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Toned Up, Retained, or Toned Down? Trends in the Translation of Sex-Related Language (SRL) in Young Adult Literature from English into Indonesian (2005 to 2022)

LIDYA PAWESTRI AYUNINGTYAS, University of Western Australia

Abstract

The translation of sex-related language (SRL) poses challenges as different cultures have different sets of sensitivities regarding taboo language. Baer (2024, 34) mentions that the reason for censorship is that certain groups, including children, are 'considered especially vulnerable to corruption or distraction'. In analysing the translation of sex-related language, Santaemilia (2005, 118) connects the terms sex and translation and argues that translating sexual language is challenging both at a personal and an academic level. Following this, he asserts that the translation of sex is a particularly sensitive part of language and culture transfer since it provides a strong indicator of translators' 'linguistico-cultural competence' as well as their 'prejudices, taboos, or ideological presumptions' (Santaemilia 2005, 119).

This project examines the translation of SRL in young adult literature (YAL) from English into Indonesian published between 2005 and 2022. The YAL selected for this project is limited to novels that depict sexual assault as one of the central themes.

Six English originals and their Indonesian translations, along with three original Indonesian novels (15 novels in total), are compared and analysed to understand whether there are differences in publishing such themes for Indonesian readers. Data gathered from interviews with editors, translators, and Indonesian YA authors, as well as a corpus of the 15 novels, are analysed qualitatively and quantitatively.

Initial results from the interviews reveal that censorship in translations of English YA novels into Indonesian is primarily textual, aiming to align with cultural, social, and religious norms. The results from the textual analysis will confirm the trends in translating the novels over the years. In the discussion, the analysis will reveal the correlation between the translation strategies and the sociohistorical conditions in Indonesia during the time of publication.

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Bio-note

Lidya Pawestri Ayuningtyas is a 4th year PhD student in Translation Studies at the University of Western Australia. Her PhD project examines the translation of sex-related language from English into Indonesian in young adult literature about sexual assault. She is a sponsored student of the Indonesia Endowment Fund for Education.

Reiner Kunze as translator: mediation, ethics, and cultural resistance in divided Germany

ANA CAEROLS MATEO, Universidad Antonio de Nebrija (Madrid)

Abstract

The work of Reiner Kunze (1933–) is a remarkable example of how literary translation can take on an ethical and political dimension in contexts of ideological restrictions. In the German Democratic Republic (GDR), where the state systematically controlled literary and cultural production, Kunze turned poetry and translation into spaces of symbolic resistance and affirmation of intellectual autonomy, understanding translation as a practice conditioned by systems of power and forms of cultural manipulation (Lefevere, 1992).

This communication analyses Kunze's translation work as cultural mediation and moral dissent, focusing on his German translations of Czech and Slovak poets such as Jan Skácel, Vladimír Holan, František Halas, and Ivan Blatný. These authors, marginalized or silenced by communist regimes, represent poetic voices whose recovery implied aesthetic affinity and intellectual solidarity.

Translation is thus presented not only as a linguistic operation, but also as an ethical practice aimed at preserving the integrity of the original poetic voice, emphasizing the role of the translator as a narrative and moral agent (Baker, 2006).

Therefore, his translation work can be read as a gesture of cultural dissent and an affirmation of the role of the translator as a moral and intellectual actor in contexts of censorship.

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Bio-note

Ana Caerols Mateo holds a PhD (2024) from the Complutense University of Madrid (UCM) with a PhD on the translation of Rosa Luxemburg's work into Spanish, earning Sobresaliente Cum Laude. She is currently Adjunct Professor at Universidad Antonio de Nebrija (Madrid) in the Degree of Modern and Applied Languages. Her research focuses on Translation, History, and Politics, analysing translation practices, policies, and the influence of economic, political, and social power. She has published book chapters and articles on Luxemburg's translations, participated in international conferences, and contributed to organizing academic events. She is a member of EST, the History and Translation Network.

The Invisibility of Diplomatic Translation in the Historiography of the Chinese Tang Dynasty (618–907)

XIAN CHEN, FTSK, University of Mainz

Abstract

During its nearly 290-year reign, the Tang dynasty maintained regular contact with more than seventy surrounding states and tribal polities, making translation indispensable to the functioning of its diplomacy. Yet translators and translational practices remain strikingly marginal in official historiography. Dynastic histories provide detailed accounts of formal diplomatic exchanges, but they seldom acknowledge the linguistic mediation that made such encounters possible. This absence constitutes not merely a documentary lacuna but a patterned form of historiographical erasure.

This paper argues that the invisibility of diplomatic translation in Tang histories stems both from the narrative priorities of official historiography, which is prevailing court-centered in perspective, and from the characteristics of diplomatic translation itself, notably its fleeting, predominantly oral nature, both of which resist incorporation into established modes of historical narration.

The study examines the invisibility of diplomatic translation across the administrative settings in which translation can be located in the Tang, including the *Zhongshu Sheng* 中書省 (“Central Secretariat”) and the *Honglu Si* 鴻臚寺 (“Court of State Ceremonial”). By tracing the conditions under which translation becomes visible or disappears from the record in sources such as the *Tang liudian* 唐六典, *Jiu Tangshu* 舊唐書, and *Xin Tangshu* 新唐書, the paper reassesses the epistemic boundaries of Tang historiography and illuminates the hidden linguistic labor that sustained diplomatic relations in early medieval China.

Bio-note

Xian Chen began her PhD in 2022 and is a *wissenschaftliche Mitarbeiterin* (academic research staff) at the Department of Intercultural German Studies, FTSK, University of Mainz. Her dissertation, *The Invisibility of Diplomatic Translation in the Chinese Tang Dynasty (618–907)*, investigates how translation shaped diplomatic communication in early medieval China and why translators, translational practices, and translation-related discourses largely vanish from the historical sources of the Tang period. Her research interests include translation history, conceptual history and the relationship between multilingual practices and statecraft in premodern East Asia.

Rethinking external and internal translation history: on translation events and historical explanations

CHARLES CHON NENG CHEUNG, CECC-Universidade Católica Portuguesa & NOVA
University of Lisbon

Abstract

Active between 1985 and 1996, the Göttingen group for literary translation into German developed the dichotomy of “external” (“institutional”) and “internal” (“textual”) history to account for why particular literary translations took the form they did (Hermans, 2004). This focus means that, within this model, other historical questions that can be addressed by studying translations often remain in the background. In particular, Pięta (2016) suggests that the concept of external translation history helps to map bibliographical data but not the historical reasons behind patterns in these data.

Considering these limitations and recent calls for interdisciplinary approaches and historiographical self-awareness, this paper proposes rethinking the concepts of external and internal translation history. It draws on Nanay’s (2017) framework of external (“all observable events”) and internal (“a chain of unobservable events”) history, developed from historical studies in other areas. In this framework, observable events both constrain and enable historians’ inferences about explanatory links among them. Simultaneously, inferred connections delimit which observable events are relevant. Therefore, this framework emphasizes the coexistence of multiple historical explanations and the historian’s role in prioritizing particular ones.

To explore how this framework can be applied to translation history, the paper reflects on the boundaries of “translation events” and “historical explanations.” It uses examples from previous studies that employ the Göttingen group’s model, as well as from my ongoing PhD research on 20th-century Chinese-Portuguese translation.

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Bio-note

Charles Chon Neng Cheung is pursuing a PhD in Translation Studies at Universidade Católica Portuguesa (UCP) and NOVA University of Lisbon. He earned his BA and MA in Translation from UCP. His research focuses on censorship, ideology, and imagology in the history of Chinese-Portuguese translation in Portugal throughout the 20th century. His MA research examined censorship of translation during the Portuguese para-fascist regime, and he has also published historical studies on Portuguese translations of Chinese socialist and communist authors. He is currently working on his dissertation related to the Portuguese image-building of China from 1890 to 1999.

