Translation is the interface between language and genes — Emily Apter

TRANSLATION & MEDICAL HUMANITIES

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD | 5-6 SEPTEMBER 2023

Keynote speakers
Mona Baker, University of Oslo
Charles Briggs, UC Berkeley
Trish Greenhalgh, University of Oxford

In collaboration with
Medical Humanities, The Oxford Research Centre in the Humanities, University of Oxford & Pitt Rivers Museum, University of Oxford

Funded by
Bodies in Translation: Science, Knowledge and Sustainability in Cultural Translation, Department of Culture Studies and Oriental Languages, University of Oslo & The Research Council of Norway

Organised by
Marta Arnaldi, Postdoctoral Research Fellow, University of Oslo
Lecturer in Italian, University of Oxford
John Ødemark, Professor of Cultural History, University of Oslo
This conference explores the interzone between translation studies and medical humanities by bringing together students, researchers, and professionals in these and adjacent areas. The idea for, and need of, this conference moves from the realisation that the visions and methods of translation studies and translation theory have up to now remained largely overlooked, if not altogether ignored, in critical medical humanities (Whitehead et. al. 2016) and health humanities alike (Crawford, Brown, and Charise 2020). Such an omission, or lack of attention, is particularly surprising given these fields’ inclusive, activist, applied, and culturally diverse agendas. Similarly, an unrecognised yet implicit division between the medical—as in individual and/or societal health—and the ecological—as in planetary, non-human health—has facilitated the evolution of medical humanities and environmental humanities along parallel lines that have only rarely intersected (e.g., Bleakley 2019). Even though a translational understanding of health and disease has been evoked (e.g., Kristeva et al. 2018), a systematic appraisal of the contribution of translation studies and translation theory to the fields of medical and health humanities is overdue.

We welcome papers that creatively and differentially address and/or challenge this gap by exploring the interfaces between medical humanities and translation. In an attempt to mobilise ideas of health and disease across space and time, we invite different stakeholders to use translation, broadly construed, as a medium to explore the role of the arts, humanities and social sciences as ‘essential services’ for medicine and health care. Simultaneously, in the spirit of reciprocity in cross-disciplinary research, we aspire to reappraise the significance of biomedical advancements in the shaping of our linguistic, cultural, and societal ecosystems.

The two-day programme explores three bridge-concepts between, or key aspects of, translation and medical humanities: language, culture, and power. With the awareness that these dimensions are discrete as much as indivisible, we seek critical, policy, and professional responses that investigate, interlace, and/or challenge these notions while fundamentally (re)considering aspects of epistemology, sustainability, technology, history, politics, justice, decolonisation, embodiment, and affect that are inherent in both medicine and translation.
9.00–9.30 Coffee & Registration

9.30–9.40 Welcome
Marta Arnaldi, University of Oslo and University of Oxford
John Ødemark, University of Oslo

Charles Briggs, University of California (Berkeley)
Chaired by Marta Arnaldi, University of Oslo and University of Oxford

10.30–12.00 Panel 1 | Translating Indigeneity and/as Medical Pluralism
Chaired by Tony Sandset, University of Oslo

‘Medical Pluralism in Indian Literature: A Study of Short Stories Translated into English from Indian Languages’
Prachi Sharma, Parliament and Archives, Parliament of India

‘Placebo, Additional Medicine and the Healing Power of Ritual’
Daniel Mohseni Kabir Bäckström, University of Oslo

‘Lu Xun and the Deleuzian Small Health’
Shijung Kim, Harvard University

‘The Challenges of Translating Self-Help Books from English into Arabic while Maintaining their Positive Effect on Mental Health’
Amjad Alliheibi, University of Leicester and King Khalid University

12.00–13.00 Lunch
13.00–14.30 Panel 2 | Translating (with) the Other-than-Human: From Nature to AI
Chaired by Joseph Hankinson, University of Oxford

‘Translating Microbiomic Thinking across Time, Space and Genre’
Davina Höll, Mainz University

‘Virality and Translation in Nights of Plague’
Duygu Tekgül-Akın, Bahçeşehir University

‘Translating Medical Scenes in Fiction: From Scalpel to Paper in the Age of Artificial Intelligence’
Nefise Kahraman, University of Toronto

‘Deeper Learning: Translating the Lived Experience of Dementia Using Semantic Frame Theory and Large Language Models’
James Carney, London Interdisciplinary School

14.30–14.40 Coffee Break

14.40–16.00 Panel 3 | Roundtable on Translation and Medical Humanities: Histories and Visions
Marta Arnaldi, University of Oslo and University of Oxford
Eivind Engebretsen, University of Oslo
Charles Forsdick, University of Liverpool
John Ødemark, University of Oslo

16.00–16.30 Transfer to the Pitt Rivers Museum

16.30–17.00 Visit to Pitt Rivers Museum (for conference delegates)

16.30–18.30 ‘Bodies in Translation’ ECRs Workshop (for registered ECRs)
Marenka Thomson-Odlum, Pitt Rivers Museum
Marta Arnaldi, University of Oslo and University of Oxford
John Ødemark, University of Oslo

with Cristian Torres-Gutierrez, University of Oslo; Zsolt Györegy, University of Oslo; Greta Karoline Heien, University of Oslo; Caroline Pilat, ARUP; Anna Gregaard, University of Oslo; Jeremy Nigel Leslie-Spinks, University of Oxford; Frances (Fanny) Clemente, University of Oxford
9.00–09.45  Keynote  | ‘Working Knowledge and the Duality of Uncertainty: Translating Heterogeneous Knowledge Networks in Long Covid Clinics’  
Trish Greenhalgh, University of Oxford  
Chaired by Eivind Engebretsen, University of Oslo

