Intercultural Adaptation in Early Modern Popular Theatre: From Torquato Tasso's *Aminta* (1573/1581) to *Von den Aminta und Silvia* in *Liebeskampff* (1630)

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Abstract:

The focus of this chapter lies on the contribution of Italian and English travelling troupes on early modern popular theatre in Germany. This will be achieved by reading *Von den Aminta und Silvia* ('About Aminta and Silvia', 1630), a German adaptation attributed to the English Comedians of Torquato Tasso's pastoral play *Aminta*, against the background of adaptation theory.

Given the long history of performance of Tasso's play, which was first performed in 1573 by a Commedia dell'Arte troupe, it is plausible to assume that the original text had already undergone several changes before the German version appeared. Some of these changes were due to Tasso himself; other alterations can be attributed to the Commedia dell'Arte troupes. The many translations published in France and England prior to *Aminta und Silvia* might also have inserted new details, further developed by the English Comedians. Finally, the anonymous editor of the German play may have been responsible for other additions. However, as adaptation theory shows, translations merely make the content comprehensible from a linguistic point of view, whereas adaptations aim at making a text accessible from a socio-cultural viewpoint, even with consistent changes to the source.

Keywords: Wandering troupes, early modern drama, adaptation theory, pastoral, English Comedians, Commedia dell'Arte, German popular theatre

Introduction

Wandering troupes represent a fascinating phenomenon within the Europe-wide boom of theatrical activity in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In particular, the repertoire of English and Italian touring companies had a great impact on the professionalisation of theatre in German-speaking countries, although the scarcity of textual documents about their performances is responsible for the little acknowledgement enjoyed by itinerant troupes in literary history.

The discovery of new historical material has led to an international reprisal of scholarly discussion about the English Comedians in Germany, especially in the last 10 years, but the investigation of how the wandering troupes performed and adapted certain plays in such a way that they had a wide-reaching impact on the production of theatre and drama of their recipients is still an uncharted area of research. Both Elizabethan drama with an Italian influence and the plays based on improvisation of Commedia dell'Arte were successfully exported to Germany, where they mingled with pre-existing

dramatic forms like the Shrovetide play to reach a peak of mutual understanding. However, all major studies about the English Comedians' repertoire and their reception (for instance Cohn 1865; Richter 1910; Fredén 1939; and Haekel 2004) have dwelled only marginally on the Italian sources. By reading a sample play attributed to the English Comedians, namely *Von den Aminta und Silvia* ('About Aminta and Silvia', 1630), a German comedy based on the Italian pastoral play *Aminta* by Torquato Tasso (first performed in 1573 by a Commedia dell'Arte troupe), against the background of adaptation theory, the focus of this chapter lies on the contribution of Italian and English travelling troupes to early modern popular theatre in Germany.

Before delving into a comparative analysis of *Aminta* by Tasso and its German rendition, however, a few words should be said about adaptation theory, developed primarily by Julie Sanders, Linda Hutcheon and Gérard Genette.

Adaptation theory in popular theatre

According to Julie Sanders, the term *adaptation* "signals a relationship with an informing source text or original" despite reinterpretations and generic changes, while *appropriation* entails a "more decisive journey away from the informing source into a wholly new cultural product and domain" (Sanders 2006, 26). Appropriated texts are not always as clearly acknowledged as in the adaptive process, which for Sanders can assume the form of (a) transpositional practice, for example from one genre to another; (b) an editorial practice such as trimming or pruning a text; and (c) an amplificatory procedure involving adding, expanding and commenting. Similarly, for Linda Hutcheon the difference between adaptation and appropriation depends on the degree of dependence, indebtedness and explicit reference to the original. In her definition, *adaptation* is:

> 1) an acknowledged transposition of a recognizable other work or works;
> 2) a creative and an interpretive act of appropriation/salvaging;
> 3) an extended intertextual engagement with the adapted work.
> Therefore, adaptation is a derivation that is not derivative – a work that is second without being secondary. It is its own palimpsestic thing.
> (Hutcheon 2006, 8).

