



**University of  
Zurich<sup>UZH</sup>**

**University Research Priority Program (URPP) Asia and Europe**



# **Asia and Europe in Translation**

## **Interdisciplinary Perspectives**

**International Conference, Zurich, November 6–8, 2014**  
**URPP Research Field 2 *Entangled Histories***

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# Conference Outline

Histories and discourses of translation, and concepts of cultural translation are being continuously revised in a variety of disciplines. “Translation” also plays a crucial role in the research undertaken at the URPP *Asia and Europe*, both in its narrower meaning of translating between languages and in the conceptual implications of cultural translation. This conference investigates both notions of translation with regard to transfers between contexts in the entangled histories of Europe and Asia from an interdisciplinary and broad historical perspective.

We aim at bringing into dialogue differences and similarities in traditions and discourses of translation in Asia and Europe and to re-examine theoretical positions in translation studies for trans-cultural analyses. For instance, the Latin terms *translatio* and *traduco*, “to carry/bring across” and “to lead across,” from which English and the Romance languages take their terms, connote a movement from one context to another. Other historically, linguistically, and culturally contingent connotations of “translation” are found in Europe and in Asia, such as “(ex)change,” “movement,” “transmission,” “transformation,” “legitimation,” or “turning over.” Further challenges to translation theories arise with respect to processes of translation between different writing systems or between different languages that partially share a writing system.

Such theoretical and historical considerations offer a point of departure to focus on specific contexts and media of translation; the transmission of knowledge between regions and cultures is one major focus of the conference and expands the notion of translation beyond its textual base to account for knowledge transfers based on maps, objects, and practices. Another emphasis is the spread of Buddhism from India throughout Asia, analyzing how religious concepts and practices were translated between languages and cultures, and how they were re-evaluated and adjusted over time. The concept of cultural translation will be examined with a focus on post-colonial perspectives in case studies addressing literature, film, photography, and illiteracy in the modern and postmodern period. Further expanding the notion of translation to the visual field, issues of interpretation, reception, and appropriation in aesthetic discourses, in developing a language for “national art”, and in studies of Asian art in Europe will be scrutinized.

Hans B. Thomsen, Julia Orell, Julia Obinger

# Program

Thursday, November 6

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**14:30–15:00 Welcoming Remarks**

**Prof. Dr. Katharina Maag Merki, Vice Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences**

**Prof. Dr. Hans Bjarne Thomsen, Art History Department, Section for East Asian Art History**

**15:00–18:45 Panel 1: Discourses and Traditions of Translation**

**Panel Chair: Wolfgang Behr (University of Zurich)**

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Translation practices and theories are typically embedded in their respective linguistic, cultural, historical social, or functional contexts. This panel examines discursive frameworks of translation within, across and beyond languages, language families and cultures in Europe and East Asia. Three papers explore these questions from the perspectives of etymology and conceptual history in classical Europe, of linguistic transpositions specific to literary genres and social settings on the Korean peninsula, and of the appropriation or criticism of Western translation theories in Japan. Another focus will be on the relevance of Jakobson's theories of translation and transmutation for current debates of cultural translation.

**15:00–16:45 Bruno Rochette (Université de Liège)**

Terminologies of Translation in Greek and Latin

**Marion Eggert (Ruhr-University Bochum)**

Literary Translation in a Diglossic Environment: Sino-Korean Case Studies from the Late Chosôn Period (ca. 1600-1850)

**Judy Wakabayashi (Kent State University)**

The Japanese Engagement with European Discourses of Translation

**16:45–17:15    Coffee break**

**17:15–18:45    Tomáš Glanc (Humboldt University Berlin)**

Ambivalent Translatological Strategies in the Work of Roman Jakobson

**Ralf Müller (University of Zurich)**

On Linguistic and Cultural Translation – Towards a Semiotic Theory

**Comments by Mark Gamsa (Tel Aviv University)**

On Roman Jakobson and Translation

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**18:45            Buffet reception**

## Friday, November 7

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### **09:30–12:30 Panel 2: Knowledge Transfers**

**Panel Chairs: Ulrich Rudolph (University of Zurich) and Sven Trakulhun (University of Zurich)**

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The transmission of knowledge – be it philosophical, scientific, technical, or practical – has been, and continues to be, one major incentive for translation processes. Not only texts, but also images, maps, and methods of knowledge acquisition have been circulating within Europe and Asia, requiring constant translation and adaptation into new languages and contexts. In addition to these themes, the panel will foreground the transmission of oral, embodied, and material forms of knowledge and their respective translation into writing and practice.

