

## **Compare and contrast critically three translations of *Chariton Chaereas and Callirhoe* A.7-16**

I am looking at translations of Chariton's novel *Chaereas and Callirhoe* by Goold, Reardon and Trzaskoma and analysing how Callirhoe is represented. As with any text, and especially with translation from an ancient language, there are different interpretations and different approaches in how to express that interpretation. Omissions, additions and alterations help these three translators convey different meaning, emphasis and connotation. They take different approaches in how Callirhoe's character is portrayed in her own right, in contrast to others, and through imagery.

Goold remains close to the original Greek. This rigid approach means that he does not make explicit what is inferred; however students and scholars will be able to see the language at work and interpret for themselves. It was based on scholarly work and created for the Loeb series so its intention was universal and it was important to be close to the Greek in grammar.<sup>1</sup> Reardon makes more changes, keeping closer to what he has interpreted as the meaning of the text and tells the story in a more natural narrative than the confines of translating the original Greek allow. This could be due to Reardon's scholarly interest in the novel genre. Trzaskoma's is the latest translation of the three and was created with the aim of effective communication with contemporary readers while maintaining the sense of the original author.<sup>2</sup> This comes across in his translation which is clearly modernised and uses quite casual language and idioms.

Callirhoe's representation is fundamental in the novel. As a protagonist and arguably the singular title character,<sup>3</sup> the way in which she is portrayed early on, such as in this extract,

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<sup>1</sup> Goold (1995) vii.

<sup>2</sup> Trzaskoma (2010) xxxvi.

<sup>3</sup> Reardon (2008) 18.

sets the foundation for how her character develops. The three translators handle this slightly differently. I will argue that Reardon's Callirhoe is portrayed as a beautiful, emotional maiden however she is able to perform actions whereas in Goold she only has power to influence others, namely the crowd, but not to act and in Trzaskoma she is completely objectified. Reardon makes many changes, adding or detracting emphasis; for example changing the phrasing of the Greek to make Callirhoe active rather than passive like in line A.8.2-3, 'could not bear to give herself away'. Where here Reardon has given Callirhoe the power to act and control over who knows she is in love with Chaereas, Goold's translation 'for shame of being exposed', which is closest to the Greek, keeps that power with someone else to possibly discover how she feels. Trzaskoma describes her as 'afraid her secret will get out', this casual phrase personifies the secret itself whereas Callirhoe is passive and afraid.

Lines A.14.6-9 imply that Callirhoe faints without stating it. Reardon makes this explicit saying 'she fainted there and then' and Trzaskoma similarly says that Callirhoe 'swooned', which has obvious romantic implications, while both omit her state of speechlessness.<sup>4</sup> These translators are including the meaning behind what Chariton said; Callirhoe becomes overwhelmed with emotion, reacting in a stereotypically feminine way.

The original text describes the effect that Callirhoe's beauty has on the crowd; they are seized by the sight of her. Some of that is lost in Goold as he phrases line A.16.2 as 'all were astounded' where the other translations fit more true with the crowd being 'gripped' and 'struck'. There is clearly a difference in emphasis, Goold focusing on the outcome. In line A.16.4-5 the crowd also react to Callirhoe. Goold goes beyond the amazement in the Greek so that 'all were entranced', put in a certain state by her. Her divine beauty is highlighted as her only source of power, solidified by using the same sentence structure on both occasions. Reardon loses the connotations of ἔθαυμαζον and instead inserts a focus on Callirhoe's

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<sup>4</sup> 'ἄφωνος': A.14.7 Goold (1995) 34.

beauty. Trzaskoma possibly interprets the gaze that Callirhoe receives, translating as ‘everyone looked at Callirhoe in admiration’. He describes the way in which the crowd look at her, not her effect on them.