The main aim of adaptations is to make a text that is removed in time or space relevant and accessible to new audiences. After all, to adapt, from the Latin *adaptare*, simply means 'to make fit' to new audiences, times, places and cultures. The process of an older text being brought "up to date and closer to its own audience (in temporal, geographic, or social terms)" is called 'proximization' by Gérard Genette (1997, 304).

Compared to Sanders and Hutcheon, in *Palimpsests* Genette gives a more detailed description of his concept of *transtextuality* or the textual transcendence of a text by which he means "all that sets the text in a relationship, whether obvious or concealed, with other texts" (Genette 1997, 1). Since in his view any text is a hypertext grafting itself onto an earlier hypotext that it imitates or

transforms, adaptation is an omnipresent procedure in literature. One of the five possible types of transtextual relationships is *hypertextuality* or literature "in the second degree", meaning a text derived from a pre-existing text which it either transforms (directly) or imitates (indirectly) with ludic, satiric or serious intent. For Genette, *transposition* is the most important hypertextual practice, which can be subdivided again into many different forms. Translations are the transposition from one language to another, for instance (Genette 1997, 213). Then, there are quantitative transformations which alter the text more than a translation because they either reduce or augment its content.

On the one hand, reduction comprises excision, concisions and condensation. First, 'excision' refers to the suppression or amputation of single words or larger parts of a text. Another form of excision is 'expurgation', a reduction with an edifying function, or in other words a form of censure (Genette 1997, 228-37). Second, 'concision' happens when abridged versions of a text appear without the suppression of any significant part and are formulated in a new way. For this reason, concise versions are works in their own right, while excisions are not. Third, 'condensation' does not operate directly on the hypotext to reduce it but creates an autonomous scaled down version of the model, such as a summary or a digest.

On the other hand, texts can be augmented, either by 'extension' (adding elements to content) or by 'expansion' (a stylistic dilation such as doubling the length of each sentence). Since these two practices often go together, they can be termed 'amplification' (Genette 1997, 254). If addition and suppression are combined, the result is 'substitution', which means that narrative structures, characters, or linguistic extrapolations might be taken from one text and inserted into another.

Although they were probably not aware of it, the itinerant English – and Italian – Comedians made use of adaptational strategies known to them from the Renaissance context and transferred them to the stage, as the adaptation at work in their plays shows. What is fascinating, is that their adaptation went beyond the intertextual sphere and added the aspect of performance, which must be even more sensitive to the recipients than a text given the immediate and sensory nature of theatre.

The English Comedians in Germany and their repertoire – Italian echoes and the pastoral vogue

As to the historical background, a helpful question to start with is: what is known about the troupes which toured Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and the traces they left? Commedia dell'Arte companies were the first to tour Italy and Europe from 1568 onwards with their specific form of theatre involving stock characters and masks, which flourished between 1550 and 1750. Being a product of amalgamation of erudite and popular culture to entertain the noble patrons and the commoners in the streets with physicality and improvisation, it was the nature of Commedia dell'Arte to wander and inspire their recipients from Spain, France and England to Germany, Austria and Russia.

Like in Italy, in early modern England, touring companies gained the status of professionals thanks to noble patronage, and this consolidation went hand in hand with an increasing literarisation

and marginalisation of extemporising popular entertainers such as the clown. A major difference compared to Commedia dell'Arte's centrality of the performers in a courtly environment lies in the fact that the bloom of Elizabethan drama is connected to playwrights and public playhouses, which thrived after 1576 and brought about an overabundance of actors. To escape strict regulations and fierce competition, in 1592 English itinerant troupes started exporting their repertoire to Germany. Despite linguistic difficulties, the English Comedians adapted flexibly to the taste of their audiences, still unaccustomed to professional theatre. In a resourceful way, they made their simplified German versions of Kyd, Shakespeare and Marlowe palatable with the help of extemporising clowns like Jan Posset, Hans Stockfish and Pickelhering, who functioned as singers, acrobats and translators of plots, in the manner of Commedia dell'Arte and the autochthonous *Fastnachtspiel*. Part of the English Comedians' repertoire was then fixed in print from 1618 to 1648, when theatre came to a standstill due to the Thirty Years' War, and their staging techniques were later appropriated by German troupes.

