ATTR Fall Seminar 2020
Translation and Reception

Speakers, Abstracts, and Readings

BRENNAN BREEDE, Columbia Theological Seminary:
“Aerosol Transmission: Theorizing Reception History
during a Global Pandemic with Ecclesiastes 1:2”

Abstract:
Since the emergence of the airborne pathogen COVID-19, many non-specialists have had to
learn the basics of epidemiology in order to navigate the ensuing pandemic. For scholars of
authoritative texts, epidemiology offers new perspectives on concepts such as transmission,
reproduction, communication, and translation. As a test case, I explore the reception history of
Ecclesiastes 1:2 (“vanity of vanities, all is vanity,” or “all is vapor/breath”), tracing its various
trajectories of transmission from its ancient context of production to the present day.

Required reading:
Pages 95-106 in Reception History and Biblical Studies: Theory and Practice.

Brennan Breed, “Biblical Scholarship’s Ethos of Respect: Original Meanings, Original Texts,
and the Reception History of Ecclesiastes.” Pages 212-236 in Reading Other Peoples’
Texts: Identity Formation and the Reception of Authoritative Traditions. Edited by K.

Recommended reading:
Deborah Goldgaber, “Derrida and Translation.” Pages 141-156 in The Routledge Handbook of


The Book of Ecclesiastes, chapters 1-3, 9, 12.

MIRIAM L. HJÄLM, Stockholm School of Theology: “The Bible in Arabic”

Abstract:
The complex and heterogeneous reception of the bible in Arabic is increasingly gaining
attention by scholars in various fields. The numerous biblical references in the Qur’ān attest to
its earliest stage and to the importance of biblical texts in the struggle to own divine revelation that took place among Jews, Christians, and Muslims at this time. When Arabic bible translations appear in physical form approximately two centuries later, they seem to serve a variety of functions in the Christian communities. They were used in liturgy, for studying the bible, and perhaps also for apologetic and missionary purposes. A number of them exhibit a remarkable interest in textual criticism. Although we have almost no paratextual information in these renditions, we may assume that the function of the translations effected the translation techniques used to compose them. During this lecture, we will look at such differences and try to understand what purpose the various translations might have served in these communities.

**Required reading:**


**Recommended reading:**
Overviews and contextual studies:


Studies on translation techniques:


For future studies also:


**NORA EGGEN, University of Oslo: “Translation of the Qurʾān”**

**Abstract:**
This lecture will be organized around the following topics:

- Translation of the Qurʾān as a contested concept in historical and theological terms.
• Translations of the Qurʾān as an empirical field.
• Interdisciplinary and methodological challenges and possibilities in the study of translations of the Qurʾān.
• Analytical issues like the diverse functions and roles of translation; cross-historical relations between text and reception; interactions between the local, regional and global; agency and authority.

**Required reading:**

**Recommended reading:**

**MORTEN BECKMANN, University of Agder:** “Translating the Bible: Tradition, Authority and Reception”

**Abstract:**
Translation is no neutral enterprise. In the last three decades, Translation Studies have focused on how translations are affected by the cultural context in which they are produced. This shift has led the attention away from assessing translations solely with regard to how «accurate» they render the source text to the multiple socio-cultural (contextual) factors that influence the choice of translation. No translation is made in a vacuum, and every translation is made for a reason.

This lecture will focus on how the Churches’ traditions and other variables affect how the Bible is translated. Bible translations can strengthen the authority of a religious tradition by reaffirming the institutionalized interpretation of a canonical text. At the same time, they can
also challenge that interpretation in an effort to change the institution or found a new one (Venuti 2004).

**Required reading:**

**Recommended reading:**

**STEFKA G. ERIKSEN, NIKU: “Translations into Medieval Norway and Iceland: Texts, Practices, and Contexts”**

**Abstract:**
Old Norse literature comprises of highly original indigenous prose and poetry, as well as translations from Latin, French, and German. In this lecture, I will focus on Old Norse translations, seen as linguistic, textual, material and cultural *translatio* from one context to another, a process which entails a dynamic interplay between separate, but related sub-cultures. The lecture will include:
- An overview of Old Norse translations in the Middle Ages: texts, languages, background, translators, and cultural contexts
- A historiography of how Old Norse translations have been studied in scholarship, including theoretical starting points and main research questions
- New approaches in translation studies: cognitive theory and multimodal communication

**Required reading:**

or

Sif Rikhardsdottir, 2012, Medieval Translations and Cultural Discourse: The Movement of Texts in England, France and Scandinavia, Boydell and Brewer, see Introduction

**Recommended reading:**

**On the Nordic context**


**On translation theory:**

Gideon, Toury. 1995. Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond. Amsterdam. Part two: Ch.1 (pp. 23-39), ch. 2 (53-69); Part four (pp.259-279) (52 p.)


Munday Jeremy. 2001. Introducing Translation Studies. Theories and applications. London. Ch. 1. Main Issues of Translation Studies (pp.4-17); chapter 7. System theories (pp. 108-125) (30 p.)

