



 **Universität Trier**



**DFG - Kolleg-Forscherguppe
FOR 2603**

DFG-CENTER FOR ADVANCED STUDIES
Russian-language Poetry in Transition.
Poetic Forms – Addressing the Bound-
aries of Genre, Language, and Culture
Across Europe, Asia, and the Americas

www.lyrik-in-transition.uni-trier.de

Translating Contemporary Poetry
Forms of Transition between Europe, Asia, and the Americas
October 5 – 8, 2020, University of Trier, Germany

Dear colleagues,

We would kindly like to invite you to the conference "Translating Contemporary Poetry. Forms of Transition between Europe, Asia, and the Americas," hosted by the DFG Research Center for Advanced Studies in the Humanities at the University of Trier. Colleagues whose research is focused on modern languages and literatures are welcome to participate. The conference will have an international and comparative profile, and the main conference language will be English.

However, if you organize a **panel or stream** on a specific topic, *presentations in other languages* (Russian, German, etc.) *will be permitted*.

Proposals for the presentation of a single paper or a panel (stream) should be **sent by email (to: transition@uni-trier.de) no later than March 30, 2020** and must include the name(s) and affiliation(s) of the presenter(s), the title of the paper(s) (panel/stream), a 100-word-maximum English abstract of the paper(s) (*in addition to* an abstract of the panel/stream, if applicable), and a short CV of the presenter/s. Acceptance will be communicated by May 30, 2020, at the latest.

No fees will be charged for participation in the conference.

It is also possible to receive funding for hotel and travel costs. If you are interested in receiving financing for your participation, we ask you to apply with a longer, 400-500-word abstract of your presentation. Furthermore, funding is contingent upon the submission of your finished essay with the rights to its first publication through our project not later than September 21, 2020.

Enclosed is an outline of conference topics broken into main subject areas and associated key questions. In your abstract, you should indicate which of the fourteen subject areas best accommodates your contribution and which of the key questions you wish to address. Section 15 is open to accommodate topics that cannot be assigned to any of the previous sections.

For further questions and more information please do not hesitate to contact us (transition@uni-trier.de).

We are very much looking forward to your contributions and hope that you will be able to participate at our conference!

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'H. Stahl', is positioned above the printed name.

Henrieke Stahl
(on behalf of Alexander Bierich, Andreas Regelsberger, Christian Soffel).

Information Summary:

Conference Dates: October 5 – 8, 2020

Location: University of Trier, Germany

No fees.

Proposals for a presentation of a single paper or a panel (stream) at the conference should be **sent by email (to: transition@uni-trier.de) no later than March 30, 2020.**

Financing / Reimbursement Conditions:

- Application including a short CV, title, and abstract (up to 500 words) in English, must be sent by March 30, 2020 to: transition@uni-trier.de
- As a condition for reimbursing your expenses, your paper must be accepted and submitted (length up to 60,000 characters) by September 21, 2020 to: transition@uni-trier.de

Expenses Eligible for Reimbursement:

- Travel costs: second class / economy *only*. During the conference your expenses will be reimbursed in cash (non-SEPA) or, alternatively, after the conference by bank transfer (SEPA).
- Four nights in a hotel (booking and payment directly by our Research Center)
- Catering during the conference (coffee breaks, lunches)

Publication of contributions is scheduled for 2021.

Main conference (and publication) language: English

CONCEPT

There is currently a greater quantity and variety of translation than perhaps ever before in the history of world literature, and it is in part thanks to translation that world literature is so rapidly developing as a global and transnational institution. Poetry has not been excluded from this boom—not only in the segment of professional authors and translators but in the broad field of interested amateurs and in contexts such as philosophical or philological translation for the purpose of academic research.

However, the translation of poetry, particularly contemporary poetry, has to address extraordinary challenges. Hence, the widespread view that poetry in translation is impossible: that translation either reduces texts to their lexical-semantic content or transforms them into an entirely new work. It is therefore no coincidence that the theory of translation tends to disregard poetic forms; conversely, as its limit case, the translation of poetry has advanced to become a core area of theoretical reflection on translation as such.

The linguistic features, characteristics of poetic forms and their specific potentials for aesthetic reception usually have even fewer or no correspondences in the target language. These problems in each case result from very different developments in literary history, politics, and society; the sometimes strongly divergent approaches to poetic forms and procedures in various literatures can, if reproduced in translation, evoke other and different poetic functions and effects conditioned by the aesthetics of reception.

The translation of contemporary poetry poses further complications. Frequently, the authors and their texts are little or not at all known in the target language, and there are few or no exemplary

texts on which the new translation could be based or from which it could consciously distance itself. Moreover, the selection of texts to be translated and the introduction of the poets into other languages and literary milieus appears to be particularly difficult for new poetry, which still has to find its audience.

