



A Space for Translation: Thresholds of Interpretation

Presentation Details	
Title of Paper:	Mediated Laughter: Translation across Language and Media in Georg Kaiser’s “Side by Side” and Senda Koreya’s “Laughing Letter”
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Abstract:	<p>Like translation, the “proper” role of mediatization is commonly assumed to be transparency. Yet no translation of any kind, either across language or media, is ever free of ideology. While questions of liveness vs. mediation have typically been the purview of Performance Studies and Media Studies, the conversation in those fields tends to be set in binary terms which highlight competing ontologies between formats. By contrast, the language of Translation Studies is uniquely situated to analyze stories that appear in both live and mediated formats as examples of a process <i>across</i> and <i>between</i> generic divides rather than as dichotomy. In so doing, Translation Studies promises to locate different kinds of ideological interplay than other modes of inquiry.</p> <p>In 1937, Senda Koreya directed the “talkie <i>rensa-geki</i>” (a hybrid film/theater genre) production of <i>The Laughing Letter</i> (<i>Warau tegami</i>). Translated from Georg Kaiser’s play <i>Side by Side</i> (<i>Nebeneinander</i>), Koreya’s production represents a translation in not one but two of Roman Jakobson’s categories: as a translation from German to Japanese, it is an interlingual translation; and by adding screens to the production and mediatizing the play, the translation is also an intersemiotic translation. This paper probes the parallel translation strategies of the intersemiotic stage to screen and interlingual German to Japanese in order to uncover what Koreya termed the “hidden socialist realism” located between language and genre.</p>

Author's Biography

Aragorn QUINN is currently an Assistant Professor at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. His work explores the intersection of Japanese translation, politics, and performance between the Meiji Restoration in 1868 and World War II.