particular the *Metamorphoses*, figured time and time again in his theoretical writings on translation and its theory.<sup>8</sup> Ovid's *Metamorphoses* are about

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Ovids 'Metamorphosen' im Wandel der Diskurse in England zwischen 1660 und 1800  
(Frankfurt am Main: 2000) 27-37.

<sup>6</sup> See in particular Hopkins D, *Conversing with Antiquity. English Poets and the Classics, from Shakespeare to Pope* (Oxford: 2010) 1-16; Coelsch-Foisner S. – Görtschacher W, *Ovid's Metamorphoses in English Poetry* (Heidelberg: 2009), esp. Coelsch-Foisner S., "Metamorphoses of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* in English Poetry" VII-XXI. See also Clarke B., *Allegories of Writing. The Subject of Metamorphosis* (New York: 1995) 1-2. Further, Kundu R., "Dryden's *All For Love* and the Aesthetics of Adaptation", in Görtschacher W. – Klein H. (eds.), *Dryden and the World of Neoclassicism* (Stauffenburg: 2001) 99-113.

<sup>7</sup> Dryden John, *Sylvæ, Or, The Second Part of Poetical Miscellanies* (London, Jacob Tonson: 1685), "Preface" n.p. See also Millar (ed.), *Sir Peter Lely, 1618-80*, exh. cat., National Portrait Gallery (London: 1978) 25.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Ficlitz S., "John Dryden as Critic and Translator of Ovid: The *Metamorphoses*, or, Neo-Classical Standards Put to Test", in Görtschacher – Klein (eds.), *World of Neoclassicism*

transformation, the transfer of one entity into another state, which made them a useful device for reflecting on the important, yet contested and often antagonistic nexus of imitation, invention, and translation<sup>9</sup> in a larger discussion of what it meant for authors (and artists) to transform, transfer, or convert sources into representations.<sup>10</sup>

## 2 The Art(s) of Translation: John Dryden's 'PARALLEL betwixt PAINTING and POETRY' and Invention as Reception

For Dryden, translation was a form of portrayal. Accordingly, in his first and only venture into the theory of art proper, a 1695 translation of Charles-Alphonse du Fresnoy's *De Arte Graphica*, he used art theory to discuss translation. Composed in Latin hexameters in 1637, *De Arte Graphica* had been translated into French by Roger de Piles in 1668, and Dryden used both editions for his own version. *De Arte Graphica* was a long didactic poem on the rules of art, extolling many of the commonly-held tenets of art theory that structured academic painting and were institutionalised with the establishment of the French Académie

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155-167. Dryden's theoretical considerations were often included in the paratexts of translations such as the preface.

<sup>9</sup> On Dryden and Ovid see Frost W, "Dryden's Versions of Ovid", *Comparative Literature* 26, 3 (Summer 1974) 193-202; Hopkins D., "Dryden and Ovid's 'Wit Out of Season'", in Martindale C. (ed.), *Ovid Renewed. Ovidian Influences on Literature and Art from the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: 1988) 167-190; Tissol, "Dryden's Additions" 181-193.

<sup>10</sup> Doederlein, "Ut Pictura Poesis" 158. Llewellyn N., "Illustrating Ovid", in Martindale (ed.), *Ovid Renewed* 151-166, esp. 151-153. On Franz Kafka, Clarke has written: 'the *Metamorphosis* is an allegory of writing: it flaunts its own paradigmatic belatedness, its virtual location within the immeasurable line of metamorphic typ010U. [...] An allegory enforces a semantic or thematic translation of the lexical sense of a text; a metamorphosis brings about the literal rewriting of a character on the model of verbal translation from one language into another.' Clarke, *Allegories of Writing* 1-2. See Davis, *Translation* 221-223, for Dryden's use of the *Metamorphoses* as poetical and political self-reflection and the 'capacity of the *Metamorphoses* to bring to light gradations of consciousness' (222). See also Brower R. A., "Visual and Verbal Translation of Myth: Neptune in Virgil, Rubens, Dryden", *Daedalus* 101, 1 (Winter, 1972) 155-182, 157: 'Translations, in whatever medium, can be best understood not only in relation to an original text but in light of the "conditions of expression" within which they were created'; Tomlinson C., *Metamorphoses. Poetry and Translation* (Manchester 2003), esp. 1-30; Hopkins D., "Dryden on Translation: Theory and Practice", in Gillespie S. – Hopkins D. (eds.), *The Oxford History of Literary Translation in English* (Oxford: 2005) 55-66, 63-67. On the chances and challenges of understanding translation itself as a metaphorical expression see Reynolds, *Poetry of Translation* 3-45, esp. 3-7

Royale, founded in 1648:<sup>11</sup> painting should delight and instruct ('prodesse et delectare'),<sup>12</sup> characters and the human body were subservient to setting and plot, and invention was preferable to imitation; in other words, history paintings were more valuable than portraits.<sup>13</sup> To meet these standards, the visual arts had to adhere to literature, especially poetry or tragedy, in terms of subject and form to provide ideal examples of human virtues. This request was summed up in Horace's 'ut pictura poesis' – as in painting so in poetry and vice versa – and Du Fresnoy aimed to complement literary theory with artistic theory with his title, *The Art of Painting*, intentionally referencing Horace's *The Art of Poetry* (*Ars Poetica*, first century BCE ).<sup>14</sup>

