

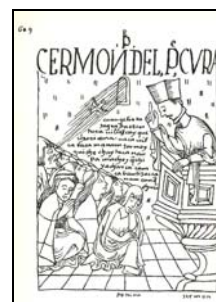
**Colloquium
"Translating God"**

Thursday 4 May and Friday 5 May 2017

Hosted by the *Translating Christianities* Research Group
Literature and Languages

Faculty of Arts and Humanities of the University of Stirling, Scotland (UK)

Pathfoot Building, Room D1



SCHEDULE

(1 May 2017)

Thursday	4 May 2017
10.00	Welcome
CHAIR	Sabine
10.30	Brian Murdoch: God and the Goths: Translation Techniques for the Germanic Tribes
11.05	Linda Archibald: Otfrid's Apology: A Ninth-century Benedictine Perspective on Human and Divine Agency in Translation
11.40	Tea/coffee
CHAIR	Brian
12.10	Stephen Penn: Wise, Subtle or Wily? Describing the Serpent in the Vulgate and Vetus Latina translations of Genesis
12.45	Adrian Streete: Translating Calvin in Early Modern England: The Case of Arthur Golding
13.20	Lunch break
CHAIR	Stephen
14.20	Frauke Sachse: Mendicant Perspectives on Translating Christian Conceptualisations of Divinity into Sixteenth-Century K'iche'
14.55	Rebeca Fernández Rodríguez: Christian Concepts in the Philippines: Success or Misunderstanding?
15.30	Tea/coffee
CHAIR	Hepzibah
16.00	Sabine Dedenbach-Salazar Sáenz: The Translation of God: How God and the Saints became Apus
16.35	Christine Lee: Catholic 'Formation' in Andahuaylas: Translation after Conversion
17.10	Bjørn Ola Tafjord: Translating God, Converting Sibö, or Turning Him into an <i>Akeköl</i>
18.40	Dinner at the "Jam Jar" in Bridge of Allan, 28 Henderson Street, http://www.jamjarcafe.co.uk/ , Tel. 01786 831616

Friday	5 May 2017
CHAIR	Frauke
10.00	Ignacio Chuecas Saldías: Translating the Law of Moses: Portuguese <i>Conversos</i> and Jesuits Decodifying <i>God</i> in the Ten Commandments in Colonial Spanish America (17th and 18th Centuries)
10.35	Leo J. Garofalo: Translating God by and for Afro-Latin Americans and Afro-Iberians, 1530-1680
11.10	Joanne Davis: Aspects of the History of the Translation of the Bible into Xhosa: Aetiology of an Argument
11.45	Tea/coffee
CHAIR	Leo
12.15	Gwilym Colenso: Bishop John William Colenso and the Use of uNkulunkulu, a Contested Zulu God-name, in the Incorporation of the Zulu People into the Colonial Order in Mid-nineteenth century Natal
12.50	Hephzibah Israel: Re-translation and Re-naming: Re-christening God for a Tamil World
13.25	Lunch break
CHAIR	Bjørn Ola
14.30	Pär Eliasson: Jesus' Divinity in Early Modern Indian Catechisms
15.05	Monica Romano: Who is God in China, Shen or Shangdi? Translating the Terms for God and Spirit in Chinese Bible Translations
15.40	Tea/coffee and
15.50-16.45	Final roundtable discussion

TOPIC

When faced with the spread of Christianity into a non-Christian culture, the translator faces obvious difficulties: the expression of abstract religious concepts presents a range of problems which have always preoccupied philosophers and theologians. We may think for example of the spread of Christianity in medieval Europe, or of the Spanish Jesuits in Peru attempting to convert the indigenous peoples. How are concepts firmly enshrined in written form in an original language (Hebrew, Greek or Latin) or later in a mediating language (like Spanish in South America) to be transferred comprehensibly into the languages and hence the minds of the converted?

The 'translation of God' also reflects power-relations which are revealed in the imposition of new ideologies across Europe, by medieval and renaissance rulers, in the contexts of the British, Iberian or other empires, or even in more recent times. Things may be especially difficult when there is contact between missionary Christianity and an already well-established and complex religious system, as in India, China or the native Americas.

