



## A Space for Translation: Thresholds of Interpretation

Presentation Details	
<b>Title of Paper:</b>	Translating Space in Shen Congwen, Yan Lianke and Mo Yan
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<b>Abstract:</b>	<p>Shen Congwen (1933-1988), Yan Lianke (1958-) and Mo Yan's (1955-) fiction have in common a strong relationship to rural space. This paper examines some of the common challenges in translating space in Shen Congwen's <i>Biancheng</i>, Yan Lianke's <i>Balou tiange</i> and Mo Yan's short story collection <i>Shifu yuelaiyue youmo</i>. The analysis is based on my experience translating these books into Spanish (Shen Congwen, <i>La ciudad fronteriza</i>, 2013), and Basque (Yan Lianke, <i>Balou mendikateko balada</i>, 2017; Mo Yan, <i>Hori da umorea maisu!</i>, 2013). After discussing the space in which these novels are set, and introducing some of their shared features and differences in style, I will present examples of challenging passages that characterise space in these novels. The examples include spatial descriptions (landscape, housing), flora, administrative divisions, and rural machinery. I will also discuss the differences between translating these passages into a language in which other modern Chinese authors can be read in translation, such as Spanish, French and English, and a language in which this literature was unavailable until recently, such as Basque. I will demonstrate that translation is a close reading exercise that reveals stylistic features and connects different authors. The conclusions will also show how important rural space is in some of the most prominent modern and contemporary Chinese fiction.</p>

### Author's Biography

**Maialen MARIN-LACARTA** is assistant professor in the translation programme at Hong Kong Baptist University, teaching Chinese literature and translation. She holds a PhD in Chinese studies and in translation and intercultural studies from the National Institute of Oriental Languages and Civilisations (INALCO) in Paris and the Autonomous University of Barcelona, and is interested in the complex position of Chinese and Sinophone literatures in the global literary system. Marin-Lacarta is currently the principal investigator of the project “Digital Translations in the Making: Hong Kong Contemporary Fiction in Spanish.” Research areas include literary translation, modern and contemporary Chinese literature, literary reception, indirect translation, translation history and digital publishing. She is also a practising literary translator and, among other authors, has published Mo Yan’s work into Basque and Shen Congwen’s fiction into Spanish.