Dryden not only translated the Latin poem, but also De Piles's own two contributions, the "Remarques sur l'art de peinture" – a line-by-line commentary on Du Fresnoy's remarks – and the "Sentiments de Charles Alphonse du Fresnoy sur les ouvrages des principaux & des meilleurs Peintres des derniers Siecles". He added "an *Original Preface* containing A PARALLEL betwixt PAINTING and POETRY" (hereafter "Parallel") as well as "A Short Account of the Most Eminent Painters Both Ancient and Modern", which identified English painters Samuel Cooper, William Dobson, and John Riley – all of them portraitists – among the more famous Italian masters included in De Piles's collection. Although English intellectuals knew French and Italian, and several art theoretical treatises had been published since the end of the 16th century, it was only with this translation that the discourse around academic painting

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<sup>11</sup> Salerno L., "Seventeenth-Century English Literature on Painting", *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institute*, 14, 3/4 (1951) 234-258, 246. Other academies were Vasari's Accademia delle Belle Arti (\*1563) in Florence and Jacob von Sandrart's Maler-Akademie in Nuremberg (\*1662). On translations of *De Arte Graphica* itself see Lipking L., "The Shifting Nature of Authority in Versions of De arte graphica", *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 23, 4 (Summer 1965) 487-504.

<sup>12</sup> Horace, *Horatii Flacci epistola ad Pisonem, de arte poetica. The Art of Poetry: An Epistle to the Pisos. Translated from Horace. With notes. By George Colman* (London, T. Cadell: 1783) 28 (ll. 333-334).

<sup>13</sup> See Félibien André, *Conférences de l'Académie royale de Peinture et de Sculpture, 1648-1793*, ed. J. Lichtenstein – C. Michel, 12 vols. (Paris: 2007-2015) vol. 1.1.; Puttfarken T., *The Discovery of Pictorial Composition. Theories of Visual Order in Painting 1400-1800* (New Haven: 2000) 263-277.

<sup>14</sup> Horace, *Art of Poetry* 30 (l. 361). On the poetry-painting comparison see in particular Howard W. G., "Ut Pictura Poesis", *Publications of the Modern Language Association* 24, 1 (1909) 40-123 Lee R, *Ut Pictura Poesis. The Humanist Theory of Painting* (New York: 1977); Hagstrum J. He, *The Sister Arts. The Tradition of Literary Pictorialism and English Poetry from Dryden to Gray* (Chicago: 1956); Salerno, "Literature on Painting" 236.

gathered full speed as Dryden's work adapted Continental art theory for the English market and language.<sup>15</sup>

Like many of his contemporaries, Dryden considered painting simply another form of language, like two sisters using different means to the same ends,<sup>16</sup> so that the "Parallel" was chiefly an accumulation of presupposed similarities between painting and poetry rather than an observation borne out of actual comparison and examination.<sup>17</sup> Painting and poetry should be pleasant and instructive, and depict great and noble actions and great and noble characters (which were neither base nor entirely flawless).<sup>18</sup> However, Dryden also used the "Parallel", embedded in this mixture of Latin and French translations, as a springboard for thinking about invention and what it meant for authors to work with original texts, especially with a view to originality and invention.<sup>19</sup> In short: Dryden employed a translation of art theory for a theory of the art of translation.

Invention was a vital feature of all three versions, the Latin, French, and English. Du Fresnoy's French translator Roger de Piles had added an explanatory section to Du Fresnoy's work, the "Remarques" (called "Observations" by Dryden) and his remarks on invention are among the longest. Crucially, invention did not come about by itself, but from studying, reading, imitating, and, eventually, emulating great poets and masters: 'there is no man [...] who knows not and who finds not himself how much Learning is necessary to animate his

<sup>15</sup> Before Dryden's take on Du Fresnoy, the most influential treatise had been Gian Paolo Lomazzo's *Trattato dell' Arte della pittura, Scoltura et Architettura* (Milan, Paolo Gottardo Pontio: 1585), translated as *A Tracte Containing the Artes of curious Paintinge & Building* by Richard Haydocke in 1598. See Hagstrum, *Sister Arts* 71. English treatises on art theory had previously been mainly technical manuals, such as William Sanderson's *Graphice* (London, Robert Crofts: 1658) and William Salmon's *Polygraphice* (London, E. T. and R. H. Richards: 1672). Other texts are Junius Franciscus, *De pictura veterum libri tres* (Amsterdam, Blaeu: 1637), translated as *The Painting of the Ancients* (London, Daniel Frere: 1638); Aglionby William, *Painting Illustrated in Three DIALOGUES, Containing some Choice Observations upon the ART* (London, Walter Kettilby: 1685). See also Salerno, "Literature on Painting" 244. The canonical writings on academic art theory, the *Conférences de l'Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture, pendant l'année 1667* (1669), were first published in a translated version in 1740 (the original French version had been published in England in 1705). See Salerno, "Literature on Painting"; Hagstrum, *Sister Arts* 174-176; Tolle Mace D., "Ut Pictura Poesis: Dryden, Poussin and the Parallel of Poetry and Painting in the Seventeenth Century", in Dixon Hunt J. (ed.), *Encounters. Essays on the Literature and the Visual Arts* (London: 1971) 58-81; Lipking, "Shifting Authority" 493-494.

<sup>16</sup> Dryden John – Du Fresnoy Charles Alphonse, *De Arte Graphica. The Art of Painting by C. A. Du Fresnoy. With Remarks* (London, W. Rogers: 1695) 3.

<sup>17</sup> Hagstrum, *Sister Arts* 174-175.

