

An International Symposium

# Itinerant Tongues

## The Glorious Noise of Literature in Translation

**SATURDAY, 10TH JANUARY 2015**

**10:30-17:30**

**CONFERENCE ROOM, BUN-HO-KEI HONKAN 2F,  
OSAKA UNIVERSITY, OSAKA**

- 10:30-10:40 Opening Remarks: Yuzo Yamada (Osaka University)
- 10:40-12:00 Prof. Jeffrey Angles (Western Michigan University),  
“Translator as Shaman, or the Art of Channeling Voices”  
(Discussion)
- 12:00-13:00 Lunch
- 13:00-13:45 Ayaka Nakajima (PhD Candidate, Osaka University),  
“Kazuo Ishiguro’s Pseudotranslation:  
The Japanese Translation and Reception of *An Artist of the  
Floating World*”
- 13:45-14:30 Andrew Murakami-Smith (Osaka University),  
“Translation and Japanese Literature as World Literature”
- 14:30-14:50 Discussion
- 14:50-15:30 Coffee Break
- 15:30-16:15 Goro Takano (Saga University),  
“What I Wondered How to Handle  
While Translating the Works of the Japanese Poet Shiro Murano”
- 16:15-17:00 Anne McKnight (Shirayuri College),  
“‘In the Tenor of a Robot’:  
How to Translate New Words for New Worlds in Science Fiction”
- 17:00-17:20 Discussion
- 17:20-17:30 Final Remarks: Trane DeVore (Osaka University)

George Steiner has stated that “Without translation, we would be living in provinces bordering on silence.” This statement, a succinct figure for the way in which translation gives voice to both the moment of intercultural understanding and trans-literary communication, could serve as a motto for the history of English/Japanese translation — an enterprise that has allowed the voices of different literary and cultural traditions to be heard across linguistic and national boundaries. From Lafcadio Hearn’s “translation” into Koizumi Yakumo to Jay Rubin’s role in helping to popularize the works of Murakami Haruki in English, translation has played a key role in ensuring the worldwide circulation of literary culture.

While many prominent works of literary fiction and poetry have been widely translated and become wildly popular, it’s also the case that an equally large body of literary work has remained untranslated, locked away in provinces of silence. A great deal of this work is minor literature, unconventional or outside the purview of what is traditionally considered literary, while an equally significant amount falls into the category of contemporary experimental writing, including experimental poetry. Of course, it’s not only experimental and avant-garde work that remains on the margins of translation: work that escapes the metropolitan taste-making of literary centers such as Tokyo, London, and New York is often also marginalized.

One of the tasks of the translator is bringing to light voices that would otherwise remain unheard, voices that become new again — expanding through a kind of selfsame difference — as they make the journey into new linguistic territories and literary contexts. Translators such as Jeffrey Angles, recipient of the 2009 Japan-US Friendship Commission Prize for the Translation of Japanese Literature, has opened up the territory of Japanese poetry to readers of English with his translations of such poets as Tada Chimako, Mutsuo Takahashi, and Hiromi Ito. Focusing on the modern poetry of Shiro Murano, Goro Takano also seeks to reintroduce a set of writings that have been relatively neglected in the English language, while Andrew Murakami-Smith, whose recent translation work is focused on Osaka literature and tries to trace the thematic and stylistic similarities of what he refers to as the “Osaka Tradition” in modern writing, seeks to characterize the unique dialect and cultural history of Japan’s “second city.” Meanwhile, scholar Ayaka Nakajima will explore questions related to translating the work of Kazuo Ishiguro — an author who himself might be viewed as, at least partially, “in translation” when it comes to the reception of his novels by international audiences. Anne McKnight, on the other hand, will be covering a different territory entirely — the alternative world of robot-speak.

The Osaka University Graduate School of Letters is pleased to host an international symposium featuring these translators and scholars of translation, all of who are working in their own way to populate the provinces of silence with the glorious noise of literature in translation.

**Hosted by Honyaku Kenkyukai  
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