

Preface

This publication is the result of a research project on translation studies in the Slavic countries promoted and funded by the Department of Modern Languages, Literatures and Cultures (LILEC), University of Bologna. The culmination of this work was an international conference held on 7-8 May 2014, which was attended by most of the authors of the articles here included.

The initial assumption of the research, started in 2011, concerned the fact that translation studies conducted in the Slavic countries, despite their richness and often being ahead of their time, have often remained unknown across borders. This is due to several factors including, primarily, their anchor to an exemplifying apparatus taken from national languages and literatures poorly known in the West. We can still state, as did Wittgenstein, “Die Grenzen meiner Sprache bedeuten die Grenzen meiner Welt”.

It is not a secret that manuals of translation theory, popular in Western countries, base their argumentative-exemplifying apparatus on different linguistic-cultural contexts; nor do the main encyclopedic repertoires on the issue bring justice to the amplitude and the depth of the translational debate in the Slavic countries. Even the receptions of the best known traditions, such as the Russian or Czechoslovak, still show considerable gaps. It is true, however, that the Slavic authors of seminal books on translation theory circulating in major European languages can be counted on the fingers of one hand or, at most, two: Roman Jakobson, Jiří Levý, Anton Popovič, Aleksandar Ljudskanov, Elżbieta Tabakowska, Peeter Torop.

Hence the need to shed light on an extremely rich and varied research context, fostered and fueled by the fact that Slavic cultures are all translation cultures, in which the circuit of translated literature has always interacted in a very profound way with the circuit of the original literature.

Since the beginning of our research, in 2011, the international interest in the subject has grown considerably, as shown by some recent initiatives – e.g. numbers of magazines, conferences – aimed at describing single, translational traditions developed in a specific country or following a precise research paradigm.

This collection of studies is the largest overall contribution on the subject to see the light in a Western language. The intent is to show the peculiarities

of scientific consideration on translation conducted in each Slavic country, without omitting the mutual connections and elements of dialogue, nor forgetting to provide the necessary references to the pre-scientific period. All the Slavic areas are shown and described, albeit not in an exhaustive way, to stimulate further critical reflection and open the way for more specific and detailed descriptions.

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