

Translation Theory Today

An Interdisciplinary Conference on Critical Theory

Keynote Speakers:

Homi K. Bhabha (Harvard University)

Edwin Frank (The New York Review of Books Classics)

Keynote Roundtable on Practice:

**Sara Bershtel (Metropolitan Books), Barbara Epler (New Directions),
Jonathan Galassi (Farrar, Straus, & Giroux), & Jill Schoolman (Archipelago Books)**

The Critical Theory Certificate Program at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York in conjunction with The Center for the Humanities presents the fifth annual interdisciplinary conference on Critical Theory to be held May 5th-6th, 2015. This year's conference will be devoted to the theory and practice of translation.

Literally meaning “carried across,” translation facilitates the movement of ideas among individuals, cultures languages, time periods, and geographic boundaries. Since antiquity, scholars have questioned translation's ability to preserve meaning across languages and debated whether the successful translator should provide a word for word conversion of the original or adapt the source material to fit its new context and, in so doing, take on an authorial role. The globalization of the present era has highlighted how translation fosters communication while emphasizing cultural differences and disparities, simultaneously illuminating and distorting meaning. In the liminal space between the spoken and the unspeakable, translation serves as an adaptive tool that facilitates the development of new social memories and historical narratives. This conference seeks to employ Critical Theory to examine all aspects of translation—its history, evolution, practice, and effects on language, identity, culture, and society—in order to interrogate the functions of and standards for a successful translation. We welcome a wide range of disciplines and theoretical approaches, including literary theory, psychoanalysis, identity theory, semiotics, philosophy, social theory, cultural studies, postcolonialism, gender studies, and political theory. Some of the topics that this conference seeks to address include, but are not limited to:

- Translation's adaptation of the source material to fit new historical, social, and cultural contexts
- The creative aspects of a translation, and its capacity to stand on its own artistic merits
- The translator's role as an author and translation's fidelity (or lack thereof) to the original source material
- The possibility of cultural translation
- The relationship between translation and globalization
- Translation as means of comprehending Self and Other
- The particular characteristics of writers and translators in exile, immigrant, diaspora, and dissident communities
- The evolution and history of translation, especially with respect to Antiquity and the Middle Ages
- The psychological effects of translation, particularly with regard to identity politics
- Translation and its relationships with etymology and philology (e.g. Turğumān, dragoman, drogman, targum)
- Translation as an ideological or political tool
- Translation and memory
- The function of translation in polyglot communities
- Theoretical analyses of translations
- Authors who translate and the inner translator in bilingual and trilingual authors
- Technology's effect on translation and the impact of internet translation communities
- Translation as figure
- Translation, imitation, and hybridity
- The consequences of improper or mistranslation

Please submit a 300-word abstract to translationtheorytoday@gmail.com by March 1st. Proposals should include the title of the paper, the presenter's name, a 50-word bio including institutional and departmental affiliation, and any technology requests. We also welcome panel proposals of three to four papers.