Other characters are important for different perspectives on Callirhoe and the situation. The main case of this is with the other protagonist Chaereas. While it is not explicit in the Greek what he should not attempt to do in line A.9.6, Reardon and Trzaskoma explain that it is ‘to win her’ and ‘compete’ respectively. This is further evidence of Callirhoe as an object as both describe her as a prize. However this also contains implications about Chaereas: that he is not a valid competitor for her. The two characters are interlinked: when Chaereas is described as not good enough even to compete, Callirhoe’s high status is implied along with his potential to become worthy of her. At the start of this extract a ‘μεν...δε’<sup>5</sup> construction clearly contrasts their different reactions to their mutual suffering. Although the translations are quite similar here, one notable difference is in line A.10.5. Only Trzaskoma keeps the action of Chaereas risking his life, whereas the others simply describe how he appears close to death. They give the crowds opinion on what is happening to him because of Callirhoe, rather than keeping with the Greek like Trzaskoma’s ‘willing to risk death’ which portrays Chaereas differently, almost like he is a martyr nobly choosing to suffer. Also, Goold’s description of Chaereas as ‘done for’<sup>6</sup> more emphatically foreshadows the ill-fated future. It is clear that neither Chaereas nor Callirhoe are necessarily in control of their story. The novel explains that the crowd’s appeal leads to Hermocrates giving his consent. Trzaskoma describes that the crowd as a collective are in their ‘hour of need’<sup>7</sup> when they react to what they found ‘snooping around’<sup>8</sup>: idioms which express what Chariton intended to a modern audience and emphasises their passion for the situation. However, Goold expresses

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<sup>5</sup> A.7.1 and A.7.4.

<sup>6</sup> A.9.2.

<sup>7</sup> A.12.3-4.

<sup>8</sup> A.10.3-4.

Chariton's 'Eros', the driving force behind the crowd, as 'Love' personified and also adds in line A.8.1 that the suffering they feel is 'love's fire'. He is highlighting Love's influence, giving a more existential perspective to how the narrative progresses and keeping the ancient Greek view that fate and deities always played a role in the plot, sometimes even more so than the actions of characters, a theme that is present in most genres.<sup>9</sup>

Reardon uses mythology to portray Callirhoe as virginal, strengthening the comparison between Callirhoe and Artemis beyond what the Greek states. He translates line A.16.1-2 as 'she appeared in public... as when Artemis appears' when 'she went forward... just as the appearance of Artemis' would be closer to the original. By ignoring the connotations of the movement forward, he is able to use the exact same word to describe the action of both Callirhoe and Artemis, reinforcing the image of the two as similar. This could be to explicitly emphasise Callirhoe as virginal, which is implied in the Greek. He also makes the addition of the word 'maidenly' when describing her modesty in line A.14.9. While the connotation is present, only the word for modesty is there in the Greek. This means Callirhoe is portrayed as a beautiful unmarried girl, like the virginal goddess, which does not bode well for her marriage. Goold incorporates imagery concerning light, fire, life and death. While he usually stays as close as possible to the original language, in the metaphor about the lamp in lines A.15.4 - 16.1 he makes more alterations. In his translation Callirhoe is a 'dying lamp' which 'flames into life' when 'replenished'. While the basis of the metaphor remains, there is a great emphasis on life and death. The Greek does not mention either and 'lit up' would be more accurate. However Goold conveys the severity of the situation here: it was life or death for Callirhoe until Chaereas 'replenished' her away from death. Trzaskoma also uses imagery of light for emphasis. In the lamp metaphor he says Callirhoe grew 'stronger and brighter' rather than 'bigger and stronger'. This is a minor change, but as the line is a recognised

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<sup>9</sup> Helms (1966) 109.

Homeric quote, it could be that Trzaskoma is deliberately distancing the novel from the epic genre. Rather than translating the line closer to the Homeric Greek, which brings up notions of heroism and Odysseus, he could have chosen 'brighter' to focus the metaphor on Callirhoe as a light that shines.

So the three translations of and approaches to the same story are different. A text created to be read in modern USA like Trzaskoma's differs from one for the universal purpose of Goold's for the Loeb series, and differs again from Reardon's from a collection of various ancient novels and so specific to the genre. The aspects that they emphasise are important in their interpretation of the novel. I have looked at the way that Callirhoe is portrayed especially in contrast to others, whether her effect on those around her or by comparison with mythological characters. The original Greek gives insight into how gender and power were viewed in the ancient world, and how much control individuals had over the course of their own lives and the translators attempt to convey that to a modern audience.

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