Even after the end to the actors' continental activity, their legacy persisted on the Austro-German stage, as the publication of the repertoire associated with the English Comedians proves. First, in 1620 there was the anonymous collection *Engelische Comedien und Tragedien* ('English Comedies and Tragedies'), soon followed by a second edition in 1624 and by a second collection entitled *Liebeskampff oder ander Theil der Engelischen Comedien und Tragoedien* ('Love Conflict / Fight or Another Part of English Comedies and Tragedies') in 1630. In this second collection, the unknown editor put together and revised plays of other authors and companies which were circulating in Germany at the time: *Comoedia und Macht des kleinen Knaben Cupidinis* ('Comedy and power of the little boy named Cupid'); *Comedia von den Aminta und Silvia* ('Comedy of Aminta and Silvia') with songs and musical scores; *Comoedia und Prob getrewer Lieb* ('Comedy and test of truthful love'); *Comoedia von König Mantalors unrechtmessigen Liebe und derselben Straff* ('Comedy of King Mantalor's unlawful love and its punishment'); *Etliche newe Singe-Comoedien, so zur Lust wol agiret werden können* ('Several new musical comedies, to be played ad libitum'); *Tragi Comoedia* (tragicomedy without a proper title); *Tragoedi. Unzeitiger Vorwitz* ('Tragedy of inopportune impertinence' after Cervantes's novella 'El curioso impertinente' with musical scores).

Compared to the first collection, which I analysed in my study *Popular Theatre in Early Modern England, Germany and Italy (1570-1640): A Study in Intercultural Theatricality with an Analysis of 'Engelische Comedien und Tragedien' (1620)*, *Liebeskampff* witnesses a change of taste towards the Spanish and Italian 'rivals' of the English Comedians, noticeable in a preference for plots of novelistic intrigue in fantastic and pastoral settings, with comic subplots involving the clown. A particularly fascinating example is the *Comodia*, *Von den Aminta und Silvia*, which has its foundation in a pastoral play by Torquato Tasso, *Aminta*, first presented at the court of Ferrara under duke Alfonso II d'Este by the famous Commedia dell'Arte company of the Comici Gelosi on 31 July 1573. One noticeable fact is that this erudite play was performed at court by a Commedia dell'Arte company and thus became part of the repertoire of wandering troupes which travelled to France, England and Germany. Moreover, the play was presented several times in Italy before it was

printed in 1581 and reappears in altered form almost 50 years later in *Liebeskampfff*, the second part of the collection of plays attributed to the English Comedians. It might therefore be assumed that both the Italian original, mediated on stage by the Commedia dell'Arte, and the influence of the English actors on the German stage are retraceable in this adaptation more than in any other of the numerous previous translations. Indeed, the German rendition follows the original closely, including scenes translated verbatim from Tasso, but renounces the pastoral setting and instead adds a clownish servant to make the content palatable to the audience. Conversely, there is another comedy in *Liebeskampfff*, called *Macht des kleinen Knabens Cupidinis* ('Power of the little boy named Cupid'), which makes use of strands from Tasso's play, especially the pastoral elements.