<sup>18</sup> Dryden – Du Fresnoy, *De Arte Graphica* xx, xxvij, xxij.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Doederlein, "Ut Pictura Poesis" 158.

Genius, and to compleat it'.<sup>20</sup> Painters should 'heap up treasures out of their reading' and read good authors to understand 'those things of which they treat'.<sup>21</sup> Imitating authors of antiquity, De Piles claimed, was the only way to accomplish invention. While the subject matter was to be taken from literary sources, the 'choice of Postures', 'the harmony of the Lights and Shadows', and the colours were the '*most important Precept* of all those which relate to Painting':

It belongs properly to a *Painter alone*, and all the rest are borrow'd either from *Learning*, or from *Physick*, or from the *Mathematicks* [...]; but for the *Oeconomy* or ordering of the whole together, none but onely the Painter can understand it, because the end of the Artist is pleasingly to deceive the Eyes.<sup>22</sup>

In the same vein, Dryden argued that extensive engagement with others authors was a prerequisite for any work,<sup>23</sup> yet he apparently also felt the need to defend his own undertaking, especially the translations. The preface opens with Dryden declaring 'it was not of my own choice that I undertook this Work'.<sup>24</sup> This may have been a proactive deflection of criticism because he was a man of letters venturing into art, but read in context, this passage appears as a slight: it was the first hint at the fact that Dryden considered the original treatise less than ideal material for a translator.<sup>25</sup> He criticised Du Fresnoy's 'highly metaphorical' expressions, which, 'being a fault in the first digestion (that is, the *Original Latine*) was not to be remedy'd in the second (*viz.*) the *Translation*',<sup>26</sup> thus including a jibe at De Piles in the same breath. By directing this slight at two writers who had placed much emphasis on invention, Dryden indicated that invention had no merit in itself because it was merely an invention. He went on:

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<sup>20</sup> Dryden – Du Fresnoy, *De Arte Graphica* 105-106.

<sup>21</sup> Dryden – Du Fresnoy, *De Arte Graphica* 106-107.

<sup>22</sup> Dryden – Du Fresnoy, *De Arte Graphica* 22, 111-112.

<sup>23</sup> On Dryden, imitation, and adaption see especially Kundu, "Dryden's *All for Love*", esp. 99-100.

<sup>24</sup> Dryden – Du Fresnoy, *De Arte Graphica* i.

<sup>25</sup> On Dryden, his relationship with French criticism, and translation as a form of criticism see Smallwood P., *Critical Occasions. Dryden. Pope, Johnson, and the History of Criticism* (New York: 2011) 30-45.

<sup>26</sup> Dryden – Du Fresnoy, *De Arte Graphica* iij.



*Invention* is [...] absolutely necessary to them both [painting and poetry]: yet no *Rule* ever was or ever can be given how to compass it. [...] *Tu nihil invitâ dices faciesve Minervâ*. Without *Invention* a *Painter* is but a *Copier*, and a *Poet* but a *Plagiary* of others. *Both* are allow'd sometimes to *copy* and *translate*; but as our *Authour* tells you that is not the best part of their Reputation. *Imitators* are but a *Servile kind of Cattle*, says the *Poet*; or at best, the *Keepers of Cattle* for other men; they have nothing which is properly their own; that is a sufficient mortification for me while I am translating *Virgil*. But to copy the best *Authour* is a kind of praise, if I perform it as I ought. As a *Copy* after *Raphael* is more to be commended, than an *Original* of any indifferent *Painter*.<sup>27</sup>

The Latin quote, 'You will neither say nor do anything without Minerva', was taken from Horace's *Ars Poetica*, the source of the *ut pictura poesis* catchphrase. It was a warning for 'he' who 'In Poetry [...] boasts as little art, I And yet in Poetry [...] dares take part';<sup>28</sup> this was perhaps intended as a swipe at Du Fresnoy, who had chosen a poem to express his ideas. Dryden would repeatedly make such jabs at Du Fresnoy. In the last part of the preface, he provides a range of Virgil quotes, noting that he could spend an hour translating one sentence because 'there is so much of Beauty in the Original'<sup>29</sup> On the other hand, Du Fresnoy's entire poem was completed in two months in his spare time, including the writing of the "Parallel", which was 'begun and ended in twelve Mornings'.<sup>30</sup>

The extent to which Dryden incorporated other authors leads one to suspect that he was implicitly but proudly defending the translator's work with a deliberate overflow of references:<sup>31</sup> pages xx-xxi and xlix-liv of the "Parallel" contain analyses of Virgil and pages v-xiv consist nearly entirely of a long translation from Giovan Pietro Bellori's *The Idea of the Painter, the Sculptor and the Architect*, which formed the preface to his *Lives of the Modern Painters, Sculptors, and Architects* (1672).<sup>32</sup> The translator's pride also shows in the typeface of the title: 'PREFACE OF THE TRANSLATOR, With a Parallel, of Poetry

<sup>27</sup> Dryden – Du Fresnoy, *De Arte Graphica* xxxiv-xxxv.

<sup>28</sup> Horace, *Art of Poetry* 32 (l. 385); 31 (ll. 559—560).

<sup>29</sup> Dryden – Du Fresnoy, *De Arte Graphica* li.

<sup>30</sup> Dryden – Du Fresnoy, *De Arte Graphica* liv.

<sup>31</sup> On Dryden's copiousness in translating Ovid see Fielitz, "Translator of Ovid" 158-161.

<sup>32</sup> Raben H., "Bellori's Art: The Taste and Distaste of a Seventeenth-Century Art Critic in Rome", *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 32, 2/3 (2006) 126-146.