Queer Subjectivity Across Time: The Italian (Re)translations of Radclyffe Hall's *The Well of Loneliness* (1930–2024)

BARBARA CONCU, Independent Researcher

Abstract

This paper examines how the Italian (re)translations of Radclyffe Hall's *The Well of Loneliness* (1928) build, reshape, or constrain queer subjectivity across nearly a century. Drawing on Queer Translation Studies (Baer 2021), Retranslation Theory (Koskinen & Paloposki 2003; Peeters & Van Poucke 2023), and Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (Lazar 2005), the study analyses four Italian translations (1930, 1995, 1997, 2024). By focusing on ideologically marked lexicon and paratextual strategies (Genette 1997; Batchelor 2018), it explores how translation becomes a historical lens on gender, sexuality, and the cultural intelligibility of queer identities.

Hall's novel has long been discussed in relation to censorship and lesbian literary history, but little research has so far examined the role of translations in reframing queer intelligibility in Italy. This paper addresses that gap through a comparative analysis of ideologically marked terms (*queer*, *invert*, *unnatural*, *freak*) and an examination of the paratextual framing adopted by each publisher.

The findings show diachronic shifts: the 1930 and 1995 translations reproduce medicalised and moralising discourse, reinforcing narratives of deviance or tragedy. The 1997 revision goes further by softening or erasing politically charged passages and reframing the novel within a generalised discourse of female suffering. The 2024 retranslation, while retaining historical terminology when needed, adopts a more nuanced ideological stance. Through subtle lexical adjustments and a more historically grounded paratext, it performs what Baer (2021) defines as *covert reframing*: a semantic shift that preserves the original discourse while reducing its pathologising tone.

These (re)translations are not merely linguistic updates but cultural interventions, illustrating how queer identities have been read, negotiated, normalised — or marginalised — over time in Italy. By tracing these shifts, the paper highlights how translation shapes the historical legibility of queer lives and contributes to wider debates on translation, ideology, and the representation of marginalised subjectivities.

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Bio-note

Barbara Concu is an independent researcher in Translation Studies. Her research focuses on queer narratives in translation, especially their Italian (re)translations and the ways linguistic and paratextual choices shape the visibility and interpretation of queer subjectivities. Her interests include retranslation, feminist translation, queer lexicons, paratextual framing, and interdisciplinary approaches connecting translation, gender, and discourse.

Renarrating History Across Media: A Hermeneutic Reframing of Braveheart in Persian Dubbing

PARINA GHOMI OSKOU, Danesh Alborz University

Abstract

Understanding history as a culturally situated and epistemologically constructed narrative has become a central concern in postmodern historiography. Rather than viewing the past as a fixed referent, scholars argue that history operates as a translation of past events—an interpretive act mediated through selection, emplotment, and ideological positioning. Building on this perspective, this paper conceptualizes the movement from historical reality to Persian-dubbed version of Braveheart (Gibson, 1995) as a multi-tiered hermeneutic process in which the past is successively reframed through historiographical narration, cinematic representation, and cross-cultural audiovisual translation. Drawing on Jenkins' (2003) view that historical meaning is discursively constructed rather than empirically recovered, together with Vidal Claramonte's (2018) claim that rewriting history constitutes an act of intralingual translation, the study proposes a three-stage model of historical reframing that integrates intralingual, intersemiotic, and interlingual tiers of manipulation. The analysis traces how the film's narrative of the Scottish past is first shaped within historiographical discourse, then remediated through the aesthetic and ideological imperatives of Hollywood historical filmmaking, and finally reconfigured in its Persian-dubbed version produced by Iranian state media. By mapping the hermeneutic movement from the past to their historiographical inscription, cinematic dramatization, and ultimately their dubbed transformation, the paper illustrates how the historical narratives are continually re-translated as they circulate across media, languages, and cultural contexts. This research contributes to the growing interdisciplinary scholarship at the intersection of historiography, translation studies and film studies by positioning dubbed history films as a critical yet understudied site of historical mediation. It offers a framework for understanding how translation participates in the cultural reconstruction of the past, thereby expanding current debates on the politics of historical representation in global media flows.

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Bio-note

Parina Ghomi Oskoui is an Assistant Professor of Translation Studies at Danesh Alborz University in Qazvin, Iran, where she has been teaching both undergraduate and Master's courses on translation theory and practice since 2009. In addition to her academic role, she serves as the Director of Public and International Relations since 2023 and leads the Office of Talent Scout at the same university. She earned her PhD in Translation Studies from Allameh Tabataba'i University in 2020, where her dissertation explored *Audiovisual Translation as Renarration*. She has published numerous papers in national and international journals, focusing her research on multimedia translation, accessibility, and the cultural and ideological dimensions of translation.

Translating obligation: Vaccination decrees, address and knowledge translation in early nineteenth-century Venezuela

BEATRIZ DANIELA GIESEN, University of Oslo

Abstract

My MA thesis explores how medical knowledge and bodily vulnerability are translated between state health interventions and Indigenous knowledge in Venezuela. This paper focuses on the circulation of smallpox vaccination decrees in early nineteenth-century Venezuela. In 1805 the Spanish Crown issued a Real cédula ordering the promotion and conservation of vaccination; a decade later, the Caracas authorities translated these norms into local regulations and instructions. I read these texts as nodes in an early knowledge translation (KT) chain rather than as a simple top-down implementation.

Drawing on work on knowledge translation, which I extend with cultural and epistemic translation as proposed by Ødemark & Engebretsen, and on postcolonial theories of address and voice, I reconstruct how the vaccination decree is re-genred as it moves from imperial ordinance to regional regulation to the presumed level of parish practice. I pay particular attention to address, modal register (“shall/should/may”), and to how categories such as parish priests, local officials and the poor are invoked, erased or redistributed along the chain. Methodologically, I combine close reading of the Real cédula and the 1815 Caracas regulations with discourse-analytic tools to locate points of friction where local hierarchies and material constraints disrupt the chain and certain bodies fall outside its scope.

I argue that the translation of the decree does not simply carry medical content; it actively reconfigures obligations, responsibilities and legitimate speakers within a colonial health regime. The KT chain doubles as an apparatus of biopolitical ordering that both relies on and reproduces racialised and classed distinctions. By foregrounding translation as a site where imperial medicine and local publics are co-produced, the paper contributes to debates on translation history, colonial public health and the politics of knowledge circulation. The case forms part of a broader comparative project that traces similar chains into contemporary Warao health crises.

Bio-note

Beatriz Daniela Giesen is a master’s student in Cultural History at the University of Oslo, where she will submit her thesis in June 2026 and plans to continue into a PhD project. Her thesis examines how medical knowledge, illness and bodily vulnerability are translated between state health interventions and Indigenous knowledge in Venezuela, with a focus on Warao communities and colonial/postcolonial health regimes. She combines critical discourse analysis and comparative historical methods with theories of cultural and epistemic translation and postcolonial thought. She also works as a research assistant in translational medical humanities projects led by Professor John Ødemark.

Tracing the Translations of Albert Einstein's Article "Why Socialism?" / "Warum Sozialismus?"

SARAH DEL GROSSO, University of Mainz

Abstract

Albert Einstein (1879–1955), a theoretical physicist and Nobel Prize winner, is known worldwide for his theory of relativity. However, he may be more famous for his political views on pacifism, humanism – and socialism (Beyerchen 1978, 11). Born into a Jewish family in the German Empire, Einstein lived in Germany and Switzerland, then moved to Princeton, New Jersey, in 1932, right before the Nazis came to power.

In 1949, Einstein's article "Why Socialism?" was published in the first issue of the socialist journal *Monthly Review* (Foster 2024). The article is republished in the May issue of the journal every year (Rowe & Schulmann 2007, 438). In it, Einstein addresses the problems of capitalism, growing inequality, and the influence of oligarchs on politics. The article was also included, with slight modifications, in the collection "Out of my Later Years" (Einstein 1950).

