

Title: Retranslating the ‘n’ word – the case of Agatha Christie’s *And Then There Were None*

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The article explores a paradigmatic case of retranslation through retitling in an analysis of the ongoing revision of the title of a best-selling, canonical work: *And Then There Were None* by Agatha Christie. It will first examine relatively recent changes in Anglophone and other cultures in relation to the predominant interpretation of what constitutes racism and which racial terms are no longer acceptable. Then it will question how translation might distort this issue as the vastly different colonial histories and concomitant racial sensitivities of diverse cultures have led to a lexical imbalance which poses significant problems for translators searching for a dynamic equivalence for deeply loaded racial terms. Therefore, the paper seeks to address a specific and increasingly troubling example of a key retranslational issue – how intercultural and also intracultural criteria can change profoundly and problematically over time. A rich source of evidence can be found in the numerous retranslations of the title of this novel, which was first published in the UK in 1939 with the now utterly offensive title of *Ten Little Niggers*, whereas in the USA it appeared the following year as *And Then There Were None*, indicating how the ‘n’ word in American culture was already perceived as unpublishable in a book title. The paper will review the history of the retranslations of both possible titles in a broad range of languages right up to the present day, in which the Agatha Christie estate only offers one version for publication: *And Then There Were None*.

Bionote: Dr. Andrew Samuel Walsh is a lecturer at Comillas Pontifical University, and his main fields of research are literary translation and comparative literature. He is the co-editor of *Literary Retranslation in Context* (Peter Lang 2017), and his latest book is *Lorca in English. A History of Manipulation through Translation* (Routledge 2020).