*and Painting*'.<sup>33</sup> Invention may have been the first and most important thing, without which all else was nothing. In Dryden's words, invention was 'rais'd higher than the rest, and shines with a more glorious, and brighter flame'. However, invention also depended on the right source: '*Sit Thematis genuina ac viva expression juxta Textum Antiquorum | propriis cum tempore formis* (Let your Compositions be conformable to the Text of Ancient Authours, to Customs, and to Times)'.<sup>34</sup> Later, Du Fresnoy wrote: '*Nec mora nec requies, noctuque diuque labori | Illorum Menti atque Modo, vos donec agendi | Praxis ab assiduo faciles assueverit usu*', which Dryden translated as 'and cease not day or night from labour, till by your continual practice you have gain'd an easy habitude of imitating them in their invention, and in their manner'.<sup>35</sup>

Intriguingly, however, Dryden engages with invention by outsourcing it. Using translation both as a model and a method, instead of giving his own explanation, he quotes the English translation of Bellori's Italian text to define an 'Idea of the Painter':

*the Artfull Painter and the Sculptour, imitating the Divine Maker, form to themselves as well as they are able, a Model of the Superiour Beauties; and reflecting on them endeavour to correct and amend the common Nature; and to represent it as it was first created without fault, either in Colour or in Lineament. This Idea, which we may call the Goddess of Painting and of Sculpture, descends upon the Marble and the Cloth, and becomes the Original of those Arts [...].*<sup>36</sup>

Simultaneously praising Virgil and ventriloquising Bellori, and thereby criticising Du Fresnoy, Dryden claimed that the beauty of imitation depended at least partly on the state of the original, drawing attention to the fact that any imitative device must be concerned with the relationship between original and

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<sup>33</sup> Dryden had turned to translations in the dire years of his cultural marginalisation as a Jacobite and a Catholic after the Glorious Revolution and his stance on translation was ambiguous: it was a drudgery and something he undertook only for a living, yet he was also aware that there was more in it than just repeating of what others had said. See in particular Fujimura T. Fl., "Dryden's Virgil: Translation as Autobiography", *Studies in Philology* 80, 1 (Winter 1983) 67-83, 67-69: in the course of the three years he spent on the translation, Dryden discovered that he was more than the keeper of other men's cattle. In the process he managed to transform some of Virgil's poems, and particularly the *Aeneid*, into autobiographical or personal statements' (69). In a similar vein, Tomlinson, "Translations Matter" 11, has argued that Dryden used translations 'as a means of self-exploration'.

<sup>34</sup> Dryden – Du Fresnoy, *De Arte Graphica* 12-13.

<sup>35</sup> Dryden – Du Fresnoy, *De Arte Graphica* 72-73.

<sup>36</sup> Dryden – Du Fresnoy, *De Arte Graphica* v.

copy. This also qualified the status of invention: originality was all well and good, but if originality was a text's only merit, then good imitation was still preferred.

Fittingly, Dryden finished the "Parallel" with an analogy to portraiture, the foremost genre concerned with resemblance between original and copy:

But if I have really drawn a Portrait to the Knees, or an half length with a tolerable Likeness, then I may plead with some Justice for my self, that the rest is left to the Imagination. Let some better Artist provide himself of a deeper Canvas, and taking these hints which I have given, set the Figure on its Legs, and finish it in the *Invention, Design and Colouring*.<sup>37</sup>

In Dryden's writing, translation served as a model: it explained transferences in art and literature in general and described the process of turning an original – person or work – into a derivative that was original yet sufficiently representative, a process that was at the heart of both translation as a task and the *Metamorphoses* as a metaphor.

### 3 Echoing Others: Dryden and the *Metamorphoses*

De Piles' French edition included a glossary and annotations, in which he explained some of the sources and subject matters he deemed suitable for painters, such as the Bible, Roman history, or Homer. He also recommended Ovid, especially Pierre Du-Ryer's 1660 illustrated edition of the *Metamorphoses*.<sup>38</sup> In his translation, Dryden added a recommendation to the older 1632 illustrated English edition by George Sandys, thereby tailoring the book to the English market.<sup>39</sup> By recommending illustrated editions of Ovid to painters and bringing pictures into the discussion, De Piles and Dryden broached the issue of comparison and competition not only between art and literature<sup>40</sup> but also

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<sup>37</sup> Dryden – Du Fresnoy, *De Arte Graphica* lvi.

<sup>38</sup> Du Fresnoy Charles-Alphonse – De Piles Roger, *L'art de peinture de Charles Alphonse Du Fresnoy, Traduit en François, avec des Remarques necessaires & tres-amplés* (Paris: Nicolas L'Anglois, 1668) 80. Du-Ryer is also sometimes spelled Du Rier or Durier.

<sup>39</sup> Dryden – Du Fresnoy, *De Arte Graphica* 107. For the Sandys edition see Hardin, "Ovid" 49; Rubin D., *Ovid's 'Metamorphoses' Englished: George Sandys as Translator and Mythographer* (New York: 1985); Fielitz, *Wit, Passion and Tenderness* 58-63. Morton Re., *The English Enlightenment Reads Ovid Dryden and Jacob Tonson's 1717 Metamorphoses* (New York: 2013) 15-22.

