

Chronotopos – an invitation

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The journal is dedicated to translation history, meaning, roughly speaking, the history of translation phenomena, the history of the discipline(s) studying it, of methods and theories. We, the editors, are convinced that it is in translation studies' best interest to find its own way of writing history. Research efforts are ongoing in many places. The history of translation is increasingly recognised as a perspective that comprehends translation in an entirely new way. Being aware of the fact that historiography is an interest-led action and that every story follows a certain dramaturgy is of essence (cf. VERMEER 1992: 23). For a translation history that succeeds in looking at translation from a translation studies' perspective – and is thus in a position to pose questions about the object of the discipline – can substantiate, influence and at best irritate translation theory. It can influence translation studies and translation (processes) in the present and also affect future research and translations. Translation studies should therefore have a special interest in the way in which translation history is written and consciously help shape translation historiography. *Chronotopos* aims to contribute to this endeavour.

Open access does not only refer to the approach, but also to the content, methods, theoretical foundations and disciplinary access to the long history of translatorial action. The reflections of those actors can be seen as the early stages of theories of translators. This also means to refrain from what has been common in the self-portrayal of translation studies: drawing a line in the 1970s and celebrating autonomy *ab ovo* from then on. Rather, it calls for finding a way to handle the historical and historiographical predecessors in the source disciplines of translation studies and integrating them from a translation studies' perspective. There is no worse place for the separation between scientific and prescientific contemplation than the contemplation of history (cf. LATOUR 1986).¹

At the same time, two decisive approaches regarding the reorientation of translation studies rely heavily on translation history: *Descriptive Translation Studies* was, first and foremost, interested in elaborating a theoretical framework for researching translation history. With his functionalist perspective, Vermeer has provided us with the, for now, most extensive reconstruction of occidental translation history in seven volumes. For *Chronotopos*, findings and approaches from all disciplinary perspectives are most welcome. The exchange between (neighbouring) disciplines in this journal

¹ “[T]he divide between prescientific and scientific cultures is merely a border – like that between Tijuana und San Diego. It is enforced arbitrarily by police and bureaucrats, but it does not represent any natural boundary. Useful for teaching, polemics, commencement addresses, these ‘great divides’ do not provide any explanation, but on the contrary are the things to be explained” (LATOUR 1986: 2).

should not only be mutually enriching, but also – and maybe more importantly – shake up the historically grown certainties of thought.

With our journal's name, we draw upon the space-time theory of literary scholar Bakhtin. Bakhtin's space-time theory, for which he used the term "chronotopos", is designed for the analysis of literary texts.² When we chose the term chronotopos³ as the name of a journal on translation history, we detached it from the literary and transferred it to a historiographical framework. The time-space relationship is essential in all narration. Hayden White (1973) has already worked out the parallel between the construction of historiographical and literary texts for the science of history. Should the story be told dramatically, comically or heroically? According to White, this is a decision not only made by writers, but also historians (and actually authors of all texts that describe actions, whether fictitious, with claim to the truth or even with mixed forms (such as the literary genre *faction*)).

Whereas Bakhtin's concepts of dialogism, polyphony and carnivalism had made their way into the concept of intertextuality, his concept of space-time, the chronotopos, remained unnoticed for quite a while. With this in mind, the name of the journal *Chronotopos* itself is a testimony of survival/continuing life through translation. It resembles the title of the third edition of Mihail Bakhtin's texts in Michael Dewey's translation into German. It was not until the third edition that this collection of texts received the title "Chronotopos".

1. *Untersuchungen zur Poetik und Theorie des Romans* [*Studies into the poetics and theory of the novel*]. Aufbau-Verlag, Berlin/Weimar 1986,
2. *Formen der Zeit im Roman. Untersuchungen zur historischen Poetik* [*Forms of time in the novel. Studies into historical poetics*]. Fischer, Frankfurt am Main 1989,
3. *Chronotopos*. Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main 2008.

The original was published in 1975 in Moscow under the title *Вопросы литературы и эстетики*. In it the text: *Формы времени и хронотопа в романе*. The imprint in the foreword to the 2008 German edition reveals the German publication history:

² Regarding the genesis of the term, Bakhtin refers to Einstein and Uchtomski (in a footnote, mentioning a lecture by Uchtomski who had taken over the term from Einstein) (cf. BACHTIN & DEWEY 2008: 7).

³ With the first English translation of Bakhtin's essay, the translator Wendy Rosslyn coined the term "chronotopos". (cf. BAXTIN & ROSSLYN 1978) The following translation, however, used "chronotope".

