

TRANSLATING CULTURES: TRANSLATION, TRANSMISSION AND DISSEMINATION OF PRINTED TEXTS IN EUROPE 1640-1795

Key works of early modern social and political thought, such as Samuel von Pufendorf's *De jure naturae et gentium* (1672), John Locke's *Two Treatises of Government* (1689), or Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Émile* (1762) were read, used and passed around by scholars and interested lay people across Europe, contributing to the spread of ideas and knowledge across countries and borders. Yet, little is known about the translation processes and translators that enabled these texts to travel and reach their readers in their own vernacular languages. This two-day workshop therefore addresses the key role of translation in the dissemination and reception of ideas in print across Europe during the period from the mid-seventeenth century to the French Revolution.

In this period, Latin lost its position as the preferred international language amongst scholars, the Republic of Letters, and educated readers. At the same time, the growth of printing in the major vernacular languages of Europe facilitated the dissemination of shared ideas and cultural identities across a more socially diverse range of readers using their native languages. The workshop will address the various processes involved in the translation, transmission and distribution of texts, while also looking at their wider cultural understanding, which involved the many ways in which the texts were acquired, read, used, passed around and received.

In order to provide a better understanding of translators as cultural agents, a particular focus will be on the selective reception and adaptation of texts to suit their new readers, employing the concept of 'cultural translation', as distinct from 'straight' or literal translation (Peter Burke, 2009). The workshop will necessarily centre on those parts of Europe with the most lively book trades, including the British Isles, the Netherlands, France, Germany and northern Italy, but the approach will be widely comparative. Broader conceptual papers will give an insight in both theories of translations and general translation practices, and how such cultural communication may have helped to create new ideas and identities.

Papers will focus on one or more of the following themes:

1, Translation in Theory and Practice

Translators were facilitators of intellectual exchange. While significant work has been done on ideals and theories of translation, much less is known about the identity, role and self-perception of translators and the way in which they actually worked. While some translators might have been able to translate a work from one given European language into another, many translations were done at second, or even third hand. Thus, many translators used French – which was emerging as a key language of international exchange – as a bridging language in European cultural transmission across the main language communities. Thus, an English work might first have been translated into French before subsequently being translated into German or Italian. However, in northern Europe, Dutch was also prominent as a bridging language from English, as the two countries had close trading relations and a lively cultural exchange across the North Sea. The growing demand for translations of

foreign works into the vernacular meanwhile also created a market for multi-lingual dictionaries and contributed to the steady standardisation of vernacular languages in print.

II, Translators as Scholars, Cultural Mediators and Go-Betweens

Key to the cultural transmission of ideas in early modern Europe were the translators themselves. In a period well before professionalization, many individuals came to translation by accident. For most translators, it was simply a by-product of their work as writers, scholars, tutors, lawyers, or diplomats. Translation was also one of the few activities open to educated women as translators usually worked in the background and mostly remained anonymous. So the work did not interfere with their social role. Nevertheless, translators played a key role in the transmission of texts and ideas and as a bridge between cultures. As such they required enormous understanding and skill and were able to shape the reading of the texts they adapted for new contexts and cultural environments. In the book production process, meanwhile, they stood squarely, but might also act as the bridge between authors, printers and publishers who facilitated the translations and their dissemination.

III, Reading, Cultural Translation and 'Tradaptation'

The third theme to be addressed is the communication process from the author via the translator and printer/publisher to reader. A particular focus will be on the ways in which a text changed as it entered another language and cultural context. Early modern translators and printer/publishers were much more liberal in their handling of text than their modern counterparts. They might not just add an explanatory preface 'to the reader' or a commentary to a given text, but also cut down the text or add to it as they thought fit – often without marking the changes as their own. In some instances, such changes might be necessitated by a text's controversial or subversive content, local censorship laws or financial considerations. In any case, translators created a dialogue between author, intermediaries, and readers as they adapted a text for a new context and audience in a process sometimes described as 'tradaptation' (Garneau). A good measure of the dissemination and reception of texts meanwhile are citations, reviews, mentions in journals and newspapers as well as their availability in libraries and book clubs. Book collections, libraries, and provenance of individual copies of selected texts will be relevant, while manuscript annotations by owners and readers could provide evidence of the way in which texts might have been read.