<sup>40</sup> Sandys included a section "Ovid Defended" to 'vindicate his worth from detraction' in which he collected 'those infinite testimonies, which the clearest iudgements of all Ages

between painted and printed images. They also raised questions about reception and transformation: neither referred to Ovid's original text, but each assumed that painters would prefer to read in their mother tongue, with De Piles explicitly stating that 'for *Translations* being made of the *best Authors*, there is not any Painter who is not capable in some sort of understanding those Books of Humanity'.<sup>41</sup>

For Dryden, translation was the very route through which one demonstrated this 'sort of understanding' by hitting the right degree between imitation and invention, adequately following a predecessor, yet tastefully departing from them. This included a competition between editions of translations because Sandys was one of the predecessors with whom Dryden vied.<sup>42</sup> In the *Examen Poeticum* of 1693, Dryden praised his own translation of Ovid in the dedication as 'the best of all my Endeavours in this kind'. Sandys's work in contrast was less commendable:

And no better than thus has *Ovid* been serv'd by the so much admir'd *Sandys*. [...] see [...] what is become of *Ovid's* Poetry, in his Version; whether it be not all, or the greatest part of it evaporated. But this proceeded from the wrong Judgement of the Age in which he Liv'd: They neither knew good Verse, nor lov'd it; they were Scholars 'tis true, but they were Pedants. And for a just Reward of their Pedanticks pains, all their Translations want to be Translated, into *English*.<sup>43</sup>

In 1717, Jacob Tonson would publish a complete and lavishly illustrated translation of the *Metamorphoses*, which included contributions from, Joseph

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haue giuen him'. Among them was Stephanus, who wrote 'NASO, in his *Metamorphosis*, may well be called the Poet of Painters; in that those witty descriptions afford such lively patterns for their pencils to imitate'. Ovid - Sandys George, Ovid's *Metamorphosis*. Englished, Mythologiz'd, And Represented in Figures by George Sandys (London, William Stansby: 1626) "Ovid Defended" n.p. Cf. Fielitz, *Wit, Passion and Tenderness* 63.

<sup>41</sup> Dryden – Du Fresnoy, *De Arte Graphica* 107.

<sup>42</sup> Hopkins D., "Dryden and the Garth-Tonson *Metamorphoses*", *The Review of English Studies* 39, 153 (1988) 64-74, 67-68; Frost, "Versions of Ovid" 196, 200; Miner E., "Ovid Reformed: Fables, Morals, and the Second Epic", in Miner E. - Brady J. (eds.), *Literary Transmission and Authority* (Cambridge: 1993) 79-120, 89-99. Hopkins, *Conversing with Antiquity* 126, has argued that in case of the original authors he translated, Dryden was aware both of what made them different from him and of the 'mysterious sympathy or affinity which drew him to each of them in the first place', meaning emulation always meant admiration in the first place.

<sup>43</sup> Dryden John, *Examen Poeticum. Being the Third Part of Miscellany Poems* (London, Jacob Tonson: 1693) 'The Dedication' n.p.

Addison, Alexander Pope, William Congreve, and Nicholas Rowe among others, next to work undertaken by the then-deceased Dryden.<sup>44</sup> An immense success and known throughout the eighteenth century, this translation has been called 'Ovid's poem recast in English Enlightenment mode'.<sup>45</sup> It was also understood to be '*Dryden's Ovid's Metamorphosis*' because Dryden's renderings, which had mostly been published already — mainly in *Fables Ancient and Modern* (1700) — and were then incorporated in this edition, not only made up a good chunk of the book, but also were its 'selling-point'.<sup>46</sup>

In the preface to the *Fables*, Dryden commented on the addictive quality of Ovid's writing. He shared with his readers that after finishing the translation of book twelve of the *Metamorphoses*, he came across the speeches of Ajax and Ulysses, which at first he 'could not balk', only to then find himself compelled to do the first section of book fifteen, a masterpiece, as well as other parts of book. Dryden then praised his own translation as being very near to the original, with only Sandys similarly as good.<sup>47</sup> Again, Dryden compared his work with portrait-painting, although this time, in relation to the writing of the preface: 'I conclude the first Part of this Discourse: In the second Part, as at a second Sitting, though I alter not the Draught, I must touch the same Features over again, and change the Dead-Colouring of the Whole'.<sup>48</sup> Here, Dryden coupled Ovid with Geoffrey Chaucer, 'considering the former only in relation to the latter' in order to rate language: 'With *Ovid* ended the Golden Age of the *Roman Tongue*: From *Chaucer* the Purity of the English Tongue began. The Manners of the Poets were not unlike. [...] Both writ with wonderful Facility and Clearness; neither were great Inventors'. However, Chaucer finally took the lead because he 'had something of his own'.<sup>49</sup> Paul Davis has argued that with

<sup>44</sup> For this edition see Morton, *English Enlightenment*, esp. xi-xix and 23-60 for its genesis. See also Hopkins, "Garth-Tonson *Metamorphoses*" 64-66; Hopkins D., "Charles Montague, George Stepney, and Dryden's *Metamorphoses*", *The Review of English Studies* 51, 201 (2000) 83-89; Brown, *Metamorphosis of Ovid* 123-140.

<sup>45</sup> Morton, *English Enlightenment* xviii. This edition made use of several previous translations as well as the original Latin text. See *ibid.* xxi n36. Morton argues that its 'humanizing realism [...] is a new stage in a long tradition of Ovidean commentary and translation'. *Ibid.* xxv.

<sup>46</sup> Morton, *English Enlightenment* xi-xv.

