

HUMANITIES IN TRANSLATIONS – TRANSLATION IN HUMANITIES

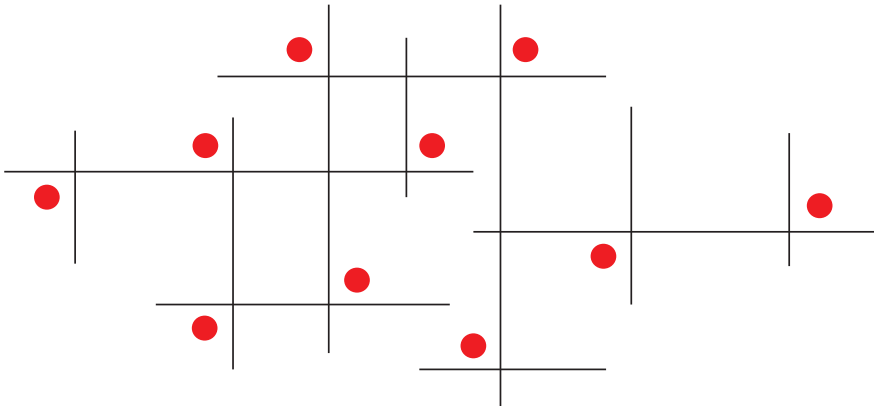
Exploring Transfer and Reception

SCIENCES HUMAINES EN TRADUCTION – TRADUCTION DES SCIENCES HUMAINES

Questions de transfert et de réception

International Colloquium, May 14-16, 2025, Bratislava
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD

CONFERENCE COMMITTEES

AIMS AND PURPOSES / OBJECTIFS

DOCTORAL SEMINAR

Introductory lecture

IGOR TYŠŠ

Finding Your Method in Translation History: Lessons Learned from Juggling Multiple Projects ■ 18

Session

MICHAEL SHARKEY

Translation and Ideologies of Knowledge Formation: A Case Study of The Mao Writings Project at Brown University ■ 20

SHU WAN

Transmission and Translation: *The Deaf-mute Primer* (《启哑初阶》) and the Introduction of Deaf Education into Late Qing China ■ 22

EKATERINA SHASHLOVA

Transfert de concepts phénoménologiques : l'influence de l'émigration russe sur les traductions allemand-français ■ 24

CONFERENCE

Keynote speech

JUDITH WEISZ WOODSWORTH

Translating the Social Sciences and Humanities: Increased Attention and Shifting Boundaries ■ 26

Round table ■ 28

Session 1: Translation of the Humanities – Limits and Pathways

DUNCAN LARGE

Non-Fiction Translation and the Limits of the Literary ■ 31

EUGENIA KELBERT RUDAN

The Limits of Translation: A Language Contact Approach ■ 33

KATARÍNA BEDNÁROVÁ

De la non-traduction à la traduction : trajectoires et limites du traduire dans l'espace textuel des sciences humaines ■ 35

ANIKÓ ÁDÁM

Penser global, traduire local ■ 37

Session 2: Prominent Figures of the Humanities in Translation 1

ROBERT LUKENDA

A (New) 'Popularisation' of the 'Popular'? On the Current Change in Bourdieu's Reception in and through Translation into German ■ 39

CÉLINE LETAWE

Simone de Beauvoir par le truchement d'Alice Schwarzer : invisibilisation de la traduction et réappropriations ■ 41

ISABELLE POULIN

Usages du roman. *Comment vivre ensemble* (Roland Barthes) – *How to live together* (tr. Kate Briggs) en plus d'une langue ? ■ 43

ELISAVETA POPOVSKA

Traduire les sciences humaines de la langue d'origine en langue dite mineure – la traduction du *Plaisir du texte* de Roland Barthes du français en macédonien ■ 45

Session 3: Prominent Figures of the Humanities in Translation 2

VERA VIEHÖVER

« Mettre en œuvre » la pensée d'Henri Meschonnic. Expérience collective et subjective lors du transfert de la poétique du rythme dans l'espace germanophone ■ 47