We would like to examine how God is translated, how the idea of the supreme being is rendered in another language and culture, or that of other spiritual concepts such as Holy Ghost. The Trinity, the Virgin as mother of Jesus and the idea of the Immaculate Conception, or of the saving Christ, and indeed the whole area of angels and devils (or the Devil) are parts of the same problem, as all these concepts are translated into different languages and registers.

In all cases the target culture will already have a concept of the supernatural, but how does the missionary or theologian make sure that everyone is eventually talking about the same thing? Who are the translators and what is their agenda? What exactly are their working texts and how reliable are they? Which methods do they use to reformulate Christian terms and their meanings in the languages of the other(s)? And to what extent can we gauge how the recipients (might have) understood or reacted? How can the outcomes be interpreted - as syncretism, fusion or hybridity, as parallelism or convergence?

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ABSTRACTS

EUROPE

God and the Goths: Translation Techniques for the Germanic Tribes

Brian Murdoch

(University of Stirling, Scotland, UK)

Early translation of Christian terms in Germanic languages was done using different techniques for individual words: direct borrowings, translation of individual elements, or the grafting of Christian ideas onto existing words. This is examined with reference in particular to the words used for the different members of the Trinity and for the word 'church' itself. Examples are taken first from the earliest example of Christian translation into a Germanic language -- the (East Germanic) Visigothic Bible of Wulfila in the fourth century. Further illustrations are taken from the West Germanic branch of the Germanic languages, mainly from Old High German (the earliest stage of the modern German language, recorded from around the eighth century), with a few from Low German languages, such as English.

Otfrid's Apology: A Ninth-century Benedictine Perspective on Human and Divine Agency in Translation

Linda Archibald

(Freelance Author/Translator)

Otfrid von Weissenburg composed a rhyming, five-book gospel harmony in the South-Rhenish Franconian dialect, in a monastic setting where most religious writing was in Latin. His work is accompanied by several introductory and concluding units in which he reflects on the nature and purpose of his work, using an intriguing mixture of linguistic, literary and religious terminology. This paper examines some of the metaphors he uses to argue for the use of the vernacular. It also explores how a biblically-inspired appreciation of divine and human agency is used to persuade a rather sceptical Church hierarchy of the value of translating scripture into the barbaric local languages of Europe. A conclusion is reached which explains why Otfrid's apology failed in its intentions, even though it demonstrates a remarkably nuanced understanding of the many dilemmas facing a translator who seeks to make canonical texts accessible to a new audience.

Wise, Subtle or Wily? Describing the Serpent in the Vulgate and Vetus Latina translations of Genesis

Stephen Penn

(University of Stirling, Scotland, UK)

Jerome's Latin 'Vulgate' Bible, which was commissioned by Pope Damasus during Jerome's visit to Rome in 382, was preceded by a group of Latin translations known collectively as the Old Latin (*Vetus Latina*) Bible. The difference between Jerome's translation and these earlier, often inconsistent renderings, lay principally in the versions of the biblical text to which the translators had access. The *Vetus Latina* drew principally on the Greek New Testament and the Septuagint, whereas Jerome also consulted the Hebrew text of the Old Testament. This gave rise to some subtle inconsistencies in the representation of biblical characters. In this paper, I will examine the representation of the serpent in Genesis and (more problematically) of Satan in the Old Testament more generally. Comparing the Latin Vulgate and the *Vetus Latina* texts, I will focus on the possible sources of inconsistency in the sources that the respective translators used.

Translating Calvin in Early Modern England: The Case of Arthur Golding

Adrian Streete

(University of Glasgow, Scotland, UK)

Arthur Golding is probably best known today for producing the translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* used by Shakespeare. Yet he was also the most important translator of Calvin's works in Elizabethan England. His translations of Calvin's sermons and commentaries on books like the Psalms, Job, and Ephesians were both popular and accessible. This paper will consider Golding's prefatory materials where he considers topics like the political progress of the Reformed movement in England and Europe, the rhetorical and linguistic challenges faced by the translator of Calvin, and the difficulties of conveying some of Calvin's more troubling theological concepts to the 'godly' reader.