It is important to keep in mind that the sixteenth-century European vogue around the pastoral had a considerable impact on popular theatre, which started to draw from this imagery and create new hybrids, especially in tragicomedy. Pastoral poetry and novels from Greco Roman literature like the novel *Daphnis and Chloe* by Longus (II century AD) were re-vitalised in the Renaissance's international vogue for idyllic settings detached from socio-political issues. Jacopo Sannazaro's *Arcadia* (1504) set the standard for the novel, soon followed by Jorge de Montemayor's *Diana* (1524), Philip Sidney's *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia* (1580) and Honoré D'Ufré's *L'Astrée* (1607–1625). In drama, Angelo Poliziano's *Fabula d'Orfeo* (1480) paved the way to erudite comedies in Arcadian settings like Torquato Tasso's *Aminta* (1573/1581) and Giovanni Battista Guarini's *Pastor fido* (1590). The pastiche of magicians, spirits, or fairies mixed with mythological figures of the pastoral like shepherds, satyrs and gods in Arcadian settings can be observed both in later Commedia dell'Arte *scenari* (i.e. skeletal plots), and in Shakespeare's mature plays *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Tempest*.

In the German context, the pastoral tardily found its way into poetry and the most favoured dramatic form of the Baroque period: the *Haupt- und Staatsaktion* or 'main and state action'. As the term implies, the main action was devoted to serious topics (politics, religion, history, mythology) with intrigues of noble characters in exotic places, abounding in magniloquent rhetoric after the model of Italian and French drama and opera. By contrast, the subplot was the domain of clown figures like the Anglo-German Pickelhering with semi-improvised sketches to entertain the audience after the manner of the Commedia dell'Arte.

This combination of 'high' and 'low' can be seen in the comedy of *Aminta und Silvia* and some scenes of *Macht des kleinen Knabens Cupidinis*. They shall now be analysed with the help of Genette's terminology revolving around intertextuality to see what intercultural adaptation entails in the early modern period. Hereby my focus lies not as much on a detailed comparison but rather on the major changes in the context of adaptation theory.

Tasso's *Aminta* and its traces in *Liebeskampfff* – a comparison

The Italian poet and playwright Torquato Tasso (1544–1595) is more renowned for his epic poem *Gerusalemme liberata* than for his juvenile play *Aminta*, although it is to this original attempt

at pastoral poetry in drama that he owed much of his success in his day. In fact, after the first courtly performance at the Este court in Ferrara in 1573, of which little is known apart from the fact that Tasso himself led the well-received production, several representations followed: in Pesaro (1574), in Verona (1581), in Ferrara and Garfagnana (1583) and on the occasion of the Medici-Farnese wedding in Parma (1627–28), for which some encomiastic *intermedi* ('interludes') were also composed (see Sozzi 1954, 12). In addition, the play became a *pièce de résistance* of some of the major travelling Commedia dell'Arte troupes like the Confidenti between 1609 and 1623 (see Galli Stampino 2015, 18). Since it was published more than seven years after the first performance, it is very probable that various manuscript versions were already in circulation, with the addition of the chorus, the epilogue and successive *intermedi* not present in the first performance in 1573 (see the introduction to *Aminta* by Mario Fubini 2001, 34).

Adaptation was thus at work well before *Aminta und Silvia* was printed, and some themes, like the corruption of the court opposed to an idyllic country life, as well as verbatim quotations can be detected, for instance, in Shakespeare's self-consciously pastoral play *Love's Labour's Lost* (1598) and *As You Like It* (1599), as Roger Prior asserts (Prior 2004, 269). Moreover, the great success of this pastoral play is witnessed by the numerous free translations which began to appear throughout Europe, especially after its publication in 1581. For instance, Prior mentions a Latin love-epic about Amyntas published in 1587 by Thomas Watson and translated along with Tasso's *Aminta* for *The Countesse of Pembroke's Yvychurch* in 1591 by Abraham Fraunce, who wrote a second epic entitled *Amintae Gaudia* in 1592 (Prior 2004, 270). A later translation of Tasso into English by John Dancer followed in 1660. However, a crucial difference between translations and adaptations is that translations merely make the content comprehensible from a linguistic point of view, whereas adaptations aim at making a text accessible and palatable also from a socio-cultural viewpoint, even if this means consistently changing the source.