Finally, contemporary poetry intensifies linguistic, generic, and transcultural hybridization (e.g., multilingualism, generic and intermedial crossover, transcultural and transhistorical reference). This undoubtedly weighs on the task of the translator. For example, transcultural poetry requires transcultural translation, which, however, must necessarily respond to the respective target language, literature, and readership—even if the original attempts to violate the constraints of *any* such localization. Here, the possibility of direct contact with living authors to clarify and reflect on certain issues can be instrumental. Literatures show very different degrees of internationalization; and in various languages and literary traditions, current practices of poetry translation and contemporary philological theories and models differ.

This conference aims to examine trends in the translation of poetry in East Asia, Western and Eastern Europe, and the Americas since the turn of the millennium and to compare them, on the one hand, to the background of their respective traditions and, on the other hand, to an international context that increasingly shapes contemporary poetry as a whole. The focus of the conference is therefore on comparative studies and contemporary poetics. Contributions that compare approaches to translation in different languages and literatures are particularly welcome.

Thematic Sections of the Conference:

1. Theory: Which models of poetry translation are currently applied in various localized philologies under consideration? Upon which hermeneutics or theory of literature are they based?
2. Typology: How might a typology of possible forms of lyric translation appear if it were to be constructed? Which criteria could be developed for characterizing, classifying, and evaluating lyric translations?
3. Poetology of Lyric Translation: How do contemporary poets themselves understand poetic translation and what role does their understanding of translation play in their own poetics? Do contemporary translation poetics question and extend traditional notions of authorship and work identity in the process of translation? How does poetry translation differ from the translation of other literary genres?
4. World Literature: What is the significance of poetry translation for the internationalization of literature? How is translation involved in the development of 'world poetry'? To what extent does poetry translation take into account the untranslatability of language(s) and culture(s)? How are self and other renegotiated and related in the process of translation?
5. Forms of Practice and Praxiology: Which types of poetry translation are commonly used today in which languages or countries? How do philologists translate and how do poets translate? How does automatic translation work in the case of poetry? Which processes are involved in poetic self-translation? How does poetry translation relate to spheres of activity within the literary establishment and the literary public (concerning: authorship, copyright, publishing houses, traditional and new media, funding institutions, prizes, the reading public)? Could we even identify a sociology of poetry translation?

6. Multilingualism: Recent poetry is—in various ways—increasingly characterized by multilingualism, the use of style levels and sociolects, dialects or even idiolects: What challenges are thus created for the varying target languages, and how do they differ?
7. Transculturality: Contemporary poetry hybridizes different cultural influences. How do translators deal with this arrangement? And to what extent does transculturality manifest itself in the translation of poetry?
8. Genre Transition and Intermediality: Contemporary poetry hybridizes characteristics of different genres and works with different media. What special challenges could thus be identified for translation?
9. Traditions of Translation: What have been the main tendencies of various literatures for developing the translation of poetry and in what relation to them does poetry stand in the present?
10. Multiple Translations and Dialogue versus Agonism in Translation: What poems have been translated into one language in the present with particular frequency? How could this focus on certain texts be explained? What are the reasons for the conspicuous occurrence of multiple translations? How do the translations stand in relation to each other, as well as across languages? Who or what decides whether a text is translated and thus becomes visible or remains invisible for a specific readership, and what enables a translator to translate a text, and for what reasons?
11. Case Study. Paul Celan: Celan, whose hundredth birthday will be celebrated in 2020, is not only considered one of the most translated poets in the world today, but also one of the great poet-translators of classical modernism. His translational work has received an unprecedented reception in literary and translation studies. Which poems are of particular interest in which linguistic areas? How are Celan's special poetic and linguistic procedures of silence and the decentering or multiplication of meaning dealt with? How are the highly problematic topics, influenced by the Shoah, treated in translation? How is the dimension of Judaism dealt with? What image of Celan is constructed by translations in various foreign linguistic areas? What significance does Celan's own translation of poetry hold for contemporary poetry translators?
12. Mystification, Transmimesis, and Translational Fictions: How are mystifications in translation in the present and 'fictitious' poetry translations in other genres—such as fictitious translations of poems in a novel or translations without the original (pseudo-translations)—constructed?
13. Micro Languages: To what extent do poetic translations contribute to the preservation and dissemination of micro-languages? What particularities are apparent in this context?
14. Writing Systems: What challenges do the peculiarities of logographic writing systems (e.g., Chinese and Japanese) pose to translators of lyrical texts? What strategies can be used to transfer concrete poetry in these cases?
15. Free Topics