

International Comparative Literature Association
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Original / Translation. The implied languages of imagined translations

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This ICLA seminar focuses on a specific form of multilingualism—on mostly monolingual texts that do not present but rather evoke another language. There are many instances in which a text we read implies that it was "originally" in a different language: We read Usbek's and Rica's letters from Paris in Montesquieu's *Lettres Persanes* (1721) in French, but we understand that they "originally" wrote to their Persian correspondents in Persian; Macpherson's English *Fragments of ancient poetry* (1760) never let us forget that they are "translated from the Gaelic or Erse language"; Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus* (1832) chronicles a torturous attempt to acquaint the British public with a German philosopher's work, citing long passages from the "originally" German text in English "translation"; and when in Ted Chiang's story "The truth of fact, the truth of feeling" (2013) a missionary in West Africa talks with his student, they speak in Tiv, but we read their conversations in English.

In all these cases, the present language brings an absent language into play. These texts evoke and involve another language by inviting us to imagine the original text we read as a translation of a preceding original.

This wide-spread phenomenon has only recently become a focus of scholarly attention. The terms used proliferate with the increasing number of contributions: pseudotranslation (Toury, Rambelli, Gürçağlar), pseudo-traduction (Collombat, Jenn, Martens/Vanacker), seudotraduccion (Santoyo), fictitious translation (Bassnett), assumed translation (Komissarov, Halverson), translations with no original (Apter), traduction supposée (Lombez), transmesis (Beebee), and original translation (Rath). This seminar aims at bringing the many languages of different research traditions together to discuss the implications of the multilingualism of imagined translation for Comparative Literature. These include questions on the concepts of original and translation, on the process of translation and translatability, and on transnational reception, authorship and audience.

We invite papers that present individual case studies—from all periods and literatures—and/or discuss the concept and its many names. These individual contributions to the seminar will allow us to explore and map this productive phenomenon for comparative literature.

This seminar will consist of three panels with three to four papers each that allow for continuing discussions among the participants of the seminar. Active participants are expected to attend all three panels.

Please submit your abstract online by August 31, 2015 via the conference website <http://icla2016.univie.ac.at/abstract-submission/>. You will need to create an account with the website and enter the seminar number 17295 into the "topic" field on the "add abstract" screen.

Do not hesitate to contact us with any questions you might have via an email to both brigitte.rath@fu-berlin.de and beatrijs.vanacker@arts.kuleuven.be