Hildegard Blomeyer may have been the first to translate Einstein's article into German. Titled "Warum Sozialismus?", it is part of the German translation of the collection "Out of my Later Years" (Blomeyer 1950). Another translation, titled "Warum ich Sozialist bin" ("Why I am a Socialist"), by Sigmund Schmerling (1955), was published in the Austrian journal *Arbeit und Wirtschaft*. In the following decades, more German versions were published in various journals, often without indicating the translator's name or mentioning that the text had been adapted or shortened. Einstein wrote most of his texts in German (Rowe & Schulmann 2007, XXXI), including his article on socialism. Therefore, we will also consider the third edition of "Aus meinen späten Jahren" (Einstein ³1984), in which Blomeyer's German translation is replaced by Einstein's original German source text of the English article. This contribution traces the history of Einstein's famous article from the original German manuscript over the English translation to the various (re)translations and adaptations of the text.

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Bio-note

Sarah del Grosso is an academic staff member of the University of Mainz (Germersheim). She studied Translation Studies (French/Italian) in Mainz (Germersheim) where she wrote her doctoral thesis on the translation of the French Commercial Code into Italian during the Napoleonic period (September 2022). As a post-doc, she works on various subjects regarding the relationship between history, politics and translation.

Tracing Translators' Lives: (Auto)Biographical Approaches to Translation History

HALİSE GÜLMÜŞ SİRKINTI, Marmara University

Abstract

This paper aims to examine how (auto)biographical texts can serve as sources for writing translation history, particularly within the framework of Translator Studies. As the focus in the field has shifted from product-oriented perspectives toward an emphasis on translators as agents (Chesterman, 2009), this paper investigates how (auto)biographical texts reveal translators' professional identity and their role in historical processes. Building on Tahir Gürçağlar's (2019, p. 11) assertion that examining translators' (auto)biographical narratives provides a micro-historical understanding of their professional contexts, this paper employs Kaindl's (2024) methodological framework to analyse the (auto)biographical documents of translators. Kaindl's (2024, p. 10-12) five-stage methodological model guides the examination of a corpus drawn from early Republican Türkiye, a period marked by intense cultural reform and large-scale state-sponsored translation initiatives. Considering this broader historical context, the study focuses on the (auto)biographical works of four translators whose intellectual journeys were intertwined with the translation movement of the country: Azra Erhat, Mina Urgan, Orhan Burian, and Vedat Günyol. Through their memoirs, diaries, essays and paratextual reflections, we gain insight into how these translators positioned themselves within emerging national ideologies, educational reforms and shifting literary canons. By identifying shared patterns, as well as gendered and individual variations, the paper argues that these narratives collectively contribute to our understanding of the history of translation in the early Republican period. Ultimately, the study highlights that biographical materials actively shape the reconstruction of translation history as a culturally and politically situated practice.

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Bio-note

Halise Gülmüş Sirkinti is an Assistant Professor in the Department of English Language and Literature at Marmara University, Istanbul, Türkiye. She holds BA, MA, and PhD (obtained in 2021, July) degrees in Translation Studies. She teaches courses including literary translation, ecocriticism, and translation-oriented textual analysis. She has published articles and book chapters on translators studies, feminist translation, ecocriticism, and urban translation. Her most recent work appears in a special issue edited by Sherry Simon and Krzysztof Majer on Translating City.

Meso-level (organisation) as a research space for translation history

TATSIANA HAIDEN, Austrian Academy of Sciences, University of Copenhagen

Abstract

In this talk, I present the results of my completed doctoral dissertation, where I reconstruct the translation culture of the Paul Zsolnay Publishing House between 1924 and 1938, together with professional biographies of its 16 translators, demonstrating their crucial role in the company's development. I have consulted numerous archives worldwide. However, my main source was the archive of the publishing company housed at the Austrian National Library.

I examine the publishing house (meso-level) as a space for investigating translators' agency and highlight the usefulness of networks analyses for studying this agency. My work promotes meso-history as a bridge between the general and the personal, in contrast to purely micro- or macro-historical approaches. Moreover, I present a multi-level model for analysing the complex concept of translation culture. I zoom macro-/meso-/micro-dimensions: I first focus on the relevant external circumstances (macro-level) – the Jewish difference and the publishing field, then I analyse the company's translation policies (meso-level), and finally, I reconstruct the professional biographies of the translators, demonstrating individual contributions to the (trans-)formation of the translation culture (micro-level). This model can be applied to other translation-related organisations such as translators' unions or agencies. At the meso-level, I experiment with measuring the transformation of the publisher's symbolic capital through sociological parameters of translators (age, gender, exile, education, professional background).

Through peritextual analyses of all published translations (277 books), I have identified a hierarchy of translators within the publishing house (author's translators, publisher's translators and independent translators). This hierarchy reveals that networks (social capital) provided greater professional freedom and higher income to some translators. Finally, I have reconstructed situations in which the publisher and translators used translation strategically as a form of soft power to oppose rising anti-Semitic ideas and the discrimination of marginalised groups (incl. those defined as Jews or female translators).

Selected archives:

- Partial archive of the Paul Zsolnay publishing company at the Austrian National Library;
- Hohenems Genealogie Jüdische Familiengeschichte in Vorarlberg und Tirol;
- Literaturhaus, Vienna;
- Deutsches Literaturarchiv Marbach;
- Open Jerusalem Archive – Siegfried Schmitz folder;
- Injoest, Lebenserinnerungen, Amann Paul (Institut für Jüdische Geschichte Österreichs);
- Jewish archive in New York – Victor Polzer Collection;
- Centre for Jewish History;
- Center for history of medicine, Harvard countway library.

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Bio-note

Tatsiana Haiden is a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Copenhagen and a Postdoc-Track Fellow at the Austrian Academy of Sciences. She holds a PhD in Transcultural Communication from the University of Vienna (2024), Master's Degree in Translation from University of Turin (2015) and from Belarusian State University (2012). During her PhD she was IFK Junior Fellow (University of Arts, Linz), IFK Fellow Abroad (Oxford University) and Literar Mechana Fellow. She investigates agency in translation both contemporarily and historically. Her monograph on the sophisticated agency of the Paul Zsolnay publishing company and its translators in interwar Austria will be published by Frank&Timme in 2026. Her research interests include translation history, exile, publishing translations, translation culture, agency in translation, and translation sociology.

English translations of the first-hand travel documents on Zheng He's voyages: An historical account

SONG HOU, KU Leuven

Abstract

This conference paper offers the first systematic historiography of English-language translations of the first-hand sources on Zheng He's (鄭和) maritime expeditions (1405–1433): Ma Huan (馬歡) 's *Yíngyá shènglǎn* (瀛涯勝覽), Fei Xin (費信) 's *Xīngchá shènglǎn* (星槎勝覽), Gong Zhen (鞏珍) 's *Xīyáng fāngúo zhì* (西洋番國志), and the *Zhèng Hé hángǎi tú* (鄭和航海圖, better known as the Mao Kun map 茅坤圖).

I trace a process of nearly a century and a half beginning with scattered nineteenth-century excerpt translations (Groeneveldt 1880, Phillips 1889), and then partial renderings (Rockhill 1914–1915, Duyvendak 1933), to the emergence of complete, scholarly translations through the Hakluyt Society: J. V. G. Mills's *Ying-yai Sheng-lan* (1970) and the posthumous Mills's *Hsing-ch'a Sheng-lan* (1996), and, most recently, through the Asiatic Society, Kolkata: Haraprasad Ray's *Chinese Sources of South Asian History in Translation: Gong Zhen's Records of the Foreign Countries in the Western Ocean* (2022). It also charts the translational trajectory of the Mao Kun map from Mills's 1970 transcription to recent digital and GIS-based projects in the English language.

By analyzing editorial prefaces, annotation practices, funding patterns, and major differences in translation, I demonstrate how successive generations of translators—colonial administrators, Republican-era sinologists, Cold War academics, and twenty-first-century scholars in history and digital humanists—have reconstructed the culture, history and geography of the documented regions and countries as well as the memory of Zheng He's voyages through their own intellectual and ideological lenses. I conclude with a call for closer textual and paratextual translation analysis of different translators' renderings to facilitate critical inquiries of world, especially Western, representation of Zheng He's voyages and the Indian Ocean countries and regions they had visited in different phases of modernity.

