

Call for Papers

HTN 2027 Ghent

Agents, Texts and Networks in Historical Perspective

20-23 September 2027 in Ghent, Belgium

The **History and Translation Network** (HTN) was launched in 2021 to provide a forum for the increasing interest that was developing in historical studies on translation and interpreting (cf. the Network [“Manifesto”](#)) and to promote interdisciplinary approaches to historical research on translation.

The Network has since become a global community of over 750 scholars from a diverse range of disciplinary backgrounds and has held two very successful in-person conferences in Tallinn (2022) and Graz (2024), and two equally successful online events in 2023 and 2026.

The **HTN 2027 Ghent** conference aims to explore the dynamic interactions between individuals, texts, institutions, and networks across time. We invite participants to reconsider what it means to be an “agent of translation” and to examine how human and non-human actors have created, mediated, circulated, and transformed textual and social networks in diverse historical contexts.

From celebrated literary translators to often-forgotten mediators, including editors, publishers, annotators, readers, patrons, colonial interpreters, institutions, and machines, translation has always depended on complex networks of agency. Yet many of these contributions have remained overlooked, marginalised, or erased from literary and cultural histories. By foregrounding the multiple actors involved in the production, circulation, and reception of translated texts, this conference seeks to recover hidden forms of labour and to reassess the social, political, and material conditions that shape translation. By foregrounding the importance of these networks of agency in cultural production, the conference will equally look to challenge established narratives in (national) literary and cultural histories.

Particular attention will be given to the historical circulation of texts across manuscripts, print cultures, and digital environments, as well as to the material infrastructures, media, and institutional frameworks that enable translation.

The conference also encourages reflection on the boundaries between human and non-human forms of mediation from a historical perspective, such as the historical role of technology in translational processes.

Possible topics include:

- translator branding and authorial visibility
- gendered and postcolonial invisibility
- archival recovery of neglected translators and mediators

- translation and mechanisms of canonisation
- the historical circulation of texts in manuscript, print, and digital cultures
- the materiality of texts, media ecosystems, and publishing networks
- censorship, patronage, cultural diplomacy, and cultural policy
- translation as labour, profession, and economic practice
- readers, reception, and communities of interpretation
- translation and media(tion)
- the shifting boundaries between human and non-human mediation
- social, intellectual, institutional, and communication networks
- digital humanities approaches, network analysis, corpus studies, and archival methodologies

By bringing together scholars working in translation history, cultural theory, book history, sociology of translation, and digital humanities, the conference aims to map new ways of acknowledging the labour, creativity, and politics of translation across time and media. It seeks to foster dialogue between historical and contemporary perspectives, recovery and re-evaluation, material and digital approaches, in order to reconsider who speaks, who circulates texts, who is remembered, and who remains at the margins of translation history.

Agents, Texts and Networks in Historical Perspective ultimately aims to open new avenues for understanding translation not merely as the transfer of texts, but as a complex and evolving network of people, institutions, technologies, and practices that have shaped cultural exchange across time.

Time and Place

The conference will take place **20-23 September 2027 at Ghent University**
Campus Mercator, Abdisstraat 1, 9000 Ghent, Belgium

Keynotes

Lieven D'hulst (KULeuven, Belgium)

Klaus Kaindl (University of Vienna, Austria)

Padma Rangarajan (University of California, Riverside, USA)

Submissions and deadlines

We accept individual papers as well as panel proposals.

All proposals should be accompanied by short bios (approx. 100 words) of the presenters, and sent to: htn2027@ugent.be with the keyword "HTN-abstract" or "HTN-panel" in the subject line.

(i) Panel proposals

If you are interested in organizing a thematic panel featuring 3-4 papers, please submit a preliminary panel proposal, including the panel topic and a brief description (approx. 100 words), by **1 December 2026**.

Acceptance of preliminary panel proposals will be given by **15 January 2027**.

If the preliminary proposal is accepted, we will ask for a full panel proposal with title, panel description (approx. 200 words), panellists and their paper proposals (approx. 300 words each) by **1 February 2027**.

Acceptance decisions for full panel proposals will be made by **31 March 2027**.

(ii) Individual papers

Individual paper proposals should be approximately 300 words long and should be submitted by **1 February 2027**.

Acceptance decisions for individual paper proposals will be made by **31 March 2027**.

Timeline summary

1 December 2026: submission of *preliminary panel proposals* (response by 15 Jan 2027)

1 February 2027: submission of *full panel proposals* (response by 31 March 2027)

1 February 2027: submission of *individual paper proposals* (response by 31 March 2027)

Conference fee

The standard cost for attendees is €150.

We also offer a reduced fee of €100 for (PhD) students and participants from low-income countries (World Bank categories).

Organizers

The **HTN 2027 Ghent** conference is organized by the [History and Translation Network](#) and the [TRACE - Translation and Culture Research Group](#) of Ghent University.

Organizing committee:

Brecht de Groote
Thomas Franck
Lieve Jooken
Bram Lambrecht
Francis Mus
Alexandra Sanchez
Anneleen Spiessens
Yves T'Sjoen
Piet Van Poucke
Jeroen Vandaele

Scientific committee:

Pieter Boulogne (KU Leuven)
Pekka Kujamäki (University of Graz)
Ilse Logie (Ghent University)
Daniele Monticelli (Tallinn University)
Outi Paloposki (University of Turku)
Kris Peeters (University of Antwerp)
Susan Pickford (Université de Genève)
Christopher Rundle (University of Bologna)
Arvi Sepp (VUB Brussels University)
Ine Van linthout (VUB Brussels University)
Zofia Ziemann (Jagiellonian University Kraków)