

Call for papers

Sustainability and Translation

Annual International Conference
of the Institute of Culture Studies and Theatre History
at the Austrian Academy of Sciences

Vienna (13-15 October 2021)

[Concept: Federico Italiano]

Despite its current socio-political urgency and the growing importance of eco-criticism in universities around the globe, the concept of ‘sustainability’ has been slow in carving out a central position in the humanities. Its marginality is perhaps due to the inherent complexity of the concept itself, its irreducible transdisciplinarity (ecology, economy and sociology) and the numerous disputes it experienced since 1987, when the World Commission on Environment and Development defined it as an activity that “meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (WCED 1987: 39).

Nevertheless, it is today an irremissible concept for participating in the global debate on our responsibility towards our planet and our future. Hence, this conference will try to fill this gap by focusing on the relationship between sustainability and translation processes. In particular, it will investigate in what sense translation—understood as both a linguistic undertaking and a cultural cross-cultural negotiation—is a sustainable practice, what makes it such, if there are translations more sustainable than others and to what extent a sustainable translation is a desirable goal.

Drawing on Michael Cronin’s *Eco-Translation: Translation and Ecology in the Age of the Anthropocene* (2017)—so far, the only monograph explicitly dedicated to the subject—the conference aims at showing how fundamental it is to put translation at the centre of any political, cultural and scientific reflection on climate change and social equity. The objective of this conference, however, is neither to establish ‘sustainability’ as a new normative concept for translation studies nor to make translation more ‘ecological’; it is rather an attempt at opening the concept of ‘sustainability’ to debate around translation processes and cultural negotiations.

Therefore, alongside the central issue of the relationship between translation and ecology, the conference will ask questions about what makes certain translation processes more sustainable than others in terms of equity and social justice; what role the sustainability of a translation plays in the transfer and circulation of knowledge; and what criteria can be used to evaluate the sustainability of a translation in highly codified fields such as philosophy, literature or jurisprudence. These questions will not only shed light onto translation as a cultural practice motivated by concerns around resilience, adaptability and 'placeness', but also contribute to a more precise comprehension of the translational dimension of sustainability.

Possible topics of interest include (but are not limited to):

- Eco-translation and environmental translation
- Political ecology of translation
- Translation and sustainable development
- Translation and social equity
- "Slow" translation versus digital translation
- Sustainability and translation technologies
- Translation and toxic heritage
- Sustainable translation policies
- Sustainability and literary translation
- Translation of endangered languages
- Minority languages in the context of technical, scientific and/or juridical translation
- The relationship between emotional/cultural resilience and translation
- Translation and empowerment

If you wish to present a paper, please send a brief abstract (300 words) and a short bio, to federico.italiano@oeaw.ac.at AND juliane.fink@oeaw.ac.at by midnight on Saturday 3 July 2021. If your abstract will be selected, we will cover your travel and accommodation costs.