Bio-note

Song HOU is a PhD researcher at the Research Unit of Translation Studies, KU Leuven, and an associate professor at the College of Liberal Arts, Shantou University, China. His research interest cuts across translation and transcultural studies, heritage and memory studies, discourse and communication studies. He is especially keen in exploring histories of translation and of heritage, as well as heritage and memory in translation. He is author of *A Chinese Discourse of Heritage* (CUP, forthcoming) and many research articles in international journals, such as *Perspectives*, *Multilingual*, *Critical Discourse Studies*, *International Journal of Heritage Studies*.

From Human–Human Collaboration to Human–AI Collaboration: Revisiting the Translation Assemblies of Chang’an during the Former and Later Qin Periods in the Era of AI

XINZHI HOU, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shenzhen

Abstract

This article examines how the organization and division of labour in Buddhist sutra translation assemblies of medieval China, especially those during the Former and Later Qin dynasties (c. 378-413 CE), may inform both the theory and practice of AI-mediated collaborative translation today. The study constructs a close and critical review of paratextual records preserved in *Chu sanzang jiji* (出三藏記集, *A Collection of Records on the Emanation of the Chinese Tripiṭaka*) and other parts of the Chinese tripiṭaka that document the contexts and division of labour in Buddhist sutra translation. It further applies social network analysis (SNA) to reconstruct the translators’ roles and multiple levels of collaboration within and among translation assemblies during this period. The study identifies the translation assemblies led respectively by Dao’an (312-385 CE) and Kumārajīva (344-413 CE) as prototypes of two distinct models of collaborative translation that prefigure today’s human–AI interaction. While collective division of labour mitigates the linguistic and disciplinary limitations of individual translators and enhances overall translation quality, it nonetheless remains constrained by the presiding translator’s authority and competence. Reflecting on the roles and workflows of ancient Chinese Buddhist translation assemblies, the article suggests that even in an era of strong AI performance, a human-centered approach to translation remains both possible and necessary. These historical models not only illuminate the enduring dynamics of distributed expertise and mediated collaboration but also offer valuable insight into how human agency can continue to shape translation practice in the age of AI.

Bio-note

Xinzhi Hou (侯新智) is a PhD candidate in Translation Studies at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shenzhen. His research centers on the Chinese history of translation and the theory and practice of human-AI collaboration. He holds a B. Sci. and a B. Eco. from Peking University, an MTI from the University of International Business and Economics, and a Master of International Commercial Law from the University of Western Australia. He has translated or co-translated several books into Chinese, including *Life on the Edge* and *Enlightenment Now*.

Translation as Activism and Pedagogy: Lim Boon Keng in the Language Nationalism Movements of the Early Twentieth Century

ZHINAN JI, Soochow University

Abstract

This paper offers a micro-historical analysis of the translational practices of the Singaporean polymath Lim Boon Keng (林文慶, 1869–1957) to explore the central role of translation in the historical formation of language politics in early 20th-century China and Southeast Asia. Lim, a European-educated physician and influential advocate for social and educational reform, utilised translation as pedagogy, a linguistic conduit as well as a crucial tool of nation-building and Confucian modernisation. The research focuses on two key aspects of Lim's translational work: his role in promoting classical Chinese as the language uniting the Chinese diaspora in Singapore, and his employ of Hokkein and English as scaffolding to smooth the understanding of the former. Through close analysis of Lim's published translations, critical essays, and public speeches as para-textual materials, the study investigates how his practical translation choices accelerated the standardisation of Chinese identity and language. The study links this historical moment of linguistic movements in China throughout the 19th 20th century to contemporary debates dedicated to dialect erasure/preservation and language diversity. Ultimately, this paper positions Lim's work as a compelling case study of how translation history is intimately intertwined with the history of language reform and the negotiation of cultural power, expanding the direction for understanding the transnational nature of translation history.

Bio-note

Zhinan Ji is a third-year PhD student in Translation Studies at Soochow University and a visiting PhD student at the University of Edinburgh, where she gained her MSc. Her research interests include sociological approaches to translation, Asian studies, and feminism. Her peer-reviewed articles have appeared in publications such as *Journal of Language, Literature and Culture* and *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*.

Between Tools and Literature: On the Early Translation History of Chinese Science Fiction in the German-Speaking World

WU JIALE, Institute for Global History, Beijing Foreign Studies University

Abstract

Employing Harold Lasswell's "5W" communication model as its theoretical framework, this study investigates the early trajectory of the translation and dissemination of Chinese science fiction in the German-speaking world from the perspective of translation studies. Focusing on the period from the emergence of translation activities in the 1980s up to 2015—the year Liu Cixin received the Hugo Award—this research conducts a multidimensional analysis encompassing translation agents, content selection, channels of mediation, target readerships, and reception effects. The findings reveal that German translations of Chinese science fiction have consistently been embedded within a broader cultural strategy of importing science fiction from multiple linguistic regions, serving as a deliberate attempt to counterbalance the dominance of Anglophone—particularly American—science fiction within the German literary landscape. Within this context, Chinese science fiction has long occupied a primarily functional and symbolic position in the German reception sphere, where its intrinsic aesthetic and literary value has frequently been overshadowed by the cultural and ideological orientations of the translation agents. By reconstructing the historical evolution of Chinese science fiction in German translation, this study further elucidates the underlying power dynamics and cultural functions that shape cross-cultural translation practices within the global circulation of science fiction literature.

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Bio-note

Wu Jiale is a PhD candidate at the Institute for Global History, Beijing Foreign Studies University, under the supervision of Professor LI Xuetao. My research focuses on the history of Chinese—German translation and the history of knowledge transfer. I am the principal investigator of a graduate research project on the translation and reception of Chinese science fiction in Germany. I have presented papers at the 2024 Asian German Studies Conference and the 2nd World Conference of Sinologists, participated in the 8th Summer School on Chinese Translation History at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, and will attend its 5th International Conference on Chinese Translation History in December.

Satirist, Imperialism, and Literary Tradition: Wu Mi's Critical Re-envisioning of William Thackeray and early Sino-British Literary Encounter

YUN JIANG, Wuhan University, China

Abstract

Unlike the widespread Chinese reception of Charles Dickens, William Thackeray—another major Victorian novelist—received considerably less attention in the early twentieth-century China. Wu Mi (1894-1978) stood among the first Chinese translators to recognise and introduce Thackeray to Chinese readers. Although unfinished, his translations of *Vanity Fair* and *The Newcomes* marked a pioneering effort. This study examines Wu Mi's reinterpretation of Thackeray, focusing on several key themes in Thackeray's works and situating them within the broader context of early Sino-British literary relations. While William Thackeray has long been regarded in English history of literature primarily as a satirist, yet Wu deliberately reframed him through the lens of New Humanism. This paper explores how Wu downplayed Thackeray's satire to align with his own moral and literary ideals. Furthermore, given the complex relationship between Victorian novels and British imperialism—a theme present in Thackeray's writing, this study investigates how Wu rendered these imperial elements in his translations, which was a deliberate mitigation. Unlike Thackeray, whose satire targeted the imperialist ideology, Wu softened this critical dimension, reframing the narratives to conform to his humanist priorities and facilitating their reception within the intellectual context of his time. Finally, it examines Wu's ground-breaking comparative approach, which connected British and Chinese fiction within the framework of Western literary criticism.

By drawing parallels between *The Newcomes* with *Dream of the Red Chamber*, Wu sought not only to make Western novels more accessible to Chinese readers but also to reposition Chinese literature within the landscape of World Literature.

Moving beyond the conventional 'Response to the West' model, this case study presents Wu Mi as an active interpreter of Western literature. Ultimately, it hopes to deepen our understanding of Sino-British literary relations and enrich both Thackeray studies and Victorian literary scholarship by incorporating a significant Chinese perspective.

