Call for Papers: Special Issue 'Translation in Society'

City Translation: Bridging established frameworks and novel directions

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City translation has emerged as a dynamic subfield within translation studies over the past two decades, with key contributions such as Simon's *Translating Montreal* (2006), *Cities in Translation* (2012), *Speaking Memory* (2016), and Lee's *Routledge Handbook of Translation and the City* (2021). These and other recent studies have approached city translation in various ways: as intertwined with digital connectivity and spatial negotiation (Cronin 2016); as expressed through street art and creative urban interventions (Ayhan 2021); as a plurilingual journalistic palimpsest (Demirkol-Ertürk 2021); as a tool of memory politics through urban monuments (Bellentani 2021), and so on. Building on these works, this special issue starts with the conceptualization of city translation as both a process and a product, a subject and an object, an expression of the self and the other. From this perspective, city translation involves the investigation of translationality within the complex interplay of linguistic, cultural, historical, and socio-political systems that shape urban spaces. Therefore, it takes into account both synchronic and diachronic perspectives, viewing cities as material and symbolic constructs.

However, in a decade where 55% of the world's population lives in cities – a figure projected to rise to 68% by 2050[1] – it becomes increasingly clear that research on city translation within translation studies must engage more actively with adjacent fields such as literary studies, museology, and media studies, as well as less traditional domains like urban planning, architecture, and eco-/bio-/zoosemiotics, which allow for a deeper understanding of our past, present, and future within artistic, cultural, socio-political, economic, and technological frameworks. Therefore, this special issue has the aim to expand the contributions on city translation research by focusing on three interrelated angles: memory, belonging, and the socio-cultural afterlife of cities; meaning-making in the urban fabric by human and non-human agents; and urban mediation in/as technology, aesthetics, and representation. In connection with these angles, the questions aimed to be explored are: How does translation shape the ways urban communities remember, represent, and renegotiate cultural belonging and historical presence within the city? In what ways do linguistic, material, and more-than-human semiotic systems contribute to the production and interpretation of urban meaning? How do digital, artistic, and transmedia practices mediate urban life and contribute to the (re)translation of the city as an aesthetic, cultural, and political space?

Accordingly, this special issue invites papers that focus on the exploration of city translation from a range of (inter-) disciplinary and methodological perspectives. Suggested topics include, but are not limited to:

-Translation and urban memory

-Multicultural negotiation of urban spaces

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[1] United Nations World Urbanization Prospects 2018 Highlights:
https://population.un.org/wup/assets/WUP2018-Highlights.pdf (Last accessed 02/03/2025).

-City museums as translation

-Linguistic and translational landscapes

-Material and symbolic constructions of cities

-Bio-/eco-/zoosemiotic approaches to city translation

-The role of digital technologies in shaping, mediating, and translating urban experience

-City as the subject/object/mediator or arts, architecture, and literature

-Transmedia practices and urban life

❖ **Bibliography**

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TIMELINE

Deadline for the abstracts (400-500 words): October 31, 2025

to be sent to: irmak.mertens@ut.ee and federico.bellentani@unito.it

Notifications on abstracts: November 15, 2025

Submission of full papers: February 15, 2026

Notification of outcome of peer review: May 31, 2026

Revised versions: September 1, 2026

Final decision: September 20, 2026

Online publication (separate articles): end of 2026 or beginning of 2027

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