Titel der russischen Originalausgabe:
Вопросы литературы и эстетики Исследования разных лет
© Издательство «Художественная литература», Москва 1975
Der Text der deutschen Übersetzung »Formen der Zeit und
des Chronotopos im Roman« entstammt der Ausgabe:
Michail M. Bachtin: *Untersuchungen zur Poetik
und zur Theorie des Romans*
Hg. von Edwald Kowalski und Michael Wegner; a. d. Russ.
von Michael Dewey unter Zugrundelegung einer
deutschen Fassung von Harro Lucht und Rolf Göbner
(»Epos und Roman«); mit Anmerkungen von
Michael Dewey und einem Essay von Edward Kowalski.
Die deutsche Erstausgabe erschien 1986 im Aufbau-Verlag.
Aufbau ist eine Marke der Aufbau Verlagsgruppe.

Illustr. 1: BACHTIN & DEWEY 2008: Imprint

Here, the imprint is testimony to an eventful history of “continuing life” in German variants. This metamorphosis aims at the “space question” and this happens – how could it be any different – out of a space-time constellation: the focusing takes place in the course of the so-called “spatial turn”.

The text itself – preceded by the half-title – should be read accordingly:

When Michail M. Bakhtin's essay on the chronotope, completed in 1973, appeared for the first time in German translation, the reception of Bakhtin in Germany was dominated by carnivalism, polyphony and dialogism. The author's proposal to give more weight to the category of space in the analysis of novels attracted comparatively little interest. From today's perspective, his reference to the inseparable unity of space and time in the novel proves to be an early contribution to a theoretical development that is currently being discussed as the spatial turn. The reprint of the out-of-print essay "Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel" with an epilogue that contextualises Bakhtin's "space-time" in the history of theory intends to open up new possibilities for the current spatial debates in the historical, social and literary sciences. (BACHTIN & DEWEY 2008: half-title)⁴

The past and continuing life and the content of the term chronotopos are symbol and framework of the engagement with translation history as it is intended by our jour-

⁴ “Als Michail M. Bachtins 1973 beendeter Essay zum Chronotopos erstmals in deutscher Übersetzung erschien, stand die Bachtin-Rezeption hierzulande ganz im Zeichen von Karnevalismus, Polyphonie und Dialogizität. Der Vorschlag des Autors, die Kategorie des Raums in der Romananalyse stärker zu gewichten, stieß auf vergleichsweise geringes Interesse. Aus heutiger Perspektive erweist sich sein Hinweis auf die untrennbare Einheit von Raum und Zeit im Roman als früher Beitrag zu einer Theorieentwicklung, die gegenwärtig als der spatial turn diskutiert wird. Die Wiederauflage des vergriffenen Essays »Formen der Zeit und des Chronotopos im Roman« mit einem Nachwort, das Bachtins »Raumzeit« theoriegeschichtlich kontextualisiert, möchte Anschlussmöglichkeiten für die aktuellen Raumdebatten in den Geschichts-, Sozial- und Literaturwissenschaften eröffnen.” (BACHTIN & DEWEY 2008: half-title)

nal. It goes well with Benjamin's image of the continuing life ("Fortleben") of the original in translation

Denn in seinem Fortleben, das so nicht heißen dürfte, wenn es nicht Wandlung und Erneuerung des Lebendigen wäre, ändert sich das Original. Es gibt eine Nachreife auch der festgelegten Worte. (BENJAMIN 1977: 53)

Benjamin's text itself is an example of this transformation. In Harry Zohn's translation into English, the original must first die and begin its afterlife, whereas in the quote above, Benjamin's perspective on change ("Wandel") and the *continuing* life ("Fortleben") makes the original seem almost immortal:

For in its afterlife – which could not be called that if it were not a transformation and a renewal of something living – the original undergoes a change. Even words with fixed meaning can undergo a maturing process. (BENJAMIN & ZOHN 2007: 73)

The relationship between space and time is essential for every type of narration. It is crucial in literature, in historiography, but especially in translation historiography, because here it has multiple meanings:

1. The context in which an event takes place.
2. The context in which the respective event is narrated, with all the filtering and structuring mechanisms that narration entails.
3. The time-space structure resulting from the structure of historiographical narrative.
4. The temporal-spatial change that goes hand in hand with translation.
5. And thus, the chronotopos in which translation occurs.

Illuminating the aspect of the space-time structure in the history of translation in particular, and for the whole of translation studies in general, is programmatic for *Chronotopos*.