LATIN AMERICA AND PHILIPPINES

Mendicant Perspectives on Translating Christian Conceptualisations of Divinity into Sixteenth-Century K'iche'

Frauke Sachse

(Bonn University, Germany)

The Highland Maya language K'iche' was among the first Amerindian languages to be used in the Christian conversion following the Spanish conquest. Missionaries produced a rich corpus of doctrinal literature which allows us to study the creation of Christian discourse and the processes of translation. This paper will explore Dominican and Franciscan traditions of translating Christian concepts of divinity including God, the Trinity, and the Devil. Both orders had different perspectives on translation which reflect in the written record. While the Franciscan sources show a preference for introducing neologisms, Dominican writers strategically accommodated terminology from K'iche' ritual discourse. I will argue that the latter practice favoured the survival of precolumbian conceptualisations of divine agents.

Christian Concepts in the Philippines: Success or Misunderstanding?

Rebeca Fernández Rodríguez

(Universiteit van Amsterdam, Netherlands)

During the early years of evangelization in the Philippines, decisions had to be made about the use of religious terms in grammars and vocabularies written for the purpose of spreading Christianity. The Third Council of Lima (1582–1583) established a certain set of rules in order to avoid misunderstandings. However, some missionaries chose to introduce Spanish loanwords while others chose less easy strategies such as adaptation, literal translation, neologisms, the use of definitions, etc. What happened in the Philippines? Did missionaries follow the Council of Lima? Did they adapt different strategies to their purposes? Were they successful? I will study the religious terms contained in Philippine vocabularies. I will focus on several terms – God, The Trinity... – in order to establish the missionaries' knowledge and thinking about indigenous languages and translation strategies followed from the early strategies of contact.

The Translation of God: How God and the Saints became Apus

Sabine Dedenbach-Salazar Sáenz

(University of Stirling, Scotland, UK)

Colonial descriptions of the colonisation in the Andes show how the authors tried to understand and interpret indigenous concepts. On the basis of certain similarities of the Christian and Andean concept of deity, the 16th century missionaries tried to translate the word *Dios* into the Quechua language. It seems that their (mis)understanding of the structure of the native language opened the interpretation of the Christian God up to a native understanding by identifying him with the Apus (honorific, esp. for the highest mountain deities). Moreover the parallels in the understanding of the mountain deities and the Christian Saints enabled the Andean people to integrate the latter into their own belief system. Thus different factors of linguistic and cultural translation have contributed to what has become contemporary Andean religion.

Catholic 'Formation' in Andahuaylas: Translation after Conversion

Christine Lee

(University of St. Andrews, Scotland, UK)

In the diocese of Abancay today, the clergy are almost all of *campesino* background. As such, less in doubt of the authenticity of rural Andean Catholicism because that is how they themselves grew up, pastoral efforts are less focused on translation in the form of ensuring that rural parishioners are holding the doctrinally correct idea of God, and more on their continuing catechism and formation. Translation, in the sense of conversion and of having to bridge some sort of ontological gap, is not a priority--because it is assumed to have already been accomplished. The gap that exists is not centred on theological basics, but on issues seen as particularly relevant in this day and age - drinking, co-habitation, etc. Instead, translation has increasingly become the issue of how to bridge the gap between institutional, doctrinal Catholic social teachings and modernity--even in this rural part of the Peruvian Andes.

Translating God, Converting Sibö, or Turning Him into an *Akeköl*

Bjørn Ola Tafjord

(Tromsø University, Norway)

In contemporary Talamanca, on the eastern border between Costa Rica and Panama, “god” and “God” are translated in many ways. Different members of the indigenous groups Bribri and Kabekir, who are the majority of the population, have different opinions about the translations. So do different religious leaders and missionaries – Bahá’ís and Christians of various sorts – who have come from elsewhere to work among the Bribri and the Kabekir. The translations of (and for) scholars and teachers also differ, and they must be taken into account too. Tourists are yet another group of significant translators in Talamanca today. Based on my fieldwork over the past 16 years, I will describe some of the many translations of “god” and “God” that I have witnessed. I will pay special attention to how such translations seem contextually or situationally contingent, and to the directionality involved in different translations.

