

2022 IWL, Johannes Gutenberg University, Mainz, Germany
“World Literature and Translation” Colloquium



Colloquium leader: Dr. Núria Codina Solà, KU Leuven

The colloquium “World Literature and Translation” consisted of four different sessions devoted to various topics at the intersection of translation studies and world literature. The presentations were followed by a response by another participant and included linguistic and cultural traditions ranging from Europe, North Africa, the Middle East, South Asia, and Latin America.

The first panel centered around the circulation of literary works thanks to agents and mediators that have fallen out of the scope of translation studies due to their peripheral locations or ideological affiliations. In her presentation “The Anarchist Translation Flows and World Literature Project (ARGOT)”, **Lucia Campanella** from Universidad de la República highlighted the role of anarchist periodicals in the circulation of world literature and the value

of digital humanities tools in identifying the literary translations that were published in anarchist periodicals in Montevideo, Buenos Aires, Río de Janeiro, New York, Lisbon, and Barcelona. **Rabia Zouaghi** from Binghamton University picked up the theme of circulation with a specific focus on the role of publishing houses and their reticence in publishing Arabic literature in translation. The last presentation by **Ana Duclaud** (University of Texas at Austin) analyzed Citio Vitier's translation into Spanish of Arthur Rimbaud's collection of poems *Illuminations* and focused on the role of the literary magazine *Orígenes* in introducing new cultural traditions and artistic movements in Cuba.

The second session, titled "Subversive Translation", aimed at challenging the binary between original and translation that often sustains world literature studies by addressing the role of multilingual practices and experimental translation methods in contemporary literary production. **Núria Codina Solà** from KU Leuven explored the notion of translational authorship as a form of collaborative and multilingual re-writing in Sophie Seita's translation of Uljana Wolf's multilingual poetry and Chantal Wright's rewriting of *Portrait of a Tongue* by Yoko Tawada. In his presentation "The Translingual Translation: Reversing the Monolingual Tide", **Anthony Tello** from the University of Houston gave insights into his own translation practice of Guy Bordin's novella "L'amant fantasmatique" and his use of strategic manipulations of thematically and linguistically determined translated and untranslated parts of texts to challenge readers' expectations. **Ursula Friedman** from the University of California, Santa Barbara presented cases of un-translation, substitution, circumlocution, and creative augmentation in self-translated English-Mandarin short stories penned by Chinese diasporic writers, problematizing the un-translatability of humour in literary (self-)translation.

The third panel addressed postcolonial approaches to translation theory and the challenges of establishing comparisons across literary traditions, especially in (post)colonial contexts. In his presentation “A World We Can Build Together: Fanonism, Solidarity, Translation”, **Haider Shahbaz** from UCLA reflected on the new forms of solidarity and collective learning processes emerging from Frantz Fanon’s translation into languages of the Global South such as Urdu. Along similar lines, **Ibrahim Badshah** from the University of Houston focused on literary exchanges in the Global South to challenge the center – periphery dichotomy that structures discourses of world literature. Moving from South-to-South encounters to comparisons between Kashmiri and British Romantic poetry, **Midhat Shah** from the Louisiana State University compared Wordsworth’s “Solitary Reaper” (1807) to Kashmiri romantic poet Mahjoor’s “The Country Lass” (written before 1920) to illustrate the rich diversity in the reflective sensibilities within the unity shared by romantic writers across space and time. The last presentation of this session, titled “Struggling for Consecration. African Lusophone Authors at the Court of the World-Literary System”, was held by **Marco Bucaione** from the University of Lisbon. It consisted of an historical overview of the translation of Lusophone African authors into European languages, revealing the power relations that structure world literature.

The last session of the colloquium was devoted to generic transformations linked to translation. **Carmen Reisinger** from KU Leuven talked about the parts of characters’ speeches or scenes of the fictional work circulated as commentary by the author, printed and reprinted in different periodicals and publication series in Shakespeare criticism. **Chan Ka Wai** (City University of Hong Kong) mapped the cultural adaptations of the Chinese folk heroine Mulan across cultures and history. **Leah Ewing** from the University of Wisconsin-

Madison addressed the challenges of theatre translation based on six different English translations of Bertolt Brecht's 1943 play *Der gute Mensch von Sezuan*.

The colloquium contributed to establishing new affinities between scholars with different areas of expertise and underlined the necessity of opening up world literature studies to literary traditions from the Global South, minor genres, multilingual texts and overlooked cultural mediators.