Because texts move, the historiography of translation must concern more than just translation. It must take into account the reasons why texts move, for whom they move, and in relation to what economic and political movements they move. (PYM 1992: 156)

The categories in which we have divided the contributions for this first issue can also be regarded as the continuing life of Bakhtin's ideas in Benjamin's sense. They are key words in translation, which will be enriched with new content within the journal. Bakhtin's thoughts on the chronotopos reach us via his German translator Michael Dewey. The following phrases attracted our attention in their German translation and, from our point of view, offered a structure for the contributions of the first edition of *Chronotopos*. Next to them we have placed the Russian original passages and the respective English translations. For the first two quotations – those which imme-

diately peaked our interest in their German version – no English equivalent could be found. The entire sentence is missing in the English edition.⁵

A

Die Merkmale der Zeit offenbaren sich im Raum. (BACHTIN & DEWEY 2008) [The characteristics of time reveal themselves in space.]

Приметы времени раскрываются в пространстве. [The signs of time are revealed in space.]

No English translation.

Judy Wakabayashi addresses the cultural specificity of the concept of time. From this perspective, too, time is essentially dependent on space. Aleksey Tashinskiy thinks about the translatorial oeuvre of the translator Herta Lorenz, whose works were primarily produced in collaboration with a publishing house. Individual events taking place in this particular space, connected and formed into story, allow a description of the time in which they took place.

B

Der Raum wird von der Zeit mit Sinn erfüllt und dimensioniert. [Space is filled with meaning and dimensioned by time.]

Пространство осмысливается и измеряется временем. [Space is comprehended and measured by time.]

No English translation.

Lieven D'hulst asks whether it is possible to speak of and write a Belgian translation history. The characteristics of time – the movement in thinking from national to transnational research and to interdisciplinarity while at the same time respecting the specificity of a space – can be particularly well illustrated by the example of the Belgian space. Julija Boguna poses the question if it is possible for the translation historian to mentally move in a space that is foreign because it was filled with meaning by a different time.

C

Das Bild des Menschen [...] ist in seinem Wesen immer chronotopisch. [The image of man [...] is always chronotopic in its essence.]

Образ человека [...] всегда существенно хромотопичен. [The human image [...] is always significantly chronotopic.]

The image of man is always intrinsically chronotopic.

The story of Peter Rühmkorf, shared by Andreas F. Kelletat, could only have taken place the way it did in this one chronotopos. On the level of the chronotopos of nar-

⁵ In the spirit of continuous source critique, especially when it comes to paratexts written by translators, we want to point out the foreword of the English translator Michael Holquist: “We have sought to make a translation at the level of images of a whole language (*obraz jazyka*). The translations are complete.” (BACHTIN & HOLQUIST 1981: XIII)

ration, Andreas F. Kelletat's work on the UeLEX⁶ and the trend of humanizing in translation studies and translation history are a fruitful combination. Christian Weiß draws a picture of the translator Herberth E. Herlitschka on the basis of the chronotopic relationships within which the translator worked..

D

Das Genre mit seinen Varianten wird vornehmlich vom Chronotopos determiniert. [The genre with its variants is dominated by the chronotopos.]

Жанр и жанровые разновидности определяются именно хронотопом.

The chronotope defines genre and generic distinction.

Lavinia Heller investigates knowledge production in the field of philosophical terminology in translation. In this case, it is the chronotopos of translation that provides the transformation of "habits of thought". In the Finnish prisoner-of-war camps Pekka Kujamäki and Päivi Pasanen focus on, the chronotopos determines the discourse of communication and on the meta level the discourse on communication.

On the creation of an edition of *Chronotopos*

Now we can add a third facet to the concept of open access which might deserve special attention, given the rising number of legitimate objections regarding the procedure of peer review. The contributions published by *Chronotopos* undergo a double-blind peer review process. For us as editors, this decision was not an easy one to make. The risks, effects and side effects of peer review processes that thwart scientific practice as we understand it are well known. Without complying with the academic standards of peer review for publications, *Chronotopos* would have been marginalised in the field of academia from the very beginning without further examination of the actual quality of the journal. However, we consider it our task to ensure the procedure serves its dedicated purpose – i.e. quality assurance – without restricting creativity in content and form, because these elements are essential for any science. In order to come closer to achieving this goal, we guarantee a double-blind procedure with two reviewers each as a standard, but we want to increasingly encourage reviewers and authors to set aside anonymity and to enter into a public, academic discussion. Of course, only in the case that both parties are willing to do so.

The journal is published semi-annually and contains articles on translation events, methods of translation history and the history of translation studies as well as book reviews, conference reports and translations of articles on the subject into English, French and German.

Chronotopos thrives on the contributions of its authors. We cordially invite scholars of all disciplines to contribute to the writing of translation history. Views from all disciplinary perspectives are most welcome. In our view, not only dialogue within the discipline of translation studies but also interdisciplinary exchange is precisely what

⁶ www.uelex.de. Germersheimer Übersetzerlexikon; a biographical encyclopedia of translators.

is required in order to write a translation history that can be theory-relevant for translational studies and at the same time suitable for dialogue with other disciplines.

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