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The Leverhulme Trust



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The Materiality of Feminist Texts and Translations: Economy, Production, and Text

Second Workshop of the Leverhulme Trust funded International Network 'Translating Feminism: Transfer, Transgression, Transformation (1945-1990)'

organised by Dr. Maud Bracke, Dr. Penny Morris and Dr. Kristina Schulz
Bern, June 23-24, 2017

The project "Translating Feminism" brings together scholars from three continents wishing to pursue original, interdisciplinary research focused on the global reach of feminist writing and women's movements. While the transformation of women's social status is one of the most significant developments of the post-war period, little is known about the precise ways in which women's rights campaigners across different national and cultural settings communicated with one another, read and translated each other's texts, and locally re-contextualised them. The first international workshop in Glasgow in November 2016 provided the opportunity to discuss historical findings and new theoretical approaches. These discussions will be pursued further at the second international workshop that will take place in Bern, Switzerland, June 23-24, 2017.

More precisely, the forthcoming workshop will be dedicated to the materiality of feminist texts and to the material culture of feminist literary activities, with a special focus on translation. Following Roger Chartier, the meaning that readers give to a text is never detached from the material conditions in which it is produced and diffused. Chartier reminds us that the printed object is crucial to an understanding of why and how people make sense of what they read. This applies to translations in particular ways, as the physical quality of both the source text and the translation establish an (imagined) relationship between transnational and translingual writers and readers.

Women's literary activities involved producing, diffusing, reading, translating, and discussing texts from a woman's point of view. But what was considered to be a "woman's point of view", and how do global transfers and translations de-stabilise accepted notions thereof? Instead of studying feminism as a given system of ideas, regardless of the context of its production and reception, we aim to study the variety of material supportive of women-centred ideas, ranging from pamphlets to self-published pirated editions and to printed books, as well as the literary activities by which they are produced and transmitted. This includes the fact that, while practising what social movement theorists call 'counter-cultural retreat', when it came to literary activism, feminists did engage with a broader public, both in terms of a (potential) feminist public and the institutions and actors of the publishing market.

We invite papers that deal with different aspects of feminist text and book production, diffusion, and translation, such as:

- The materiality of the printed object and the conditions of (non-) reproducibility
- The economic contexts of book publishing and translation
- The technical conditions of writing, translation and transnational communication transfer
- Aspects of distribution
- Bookshops and reading communities
- The history of translation and a transnational feminist reading market

Practical arrangements:

Presenters will have approx. 15 minutes to discuss their paper, and panels will consist of 3-4 papers. The pre-circulation of papers is intended to foster deep engagement with each other's work. Presenters may be asked to act as discussant for another paper.

Please include the following in your proposal:

- A 300-word paper abstract
- A 200-word biographical statement with main publications and current affiliation
- State if you are seeking funding, with reference to the following criteria:

Limited funding to cover travel and accommodation is available for researchers working on temporary contracts, and for academics working outside Europe and North America.

Please send your proposals to the organisers by March 15, 2017. You will be notified by mid-April 2017 and will be asked to circulate a draft of your paper by June 1. The programme will be finalised and published in the course of May 2017.

Please address your abstract and any questions to Dr. Emily Ryder:
translatingfeminism@gmail.com