Bio-note

Jiang Yun is a lecturer of Department of Translation and Interpreting, Wuhan University. They received their PhD in Literature (specialising in Translation Studies) from Peking University in January 2022. Their research interest mainly lies in Chinese Translation History, specifically that from the later 19th to early 20th century. They have published several articles both in Chinese and English, such as 'Translation as Intervention: Wu Mi's Translation of William Thackeray's Novels', 'Interpreting Ancient Western Philosophy in Twentieth-Century China: A Study of the Chinese Translation of *The Nicomachean Ethics* in *The Critical Review*'.

Affective Traces, Relational Circulation: Toward an Affective-Relational Historiography of Translation

SOFIA MONZON, Utah State University

Abstract

This contribution proposes an affective-relational framework for studying translation history that integrates relational sociology, actor-network theory, and affect theory, arguing for a historiographical approach that understands translation as a dynamic field shaped by both social interactions and affective forces. While recent scholarship foregrounds actor-networks and processual thinking (Cantó-Milà et al., 2025), the affective dimensions of translational activity still remain underexplored. I argue that following and analyzing affective traces in the archive opens new methodological pathways for reconstructing translation history, particularly in politically coercive environments.

This framework is grounded in extensive archival and extratextual research, including censorship files, import records, correspondence, translator notes, para- and peritexts, publishing reports, and interviews. These materials are considered not only as repositories of data about translational operations but also as sites where affective reactions are recorded and materialized. Expressions of disgust, fear, hesitation, hope, desire, or defiance—often embedded in bureaucratic documentation—are understood as historically consequential, shaping permissions, rejections, self-censorship, translation strategies, and ultimately the circulation of literature via translation. Building on Crossley’s relational sociology (2011) and Latour’s sociology of associations (2005), translation is conceptualized as emerging from shifting networks of actors rather than from isolated agents. Combined with Koskinen’s theorization of translational affective labor (2020), affect becomes a form of relational intensity that moves across actors, texts, and their networks. To operationalize this, the framework draws on Flatley’s notion of “affective mapping” (2008) to trace how affect shapes translational flows, negotiations, and cultural transfers across time.

Although portable to diverse historical contexts, the model is developed through archival research on late Francoist Spain (1960s–1970s), showing how translation practices not only navigated censorship but also revealed and actively shaped the cultural shifts that contributed to the *apertura* period post-dictatorship. Ultimately, it argues for an affective-relational historiography of translation, one that expands the methodological toolkit of translation history by showing how power, affect, and cultural transfer converge within archival traces and actor-networks.

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Bio-note

Sofía Monzón is Assistant Professor of Translation and Interpretation at Utah State University. Her research examines sociological approaches to translation, translation history, and translation and interpreting pedagogy. She is the author of *Translation, Affect, and Censorship: The Production, Circulation, and Reception of Transgressive Novels in Late Francoism* (Routledge, forthcoming) and co-editor of *Affect in Translation and Interpreting* (Leuven UP, 2026). She is the Spanish translator of Jane Austen's *Complete Poems* (Valparaíso, 2025). Some of her translations have appeared in *Exchanges*, *Transcultural*, and *The Polyglot*. Sofía received her PhD in Transnational Literatures in 2023 from the University of Alberta, Canada.

Giving “Direction” to the left: Translation as political agency in the *Yön* periodical (1967-1967)

MERT MORALI, Manisa Celal Bayar University

Abstract

The intersection of Periodical Studies and Translation Studies has recently emerged as a critical avenue for historical and literary inquiry (Tahir Gürçağlar, 2019; Guzmán, 2019; Fóllica, Roig-Sanz, Caristia, 2020), providing a distinct lens through which to examine the circulation of ideas. This intersection is significantly enriched by the Digital Humanities (Klein & Gold, 2016; Sun & Li, 2020), as the digitization of twentieth-century archives affords researchers unprecedented access to the intricate history of cultural exchange. Situated at this intersection, this study investigates the digitized archives of *Yön* [Direction], a seminal leftist periodical published in Türkiye between 1961 and 1967. Acting as the intellectual engine of the “Yön Movement,” the periodical played a pivotal role in synthesizing Kemalist and socialist ideologies during a volatile period in Turkish history. Through an analysis of the *Yön* archives, the study reveals how the periodical employed translation as a medium for importing Marxist literature, anti-imperialist discourse, and revisionist historiography into the Turkish intellectual landscape. The analysis highlights how the selection of source texts—ranging from classified diplomatic documents concerning the Middle East to the writings of global revolutionary figures—served to construct specific historical narratives that galvanized domestic leftist movements. This research demonstrates that translation within *Yön* operated as an active instrument of political agency and ideological formation alongside the indigenous writings published in the periodical. Overall, this study points to the value of the Digital Humanities for translation history by showing how access to digitized periodicals helps us better understand the role translation played in shaping political and social thought during key historical moments.

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Bio-note

Mert Morali works at the Department of English Translation and Interpreting at Manisa Celal Bayar University and holds a Ph.D. from Boğaziçi University (2025). His research interests span media accessibility, theatre translation, and translation history. He is currently investigating the intersection of digitalization, archives, and new methods in historical translation research.

Grasping the Translation Process in the Past: A Case Study of The German Translations of the Hungarian novel *Az arany ember*

IZABELLA NYÁRI, University of Vienna

Abstract

Research in Translation History faces challenges when its questions do not concern the translation as a *product* or the *agents* involved in translation (such as publishers, translators, editors, institutions etc.), but rather the translation *processes* and the *decision-making* underlying them. Descriptive Translation Studies sought to infer these decisions from the linguistic features of the translated text and from the role translations played in literary systems and cultural history, thus focusing primarily on the product and/or on its reception history. The translator's person, however, has not traditionally played a decisive role in such analyses.

The 200th anniversary of the birth of the Hungarian author Mór Jókai has stimulated renewed interest in the German translators, translations, and reception of his texts, bringing to light numerous previously unknown details and source materials. The present study examines three German translations of Jókai's *Az arany ember* (*Ein Goldmensch*, translated by Karl-Maria Kerbeny in 1873, Heinrich Weissling in 1956 and Henriette Schade-Engl in 1964). They frequently refer to one another and, based on textual analysis, exhibit a pronounced intertextual relationship with the first German translation of the novel. In this sense, they are not merely translations of the Hungarian original but also retractions of the earliest German version. This textual investigation, which identifies linguistic and transfer operations, is complemented by archival research. The correspondence between the author and the first translator, Karl-Maria Kertbeny, offers further nuance, illuminating the translator's extratextual circumstances and decision-making processes.

This research aims to integrate both intratextual and extratextual evidence in order to establish a broader interpretive framework for the analysis of the translation process in the past. Numerous taxonomies have been developed for the analysis of translation decisions and choices; however, this study does not constitute a comprehensive corpus analysis. Instead, it examines and systematizes decisions within selected textual segments and juxtaposes them with the translator's own statements, doubts or expectations.

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Bio-note

Izabella Nyári is a Hungarian–German–Italian translator and interpreter, and a university lecturer at the University of Vienna (Centre for Translation Studies) and at the Budapest University of Technology and Economics (Centre for Interpreter and Translator Training). She also collaborates externally with the Hungarian research project *Pont Fordítva 2.0*, which focuses on Hungarian Translation History. She obtained her PhD in Transcultural Communication in 2025 at the University of Vienna. Her main research interests include Hungarian–German translation and translators' history, and translation sociology.

Science, Politics and Translation: The Deutschland-Institut in Peiping under National Socialism (1933–1945)

JINGYING PAN, Beijing Foreign Studies University

Abstract

The Deutschland-Institut in Peiping (*Chung-Te Hsüeh-Hui*, 1931–1945) occupies a significant yet understudied position in twentieth-century Sino-German translation history. Existing research remains largely limited to incomplete bibliographic surveys of its translated works, with little attention paid to the translators and to the institutional mechanisms that shaped their practices.

