

CALL FOR PAPERS

Translation, Space and Power: Reconfiguring the Geographies of Cultural Production

Department of Legal, Language, Interpreting and Translation Studies

University of Trieste

Trieste, 26–28 April 2027

Submission deadline: 15 October 2026

In an age of intensified interconnectedness and "time-space compression" (Harvey, 1989), translation emerges both as a situated practice and a force that reshapes cultural geographies. It is not only a linguistic act, but a cultural, political and economic one. This has always been the case historically, but the current pace of technological and political developments is generating ripples of change at unprecedented speed. Translation inhabits and constructs spaces—urban and rural, central and peripheral—while circulating through networks of cultural production and exchange. It also underpins soft power strategies and cultural diplomacy (Carbó-Catalan & Roig Sanz, 2022; Wu, 2017), carrying narratives and values across borders. It generates complex publishing-market flows (Heilbron, 2000), where translations are commissioned not only for local readerships but also as catalysts for international circulation. Recently emerging notions such as Vimr's (2020) "supply-driven translation" are helping to shed light on impulses for translation that are not restricted to target systems but relate to economic, political and cultural dimensions operating at the source pole. The role and significance of source-related factors is also apparent in translation scenarios outside publishing, such as institutional translation (Prieto Ramos, 2018), public service, or "community" (Taibi & Ozolins, 2016) translation, and tourism (Katan & Fina, 2024), often in contexts where the languages acting as "source" and "target" coexist in the same geographical space. These dynamics challenge long-established paradigms of movement from a fixed "source" to a fixed "target" and call for a renewed reflection on translation as an instrument of spatial reconfiguration and re-imagination.

The recent technological, political and socio-economic developments concern dimensions that do not map onto the "international" outlook traditionally favoured by Translation Studies. These dimensions, which may be labelled as "transnational" (Cussel, 2020) or "translocal" (Haldrup, 2009), appear to be more suited to capture the criss-crossing networks and processes that span geographically dispersed localities. Space-related terms such as "border", "boundary", "locale" and "zone" may still prove useful in describing translation processes and events, but they should perhaps be redefined in a world of increased connections across space facilitated by business networks, migration and advancements in technology — with "on-demand availability" (Wenzlthumer, 2007) and dematerialized, or "disembodied" (Littau, 2016), formats today being the default modes for most types of content and information.

Building on previous work in Translation Studies that foregrounds the reconfiguration of spatial concepts (Bielsa & Kapsaskis, 2020; Cronin, 2003; Feinauer et al., 2023; Simon, 2012), this conference invites contributions exploring how translation operates within, or against, the notions of space and power.

We welcome papers addressing, but not limited to, the following thematic clusters:

- **Reconfiguring Space and Place in Translation**

- Translation in contact zones and multilingual urban environments.
- The deterritorialization of language communities and the emergence of "translation spaces" (Simon, 2018).
- Digital and "disembodied" formats (Littau, 2016) and their impact on translation's spatial logics.
- Translation practices straddling multiple geographical locations, e.g. institutional, legal, and news media translation.

- **Translation, Power, and Diplomacy**

- Translation as a vehicle of soft power and cultural diplomacy: shaping images of nations, regions, and identities.
- National and supranational translation policies shaping perceptions of space.
- Historical dynamics of cultural and translation policies.

- **Flows, Markets, and Networks**

- Mapping translation flows in global publishing and audiovisual markets.
- Source-initiated and supply-driven translations and the translocal life of texts.

- **Beyond Source–Target Dichotomies**

- Translation within communities that simultaneously act as source and target.
- New trajectories of linguistic exchange in a post-globalized world.

CONFIRMED KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Claudio Minca · University of Bologna

Nike Pokorn · University of Ljubljana

Luc van Doorslaer · University of Tartu

Submission Guidelines

- **Abstract length:** 300–500 words, including a short bibliography.
- **Deadline:** 15 October 2026.
- **Notification of acceptance:** 1 December 2026.
- **Conference dates:** 26–28 April 2027.
- **Languages:** Abstracts and papers may be submitted in English or Italian.
- **Format:** Please send your proposal (title, abstract, name, affiliation, and email) in a single PDF file to tsp2027@units.it.

All abstracts will be reviewed by the scientific committee. Presentations may be delivered in English or Italian. Selected papers may be considered for publication in an edited volume or special journal issue following the conference.

Important Dates

Abstract submission deadline	15 October 2026
Notification of acceptance	1 December 2026
Conference dates	26–28 April 2027
Venue	Via Filzi, 14 – Trieste, ITALY

For further information, please visit tsp2027.units.it or contact tsp2027@units.it

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