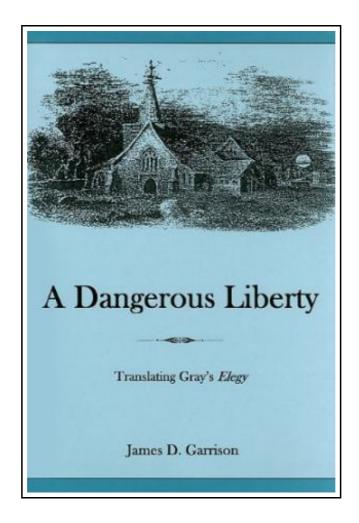
Dangerous Liberty [A]: Translating Grey's Elegy



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(Pearl Corwin)

DANGEROUS LIBERTY [A]: TRANSLATING GREY'SELEGY



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University of Delaware Press, Newark, 2009. Hardback/Cloth. Book Condition: New. 1st Edition. 336pp. [In stock in Australia, for immediate delivery] Thomas Gray's An Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard enjoyed extraordinary popular success in Europe, where it was widely translated, imitated, adapted, and in various ways assimilated into the continental literatures. The history of the Elegy's circulation on the continent demonstrates the importance of the poem to the romantic generation of European poets, while appreciation of this history serves to illuminate modern critical approaches to the poem's often uncertain or ambiguous meaning. Attracting the attention of major writers across the continent from Chateaubriand in France to Zhukovsky in Russia, the Elegy evoked a range of responses evident in the variable forms the translations take, in the different ways they sort out the difficulties of Gray's English, and in the distinctive interpretations they lend to the poem. The sheer number of translations, which peaked in the period right after the French revolution, resulted in the publication of polyglot anthologies of the Elegy later in the 19th century, and in the early 20th fostered - especially in France and Italy - sustained scholarly assessment of Gray's place in European literary history. The large number of translations into French and Italian, on which such scholarly assessment is based, announce a wide variety of approaches to the poem's meaning, and this variety of interpretations is confirmed by translations into other European languages. These translations are remarkable, moreover, for the ways in which they anticipate the broad outlines of later critical debate over the poem's meaning in Britain and the United States. Translations into German, Russian, and Spanish illustrate different thematic dimensions of the Elegy - personal, religious, political - even as their authors struggle with the interpretive uncertainties that have attended the poem since it was first...

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