<sup>47</sup> Dryden John, *Fables Ancient and Modern* (London, Jacob Tonson: 1700), "Preface" n.p. (1). On the *Fables's* form and arrangements as a way of engaging with both Ovid and his contemporaries see Gelineau D., "Adorn'd with labour'd Art': The Intricate Unity of Dryden's *Fables*", *Modern Philology* 106, 1 (August 2008) 25-59.

<sup>48</sup> Dryden, *Fables* "Preface" n.p. (3). For Dryden and the portraiture analogy see also Doederlein, "*Ut Pictura Poesis*" esp. 58.

<sup>49</sup> Dryden, *Fables* "Preface" n.p. (7-8). Cf. Fielitz, *Wit, Passion and Tenderness* 86-87.

their emphasis on the *Metamorphoses*, the *Fables* reveal Dryden's emancipation as a translator: 'Talking about Ovid, Dryden writes Ovidian prose: transgressively pleasure-seeking and defiantly self-willed'.<sup>50</sup>

It is also in the *Fables* that Dryden engaged with the two myths most frequently evoked in art theory as representative of its craft, the stories of Narcissus and Pygmalion. Narcissus in particular has long epitomised the essence and intricate, self-reflective nature of representation. Famously, Philostratus's *Eikones* (third century BCE), a collection of *ekphraseis*, or descriptions of paintings, noted that 'the pool paints Narcissus and the painting represents both the pool and the whole story of Narcissus'.<sup>51</sup> The Tonson edition included Dryden's translation of the story about the sculptor Pygmalion shunning all women until his own perfect statue is enlivened, while the Narcissus story was left to Joseph Addison. In the *Fables*, where the Pygmalion translation first appeared, however, Dryden also referenced the Narcissus myth by drawing on it in the preface as a device of criticism. Finding fault with Ovid's playful expressions and unnaturalness, Dryden wrote:

Wou'd any Man who is ready to die for Love, describe his Passion like *Narcissus*? Wou'd he think of *inopem me copia fecit*, and a Dozen more of such Expressions, pour'd on the Neck of one another, and signifying all the same Thing? If this were Wit, was this a Time to be witty, when the poor Wretch was in the Agony of Death?<sup>52</sup>

In the context of Narcissus, 'copia', the abundance that makes him poor ('too much Plenty makes me die for Want', as Addison would translate<sup>53</sup>), directly relates to the maligned notion of artists copying without inventing, imitating without emulating. With the long tradition of Narcissus exemplifying art as well as art gone wrong as a backdrop, Dryden employed Narcissus's self-love as a symbol for superfluosity to advocate conciseness in theory of poetry (including the notable paradox that he himself often embellished Ovid's poetry

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<sup>50</sup> Davis, *Translation* 208.

<sup>51</sup> Elder Philostratus, *Younger Philostratus, Callistratus*, trans. A. Fairbanks (London: 1931) 89 (*Imagines* I. 23, ll. 1-2). Literature on the Narcissus trope in art is over-abundant. For an overview see in particular Wolf G., "The Origin of Painting", *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 36 (Autumn 1999) 60-78, 65-68; Vinge L, *The Narcissus Theme in Western European Literature up to the Early Nineteenth-Century* (Lund: 1967). For a literary analysis of the same quote see Morton, *English Enlightenment* xxvi-xxix.

<sup>52</sup> Dryden, *Fables* "Preface" n.p. (6).

<sup>53</sup> Ovid – Garth Samuel, *Ovid's Metamorphoses, in Fifteen Books*, 2 vols. (London, Jacob Tonson: 1717), vol. 1, 86.

with additional expressions):<sup>54</sup> too much Narcissus makes Narcissus lose himself and too much repetition and restating leaves the reader fed up.

The topics underpinning Narcissus's fate — copy and likeness, recognition and deception — resonate with painting and literature as they do with translation because they discuss repetition in different media. Falling in love with his own reflection on the water's surface, Narcissus is compelled to stay and watch himself age and vanish. His image, while untouchable, remains in place because he lacks a method to free it from the pond, that is, he lacks a portraitist. Portraitists emancipate their sitter, and a portrait of Narcissus would have been taken *from* life instead of taking *his* life. The myth of Narcissus positioned the slavish copy, the doppelgänger image, as dangerous for the self.<sup>55</sup> It also cast faithful repetition in general as downright repulsive, as can be read from Narcissus's previous encounter with the nymph Echo. The chatty nymph had repeatedly prevented Hera from catching her unfaithful husband Zeus in the act by telling extended stories, and Hera punished her by compelling her to always repeat other people's words. Before coming to the pond, Narcissus meets the transformed Echo; the visual copy he is about to fall prey to is equated with literary copying, turning the two stories into a commentary on intermediality. Narcissus is repulsed by Echo, who dies of a broken heart:<sup>56</sup>

And sayth: I first will die ere thou shalt take of me thy pleasure.

She aunswerde nothing else thereto, but Take of me thy pleasure.<sup>57</sup>

Importantly, Echo's repetition is incomplete, only encompassing the last words so that despite her restrictions, some kind of conversation ensues. It is only in this shortened version that the repetition can really express Echo's desire: a faithful repetition, including Narcissus disgust, would have resulted in a speech contrary to her feelings, telling him she preferred death to his caress.

The *Metamorphoses* were particularly well suited for discussing questions of transformation and transfer, and their divergences. In the preface to Ovid's

<sup>54</sup> See Tissol G., "Dryden's Additions and the Interpretive Reception of Ovid", *Translation and Literature* 13, 2 (2004) 181-193, 181-182. See also Fielitz, "Translator of Ovid" 158-161.