Translating the Law of Moses: Portuguese *Conversos* and Jesuits Decodifying *God* in the Ten Commandments in Colonial Spanish America (17th and 18th Centuries)

Ignacio Chuecas Saldías

(Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez, Santiago de Chile)

This paper explores two linguistic-cultural communities that were recipients of translations and interpretations of the ancient Judeo-Christian writings in colonial Spanish America. They were the diasporic Portuguese Judaizers in New Spain and the indigenous Mapuche in the Chilean colonial borderlands. By studying the ways in which the Decalogue was translated we understand how this text became relevant for both communities in a colonial context. This proposal makes a comparison between the original Hebrew text (including its reception in the variants of the Vulgate current during the early modern period), the translations (hybrid of Spanish and Portuguese romance) made by the members of the Judaizing family Núñez de Carvajal at the end of the sixteenth century and the translation (of catechetical style in its Spanish and *Mapuzungún* versions) that was published by the Jesuit Andrés Febrés in 1765 in his *Gramática de la Lengua Chilena*. This investigation is intended to highlight how the concept of God (as it is reflected in the first part of the Decalogue: One, names, other gods, images, sanctity, etc.) was decodified into original modalities in order to inspire and provoke adhesions or reconfigure new identities. The Judaizing and the *Mapuche* natives did had a rich lexical and cultural tradition, while at the same time were embedded in a context that questioned and threatened the conservation of their traditional identity values.

Translating God by and for Afro-Latin Americans and Afro-Iberians, 1530-1680

Leo J. Garofalo

(Connecticut College, USA)

Did Africans in Iberia and the Americas translate god in the 1500s and 1600s? African peoples interpreted Christian conceptualizations of god, saints, and devils before the Diaspora. Did this intercultural translation continue in Iberia and Spanish America? As Africans and evangelizers created ways and places of worship, god and other Christian ideas were translated in a variety of ways: female converts described personal ways of knowing and communicating with a mystical god in spiritual accounts and hagiographic writings; Jesuit missionaries like Alonso de Sandoval and Pedro Claver pioneered practices and penned tracts to help a variety of African ethnic and linguistic groups access god; and African and African American ritualists named and invoked god, saints, Inkas, and devils as they bridged and combined the European, African, and indigenous traditions of reaching the supernatural, leaving a written record of their “voices” and “translations” in the local ecclesiastic and Inquisition investigations.

AFRICA

Aspects of the History of the Translation of the Bible into Xhosa: Aetiology of an Argument

Joanne Davis

(SOAS, University of London, England, UK)

This paper will explore the history of the second complete translation of the Bible in Africa, into Xhosa. I will investigate the different perceptions held by the missionary societies, Bible Societies and Xhosa speakers of Xhosa religious, spiritual and theological lexicons. I will show which books were translated first by each group, and discuss their different techniques and methodologies for

transcribing the Bible, whether by using Xhosa informants or working alone with original sources. These issues came to the fore in 1864 when a group of missionaries and colonial governors, including two Xhosa reverends ordained in the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland, rejected the revised translation of Wesleyan Rev John Appleyard as 'well nigh as dark as midnight' which crucially led to limited or no possibility for the conversion and salvation of Xhosa people. This paper will examine the causes of this conflict, revealing varying motivations, priorities and agendas.

Bishop John William Colenso and the Use of uNkulunkulu, a Contested Zulu God-name, in the Incorporation of the Zulu People into the Colonial Order in Mid-nineteenth century Natal

Gwilym Colenso

(Independent Researcher)

In the eighteen-fifties, Bishop Colenso, the first Bishop of Natal in South Africa, rejected, as neologisms, non-Zulu God-names used by other missionaries. His adoption of the Zulu word uNkulunkulu as the name for the Christian God, can be viewed within his radical conception of Christian conversion, acknowledging the 'common ground' between African and Christian traditions, particularly in seeing the 'seeds of religious truth' in Zulu belief.