Key early modern texts available in translation at the HAB include, but are not confined to:

Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (1651). (EN/ LAT/ NL)

Marchamont Nedham, *The excellencie of a free state: or, the right constitution of a Commonwealth* (1656). (FR)

John Milton, *Paradise Lost* (1667). (EN/ DE/ FR/ IT/)

Bernard de Fontenelle, *Entretiens sur la pluralité des mondes* (1686). (FR/DE)

John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government* (1689). (EN/FR)

Pierre Bayle, *Dictionnaire historique et critique* (1697). (FR/DE)

John Toland, *An Account of the Courts of Prussia and Hanover* (1705). (DE/FR)
David Hume, *Political discourses* (1752). (EN/FR)
Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Émile, Ou De L'Éducation* (1762). (FR/DE)
Cesare Beccaria, *Dei delitti e delle pene* (1764). (IT/FR/DE)
Guillaume-Thomas Raynal, *Histoire philosophique et politique ... des deux Indes* (1770).
(FR/DE)
Nicolas de Condorcet, *Esquisse d'un tableau historique* (1794). (FR/DE)
etc.

Organisers

Volker Bauer (HAB), Gaby Mahlberg (Independent Scholar, Berlin), Thomas Munck (Glasgow)

Draft Programme

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Wolfenbüttel 26-27 June 2018

Day 1

13.00 Arrival and Coffee

13.30 Welcome: Peter Burschel, HAB

Introduction: Gaby Mahlberg/ Thomas Munck

14.00-15.30 Panel 1, *Translation in Theory and Practice*

Chair: Gaby Mahlberg (Berlin)

Thomas Munck (Glasgow), 'Selective translation, print, and changing political cultures in 18th-century Europe: a comparative view'

Ann Thompson (EUI, Florence), 'Eighteenth-century Huguenot translation practices'

Alessia Castagnino (EUI, Florence), 'Italian translation practices'

15.30-16.00 Coffee Break

16.00-17.30 Panel 2, *Translators as Scholars and Cultural Go-Betweens: Politics and Diplomacy*

Chair: Rachel Hammersley (Newcastle)

Luc Borot (Montpellier), 'Translation and self-translation in the 17th century: the case of Thomas Hobbes.'

Helmer Helmers (Amsterdam), 'The Translator as Diplomatic Agent, the Diplomatic Agent as Translator: Philibert du Bois and Lieuwe van Aitzema'

Rachel Foxley (Reading), 'Nedham: translation, adaptation, opportunism'

17.30-18.30 Panel 3, *Translators as Scholars and Cultural Go-Betweens: Science*

Chair: Sarah Hutton (York)

Sietske Fransen (Cambridge), 'Multilingual science: early modern scientists as translators'

Laszlo Kontler (CEU, Budapest), 'Translating Science: Bode's German translation of Fontenelle's *Entretiens*'

19.30 Wine Reception

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Day 2

8.30 Coffee

9.00-10.30 Panel 4, *Reading, Cultural Translations and 'Tradaptation': Religion and Heresy*

Chair: Thomas Munck (Glasgow)

Andrew McKenzie-McHarg (Cambridge), 'Anton Ernst Klausling as translator of French and Italian anti-Jesuit pamphlets'

Avi Lifschitz (Oxford), 'Moses Mendelssohn's versions of English and French philosophical essays'

Asaph Ben-Tov (Erfurt), 'Oriental studies and cultures of translation: Koran translations in Early Modern Europe'

10.30-11.00 Coffee Break

11.00-12.30 Panel 5, Reading, Cultural Translation and 'Tradaptation': Philosophy

Chair: Ann Thompson (Florence)

Sarah Hutton (York), 'Early modern philosophy and translation'

Lieve Jooen (Ghent), 'The French translation of essays by Hume'

Guy Rooryck (Ghent), 'French translations of C18th English political philosophy'

12.30-14.00 Lunch Break

14.00-15.30 Panel 6, Reading, Cultural Translation and 'Tradaptation': Republicanism

Chair: Wyger Velema (Amsterdam)

Rachel Hammersley (Newcastle), 'French translations of Harrington's *Aphorisms Political* and *A System of Politics* between 1791 and 1795'

Myriam-Isabelle Ducroq (Montpellier), 'Transadapting James Harrington under the French Revolution'

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15.30-16.00 Coffee Break

16.00-17.30 Panel 7, Reading, Cultural Translation and 'Tradaptation': Law and the State

Chair: Rachel Rogers (Toulouse)

Mark Somos (Heidelberg), 'Reading Grotius' *Mare Liberum* in C17th Europe'

Gaby Mahlberg (Berlin), 'Reading English republican works in early modern Germany'

Wyger Velema (Amsterdam), 'Eighteenth-century Dutch translations of English republican works'

17.30-18.30 Roundtable Discussion

All participants – with guiding questions prepared by organising team.

Chairs: Gaby Mahlberg and Thomas Munck

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