

Presentation

Translation does not concern a comparison
between two languages but the interpretation
of two texts in two different languages.
Umberto Eco (2001)

Ever since we started publishing this journal I have wanted to dedicate a special issue to memory. Memory and translation are so obviously connected, yet so little studied. Memory—as the retrieval, reconstruction, inscription, and leaving of traces and their effects—plays a central role in any translation process, and translation, in its inherently transformative character, is intrinsic to every memory and memorializing act.

Loss, furthering, circulation, redefinition, distancing, transmigration, rewriting are all possible aspects and effects of translation that could not take place if not for some sort of memorialization.

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Since the initial planning of this special issue, my editors of choice were also clear to me. I am so grateful to the two fine scholars—and dear friends—Bella Brodzki and Cristina Demaria for having accepted to serve as guest editors for this issue. Their backgrounds and research make them a perfect duo for the present issue.

Bella Brodzki's brilliant *Can These Bones Live? Translation, Survival, and Cultural Memory* (2007) is perhaps the most important publication bringing together translation and memory, demonstrating how “excavating or unearthing burial sites or ruins in order to reconstruct traces of the physical and textual past in a new context is also a mode of translation, just as resurrecting a memory or interpreting a dream are acts of translation.” I found reading this book truly illuminating.

Bringing Bella together with Cristina, who for years has studied memory from the somewhat different angle of the semiotics of culture, was a fortunate choice. Cristina's research is in the most various expressions and testimonies of memory—from reconciliation processes in South Africa and Chile to documentaries of events and experiences of trauma. "Studying memory [as a cultural phenomenon] means considering not only the material conditions, means, or devices through which it is inscribed and transmitted, but also the models, forms, and practices that define those genres that orient, and also retranslate or reenunciate, narrations of the past" (2012, 10; my translation).

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I would like to thank Bella and Cristina for their wonderful work in putting this issue together. I also want to thank the authors for their contributions, each of which provides new and diversified insights into how translation works through memory. I am also very grateful for their patience during the many publication delays.

Regrettably, it took much longer than expected and originally programmed to publish this special issue. On behalf of the board, I want to apologize to our guest editors, authors, and readers for the unconscionable delay in delivering our journal. Over the past few years, we moved from one publisher to another but now, after a lengthy hiatus, we have finally found a new home with Eurilink University Press in Rome.

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Reading this issue's essays has enriched my understanding of the relations between translation and memory. I have learned new things, and I have been surprised and pleased. I hope you will join me in appreciating this special issue.

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This issue is dedicated to the memory of Umberto Eco, who passed away more than a year ago while we were busy preparing this issue. Translation was one of the themes to which he devoted much interest and writing in his last few years, and his contributions on translation as negotiation, based on his experience both as a translator and as a widely translated author, will continue to accompany us. I am most grateful for the

opportunity he gave me to discover and investigate translation through the lens of semiotics, and Cristina Demaria and I, who both completed our doctorates under his supervision, share fond memories of the lively discussions on translation and its limits during our university seminars.

S. N.

References

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