Bishop Colenso's fellow missionary, Henry Calloway, contested the use of uNkulunkulu on theological and ethnographic grounds. But the dispute was also intertwined with other differences, including over the Bishop's biblical criticism, and his acceptance of polygamy among Christian converts. Exploring some strands of this controversy, it will be suggested that the employment by Bishop Colenso of uNkulunkulu was, ultimately, a political choice reflecting a particular vision of the way in which Zulu people should be incorporated into the newly developing colonial order in Natal.

INDIA

Re-translation and Re-naming: Re-christening God for a Tamil World

Hephzibah Israel

(University of Edinburgh, Scotland, UK)

A lot is at stake at getting the name right when introducing a new religion to a culture. What should one call the God one is preaching? Christian missionaries in South India, both Catholic and Protestant, grappled with this question for over 200 years in a Tamil world which came packed with a sophisticated directory of god's names. A range of strategies were used from transliteration to translation and when a term was challenged, it was simply re-translated. My paper will present the several names for god used in Tamil translations of the Bible and the effects these repeated name changes had on the Tamil communities that had converted to one of the Christian denominations. How did Tamil Christian communities respond to a god with strikingly different names? My examination will take into account contexts beyond theology and doctrine, to shifting attitudes to language, caste and inter-denominational contests of authority.

Jesus' Divinity in Early Modern Indian Catechisms

Pär Eliasson

(Uppsala University, Sweden)

During the early modern period, Jesuit missionaries in Goa and other Portuguese colonies in western India composed a considerable amount of literature in Marathi in Konkani. They wrote epics and lyrics in Marathi and prose texts about saints in Konkani. When they wanted to minimize the risk of misunderstanding, they composed catechisms in the spoken dialects of the areas where they worked. In some cases, these texts are the only records of how those dialects sounded in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. I will analyse how Jesus' divinity is explained in two such catechisms, giving special attention to the way unwanted Hindu connotations are dealt with. The actual catechisms are Thomas Stephens' *Doutrina Christam em Lingoa Bramana Canarim* (1622) in Goan Konkani, and *Cathechismo da Doutrina Cristam* (1778) in a Marathi dialect spoken in northern Konkan (around present day Mumbai).

CHINA

Who is God in China, Shen or Shangdi? Translating the Terms for God and Spirit in Chinese Bible Translations

Monica Romano

(Pontifical Gregorian University of Rome, Italy)

During the 16th – 17th centuries, the Catholic foreign missionaries in China had to develop a Christian vocabulary, after the earlier but unsuccessful attempt made by the Nestorian missionaries. In doing so, the missionaries had to choose between using existing philosophical and religious terminology, whose meaning could be gradually expanding in acquiring a Christian meaning and resorting to phonetic transcriptions to prevent risk of misunderstanding, confusions, and inappropriate assimilations. Among the terms, translating God, Holy Spirit and *Logos* was a major and debate issue, which was dealt with as part of the well-known *Quaestio de Ritibus Sinensibus*. Later on, in the 19th century, the Protestant missionaries came to China. They could rely on the important work of the Catholic Church in developing a Chinese Christian vocabulary, but also made different choices, especially for key terms. They also tended to prefer the use of indigenous religious and philosophical terminology and started a long and bitter debate among themselves – the so-called “Term Question” – on what was the best term for “God” and “Holy Spirit” in the context of Bible translation. Therefore, in the development of a Christian terminology, the Catholic missionaries first and the Protestants later, were forced to take into consideration not only linguistic and theological issues but also and above all to establish whether the Chinese had an idea of God or not, whether that corresponded to the Christian concept of one God and creator, if the terms with which the deity was indicated in Chinese were compatible to the Christian concept of God and therefore if they could become part of the Christian vocabulary. The paper will provide an overview of the main positions adopted by the missionaries in debating the translation of key terms in Chinese, particularly “God”, “Holy Spirit” and “*Logos*”. The issue remains partially open as Catholics and Protestants in China still use different terms and even within the Chinese Protestant community there are two different translations (and Bible editions) for “God” and “Holy Spirit”.