Since Tasso's *Aminta* was much in vogue in England in late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, it is not surprising that the English Comedians inserted this play into their repertoire on tour, inspired either by translations of the original or similar plays circulating in Europe thanks to the Commedia dell'Arte troupes. Due to the itinerant and text-independent nature of itinerant troupes there are scarce records of the play's performance by either Commedia dell'Arte companies or the English Comedians. However, the inclusion of *Von den Aminta und Silvia* in *Liebeskampff* (1630) speaks for the notoriety of the play in the context of popular theatre. This is interesting, because it was initially written for an elite audience with numerous references not only to ancient literature and mythology but also to members of the Este court, including Tasso himself, who according to most critics portrayed himself in the character of the wise Tirsi. Clearly, these hints targeted at a specific audience were altered or substituted by other elements in the adaptation process.

Comparing the plots of *Aminta* and *Von den Aminta und Silvia*, the salient points are very similar but interestingly some strands of the Italian pastoral were also inserted in the play preceding *Von den Aminta* in *Liebeskampff* (1630), namely *Macht des kleinen Knaben Cupidinis* (abbreviated

as *Cupidinis* in the following). This shorter comedy reworks themes and even scenes from *Aminta* but inserts them into a wholly new plot, as shall be argued.

In Tasso's Prologue, the god of Love reveals that he has taken up the dress of a simple shepherd to hide from his mother Venus, who wants to use his powers according to her will. His aim is to soften Silvia's cold heart towards the heartbroken Aminta. Elements of this prologue occur both in *Aminta und Silvia*, which translates Tasso's words faithfully after a long introduction of the character of Cupid, and in *Cupidinis*, when Cupid says he ran away from his mother to prove his power not only to the rich but also among the middle and lower social classes. In *Cupidinis*, he therefore pierces the hearts of two youths who are more partial to Minerva and Jupiter than to him, namely the chaste Jucunda and the martial Floretto.

The scenes of Tasso's act 1 mirror each other, as in the first scene Silvia counters her friend Dafne's reasons for giving in to Aminta's love on the grounds that she prefers hunting and serving the goddess Diana, and in the second scene Aminta tells his good friend Tirsi why his heart is so burdened that he wishes to die. In fact, he has fallen in love with Silvia and even stole a kiss from her, pretending that he was stung by a bee so that she would murmur a magic spell against the pain on the wounded spot, incidentally his lips. However, since revealing his feelings to her, she has been scorning him, so he sees no other solution than to die. Even though Tirsi is called Floretto in *Aminta und Silvia* – interestingly the same name as the male protagonist of *Cupidinis* – the first act of the German play follows Tasso closely and translates large parts verbatim. An intriguing change is the fact that Silvia declines Aminta's love not because she prefers to hunt, as in *Aminta*, but instead declares her fondness for sewing.

SILVIA
Altri segua i diletti de l'amore,
se pure v'è ne l'amor alcun diletto:
me questa vita giova, e 'l mio trastullo
è la cura dell'arco e de gli strali;
seguir le fere fugaci, e le forti
atterrar combattendo; e se non mancano
saette a la faretra o fere al bosco,
non tem'io che a me manchino diporti.
(*Aminta* 1.1.100-7)

Translation:
Let others follow loves delights for me,
If that in love any delight there be.
This life me pleases best; Nor do I know
Ought I take pleasure in, but in my bow;
This is my chiefest comfort, for to follow

SILVIA
Ein ander mag der Lust der Liebe folgen / do anderst einige lust und frewde darinnen ist / mir beliebet diß Leben / und ist dis meine höchste Frewde / das ich mich um das Nehpult und spinrad bekümmere und so fern mir es nicht an Neh- und Sticknadeln / Zwirn / Garn / Seiden / und allerley subtiler Leindwandt gebrechen thut / besorge ich mich auch nicht / daß mir an Kurtzweil und Freuwde im geringsten etwas mangeln werden.
(*Spieltexte der Wanderbühne*, 1975, vol. 2, 97)

Translation:
Let others follow love's delights / if there be any delight in love / this life pleases me best / and this is my greatest joy / to care for the needlework and the spinning wheel and as long as I am not in want of needles for sewing and embroidery / thread / yarn /