14.30–14.40  Coffee Break

10.00–11.30  Panel 4  | Translating Medical Discourses across Genres and Media  
Chaired by Charles Forsdick, University of Liverpool

“’I Am Not a Pituitary Endocrinologist, But...’: A Translation Studies-Inspired Perspective on Online Knowledge Translation as Identity Work’  
Henry Jones, University of Manchester

‘Journalistic Translation and the International Circulation of Science News via the EurekAlert! Platform’  
Jack McMartin and Elisa Nelissen, KU Leuven

‘Spatial Translations: Hospital Architecture and the Status of the Human in Architectural Epistemology’  
Julie Zook, University of Illinois

‘Community Translation in the Intersection Between Scientific Papers and Graphic Medicine’  
Ingrid Cobos López, University of Córdoba
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<th>Time</th>
<th>Panel Number</th>
<th>Session Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11.30–13.00</td>
<td>Panel 5</td>
<td>Translating Mental Health and Disability from Psychedelics to Horticulture</td>
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<td>Chaired by Carolina Rau, University of Oslo</td>
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<td>‘St Jerome’s Pharmacy: Translation Studies and the Psychedelic Renaissance’</td>
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<td>‘The Green Clinic: Sohbet in St. Mary’s Secret Garden’</td>
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<td>Ankhi Mukherjee, University of Oxford</td>
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<td>Adarsh Yadav, University of Exeter</td>
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<td>13.00–14.00</td>
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<td>14.00–15.00</td>
<td>Panel 6</td>
<td>Translation as Transculturation: Exploring Disciplinary Crossings</td>
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<td>‘Cultural Translations and Categorical Transmutations of the Pathographical Self: Towards a Trans-Cultural Medical Humanities’</td>
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<td>Sakshi Srivastava, Banaras Hindu University</td>
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<td>‘Translation and Exclusion: Entanglements in Medical Humanities’</td>
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<td>Monika Class, Lund University</td>
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<td>Larry Duffy, University of Kent</td>
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<td>Chaired by Henry Jones, University of Manchester</td>
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<td>‘A Translational and Ethnonarrative Approach to Rehumanize Women’s Birthing Experience’</td>
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<td>Julie Boéri, Hamad Bin Khalifa University</td>
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<td>‘Bodies Within: Translating Abortion Into Legal Citizenship’</td>
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<td>‘Decolonizing Maternal Healthcare Through Interpreting’</td>
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<td>Luciana Carvalho Fonseca, University of São Paulo</td>
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<td>Şebnem Susam-Saraeva, University of Edinburgh</td>
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16.15–17.30 Panel 8 | Translating the Non-Verbal: Trauma, Screams and Gesture from the Classical Period to the Contemporary  
Chaired by Suzanne Jones, University of Oxford

‘Being Human in Graeco-Roman Treatments by Pretence’  
Brian Hurwitz, King’s College London

‘Thanasis Veggos’ Overappropriation of a Gesture, or the Re-emergence of Hysteria in Modern Greece’  
Orestis Tzirtzilakis, University of Oxford

‘Gesture as Physician’s Silent Scream’  
Magdalena Szpilman, Medical Translator

“‘Unspeakable Things Spoken’: Translating Trauma into Bodies and Images in the Works of Toni Morrison and Elsa Morante’  
Katrin Wehling-Giorgi, Durham University

17.30–18.30 Panel 9 | Round Table and Performance  
Embodied Translations in the Creative Medical Humanities  
Chaired by Matthew Reynolds, University of Oxford

‘Health Rhymes with Death’  
Nicola Gardini, University of Oxford

‘A Vital Practice: Translating Narrative Prothesis in Émile Zola’s L’Assommoir’  
Magdala Lissa Jeudy, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities

‘Translating Symbolism into Precision Medicine’  
Banafshé Larijani, University of Bath

“‘I Shiver a Little, I Shudder a Little:” Gist Translation and Uncanny Bodily Knowledges’  
Alison Phipps and Tawona Sithole, University of Glasgow and UNESCO

18.30–19.15 Keynote | ‘Health, Ecology, and Activism: The Dark Side of Translation’  
Mona Baker, University of Oslo

19.15–19.45 Closing Remarks & Wine Reception
Please find a map below with instructions to get from St Anne’s College to the Pitt Rivers Museum, where a museum visit (for conference delegates) and the ‘Bodies in Translation’ ECRs Workshop (for registered ECRs) will take place on Day 1, 5 September.

The recommended route, which takes 14 minutes, takes you from the entrance to St Anne’s College via Woodstock Road across Banbury Road to Parks Road, where you will find the entrance to the Museum of Natural History. Entry to the Pitt Rivers Museum is via the Museum of Natural History.
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— Emily Apter

The Translation & Medical Humanities international conference is organised by Marta Arnaldi, Postdoctoral Research Fellow, University of Oslo and Lecturer in Italian, University of Oxford and John Ødemark, Professor of Cultural History, University of Oslo.

The poster and programme are designed by Georgia Nasseh, Co-ordinator of the Oxford Comparative Criticism and Translation (OCCT) Research Centre.