### **09:30–10:45 Hyunhee Park (John Jay College of Criminal Justice, City University of New York)**

Translations and Transliterations as Important Tools for the Transfer of Geographical Information between Medieval Chinese and Islamic Worlds

**Eva Orthmann (Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-University Bonn)**

The Indo-Persian Translation Movement: A Multifaceted Phenomenon of Cultural Transmission and Adaptation

### **10:45–11:15 Coffee break**

**11:15–12:30**    **Dagmar Schäfer (Max Planck Institute for the History of Science, Berlin)**

Translated into Things: Concepts of Capability in Ming and Qing Scholarly and Bureaucratic Literature

**Mareile Flitsch (University of Zurich) & Nathalie Marseglia (University of Zurich)**

Artefacts and Tools – Knowledge – Texts: About the Translation of Material Culture Related Knowledge from Oral Transmission and Apprenticeship to the Written Text

**12:30–14:00**    **Lunch break (catering on location)**

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**14:00–17:00 Panel 3: Buddhist Texts and Concepts Across Asia**  
**Panel Chair: Raji C. Steineck (University of Zurich)**

The importance of translation processes is most evident in the realm of religion, both historically and in current debates. The translation of scriptures, terms, and concepts in the spread of Buddhism throughout Asia offers the opportunity to review the entangled histories between languages and cultures. Individual papers examine the difficulties, interpretations, legends, and political agendas involved in Buddhist translation processes from the 1st century BCE up to the twentieth century

**14:00–15:15 Ingo Strauch (Université de Lausanne)**

Traces of Translation Strategies in the Transmission of Buddhist Canonical Texts to Greater Gandhāra

**Stefano Zacchetti (University of Oxford)**

Making Sense of Han-Translations: Exegetical Strategies in Early Chinese Buddhist Commentaries

**15:15–15:45 Coffee break**

**15:45–17:00 Steven Heine (Florida International University)**

Transmission of the Blue Cliff Record from China to Japan: In One Night or a Thousand and One Nights?

**Jörg Plassen (Ruhr University Bochum)**

Translation and Conceptual Blending: A Case from Colonial Korea

**19:00 Dinner reception (by invitation)**



## Saturday, November 8

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### 09:30–13:00 **Panel 4: Media Translations**

**Panel Chair: Andrea Riemenschneider (University of Zurich)**

The complexity of communication by means of translation between different languages, across gender and class distinctions, various historical epochs, ethnicities, and cultures has been well studied. The same holds true for problems of discourse power as inscribed in post-colonial experiences or ethnographic methods, which have become an important topic in the study of translation and translation theories. Less work has been done with respect to translation as a transfer vehicle for intricately packaged content—words, images, ideas, data—between different media. This panel brings together scholars of modern and post-modern literature, writing technologies, film, and photography in order to address questions such as the adaptation of language to technological change, or vice versa, and the entanglements of allegedly universal technologies with linguistic particularity.

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### 09:30–10:45 **Brett de Bary (Cornell University)**

Translation Theory, Film, The Post-Colonial

### **Pheng Cheah (University of California, Berkeley)**

Rilke in the Sundarbans: World Heritage Preservation and the Unworlding of the Subaltern World in Amitav Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide*

### 10:45–11:15 **Coffee break**

**11:15–13:00**    **Helena Wu (University of Zurich)**  
The Travelling of Jianghu and its Cinematic Translation

**Jing Tsu (Yale University)**  
Alphabetism in Chinese

**Sarah Fraser (Heidelberg University)**  
Unintended Consequences: Late Qing and Early Republican  
Photography

**10**    **13:00–14:30**    **Lunch break (catering on location)**

**14:30–17:30**    **Panel 5: Visual Translations**  
**Panel Chair: Hans B. Thomsen (University of Zurich)**

Moving to the field of art and artifacts, the last panel explores trans-cultural visibility and critically re-examines the mutual reception of European and Asian art as well as the conceptual frameworks that form these processes. Case studies address the visual representation of Southeast Asian objects in early modern Europe, the interaction between Japanese and European concepts of art with a focus on sculpture, the art historical and artistic discourse of on ink painting in twentieth-century Europe, and Japanese engagement with Indian art and preservation projects.

**14:30–15:45    Jeanne Egloff (University of Zurich)**

Rodin in Tokyo? Encounters with European Art and Sculpture in Meiji Japan

**Vera Wolff (ETH Zurich)**

“The Glamour of Perspective” or The Western History of East Asian Ink Painting, ca. 1900–2000

**15:45–16:15    Coffee break**

**16:15–17:30    Dinah Zank (University of Zurich)**

Japanese Visions of Pan-Buddhist Imagery? – Kôsetsu Nôsu’s Re-Narration of the Life of Buddha in his 1930s Frescoes of the New Mulagandhakuti Vihara in Sarnath

**Paola von Wyss-Giacosa (University of Zurich)**

Devil, Idol, Putto, or Buddha: Western Interpretations of Indonesian Kris Handles

**17:30            End of Conference**

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# General Information

<b>Locations</b>	University of Zurich Ethnographic Museum Pelikanstrasse 40 CH-8001 Zurich
<b>Organizers</b>	URPP Asia and Europe, Research Field 2 <i>Entangled Histories</i> Prof. Dr. Hans B. Thomsen (Institute of Art History) Dr. Julia Obinger (Institute of Asian and Oriental Studies) Dr. Julia Orell (Institute of Art History)
<b>Contact</b>	Dr. Julia Obinger University of Zurich, URPP Asia and Europe Wiesenstrasse 7/9, CH-8008 Zurich julia.obinger@aoi.uzh.ch
<b>Registration</b>	Registration is required by October 27: <a href="mailto:sofia.bollo@uzh.ch">sofia.bollo@uzh.ch</a>
<b>Internet</b>	<a href="http://www.asienundeuropa.uzh.ch/events/conferences/translation.html">www.asienundeuropa.uzh.ch/events/conferences/translation.html</a>

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