The wild beasts in the chase, hear huntsmen hollow:
Nor do I fear such sports will wanting be.
(English translation by Dancer 1660, 6)

silk / and all kinds of fine linen / I do not fear in the least I shall miss sports and happiness.
(My translation)

As the quotes show, the German text corresponds to the Italian original but changes Silvia's favourite activity from hunting to feminine needlework. The general attenuation of the pastoral and pagan elements in *Aminta und Silvia* is clearly visible not only in this example but also in another change worthy of notice: the addition of the foolish servant Alex Schrämgen. This clown character in service to Aminta parodies his master's love torment by narrating his own sexual adventures and revealing the aggressive and cruel nature of his superior. As the clown was a central element of the English Comedians' success, it is not surprising that he is given a major role in the subplot. His humorous wordplays, sexual innuendos, references to his physical urges and appetites as well as comic pranks are more in line with the Commedia dell'Arte and other international clowning traditions of popular theatre than with the erudite pastoral. Similarly, *Cupidinis* features the clown-servant Hans Wurst/Stockfisch, who is even involved in scenes that reoccur in *Aminta und Silvia* and were evidently recycled for their effectiveness by the English Comedians. For instance, the way the clown introduces himself in the two German plays by giving silly answers to his interlocutors coincides (cf. the playtexts contained in the edition by Brauneck 1975, 2:20 and 2:105), as does the practical joke of the servant accidentally smashing a glass of his master's urine on the way to the doctor and replacing it with his own (cf. Brauneck 1975, 2:72 and 2:179).

While in Tasso's act 2 Aminta suffers in silence and remains passive, another rejected suitor plans to take revenge on spiteful Silvia. In fact, the evil Satyr declares he will rape her at the well where she usually takes a bath after the hunt. In the following, Dafne advises Tirsi to help his unhappy friend by sending him to that same well and trying to seduce Silvia. Although Aminta is too shy, he finally accepts Tirsi's advice, hoping to win the girl's heart. Thanks to this happy coincidence, Aminta saves Silvia from the Satyr just in time.

As Tirsi recounts in act 3, Aminta drives the Satyr away and gently frees the naked Silvia tied to a tree with her own hair. Instead of thanking him, she runs away in scorn and embarrassment, which leaves Aminta so desperate that he declares to Dafne that he will commit suicide. This wish is enforced by Nerina's account of Silvia's death in the woods while hunting, killed by wolves. The only thing that remains is a blood-stained veil, which drives Aminta crazy with despair. The motif of the lover's wish to die after finding a blood-stained veil, derived from Ovid's tale of Pyramus and Thisbe, is taken up again in the German adaptation. Like in Tasso, these dramatic episodes are only narrated, as they would have been very complicated to stage. However, *Aminta und Silvia* adds to the theatrical liveliness by inserting funny intermezzi with the clown, for example when Schrämgen complains to his master about his lover's death and is given the advice to look for a new one in church (see Brauneck 1975, 2:127). In this parody of the protagonist's love there is also an instance of the peculiar mixture of Christian elements in an otherwise pagan world.

Apart from that, up to act 3 of the German play large parts of the scenes are translated, which leads to the assumption that the actors or the editor had either the Italian original or a very faithful translation at their disposal. According to Manfred Brauneck, the source was not the Italian play but French translations of Tasso by Pierre de Brach (1584), Guillaume Belliard (1603) and Catherin le Doux (1618) (Brauneck 1975, 6:59). Still, even the use of different translations does not explain some major changes in the adaptation of the play. Indeed, the German play is more than a mere translation as it alters the plot and adds considerable changes, such as the fact that Aminta never speaks of committing suicide after hearing that Silvia was killed during a walk in the woods (not a hunting party like in Tasso) but rather attributes his wish to die to a love-sick heart. Moreover, the Satyr does not appear on stage but is only described by shepherds, thus replacing a long monologue with a more vivid dialogue. The figure of the mean seducer occurs again in altered form in *Cupidinis* in the character of Balandus, who tries to rape Jucunda in the woods after she turns him down (see Brauneck 1975, 2:79).

