



# **Between the Nation and the World**

The Role of Translation and Para-Diplomatic Initiatives in the Circulation of Small/Minor/Peripheral/Less Translated Literatures

Webinar: **29 – 30 June 2020**

**MONDAY, 29 JUNE 2020**

14:00 - 14:10 Opening Session by Diana Roig Sanz

**SESSION 1**

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14:10 - 14:30 Serena Talento (University of Bayreuth)  
“Niche exporting: the circulation of Swahili literature in Europe from the 1970s”

14:30 - 14:50 Discussion

**SESSION 2**

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14:50 - 15:10 Ondrej Vimr (Czech Academy of Sciences, Institute of Czech Literature)  
“Modelling International Trajectories of a Literature. The Case of Czech Literature since 1945”

15:10 - 15:40 Discussion

15:40 - 15:50 **Coffee Break**

**SESSION 3**

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15:50 - 16:10 Laura Fólica (Universitat Oberta de Catalunya)  
“The translation of indigenous languages in Latin American avant-garde literary journals of the first half of the 20th century”

16:10 - 16:40 Discussion

**SESSION 4**

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16:40 - 17:00 Golda van der Meer (Universitat de Barcelona)  
“From self-translation to the world: the case of Deborah Vogel and the “choice” of the Yiddish language”

17:00 - 17:30 Discussion

**TUESDAY, 30 JUNE 2020**

**SESSION 5**

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14:30 - 14:50 Maud Gonne (Université de Namur)  
“Between Belgium, Flanders and the Others. Literary translation practices and beliefs in Wallonia (1850-1930)”

14:50 - 15:20 Discussion

**SESSION 6**

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15:20 - 15:40 Elisabet Carbó Catalan (Universitat Oberta de Catalunya)  
“The internationalization of Catalan Culture: an overview”

15:40 - 16:10 Discussion

16:10 - 16:20 **Coffee Break**

**SESSION 7**

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16:20 - 16:40 Ana Kvirikashvili (Universitat Oberta de Catalunya)  
“25 Years of Translations (1995-2020): From the Creation of a Georgian Literary Field to the Internationalization of a Minor Literature”

16:40– 17:10 Discussion

**SESSION 8**

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17:10 - 18:00 Final Discussion and Closing Remarks, chaired by Diana Roig Sanz

Translation is central to world literature and global literary studies. The ‘transnational turn’ in literary studies has led to a significant rise in critical interest in the role of translation, but the enormous scope and scale of the topic, combined with the very focused linguistic and literary expertise required for the study of translation, has allowed for very few comparative studies. This shortage is more evident when it comes to languages referred to as small, minor, peripheral, or less translated; although widely discussed (Deleuze & Guattari 1975; Branchadell & West 2005), these terms remain controversial. Comparative literature, world literary studies, and translation studies have generally focused on central languages or, at best, on the relationships between central and peripheral literatures (Cronin 1999; 2003), but there is still a lot of research to be done with regard to inter-peripheral literary exchanges (Heilbron 1999; Heilbron & Sapiro 2002), as with Swedish-Czech, Polish-Portuguese, Dutch-Malay, Japanese-Korean or the ultraminor Faroese in its relation to Danish. The recent turn towards globalization, cosmopolitanism, and transnationalism calls us to rethink the role of major national literatures and broader regional configurations, as well as the place of smaller literatures and their relations to the wider world. Peripheral literatures not only show how important literature is to nation building, but also how deeply translation and para-diplomatic initiatives and cultural policies affect the autonomization of the literary field (Bourdieu 1992). In this respect, despite the fact that some of their texts can be also classified as world literature, minor literatures have been mostly overlooked by literary scholars. It has been assumed that minor literatures play a marginal role in the global literary system, and even major works such as *The Routledge Companion to World Literature* (Damrosch, D’haen, Kadir 2011) have paid little attention to the impact of this new focus on truly small languages and less known literatures. Postcolonial criticism has focused on a specific segment of world literature—literature from the colonies—but this is not always applicable to the analysis of small literatures from, for instance, Western Europe. Indeed, there is little theoretical work on the specificities of these cases, as well as the differences among them.

Thus, we aim at further defining the notion of the ‘minor’ and related concepts such as the ones above-mentioned (small, less-translated, peripheral, dominated) within an historical perspective. We advance the hypothesis that minor cultures and literatures are not only relevant in their own right, but also from a broader perspective. In that respect, there is an urgent need to reassess the value of the minor and the role of translation in nation building processes, but also in relation to different scales (regional-national-transnational-international-global). This will help us to rethink literary and translation history beyond classical periodizations and hegemonic geographical scales, and take into account different forms of cultural mediation, as well as the mediators involved (Meylaerts, Gonne, Lobes, Roig Sanz 2016; Roig Sanz & Meylaerts 2018).

Within this framework, this workshop gathers different case studies which are related to the translation, circulation and institutionalization of small/minor/peripheral and less translated literatures (Czech, Georgian, Yiddish, Catalan, Walloon, native indigenous literatures in Latin America, and Swahili) through processes that may imply intranlation and extranlation and para-diplomatic initiatives in the light of power struggles for legitimization. These cases will rethink key concepts related to our object of research such as cross-border languages, cultural diversity, indigenous people, identity politics, inter-peripherality, language minority, lesser-translated languages, major vs. minor languages and literatures, national minority, or regional literatures, which we understand within a twofold approach: on the one hand, Wallonia or Catalonia; on the other hand, the former Soviet Union, the Caucasus or the Caribbean. They will also illustrate translation’s political function and different degrees of minorization: literatures within a non-state framework such as the case of Catalan and Walloon, small literatures within smaller nations and a state framework such as Georgian or Czech literature, minor indigenous literatures which crisscross a whole region (Latin America) or more than one country (Swahili), or a Diasporic Third Space in the case of Yiddish (Berger 2008). We will also keep in mind the role of translation in literatures published in languages of former empires (Equatorial Guinea, for example). Some case studies will also shed light into new ways of addressing these literatures through data mining and big data approaches. Finally, this workshop will not deal specifically with literatures of migration, gender or queer issues in relation to marginalized communities, but we may understand that they could somehow appear.

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Organising Committee: Ana Kvirikashvili, Elisabet Carbó and Diana Roig Sanz.