

## EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

It is with great pleasure that we launch the inaugural issue of *Translation Matters*, a twice-yearly journal designed to offer a platform (primarily though not exclusively) for early-stage translation scholars in Portugal and the Portuguese-speaking world. From this point onwards, we hope to bring out two issues a year, a general issue at the beginning of the year and a special issue in around September. Readers and potential contributors should keep their eyes glued to our website for further information about deadlines and themes.

As befits a general (non-thematic) issue, this first number contains papers on a range of topics and translational genres, including literary, academic, religious and audiovisual. There is naturally a focus on the Lusophone context, as regards subject matter and authors' provenance, but we are delighted to also present contributions from further afield, extending the coverage to the cultural and literary systems of Spain/Catalonia, South America and Japan.

The first article, by **Gisele Dionísio da Silva**, looks at the cultural, political and literary role of translation agents in the world of Brazilian academic publishing. After a discussion of the concept of agency as it is understood in Translation Studies, she homes in on the figure of Jacó Guinsburg, a multifaceted figure, who helped introduce valuable international scholarship to the Brazilian academic community through his work with the *Perspectiva* publishing house.

The second paper continues the focus on individual agents of translation by turning to the Nobel-prize-winning author José Saramago, who not only played an important role in the commissioning and editing of literary translations for the publishing house *Estúdios Cor* during the 1960s, but also himself translated more than sixty works from French over a thirty-year period. Drawing upon Saramago's correspondence with editors and translators, **Mariana Gonçalves** reconstructs his early trajectory as literary director at the publishing house, before concentrating on his own translations of two dark tales by Guy de Maupassant, undertaken during the years of the *Estado Novo*.

The theme of agency continues to play an important role in the next two articles, though in very different translational genres. **Márcia Dias Sousa** analyses how excerpts from the Catholic Bible have been (re)translated in an autobiographical work (*My Sisters the Saints*, by Colleen Carroll Campbell), in order to sustain the author's life story and communicate her own private meanings. Her analysis gives particular attention to the role of memory and consciousness in determining the choices made, offering an important reflection on how even hyper-authoritative texts like the Bible may be susceptible to individual interpretation.

**Matteo Fabbretti's** paper is concerned with the role of agency in the scanlation (unauthorised scanning, translation and online distribution) of Japanese manga comics. The article offers a case study of one individual scanlator, focusing on his handling of Japanese honorifics and gender pronouns in a narrative that touches on the matter of gender reassignment. By studying how this particular individual uses translator's notes and other

paratextual apparatus to counter potential charges of “misgendering”, Fabbretti sheds light on the extent and limits of his agency in an especially delicate situation.

The next article stays on the Japanese theme with a study by **Kaori Asakura** of the English and Portuguese dubbing and subtitling of the anime film *Spirited Away*. She is especially interested in the strategies used to translate three kinds of extralinguistic cultural references: honorifics, characters' names, and religious terms. Of particular interest to the *Translation Matters* readership might be her findings that, while the English dubbed version uses a variety of target-oriented strategies to clarify these references to the target audience, the Portuguese sticks much more closely to the Japanese original storyline. Whether this might reveal a greater openness to the foreign Other on the part of the projected (i.e. Portuguese) target public is a question that might be worthy of further attention.

The next three articles are also concerned with translation into Portuguese, this time of literary works originally written in, respectively, American English, South American Spanish and medieval German. **Anabela Nascimento** looks at a 1970s Brazilian Portuguese version of James Fenimore Cooper's classic *The Last of the Mohicans*, and considers, in addition to the language question, how a work originally destined for an adult audience has been adapted for a juvenile readership. **Isabel Branco** takes a broader sweep, surveying the panorama of Latin American literature in Portugal and the role played by these translated works in the Portuguese polysystem. Finally, **J. Carlos Teixeira** describes a project to translate the medieval German troubadour texts known as *Minnesang*, using an approach based on Kwame Anthony Appiah's anthropological notion of “thick translation”.

The last article in this issue, by **Cristina Carrasco**, stands in marked contrast to the others, in both its geolinguistic scope and understanding of translation. It is concerned with the hybrid discourse produced by Moroccan-born Catalan author Najat El Hachmi, perceived (in keeping with much contemporary literature on transcultural writing) as a form of self-translation. Reflecting on the linguistic tensions at play in present-day Catalonia and the complexities generated by mass migration in the world at large, the article serves to illustrate how translation can no longer be understood as the simple transfer of a semantic invariant between two self-contained and internally coherent languages, but has now to be radically reconceptualised to suit the ever more complex scenarios of a multilingual world.

Hence, this first issue engages with some of the most pressing themes occupying Translation Studies at the moment. As such, it makes an important contribution to several ongoing debates in the field.

Karen Bennett