From the perspective of Translation Studies, the institute evolved during the 1930s and 1940s into an academic center where German Sinologists and Chinese Germanists collaborated systematically on translations from German into Chinese. These translations aimed to introduce the latest German research in humanities and natural sciences to China and to promote academic exchange between the two countries. From a historical perspective, the institute operated under complex political tensions among Germany, China and Japan during the National Socialist era, particularly after the signing of the Anti-Comintern Pact between Germany and Japan on 25 November 1936 and the Marco Polo Bridge Incident on 7 July 1937.

On the one hand, the Deutschland-Institut used its unique position during the Nazi era to maintain bilateral academic exchange in Japanese-occupied Peiping. On the other hand, it was increasingly subjected to pressure from the National Socialist regime to comply with its cultural policy. This dynamic interplay between science and politics was directly reflected in the institute's translation activities from 1933 to 1945, making it a revealing example of both the transformation of National Socialist cultural policy, and the development of German Sinology and Chinese German Studies. Based on extensive primary sources, this study seeks to reconstruct a comprehensive and nuanced picture of the translation practices of the Deutschland-Institut during the National Socialist period and to situate the institute's role within its historical context.

Bio-note

Jingying Pan is a PhD student in German Translation Studies at Beijing Foreign Studies University in China, and is currently a visiting scholar at the Department of Sinology at the University of Bonn in Germany. Her research focuses on twentieth-century translation institutions between China and Germany, with a particular emphasis on Chinese intellectuals and German Sinologists. She is currently completing her doctoral thesis *Übersetzungen des Deutschland-Instituts in Peiping zur Zeit des Nationalsozialismus (1933–1945)*.

Translation in Intellectual History: The Case of Leftist Philosophy in Iran

PARVIZ RASSOULI, Allameh Tabataba'i University

Abstract

The present study is a cross-disciplinary attempt at bridging translation history and intellectual history. At the methodological level, Foucault's archaeology was employed as a viable approach to study the function of translation in intellectual discourses. The methodology was then applied to examine the reception of Leftist philosophy in Iran during 1931–1971. First, several bibliographical sources were used to identify translated and authored works about Leftist philosophy. Subsequently, a library–archival protocol was devised to carry out a meticulous content analysis, in which each work was examined for its discursive statements. The statements were then systematically reviewed and classified into six discursive formations that had collectively shaped the Persian reception of Leftist philosophy. The findings of archaeological analysis made clear a complex terrain of discursive transformations, bringing into relief the contours of Iranian–Islamic encounters with Leftist (or Marxist) philosophy. Two operative modes of translation emerged from the analysis: the textual mode and the discursive mode. Manifested in various forms of textual productions, both modes proved constitutive of the Persian reception of Leftist philosophy. Moreover, the study advanced a conceptualization of translation as a condition of (im)possibility of thought in Iran. This insight was elaborated by drawing on the ideas of Javad Tabatabai—the late Iranian historian of thought—whose work underscored the complex conditions under which Modern ideas were received, reinterpreted, and transformed in Iran. Finally, the findings proved the intrinsically translational character of philosophy in particular, and of any intellectual activity in general. Beyond offering historical observations on the translation-mediated reception of Leftist philosophy in Iran, the research also opened a pathway toward a translation-focused intellectual history—one that seeks to illuminate the constitutive role of translation in shaping intellectual discourses.

Bio-note

Parviz Rassouli received his PhD in Translation Studies from Allameh Tabataba'i University in 2024. He is a lecturer and researcher in Translation Studies and a professional translator specializing in humanities texts across Persian and English. His research focuses on translation theory, translation history, historiography, and intellectual history. Besides his academic pursuits, he is committed to promoting Public Translation Studies in Iran, making the history of translation accessible to the general public, and exploring indigenous Iranian perspectives on translation.

MUSIC / VIDEO / CITY / LITERATURE / TRANSLATION: Revealing the Historical Layers of Mexico in Contemporary Literary Works and their Translations

JAMES RICHIE, Carthage College

Abstract

The Anthropologist Néstor García-Canclini uses the term “ciudad videoclip” [videoclip city] to describe the contemporary reality of living in Mexico City as one in which different historical moments are layered on top of one another, in which the coexistence of traditional, Indigenous customs along with contemporary architecture and infrastructure mirrors the rapid editing seen in music videos. (I will use the American term ‘music video’ instead of the British ‘videoclip,’ which is what most English translations of García-Canclini’s writing use.) In this study, I examine the work of twenty-first century Mexican authors to highlight how their works express the multi-layered historical reality of life in contemporary, urban areas in Mexico that García-Canclini discusses. I examine works by Alejandro Tarrab, Carmen Boullosa, and Víctor Cabrera, commenting on the intertextuality of their works that combine signifiers across different time periods and cultures. This interdisciplinary approach combines literary criticism, with media studies and anthropology to examine the points of commonality between the visual culture of Mexico City and the literary works produced in the region. Specifically, I also draw on theoretical concepts including Deleuze and Guattari’s concept of deterritorialization and Octavio Paz’s concept of the critical poem [poema crítico] to show how these poems defy conventions and expectations through their encyclopaedic references. Moreover, I highlight how translations by Clare Sullivan, Samantha Schnee, and James Richie communicate the heterogeneity of these works to Anglophone readers. While it is often assumed that translated poetry cannot provide readers with a sense of the relationship between a work and its social context, I argue that these poets find ways of communicating the impossible and that their translators follow suit.

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Bio-note

James Richie is a literary translator, a researcher, and an instructor. He obtained his PhD in Humanities from the University of Louisville in 2025. His translations have appeared in *Hayden’s Ferry Review*, *Latin American Literature Today*, *Anomaly*, and *Journal of Italian Translation*. His research has appeared in *Translation Review* and *Vernacular: New Connections in Language, Literature, and Culture*. His research and creative projects examine the intersections between mass media, early modern literature, contemporary Latin American literature, and translation. He teaches Intellectual Foundations at Carthage College.

Holocaust Writing in Translation: History, Memory, Politics

JOANNA RZEPA, University of Essex

Abstract

This paper examines contested historical narratives in translation, focusing on the specific case of Holocaust writing from Poland. The discussion of selected texts and their English translations will be situated within the political landscape of the postwar period. Particular attention will be paid to the ways in which the cultural politics of the Cold War shaped the translation flows between Eastern and Western Europe.

The paper will provide a detailed analysis of the translation history of selected diaries and memoirs of Polish-Jewish victims and survivors of the Holocaust, including narratives penned by Mary Berg, Calek Perechodnik, Sara Nomberg-Przytyk, and Henryk Grynberg. It will bring to light cases of complex publishing trajectories of narratives such as Berg's *Warsaw Ghetto Diary*, which—while originally written in Polish—only exist in various translations, retranslations, and backtranslations as the original source texts have never been published and, in some cases, are no longer extant.

Drawing on the archival material from the Polish State Archives, the Jewish Historical Institute Archive in Warsaw, the Archive of British Publishing and Printing in Reading, and the YIVO Institute Archive in New York, the paper will examine the authors' and translators' discursive strategies during the Cold War and in the post-communist period, paying particular attention to the changing political and historical status of the Holocaust in East-Central Europe and globally. It will account for publishers' agendas and editorial practices, and examine the censorship and self-censorship regimes that shaped the construction and reception of witness narratives in the context of the Cold War.

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Bio-note

Dr Joanna Rzepa is Senior Lecturer in the Department of Literature, Film, and Theatre Studies at the University of Essex. Prior to joining Essex, she held the post of Thomas Brown Assistant Professor at Trinity College Dublin, and taught at the University of Warwick, where she obtained her PhD in 2015. Her research interests include cultural and intellectual history of translation, Holocaust writing, and publishing studies. Her articles have appeared in *Translation Studies*, *Comparative Critical Studies*, and *Modernism/modernity*. She is currently working on a Leverhulme Trust-funded project that examines the translation and publishing history of Holocaust testimonies from East-Central Europe.