**IRIS MUÑIS, University of Oslo: “Gender and Feminism in Translation Studies”**

**Abstract:**

The interest on the relationship between a cultural, non-grammatical or merely biological understanding of gender and its impact on the practice and theory of translation has steadily grown in the last decades. Stemming from the pioneering theorisation on feminist translation by Canadian scholars during the 80-90s, the field, in tune with its mother feminist movement, has branched out to include broader gender and sexuality concerns that permeate 21st-Century society. Those three subfields (feminist, gender and sexuality studies) have been very productive in their interaction with translation theory, as shown by the growing numbers of academic research. During this session, we will go over the development and main ideas of the field, based on the mandatory and suggested reading materials. In addition, practical examples from my own recent research on two major feminist-claimed Norwegian literary works translated into both English and Spanish, will be presented on the light of the aforementioned theoretical perspectives.

Discussion with students on how this theoretical perspective may affect their own research projects or possible future research within the language combination they work with will be
encouraged on the later part of the session. To enliven discussion, students are asked to do some background reading and bring examples from the current political perspectives on gender issues in language in their own culture/language they are familiar with (Issues such as: Does your language have grammatical gender, if so is it based on biological associations? / Has there been any interest in developing a cultural connection to that linguistic gender in the last decade? / What is your experience/opinion with gender-neutral language uses? / Can this affect/Has this affected your work as a translation researcher or practitioner?)

**Required reading:**

**Recommended reading:**
Santaemilia, José (2017): “Sexuality and Translation as Intimate Partners? Toward a Queer Turn in Rewriting Identities and Desires”. In Queering Translation, Translating the Queer, ed. Brian James Baer and Klaus Kaindl Routledge. 11-25


**KJETIL BERG HENJUM, University of Bergen: “Literary style and translation from a linguistic point of view”**

**Abstract:**
In my talk I will discuss and illustrate different types of equivalence with examples from German and Norwegian (and maybe English) prose fiction and show how differently problems “of the same type” are treated by translators and how this affects the potential of meaning conveyed by the texts.

**Required reading:**

**Recommended reading:**


Ronald Kibirige- NTNU/MUK; “From Oral to Written Inscriptions: Reflections on Textual and Notated Translations as Processes of Interpretation in Interdisciplinary Communal Music and Dance Events of Practice”

Abstract:
Translation as a process of interpretation has always been a key feature in interdisciplinary music and dance research. Although they are regarded as culturally established systems of knowing, especially within local communities, processes of musicking and dance-musicking as translation and interpretation processes, are still heavily underestimated. Their transfer from oral to written forms in the present music and dance research does not only present them as exclusively authoritative, but also adds another layer of complexity in as far as their re/presentation, translation, interpretation, and transmission are concerned. While the process of their “re/presentation” in the present is a process of their re-contextualisation, it is also a process of knowledge (re)production itself. Music and dance practitioners, and local community elders point to interdisciplinary processes of “doing” (musicking, dancing, and dance-musicking) as vital communal forms of knowledge, as well as interpretation processes of life events present in local artistic events of practice. The material aspects of these artistically interactive processes are key in their emic and etic sense-making processes. The knowledge they embed exists collaboratively in the material (written texts and traditional regalia) and non-material forms (lived or spoken) today (Kibirige, 2020). However, processes of their interpretation are still limited to rather trivialised performer-audience, as well as textual and noted representations in “formal” academia today. Notational translations in the field of music and dance, for instance, have been regarded with reservations because of their complex syntax, strict conceptualisation, and imagery of the material and non-material aspects of sound and movement at a conscious level (Also see Bakka & Karoblis 2010; Fügédi, 2003; Watt, 2014). An interdisciplinary approach to understanding the material and non-material aspects initiates translation as a process of interpretation that goes beyond what is accessible through performative and formal written representation. To use Timothy Rice’s perspective, “understanding a world of meanings and experiences is not only a matter of observing and arranging words into taxonomies and contrasting pairs” (1997, p.88). It is also in the interactively live “doing” (dancing, musicking, and dance-musicking). The “doing” draws on an interdisciplinary understanding of, and active engagement with a music/dance practitioner’s actions and surroundings on a given event of practice (Also see Nannyonga-Tamusuza 2015; Karoblis, 2012; Bakka & Erling, 2017). Their reception in scholarly or community contexts today notwithstanding, could the genuine interpretation and understanding of this oral and written knowledge lie in an interdisciplinary as well as an interactive approach to their studies/research, enaction/performance, and transmission? Could it lie in its emic and etic interpretive translation of the audible sound and body movements? How does an interdisciplinary understanding sustain the authority interdisciplinary music and dance texts from studies/research and performative contexts command to both the immediate audiences and the wider community? This lecture will reflect on the above aspects from an applied perspective. I will draw on processes of musicking and dance-musicking with in the Lamokowang music and dance-music tradition and events of practice of the Acholi peoples of Northern Uganda. Supplementary to dance and music notation examples, I will use my most
recent research, and communal cultural and artistic engagements to explore the inescapable impact of interdisciplinary music/dance texts from studies and research on, and enaction/performance in a day-today life activities of the Acholi people of Northern Uganda and beyond.

**Required reading:**


**Recommended reading:**