

Editorial

I am delighted to introduce Issue 4 of *New Voices in Translation Studies*, which takes the form of a Special Conference Issue, as its guest-editor. On 17-18 April 2008, my colleagues and I held a Postgraduate Conference at University College London (UK), entitled 'With/without Theory: The Role of Theory in Translation Studies Research' (funded by the Arts & Humanities Research Council, UK, and the UCL Graduate School). Around eighty young translation scholars from all over the world attended the event and debated seventeen paper presentations and six poster presentations. Our keynote speakers Prof. Maria Tymoczko and Prof. Ian Mason framed the two-day event with their keynote speeches, entitled 'The Theory of Theory' and 'Theory and Method in Discourse-Analytic Approaches to Translation Research'¹ respectively.

All conference contributions addressed from various angles and view-points the conference theme, which questioned the role of theory in our endeavor to understand and conceptualize translation. In particular, we asked the presenters to consider the usefulness of the prevailing theories in translation research, which are often borrowed from other disciplines such as linguistics and sociology. Would a more directly translation-based theory be more profitable for research? And what is the connection between theory and methodology in specific projects?

As a representation of the responses heard in April '08, we selected five papers on the basis of their novel content and clear structure to be published in this special issue and shared with the wider research community. **Sai Cheong Siu** from the Chinese University of Hong Kong introduces the 'theory of giving' (dāna) as a conceptual tool to describe the special case of Buddhist scripture translation in its social and historical context. **Lavinia Heller** from the Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz (Germany) proposes the metaphor of the 'stranger' to describe the 'afterlife' of a translation: the possible interrelations in and impact on the target-culture once the translation has left the translator's hands. **Rocío G. Sumillera** from the Universidad de Granada (Spain) highlights within the theoretical framework of postcolonial translation studies the importance of rendering the socio-politically charged differences in registers. In her case-study, she works with Jean Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea* and three translations into Spanish. **Dionysis Kapsaskis** from Roehampton University (UK) draws on film and translation theories to explore the de-familiarizing effect of subtitles on the target-audience. **Kate Eaton** from Queen Mary, University of London (UK) discusses the possible space of theory in the collaborative practice of theatre translation, drawing on her own translation experience of Virgilio Piñera's *Siempre se olvida algo*.

My thanks go to the authors, reviewers and proofreaders who worked hard to bring about this issue's quality and engaging reads. Equally, I would like to thank the conference team, who helped with the early editorial stages: Daniela Almansi, Phrae Chittiphalangsri, Gloria Lee and Elaine Ng. Last but not least, I would like to thank Prof. Theo Hermans, who initiated the project and provided support, particularly at times when belief in success was scarce.

Dorothea Martens, University College London, May 2009

¹ Prof. Mason's paper (in a slightly adapted version) is in the process of being published with the following details: Mason, Ian (2009) 'Translator Moves and Reader Response: the Impact of Discoursal Shifts in Translation', in Monika Krein-Kühle and Michael Schreiber (eds) *Translationswissenschaftliches Kolloquium I*. Bern: Peter Lang, 55-71.

Editorial Note

This Issue also marks a complete change of the editorial team of *New Voices* as Stefan Baumgarten, Sameh Hannah and Marion Winters retire from their editorial duties and hand over to Phrae Chittiphalangsri (Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand), Sue-Ann Harding (University of Manchester, UK) and Dorothea Martens (University College London, UK) as the new editorial team.