

“literary works belong to their time”, whereas, “Translations, on the contrary, *must* be written in the language of the present” which leads to “an inevitable obsolescence” (339). Thus, Michelucci is in agreement with Costin in maintaining that fresh translations should always be encouraged and welcomed. Furthermore, one important issue Michelucci raises regarding translation is one of gender, a feature of the Italian language which is often irrelevant in English. She gives many examples from the story, but it is the word “fox” that gives her the most trouble in translation because, in Italian, this word is gendered as feminine. However, in Lawrence’s story, the fox is regarded as masculine and symbolises the masculine attributes and desires of the male character Henry. This case provides a glaring example of one of the significant problems of translation.

This volume’s exploration of critical perspectives and cultural translation shows how Lawrence studies are developing in the twenty-first century and make it a book worth having on one’s desk.

**Isabelle Brasme, Jean-Michel Ganteau and Christine Reynier, eds, *The Humble in 19th- to 21st-Century British Literature and Arts*.**

**Montpellier: Presses Universitaires de la Méditerranée, 2017.**

**Pp. 284. €24 (softcover). ISBN 978 2 3678 1248 9**

*Reviewed by Andrew Keese*

In her well-known article, ‘Can the Subaltern Speak?’, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak postulated that the subaltern cannot. The main thrust behind her premise was a powerful argument about how the status of the Other can be limited, in an extreme way, because of social status. Even so, the editors of *The Humble in 19th- to 21st-Century British Literature and Arts* have shown how authors have the special power to enlighten, which can bring in the voices of the Other. While not obvious as a term to inform literary analysis, in this book, the editors explore the full range of meanings behind the word

humble. It can refer to a person's station, economic class, or even a virtue, especially through "its related terms, 'humility' and 'humiliation'" (13). The introduction, which orientates and familiarises scholars with the collection's approach states:

Many of the works studied here develop an art of humility that is far from the humility the believer cultivates in his vertical relation to the divine. It is not a self-sacrificing or self-abnegating feeling, but one that makes the acknowledgement of the other and of the world possible. Through a specific narrator, a singular use of voice and in many other ways, writers and artists stage and develop a relation to the other, make room for the other or let the other speak. (18)

This is a powerful assertion which does not attempt to absolve authors or artists of the practical limitations of perspective that Spivak considers. However, the art of humility strikes at one of the common claims about the power of authors: the ability to empathise.

Brasme, Ganteau and Reynier's book is split up into six sections: 'Humble Art Forms', 'Aestheticizing Religious Humility', 'Gendering the Humble', 'Precariousness', 'Self-Effacement', and 'The British Humble Abroad'. Some of the modernist authors and their works covered in the wide-reaching study include D. H. Lawrence's *Aaron's Rod*, Virginia Woolf's *Jacob's Room*, Leonard Woolf's *The Village in the Jungle*, Christopher Isherwood's *Goodbye to Berlin* and E. M. Forster's *Where Angels Fear to Tread*; complementing an earlier work by the same press, *Ethics of Alterity, Confrontation, and Responsibility in 19th- to 21st-Century British Literature* (2013). The editors state that *The Humble* "reads as an invitation to crisscross disciplines, reveal the depth of literature, show its philosophical relevance, its ethical and political dimension and its connection to life" (20). This indicates that considerations of the humble allow for an understanding of the world that is not necessarily a reflection of the powerful and, for that, it can be a valuable tool for literary scholars and scholars of other disciplines.

Of the many interesting essays in this collection, the article that will be of most interest to readers of this journal is Shirley Bricout's 'The Humble Touch of the Good Samaritan in D. H. Lawrence's *Aaron's Rod*', which reveals Lawrence's appropriation of the biblical story of the Good Samaritan for his novel. Bricout, who is the author of *Politics and the Bible in D. H. Lawrence's Leadership Novels*, mentions that she bases much of her criticism on Paul Ricœur's 'Biblical Hermeneutics' (1975), which shows "the pattern of orientation, disorientation and reorientation" behind the narrative structure of the parable which Lawrence parallels (78). Bricout's article focuses around the care that Lilly, the Good Samaritan, provides for Aaron in the novel. While her essay shows how Lawrence makes use of this biblical pattern and provides a useful way to read the novel, Bricout makes a couple of references to an earlier article about Lawrence's *Mr Noon*, which appeared in *Ethics of Alterity*, which do not add to her criticism of *Aaron's Rod*.

However, what Bricout does well is connect *Aaron's Rod* to the biblical parable of the Good Samaritan, following Ricœur's points about orientation, disorientation and reorientation as the framework for her article. In the first section about orientation, Bricout points out that "Once Aaron becomes estranged from the ordinary and sets out on this adventurous quest, he stands as the needy character that relies on the philanthropy, and even on the care, of members of higher social classes" (81). It is Aaron's needs that make him an inviting focus for the humble.

In the disorientation section, Bricout reveals how Lawrence complicates Lilly's character by showing him having doubts about caring for Aaron. She writes, "Thus, the modernist novel, just like Aaron's body, becomes an ethical space where, thanks to multiple voices, questions and doubts are formulated to trigger the same debates in the reader's mind" (84). This not only echoes what the editors state that the humble is capable of, but it shows the relevance of Lawrence's novel to modernist studies at large. Bricout states:

the humble as a category is the aesthetic means by which the author can induce his reader to probe various trends of thought; thus, it is turned into an aesthetic foil. The very presence of Aaron—both the humble character and the Everyman character—in wealthier homes triggers conversations about care and philanthropy, and about the destitute. (85)

This attempt to relate these complexities also mirrors what many modernist authors attempt to demonstrate about life in their works.

In the reorientation section, Bricout shows how Lilly makes his care of Aaron more about himself. She states, “The tensions fostered by his ambivalence expose the complexity of the Golden Rule while commitment is set on par with sacrifice” (86). Showing how good deeds are not necessarily selfless acts but can be selfish is quite astute on Bricout’s part and certainly makes the so-called humble an intriguing course of inquiry. She notes that “the category of the humble draws the attention of the reader to the complexity of human relationships” (85). For me, this is the ultimate value of the humble in literary criticism and why this collection of articles makes a worthwhile contribution.