<sup>55</sup> Tissol, "Dryden's Additions" 182-183, has pointed out that judging by Dryden's additions, he appeared to be fascinated by questions of split identities: he adds to Dido's speech 'My self I cannot to my self restore' and, later, to Myrrha's 'Fain wou'd I travel to some Foreign Shore, I Never to see my Native Country more, I So might I to my self my self restore'.

<sup>56</sup> Wolf, "Origin of Painting" 68.

<sup>57</sup> Ovid – Golding Arthur, *Shakespeare's Ovid: Being Arthur Golding's Translation of the Metamorphoses*, ed. W. H. D. Rouse (London: 1904 [1567]) 72 (book 3.5, ll. 388—390: 'Ille fugit fugiensque "manus complexibus aufer: anter" ait "emoriar, quam sit tibi copia nostril." Rettulit illa nihil nisi "sit copia nostril"). See Wolf, "Origin of Painting" 68.

*Epistles*, Dryden compared the translator to a portraitist (see quote on p. 423 of this article) and described three forms of translation:<sup>58</sup> first, 'Metaphrase, or turning an Authour word by word, and Line by Line, from one Language into another'; second, 'Paraphrase, or Translation with Latitude, where the Authour is kept in view by the Translator, so as never to be lost, but his words are not so strictly follow'd as his sense'; third,

Imitation, where the Translator (if now he has not lost that Name) assumes the liberty, not only to vary from the words and sence (*sic*), but to forsake them both as he sees occasion: and taking only some general hints from the Original, to run division on the ground-work, as he pleases.<sup>59</sup>

Paraphrase was Dryden's preferred choice.<sup>60</sup> Echo's form of repetition is closely connected to this way of rendering an original source into loose, but still referential, representation. Echo does indeed perform a paraphrase because she neither repeats literally nor completely invents the words, and only by choosing this middle path, can she express both her limitations (she cannot use her own words) and her desire for Narcissus's touch. Resemblance must be infused with difference: either a representation was unlike enough to bring out the representative aspects or it was slavishly like, meaning identical, making it unrepresentative.

This resemblance was not only hard to achieve; it was also the place where authors could wield their skill. Discussing imperfections and idealisation in portraits in the "Parallel", Dryden drew on Peter Lely's *Oliver Cromwell*, painted in the early 1650s (Birmingham Museums Trust), which had become famous for its alleged verisimilitude: '[s]uch in *Painting* are the *Warts* and *Moles*, which adding a likeness to the Face, are not therefore to be omitted. [...] But how far to proceed and where to stop, is left to the judgment of the *Poet* and the *Painter*.'<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> See Werth Gelber M., *The Just and the Liveley. The Literary Criticism of John Dryden* (Manchester: 1999) 186-187; Hopkins, *Conversing with Antiquity* 113-129; Tissol, "Dryden's Additions" 181.

<sup>59</sup> Dryden, *Ovid's Epistles*, "Preface" n.p (c. 6r-10r).

<sup>60</sup> Cf. Morton, *English Enlightenment* 8. One could argue that paraphrase most consistently conveys the idea of a unified whole, even in language, something that Dryden is said to have believed in: 'Dryden regularly sees literature as a continuum stretching from Homer to his own day, and not to be separated into individual chronological or linguistic compartments. [...] Closely related to the concept of development, and more specifically comparative, is the idea of occidental literature as a single unit and a single tradition. Dryden ranges back and forth through this whole field with confidence and ease.' Brown, "Dryden as Comparatist" 115.

<sup>61</sup> Dryden – Du Fresnoy, *De Arte Graphica* xvij.



While difficult, this resemblance between original and representation — 'sitter' and 'portrait' — lay resolutely in the hands of the author. By understanding invention as variation, this resemblance was also the site of a painter's originality and thus their claim to authority.<sup>62</sup>

## 4 Conclusion

David Hopkins has called translation a form of conversation because conceiving of it this way

admit[s] the possibility that a translation might transform one's appreciation of an original rather than simply confirm (or fail to confirm) an impression already derived from direct contact with the original or from secondary authorities.<sup>63</sup>

Such an assessment takes into account that originality may lie in the reception and the literary criticism attached to it, and not necessarily in the invention of an entirely new topic.<sup>64</sup> Similarly, Matthew Reynolds has written that metaphors used for translations such as 'friendship', 'passion', 'moving across a landscape', and, indeed, 'metamorphosis' are 'powerfully operative in the

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<sup>62</sup> On Dryden, Ovid, verisimilitude, and morphings see Fielitz, "Translator of Ovid", 155-156: 'A "floating" world as it is presented by Ovid in his *Metamorphoses*, in which all things are in a state of constant change, in which men and women are continually transformed into animals and plants, not only contradicted this pre-ordained stability of the world, but also violated the principle of verisimilitude, so that his [Ovid's] work was also considered to be an insult to human rationality.'

<sup>63</sup> Hopkins, *Conversing with Antiquity* 14.