From the end of act 3, not just the comic subplot but also the main plot of *Aminta und Silvia* becomes more independent from the Italian pastoral. First, there is a new scene between Cupid and Aminta, in which the god disguised as a shepherd reveals his identity to the desperate lover by magically making some dancing satyrs appear (see Brauneck 1975, 2:149). This 'proof' of Cupid's divine power is employed in *Cupidinis* too, where Cupid performs the same artifice with Jucunda (see Brauneck 1975, 2:17). Secondly, the god of Love comforts Aminta and tells him that his feigned death will favourably change Silvia's feelings towards him. All he must do is hide and wait in the city of Dolona while the news of his death (not suicide) is spread. Dolona is also the city where *Cupidinis* is set, a coincidence or an instance of recycling which makes the latter play appear as an offshoot of *Aminta und Silvia*.

The revelation of the happy ending at the end of act 3 in the German version might seem a little odd, as it considerably diminishes the dramatic effect of the original, in which Silvia repents her harshness towards Aminta upon hearing from a shepherd that the distressed lover plunged to his death. As Cupid had preannounced in the Prologue, pity melts her cold heart and makes her realise her love for Aminta, even though it seems too late and all she can do is search for his body to bury it. In the last act, the wise Elpino tells Tirsi that Aminta's suicide was prevented by a soft landing on trees and that he was happily reunited with his beloved Silvia at last. The fact that the audience would have believed the news of Silvia's death first and then of Aminta's suicide would have kept a high level of suspense until the end.

By contrast, the German play announces the outcome more than once before the last act. Apart from Cupid's revelation to Aminta, Floretto is also informed about Silvia and Aminta's future wedding by the 'holy' Elpino in act 4 of *Aminta und Silvia*. The wise hermit performs a sort of religious ritual for the goddess of the underworld Hecate to inform the repentant Silvia that her allegedly dead lover is only love-sick and waiting for her in Dolona. The translated passages in the last acts of the German play are quite rare and instead leave space to major departures from Tasso's

text, such as the numerous comic scenes involving Schrämgen, who in the meantime finds his former master Aminta. At first, the servant does not recognise Aminta and then performs all sorts of slapstick pranks (e.g., the already mentioned broken urinal). Moreover, when Silvia comes looking for Aminta, the clown believes his motionless master has died and lies about a testament which would leave a new dress to him. In the end, Silvia's kiss wakes Aminta from a death-like sleep, Schrämgen reluctantly returns his master's clothes and announces the wedding between the lovers with his usual scatological humour.

A variation on the same theme can be found in *Cupidinis* as well, in which Balandus' failed attempt at raping Jucunda brings about Florettus' love and their final reunion after he kisses the sleeping girl. The long search for the beloved person after a tragic event (believed death and rape) is preceded by an echo scene in the woods in both plays, in the end of *Cupidinis* (see Brauneck 1975, 2:82) and in the first act of *Aminta und Silvia* (Brauneck 1975, 2:109).

Despite this very different ending compared to Tasso, the plot of *Aminta und Silvia* is basically the same and the addition of five songs with musical scores meant to be sung as a prelude and after each act recalls the function of the chorus in the Italian play, though with different form and content. In fact, in *Aminta* there is no mention of music or dancing, but since the English Comedians were famous abroad for their musical and acrobatic skills, they probably inserted the dance of the satyrs and musical entre-acts into their adaptation.

Having outlined the content and structure of the plays in question, Genette's terminology helps to pinpoint the process involved in intercultural adaptation compared with translation.

