

## Introduction

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This issue was originally planned to include papers presented a year ago at the 17<sup>th</sup> Annual St. Jerome's Day Conference at the University of Alberta, as it has been the tradition. Unfortunately, we received very few contributions, so the decision was made to publish a non-thematic issue and to put the emphasis on creativity. Indeed, some of the submissions we accepted for publication are remarkable in terms of both writing and translating skills as well as inventiveness thanks to either imagination, literary knowledge, or both. Before going into more details about these pieces, however, I would like to present the articles and interviews that follow this introduction.

The first article, by Omar Jabak and entitled "Application of Eugene Nida's Theory of Translation to the English translation of Surah Ash-Shams," deals with the applicability of Nida's theory of equivalence to a specific surah in the Qur'an. The author begins the discussion with a general overview of the importance of the Qur'an and its function in Islam. Following a review of Nida's work, the paper proceeds to a contrastive analysis of the surah in the international edition of *The Qur'an: Arabic Text with Corresponding English Meanings*, published in Saudi Arabia by Abulqasem Publishing House in 1997. The results of the case study are favourable to Nida's theory except for some syntactical pitfalls due to the different word order in Arabic and English.

The next article, "Ideology in the Translation of Political Speeches during the Arab-Israeli Conflict: A Critical Discourse Analysis," by Husam Haj Omar, examines the role of ideology in the translations of political speeches delivered by the Hamas and Hezbollah leaders during two Arab-Israeli conflicts: the Lebanon War in 2006 and the Gaza War in 2008-2009. Using a method based on discourse analysis, the author finds that there was a certain degree of manipulation by anglophone media outlets but concludes that more investigation is needed to determine the extent to which anti-Israeli media outlets also resorted to similar manipulative strategies.

The two other contributions to this section are interviews conducted by Mingxing Wang with translators: the first with Noël Dutrait who translated *Lingshan* by the Chinese writer and 2000 Nobel Prize winner Gao Xingjian into French (*La Montagne de l'âme; Soul Mountain* in English<sup>1</sup>); the second interview is with Gao Xingjian himself about his work as a translator and a playwright. He has lived in France since 1987, first as a political refugee, and today as a French citizen.

An essay by Leyla Seyidova follows the article section and gives us an opportunity to discover the Azeri writer Magsud Ibrahimbeyov and his novella *Let Him Stay with Us*, which he wrote in Russian as he did for all of his work because of his education at the time of the Soviet occupation of Azerbaijan. Seyidova argues that, while the English translation of this title by Saadat Ibrahimova, offers a window into post-Soviet Azeri culture, it falls short of producing a transnational understanding of the work.

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<sup>1</sup> Mabel Lee translated it into English

The following section opens with an experimental piece by Elena Siemens about the experience of transit while traveling to Moscow via Montreal. To illustrate this feeling of disconnect, Siemens uses Google Translate to move from English to French, and then to Russian. Enhanced by photographs, the final product is highly creative. Next is the English translation by Matthew Danzinger of a Japanese free verse poem entitled “A Poem I Wrote on a Beautiful Night”. The writer is Murō Saisei (1889–1962), one of the first to break away from the traditional forms of *waka* and *haikai* and write free verse. The poem is from his first poetry collection, entitled *Ai no Shishū* (“Collection of Love Poems”) and published in 1918. It was a pleasure to hear Danzinger read both the original and his translation at the readings organized as part of the St. Jerome’s Day celebration of translation in fall 2019. Another reader from that event was Sofía Monzón who treated us with a poem of her own creation and its self-translation. I am sure you will enjoy reading “*Poetízame las ganas*, ‘Poema II’” as much as we enjoyed hearing it. Julie Robinson was also participating in the readings last year and standing in for her collaborator, Leilei Chen who was away at that time. Robinson shared with us three poems by Ma Hui, which are published here with their translations. Another piece by Leilei Chen, entitled “Translation as Co-creation with the Author,” closes this section. If you want to hear Ruth DyckFehderau, the author of this story, and Leilei Chen discuss and read an excerpt, don’t miss the reading online event organized by the Literary Translators Association of Canada (LTAC) and yours truly on September 30, 2020, otherwise known as St. Jerome’s Day! They will be joined by five other translators reading their work, some of whom featured here, to celebrate translation even though the conference had to be postponed until next year due to COVID-19. Ruth DyckFehderau was commissioned by the James Bay Cree to write a collection of stories for which they retain copyrights. We are, therefore, extremely grateful to be able to publish the Chinese translation of one story entitled “The Story of Maggie Happyjack and Simon Etapp of Waswanipi” from *The Sweet Bloods of Eeyou Istchee: Stories of Diabetes and the James Bay Cree*.

This volume also includes an unusually high number of reviews and I am very grateful to all the colleagues who undertook to write these, as I am also to each contributor of this issue of *TranscUlturAl*. Special thanks also to Kristjanna Grimmelt who, as the LTAC representative, took it upon herself to organize the September 30<sup>th</sup> St. Jerome’s Day launch of this latest issue and to feature Ruth DyckFehderau, Leilei Chen and others in a much needed celebration of creativity in these unusual times.