

Master Classes

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“Translation in a Global Era or the Need to Struggle against Invisibility”

Globalization is here understood as a set of complex phenomena that set off a process of unprecedented transnational interactions in the late 1990s and beginning of the 21st century. These interactions often constitute unequal exchanges (Santos, 2001, 2002) that result, among other elements, from (i) the acceleration of the process of time-space compression in the late capitalism phase (Lash and Urry, 1994); (ii) the development of new technologies; (iii) the wide access to the internet; (iv) the fast circulation of information; and (iv) mass flows of people (Appadurai, 1996).

Transnational interactions have configured two major processes of globalization (Sousa Santos, 2002, 2005, 2007, 2009) that reveal to be contentious domains in the economic, political, cultural and ecological spheres: (i) the hegemonic globalization that responds to the neoliberal interests of Western capital, thus fostering the division between the so-called North and South; and (ii) the counter-hegemonic globalization that assumes a character of resistance against hegemonic and homogenizing practices, thus giving importance to difference, to marginal groups and to the local (as opposed to the global).

In this master class, translation will be addressed as a privileged tool of counter-hegemonic globalization. My starting point is Bielsa's contention (2005: 135) that theories focused on the global circulation of flows deny or minimize the existence of different cultural and linguistic contexts. Since these theories place emphasis on instant communication, they render translation processes in global communication invisible in the name of fluid interchange and instantaneous transparency. Bearing in mind Bassnett and Trivedi's (1999: 6) claim that “[t]ranslations are always embedded in cultural and political systems, and in history”, this master class examines the key role played by translation and by translators in the production and circulation of meaning in a global era with a view to mediating cultural difference and avoiding cultural homogenization.

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Readings:

- Bhabha, Homi (1994). "How Newness Enters the World: Postmodern Space, Postcolonial Times and the Trials of Cultural Translation". In *The Location of Culture*, London and New York: Routledge, pp. 212-235.
- Bielsa, Esperança (2005). "Globalisation and Translation: A Theoretical Approach". In *Language and Intercultural Communication*, Vol. 5, N. 2, pp. 131-144.
- Santos, Boaventura de Sousa (2002). "The Processes of Globalization". In *Eurozine*, 68/14, available on <http://www.eurozine.com/the-processes-of-globalisation/>