



Accademia Roveretana degli Agiati
8-9 November 2021

Call for papers

**The manuscript or ‘submerged’ translation
in European culture (1700-1950)**

In modern and contemporary European culture, a particular type of translation exists that may be called ‘submerged’, because it remains hidden, as a manuscript or a typescript, in the personal archive of a translator or an editor.

The peculiar phenomenon of unpublished translations has manifold explanations. The author might have explicitly intended the translation as a literary exercise or a technical transposition; he or she might have reconsidered his work or left it unfinished; he or she might have preferred another version that was faster to print; difficulties or disagreements might have arisen between the translator on the one side and the original author or the editor on the other, etc.

The failure to publish a translation, however, does not necessarily foreclose its circulation. Some translations, albeit unpublished, still pass through more or less structured intellectual networks, ensuring an early and unofficial knowledge of the original text. This phenomenon can be associated with what modern historiography has termed ‘manuscript communication’, of which 18th-century clandestine philosophy most likely represents the tip of the iceberg.

Although submerged translations cannot circulate as widely as print ones, they constitute nonetheless an extraordinary testing ground to investigate all the translational practices or ‘tactics’ used by literary translators to convey a text from a language to another, and from a cultural system to another.

First, it is possible to understand whether the translation was operated directly on the original work or using a metatext, which assembles and collates different versions of the same text. Furthermore, it can be verified whether partial or full indirect translations, or *relais*, were employed, which Jürgen von Stackelberg called ‘second-hand translations’ (*Übersetzungen aus zweiter Hand*).

The autograph quality of submerged translations allows – to a far greater extent than the print ones whose original manuscript or typescript is missing – to conduct targeted genetic analyses in order to reconstruct the complex work of the literary translator. It is hence possible to highlight, where traces remain, any syntactic and lexical choices, or the need to mark, using *ad hoc* parenthetical elements, the difficulty in translating a word or a phrase from a language to another.

The posthumous publication of a manuscript translation does not affect in any way its original purpose since its fate becomes independent from the intentions of the translator and prone to the claims of another subject acting retroactively.

Studying submerged translations does not only provide an opportunity to bring back to the surface a core of literary materials that was previously neglected, but at the same time to engage with the true extent of mediating practices between different cultural realities, which do not only pass through the editorial channels.

The upcoming edition of the conference will only consider submissions concerning manuscript or typescript translations drafted between 1700 and 1950 in the main European spoken languages, that is Italian, French, German, and English, from original prose or/and poetry works published in the same languages. Each individual submission must contain:

1. the title of the contribution;
2. the author's name and an indication of his institutional affiliation;
3. a brief summary of the contribution (max. 1000 characters including spaces);
4. an indication of the manuscript or typescript as the object of research, specifying its current location and the medium (i.e., autograph manuscript, allograph manuscript, rough or fair copy, draft, etc.);
5. a short resume of the applicant (max. 300 characters including spaces).

The proposal, to be written in Italian, French, English or German at the author's discretion, must be sent by **30 April 2021** to the following email address: traduzionemanoscritta@agiati.org.

From **1 July 2021**, the applicants will be notified whether their proposal has been selected for the seminar.

The scientific committee overseeing the conference is composed of: Stefano Ferrari (Accademia Roveretana degli Agiati), Michele Sisto (Università degli Studi di Pescara-Chieti), Paola Maria Filippi (Università degli Studi Bologna) and Alessia Castagnino (Università degli Studi di Milano).