<sup>64</sup> Hopkins, *Conversing with Antiquity* 2-5. See also Tomlinson, *Metamorphoses* 1-30; Reynolds, *Poetry of Translation* 39-55 on metaphors for translation and 127-135 on translation as an intimate meeting with the original author; Brown, "Dryden as Comparatist" 112-113 'Critics and historians of English literature have called Dryden many things [...] Almost the only designation that has been withheld from him is the one that most clearly applies to him, insofar as his critical approach is concerned — the designation of comparatist. [...] Dryden was in fact a consistent and habitual comparatist, both in his attitudes toward literature and in his choice of literary topics for discussion'; Smallwood, *Critical Occasions* 44: '[...] I am commending a model of historical thinking about the continuity over time express what Dryden, referring to translation, called "transfusion." The relations between critical texts in the historical series admit modification and preserve identity echoing relations between translated texts and their originals. The texts of criticism participate in the same literary-creative spirit as the best of the period's verse translation: there is a "sharing with the world from which a classical work speaks."

history of poetry translation into English' and thus crucial for understanding the 'imaginative processes' underpinning translations and poem-translations in particular.<sup>65</sup>

Ovid's original works were fundamental for Dryden, and the way he engaged with them can indeed be read as a conversation.<sup>66</sup> Aside from being responsible for their translation – both as a translator and editor – he also used Ovid's work to think about art and literature and translation as well, whose reputation he intended to elevate, from a methodological point of view. Through the *Metamorphoses* he reflected on the tropes, metaphors, and images that informed and governed the language and concepts of art theory. The Narcissus myth, a story about different forms of representation, which include the reflection of Narcissus's face on the water's surface and the nymph Echo's repetition of Narcissus's voice, led Dryden to expound on reproduction, reiteration, imitation, and invention in the visual and verbal arts. Dryden posited that every art form that transferred an original into another medium had to settle on the right degree of invention and reproduction in order to correctly represent the spirit and character of the original.

Notably, Dryden, who had both criticised Ovid's copiousness and defended the necessity of translating it ('If the Fancy of *Ovid* be luxuriant, 'tis his Character to be so; and if I retrench it, he is no longer *Ovid*'), had to vindicate his own additions to the author's text. In the preface to *Sylvæ* (1685), he wrote:

*where I have enlarg'd them, I desire the false Criticks wou'd not always think that those thoughts are wholly mine, but that either they are secretly in the Poet, or may be fairly deduc'd from him: or at least, if both those considerations should fail, that my own is of a piece with his, and that if he were living, and an Englishman, they are such, as he wou'd probably have written.*<sup>67</sup>

The defence Dryden mounted is both paradoxical and enlightening: rather than admitting to invention ('not always think that those thoughts are wholly mine'), he argued that he only drew out what was already present in Ovid's writing, but had not been made apparent so far. In any case, he did not write in the tradition of Ovid, but like a 17th-century Ovid might. Dryden continued:

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<sup>65</sup> Reynolds, *Poetry of Translation* 6-7.

<sup>66</sup> Miner, "Ovid Reformed" 89-100 has made the same point about Dryden engaging with his translating predecessors. See also Gelineau, "Unity of Dryden's Fables" 25-59, esp. 25-26, 57-59.

<sup>67</sup> Dryden, *Sylvæ* "Preface" A 3. See also Tissol, "Dryden's Additions" 184.

*a Translator is to make his Author appear as charming as possibly he can, provided he maintains his Character, and makes him not unlike himself. Translation is a kind of Drawing after the Life; where every one will acknowledge there is a double sort of likeness, a good one and a bad.*<sup>68</sup>

The phrasing is ambiguous as it implies that foreign authors should be made to sound like themselves and the translator and, by considering the written work the 'character' of the author, the text should operate as the living original, while the translation is like a portrait:<sup>69</sup> *'I cannot without some indignation, look on an ill Copy of an excellent Original. [...] a good Poet is no more like himself in a dull Translation, than his Carcass would be to his living Body.'*<sup>70</sup>

One of the very few original works Dryden produced during the 1690s, when he had become culturally marginalised as a Jacobite and a Catholic, was an epistle to the leading Williamite portrait painter Godfrey Kneller, which included the line: 'Likeness is ever there; but still the best, I Like proper Thoughts in lofty Language drest. I [...] Of various Parts a perfect Whole is wrought; I Thy Pictures think, and we Divine their Thought'.<sup>71</sup> Likeness in portraiture does not only mean resemblance, but reconciling resemblance with originality and invention: likeness is 'Like proper Thoughts'.<sup>72</sup>

Dryden's use of portraiture as an analogy to translation hints at the major objective of translation and imitation as well as of portraiture, the requirement for likeness. While discussing translation through Ovid and portraiture analogy, Dryden addressed the theme of morphings on a metaphorical and meta-level: every representation, regardless of the medium, had to negotiate how much variance from the source inspiration was admitted and how much resemblance was required to define the stage at which imitation qualified as invention. The question that Dryden asked was, quite simple and thus very complex, of how transformation — in poetry, prose, art, perhaps life itself — was enacted.

<sup>68</sup> Dryden, *Sylvæ* "Preface" A 3.

<sup>69</sup> Cf. Zwicker S. N., "Considering the Ancients. Dryden and the Use of Biography", in Sharpe K. — Zwicker S. N. (eds.), *Writing Lives. Biography and Textuality, Identity and Representation in Early Modern England* (Oxford: 2008) 104-124, 121.

<sup>70</sup> Dryden, *Sylvæ* "Preface" n.p.

<sup>71</sup> Dryden John, *The Fourth Part of Miscellany Poems* (London, Jacob Tonson: 1716) 3. Cf. Gelineau D., "Dryden's Portrait of Kneller in 'To Sir Godfrey Kneller'", *Eighteenth-Century Life* 23, 1 (1999) 30-43.

<sup>72</sup> On Dryden's uneasiness with translation see Fujimura, "Translation as Autobiography" 67-69.

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