Breaking the Silence — A micro-historical translator study in the wake of the Waldheim affair

PETRA SCHÖN, University of Vienna

Abstract

Based on introductory research concerning the Austrian author, poet and translator Erika Mitterer (1906–2001), this follow-up study focuses on her international outreach. Her WW II-novel “All our games” in German language was translated into English by the US author and translator Catherine Hutter (1907-1997) in close cooperation with the author. Despite its timely completion and high-quality translation, Mitterer and Hutter faced substantial obstacles until its release almost one decade later. The making of this publication is reflected in a very personal compilation of letters between Mitterer and Hutter. Apart from its translatorial relevance, this archival treasure serves as micro-historical (Levi, 1991, pp. 93-113) testimony of key developments in the 20th century.

In addition to analysing translation- and translator-related (Chesterman, 2009, p. 13) dimensions and traumata, this interdisciplinary case-study provides insight into the long and stony path to publication. It exemplifies non-text-related hurdles that almost prevented its release. Apart from highlighting a massive commercial transformation in the US publishing industry (Fernández-Moya, 2024, p. 1) it reveals cultural network interactions among author, translator, agent and publisher as “people behind the text”. This research showcases the complex, yet fragile position of female foreign authors to be translated into English—and their translators—of two women between words.

Finally, it contextualises the publication of “All our games” as vital contribution to breaking the silence of the “Waldheim affair” (Good and Wodak, 1999, p. 14). In researching the archives, this case-study aims to make the echo of Hutter’s translatorial voice heard—through her letters, her translation and her micro-historical position.

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Bio-note

Petra Schön is an Austrian lawyer-linguist and translation expert (German, English, French). After positions in the financial industry and with international organisations, she joined the University of Vienna, Austria, working at the crossroads of law, language and translation. Her key areas of interest include multidisciplinary topics, such as AI, (literary) translation, accessibility and the rule of law.

From Hiroshima to Baghdad: A Comparative Historical Analysis of Translation Failures in Intelligence

AYŞE SUNGUR, Gendarmerie and Coast Guard Academy

Abstract

Historians often acknowledge that intelligence failures shape the course of conflicts, yet the linguistic mechanisms driving these failures remain underexplored. Mainstream intelligence models typically treat source material as “linguistically stable input” (Lowenthal, 2020), overlooking that translation can fundamentally alter the historical record. This presentation challenges oversight by conducting a comparative analysis of two pivotal case studies where mistranslation changed the trajectory of global history: the 1945 “Mokusatsu” incident and the 2003 Iraqi WMD dossier. The first case examines how the mistranslation of the Japanese term “mokusatsu”—intended as “withholding comment”—was rendered as “categorical rejection” by US intelligence, accelerating the decision to deploy atomic weapons. The second case analyses the translation of technical intelligence regarding Iraq’s chemical capabilities in 2003, where ambiguous terminology was distorted to fit a pro-war narrative. By contrasting these two distinct eras, the presentation illustrates a continuity in the vulnerability of intelligence. It argues that whether due to lexical ambiguity (1945) or technical/political distortion (2003), the translator serves as an invisible gatekeeper of historical outcomes. Resonating with Footitt and Kelly’s (2012) framework on the agency of languages in war, this study invites historians to read archived intelligence not as objective data, but as mediated texts where the “fog of war” often begins as a “fog of words.”

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Bio-note

Ayşe SUNGUR received her PhD in 2024 in Translation Studies and currently serves as an English Instructor at the Gendarmerie and Coast Guard Academy (GCGA) in Ankara, Türkiye, where she teaches Security and Law Enforcement Terminology (SALE). Her academic research focuses on Translation Studies, with specific interests in the history of translation, military and security terminology, and intersemiotic translation.

Returning to Plath: Feminised Translation Labour, Precarity, and the Translator's Body as Archive

MERVE SEVTAP SÜREN, Istanbul Technical University

Abstract

This paper proposes a feminist method for writing translation history from inside the act of translation itself. It centres on my 2014 Turkish translation of Sylvia Plath's Journals (published as *Günlükler*) and asks what becomes visible when, more than a decade later, the translator returns to her own text and reads it as an archival object.

I treat the 2014 translation not only as a linguistic product, but as a material trace of feminised labour in Turkish literary publishing: compressed timelines, low formal visibility, and the implicit expectation that a woman translator will "handle" emotionally volatile material – depression, rage, ambivalence about motherhood, creative hunger – with sensitivity and moral responsibility. The corpus includes (1) the published Turkish translation, (2) its paratexts in Turkish (back-cover framing, presentation of Plath, translator credit), and (3) a focused set of passages in which Plath articulates anger, exhaustion, and self-fragmentation, read alongside my Turkish renderings. I examine where that Turkish voice softens, intensifies, or normalises Plath's affect, and argue that these shifts record the working conditions under which the text was produced.

Methodologically, I call this approach "the translator's return": a historiographic practice in which translators revisit their own earlier translations to document the affective, economic, and ideological pressures that shaped them. I argue that this practice should be recognised as legitimate primary evidence for translation history, particularly in contexts where women's translation work is precarious, affectively demanding, and poorly archived. By framing the translator's embodied memory as historical data rather than anecdote, the paper reclaims feminised translation labour as part of the historiography of literature, not its invisible backstage—and offers a transferable method for recovering women's translation labour where conventional archives fall silent.

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Bio-note

Merve Sevtap Süren is an early-career researcher, translator, and lecturer based in Istanbul. She received her PhD in Translation Studies in June 2025. Her dissertation examined the rewriting and reception of *Frankenstein* across time, languages, and ideological contexts, with a particular focus on how gender shapes the evolving images of the text, the author, and the translator. Her current research explores feminist translation, affective labour, translator agency, and feminist paratranslation in Turkish publishing. Alongside her academic work, she has translated numerous literary works into Turkish. She teaches academic writing and works at the intersection of gender, literature, and translation studies.

Giambattista Vico's Bold Etymologies as Tools for Historical and Cognitive Translation

HANNA TARALDSRUD DORMAGEN, University of Oslo

Abstract

Giambattista Vico's *La scienza nuova* (1744) proposes a radical vision of how history can be recovered through language and etymologies. His use of etymology has often – both today and in the past – been dismissed as naïve or speculative. Nevertheless, this paper argues that Vico's etymologies should be understood as a deliberate form of historical translation. In tracing the language of the first pagan nations, Vico translates poetic, mythic expressions into the rational vocabulary of philosophy. Hence, he reveals to the modern scholars the differences between their own and ancient mentalities. Vico's hermeneutical approach to etymologies thus not only becomes an attempt to translate between languages in the narrow sense, but also to translate between modes of cognition.

Through a close reading of *Spiegazione della dipintura* and *Libro primo* of *La scienza nuova*, I show how Vico's use of etymologies are acts of translation that bridge two supplementary views of history. That means that he combines a historically universal (*verum*) perspective with the historically contingent (*certum*) expression of the pagan civilisations. By interpreting etymologies as disclosures of cultural and temporal conditions of civilisations, Vico anticipates modern conceptions of translation as cultural, temporal and cognitive mediations. This paper argues that Vico's hermeneutical interpretation of etymologies exemplifies how acts of translation depend on conceptualising cultures and mentalities as historically developed and contingent. Considering recent debates in translation history and hermeneutics, the paper proposes Vico's interpretation of etymologies as a proto-theoretical framework of translation.

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Bio-note

Hanna Taraldsrud Dormagen finished her master thesis *The Bold Etymologies of Giambattista Vico: An investigation of their role in La scienza nuova (1744) in the realm of cultural and intellectual history* in June 2025 at the University of Oslo. After request by the journal *Bolletino del Centro di Studi Vichiani*, she is writing an article on Vico's use of etymologies. Currently she is cooperating with the Centre of Vichian Studies to map the Norwegian academic landscape on G. Vico. In addition, she studies a 1-year programme in educational theory and practice, and works as a teaching assistant for master students in European history of knowledge and for bachelor students in German and Italian linguistics, literature and culture.

