

CONCEPT NOTE

Translation roundtable

Centre for Translating Cultures/Exeter South Asia Centre

Heteroglossia in/and translation

This workshop invites scholars and practitioners working with multiple languages to share their experiences, compare notes, and discuss effective and ethical ways of understanding multi-lingual terrains, and of moving within them. Scholarship on translation has acknowledged the difficulty, and indeed fallacy, of working with an expectation full set of corresponding equivalent vocabulary, and criticized the denunciations arising out of consequent frustration. In this workshop, we wish to use these findings and explore whether we are in a position to move beyond a notion of bounded, discrete languages, and the act of translation as moving across well-defined boundaries.

Participants are invited to reflect on the following questions:

What may be alternative ways of conceptualizing a multi-lingual social field?

Can we reflect on vocabulary “leakage” in ways that move beyond “contamination” or “hybridity”, both of which are premised on the idea of pre-existing bounded linguistic entities?

How does the notion of distance – geographic, cultural, often used inter-changeably – affect our thinking?

Is the concept of heteroglossia useful in shaping new frameworks of analysis and practice? If so, how indeed would it work in producing functional, creative and ethical texts?

How is the visual representation of language - the historically contingent and variable combinations of language with script – relevant for this discussion?

When is a translation not a translation?

Jointly organized by the Centre for Translating Cultures and the Exeter South Asia Centre, this one-day workshop invites scholars working on thematically comparable but empirically distinct materials to share ideas derived from their own material, but also in response to material presented by paired participants, in an intensive one-day workshop.