Beyond translation – intercultural adaptation in popular theatre

Being a felicitous mixture of tragedy, comedy, satire and encomiastic poem in an idyllic, mythological setting, *Aminta* is in itself a creative hybrid well apt to initiate a European vogue. As Eugenio Donadoni argues, the tragic theme of suicide due to unrequited love is attenuated by celebrations of the court and comic scenes, bordering satire (Donadoni 1967, 122). While Tasso's elegant idyll mingles the genres of pastoral play and poetry with a perfect balance of structure, its characters are quite flat, almost similar to types, and the most important scenes – and also the most improbable ones – are only narrated instead of performed, to the point that the two lovers never meet on stage. These aspects became standard features of pastoral plays and reoccur in slightly altered form in the German versions of Tasso's *Aminta*.

Although the character constellation and general structure of *Aminta und Silvia* are similar to the original and many scenes are translated verbatim, there are some consistent changes that go beyond a translation and point to adaptation in all three senses mentioned by Sanders: transpositional, editorial and amplificatory. Given that these changes are sensitive to the context of performance and the audiences connected to it, it might be appropriate to speak of intercultural adaptation, which combines Genette's 'proximization' with other qualitative transpositions. Firstly,

the eulogy of the Este court and the hints at its courtiers would not have made sense to a German-speaking public and were therefore 'excised'. Despite the European vogue around the pastoral, *Aminta und Silvia* surprisingly renounces this setting and reduces the mythological references present in Tasso. Instead, they are inserted ('substitution') into another play, namely *Cupidinis*, which can be considered a 'condensation' of *Aminta* because it transfers the central theme of unrequited love, the main characters and even translated lines from the Italian pastoral into the context of a wholly new play.

Secondly, many new parts were added in *Aminta und Silvia* to meet the taste of the viewers ('extension'). Making use of the most successful features of itinerant popular theatre, the English Comedians augmented the elements of comedy and satire already present in Tasso by underlining the type-like features of the characters and inserting the comic figure of Schrämgen into the subplot. These changes owe much to the model set by Commedia dell'Arte with its stock characters, such as the sly servant caricaturing his master, and the frequent device of echo scenes. In addition, they are also reminiscent of the English clowning tradition and the German Shrovetide plays, proving a mutual influence on these forms of theatre. Similarly, the chorus of *Aminta* was replaced by songs to entertain the viewers in-between acts with similar themes, but through a different mode of deliverance compared to the Italian play.

The most interesting changes to the plot concern the 'excision' or even 'expurgation' of pagan aspects such as a hunting woman and a suicidal lover in favour of Christian values probably closer to the audience or more in line with the requests of the censoring authorities. Thus, the hedonistic search for pleasure in the pastoral world is replaced by courteous love in the main plot and amplified in down-to-earth tones in the comic subplot, while the amoral suicide is attenuated as love sickness. These transformations are not only the most evident but also the most context-sensitive adaptations rendered necessary in the process of transposition from one culture into another, almost 60 years after the first performance of the original.

Given the long history of performance of Tasso's play and its numerous translations, it is plausible to assume that the original text had already undergone several changes before the German version appeared. Some of these changes to the plot were due to Tasso himself, for instance the addition of *intermedi*; other alterations can probably be attributed to the Commedia dell'Arte troupes who inserted the play into their repertoire on tour. However, the questions whether and how these actors reshaped the content cannot be answered without a written text. The many translations and variations on the theme which had been published in France and England prior to *Liebeskampff* (1630) might also have expanded Tasso's plot and inserted new details, further developed by the English Comedians in their rendition. Finally, the anonymous editor of the collection *Liebeskampff* may have been responsible for other additions which go beyond the translations used as a source text.

Being the result of an international collaboration not only on the page but also on the stage, it is virtually impossible to state the exact contribution of each participant in this network without a

textual reference. What appears undeniable is that the peculiar mixture of translation, 'excision' and 'proximization' in *Aminta und Silvia* and of 'substitution' and 'condensation' in *Cupidnis* shows the clever adaptation at work in early modern popular theatre in German-speaking countries thanks to the mediators of theatrical culture beyond bookish culture – the wandering troupes from Italy and England.

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