Domestic versus international publishers' translations in the Uruguayan literary polysystem (1985-2020)

CECILIA TORRES RIPPA, Universidad de la República/Sistema Nacional de Investigadores

Abstract

This paper addresses the publication of literary translations by independent publishers in Uruguay during a period of recent history: from the return to democracy (March 1st, 1985) to 2020, when the research whose results I present began. Based on a review of translations published by local independent publishers in the computerised catalogues of the National Library of Uruguay, the Library of the Legislative Branch, and the ISBN Cloud website, 194 translations were identified and organised into three periods according to the characteristics of the publishing ecosystem for each era (1985-2000, 2001-2014, and 2015 onwards).

The analysis of the results highlights a peak in publications between 2008 and 2009, after which the number of translations fell, only to recover a decade later. However, the exchange flows involved in translations naturally transcend national barriers and, especially in the case of translations into Spanish, we are dealing with a Spanish-speaking market dominated by large publishing conglomerates (Bertelsmann, Planeta, and Océano) based in Spain with branches in Latin America. For this reason, to explain some of the fluctuations, I turned to the database *150 Years of Literary Translation in Uruguayan Printing Houses and Publishing Houses (1871-2021)* to gather information on translated literary works published by international publishing houses with Uruguayan ISBNs — which began to dominate the market between 2008 and 2010— and thus account for how the contributions of Spanish translations by independent publishers and large conglomerates have an impact on the shaping of the publishing ecosystem and the flow of translated literary works.

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Bio-note

Cecilia Torres Rippa holds a PhD in Literature from the University of Buenos Aires (2025). She obtained a master's degree specialising in Language, Culture and Society, and graduated with a bachelor's degree in French->Spanish certified translation from the University of the Republic (Uruguay). She works there as an adjunct professor in the Editorial Studies Department. She is a member of the research group History of Translation in Uruguay, as well as Analysis of Translation between Uruguayan Sign Language and Spanish (both from the University of the Republic). She is a member of the National System of Researchers (National Agency for Research and Innovation, Uruguay) at the initial level.

Rewriting Translation History from the Margins: Digital and Archival Approaches to East Germany's *Sinn und Form* (1949–1990)

YANWEI WANG, Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz

Abstract

This paper proposes new methodological horizons for studying translation history by examining how East Germany's literary journal *Sinn und Form* (1949–1990) functioned as an alternative site of world literary circulation during the Cold War. While existing historiography has predominantly focused on Western publishing markets and canonical translators, this study recovers a parallel translation system operating behind the Iron Curtain, challenging teleological narratives that position Western markets as sole arbiters of literary value.

Drawing on a comprehensive database of 3,900 articles including 1,026 translations from 55 languages, the study employs digital humanities methods—network analysis and longitudinal mapping—to reconstruct translation flows invisible in dominant historiographies. This quantitative foundation combines with archival research and textual analysis to develop a three-level framework: institutional (mapping hierarchies of translatability), editorial (analyzing how paratexts framed translated authors within translation Cold War narratives), and textual (examining translators' linguistic choices in mediating cultural difference).

The journal's translation practices reveal how state-sponsored institutions negotiated between political mandates and aesthetic autonomy, translating writers from the Soviet bloc, decolonizing nations, and Western exile communities. These patterns illuminate how translation operated within “socialist linguistic cosmopolitanism”—an ideology enabling transnational literary exchange while imposing Eurocentric filters on non-Western voices.

Methodologically, this study demonstrates how combining digital approaches with archival work uncovers overlooked translation networks and challenges Western-centric historiographies. By recovering East Germany's translation practices, it contributes to decentering translation history and reveals alternative circulation models operating parallel to—rather than peripheral to—market-driven systems. This historical perspective offers insights for contemporary debates about translation ethics, linguistic hierarchies, and literary circulation politics in divided worlds.

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Bio-note

Yanwei Wang is a doctoral candidate in Translation Studies at Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, where she holds a research scholarship at the Graduate School of the Humanities and Social Sciences (GSHS). Supervised by Prof. Dr. Eva Wiegmann, her research examines Cold War-era translation practices and literary circulation, focusing on how cultural journals mediated transnational exchange. She is a research assistant on the Germersheimer Übersetzerlexikon (UeLEX) and the DFG-funded “Post-Exil: Trans” project.

Bridging East and West: An Actor-Network Analysis of the Translation of *Gegu Yaolun* and Its Impact on Material Culture Exchange

JIANG XIAOMIN, University of Science and Technology Beijing, Hebei Minzu Normal University

Abstract

This study explores the translation of *Gegu Yaolun* by Sir Percival David through the lens of Actor-Network Theory (ANT), analyzing the interactions between various actors involved in the translation process and their role in bridging East and West. The research demonstrates how this translation acted as a conduit in the exchange of material culture between China and the West, facilitating the deeper understanding and dissemination of Chinese art and connoisseurship in the Western world. The translation process was influenced by a diverse network of actors, including Sir Percival David, museums, collectors, art dealers, and scholars, who collectively contributed to the material and intellectual exchange. Sir Percival David's translation emphasized an authentic understanding of Chinese connoisseurship, focusing on the traditional Chinese approach to appreciating antiquities, rather than imposing Western conventions. His translation strategy, characterized by a commitment to "seeking authenticity" and "preserving the original," sought to present Chinese cultural concepts in their own context, avoiding Western interpretations that might distort the meaning. Through this translation, David aimed not only to introduce Chinese connoisseurship to the West but also to create a more accurate and culturally respectful representation of "Chinese art" in Western scholarship. By using ANT to analyze the translation process, this study highlights how translation can serve as a bridge in cross-cultural exchanges, enhancing the global understanding of material culture.

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Bio-note

Jiang Xiaomin is a first-year doctoral student in Translation Studies at University of Science and Technology Beijing and an English teacher with five-year experience at Hebei Minzu Normal University. Her research focuses on the intersection of translation and material culture, particularly in the context of Chinese art translations in the West. She holds a master's degree in English Translation, and her work explores the historical and cultural impacts of translation practices.

Evolution of Translation Policies within Ancient Chinese Buddhist Sutra Translation Assemblies: A Historical Perspective

YANFEI ZHAO, Beijing Foreign Studies University/Yale University

Abstract

Sutra translation in ancient China was a highly collaborative endeavor involving Central Asian, Indian, and Chinese monk scholars. From the fourth century onward, small translation teams gradually evolved into large-scale, state-sponsored Buddhist translation assemblies (*yichang* 译场 in Chinese), representing early prototypes of modern translation institutions.

This paper examines the institutional dimensions of ancient Chinese sutra translation through the lens of institutional translation. Adopting González-Núñez and Meylaerts' (2017) model of 'translation policy', this study investigates the translation beliefs, translation management as well as translation practices in major Buddhist translation assemblies from the fourth to the eleventh century. By tracing the evolution of translation policies within ancient Buddhist contexts, it explores the interactions between sutra translation and state governance as well as the role of Buddhist translators in shaping ancient Chinese society.

This study contributes to the ongoing efforts of rewriting Chinese Buddhist translation history by revisiting the ancient sutra translation activities through an institutional lens. As Koskinen (2014: 483-490) argues, there is a need to move beyond European or Western perspectives to recognize historical and geopolitical variations in institutional translation practices. From this perspective, it is hoped that this study could not only deepen our understanding of ancient Chinese Buddhist translation history, but also reveal the intricate layers of institutional translation, thereby offering insights into the dynamics among translation, religion, and politics.

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Bio-note

Yanfei Zhao is currently a PhD visiting student at Yale University (2025–2026), and a PhD candidate in Translation Studies from Beijing Foreign Studies University (BFSU), with dual master's degrees in Buddhist Studies from SOAS, University of London and in Translation Studies from BFSU. Her research focuses on translation theory and practice, as well as Buddhist translation literature and history. She has published two translation books and translation research articles in journals such as *FORUM* and *Shanghai Journal of Translators*. In recognition of her academic achievements, she was awarded a state scholarship by China Scholarship Council in 2025.