FRANÇOISE WUILMART

Pourquoi fallait-il impérativement retraduire certaines œuvres de Stefan Zweig, à l'exemple de *Marie-Antoinette* et de *Magellan* ■ 49

MANUEL PAVÓN-BELIZÓN

Translating Rodó's *Ariel* into Chinese. Consonances and Dissonances of an Intellectual Intervention ■ 50

ANASTASIA BELOUSOVA AND VERA POLILOVA

Skaz, Siuzhet and Byt: Russian Formalism in Spanish Translation ■ 52

Session 4: Approaches to Concepts and Echoes of Centuries

RENÉ LEMIEUX

Retraduire un concept inapproprié : le cas de la retraduction de *La pensée sauvage* de Claude Lévi-Strauss en anglais, ou Quand la rectitude politique se mêle de retraduction ■ 54

FLORENCE XIANGYUN ZHANG

Concept ou mot composé : le cas de « négritude » en traduction ■ 56

ILDIKÓ JÓZAN

Des chaînes de lettres inanimées ? Sciences humaines en traduction en Hongrie dans l'entre-deux-guerres ■ 58

FLORENCIA FERRANTE

"The Jansenist Case for Translation": Religious Reform and Translation Practices in 18th century Italy ■ 60

Session 5: Translation in History – Central Europe

ELŻBIETA SKIBIŃSKA

La revue *Literary Studies in Poland/Études Littéraires en Pologne* : traduction au service de la diffusion de la pensée humaniste polonaise ■ 62

OLEKSANDR KALNYCHENKO AND LADA KOLOMIYETS

Humanities Translations in Ukraine in the 1920s–1950s ■ 64

TRIIN VAN DOORSLAER

Translating Transition: Scientific Literature in Post-Soviet Estonia (1990–1999) ■ 66

ĽUDMILA PÁNISOVÁ

Behind the Iron Curtain: Slovak Translations of American Philosophy before 1989 ■ 67

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Humanities Translations in Ukraine in the 1920s–1950s*Topic 1 (particular histories)*

To consolidate their power, the Bolsheviks declared a policy of *Ukrainization*, promoting the use of the Ukrainian language in education, publishing, the workplace, and government. In the mid-1920s and early 1930s, this led to a cultural flowering, increased enrolment in Ukrainian-language schools, and a surge in Ukrainian book publications. Also of paramount importance was the establishment of the Academy of Sciences of Ukraine in 1918 and the introduction of the Ukrainian language and Ukrainian studies into schools and universities. The period of the mid-1920s – early 1930s witnessed numerous scientific and scholarly translated books and essays. In the fields of psychology and pedagogy, for example, translations were published of books by Maria Montessori (1921), Ernest Bernhard (1925), Will Seymour Monroe (1927), Heinrich

Pestalozzi (1928), and Jean Piaget (1930), all from the original languages. In the mid-1920s, there were especially many translated works on political science and Marxism. In the early 1930s, the Bolsheviks sharply shifted away from *Ukrainization*. They sought to limit the use of the Ukrainian language, excluding it from scientific and technical settings. In 1934, the campaign against ‘nationalist sabotage’ in translations in Ukraine was triggered by Naum Kahanovych (director of the Institute of Linguistics in Kyiv), who accused the translators who had contributed to the first Ukrainian edition of Lenin’s works of falsifying, distorting, and perverting their meaning. Kahanovych labelled them as nationalists who aimed to separate the Ukrainian language from Russian. While the works of Marx and Engels in the 1920s were published in translation from German, after 1936 they were published exclusively in translation from Russian. After 1935, works on psychology were not published at all, and selected pedagogical works by Pestalozzi (1938) and Jan Amos Comenius (1940) were published in translation from Russian, as an intermediary language. Translations of the humanities became rare.

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Lada Kolomyets is Professor of Translation Studies at the Taras Shevchenko University of Kyiv and the Harris Professor at Dartmouth College, USA. She is a widely published scholar on the history of translation and censorship in Ukraine, with a monograph, *Ukrainian Literary Translation and Translators in the 1920s-1930s* (Nova Knyha, 2015), numerous book chapters, and articles.