

(Un) performable & translatable



Trinity College Dublin
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath
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Trinity Long Room Hub
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INSTITUTE OF
MODERN
LANGUAGES
RESEARCH

SCHOOL OF
ADVANCED STUDY
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Declarations of practical, political, technical, or ideological impossibility may seem at first glance like dead-ends. However, they can subsequently act as provocations to consider the problem in question more creatively. For example, in 2012 Mo Yan stated that censorship is as necessary as airport security but argued that writing literature is about transcending politics.

In performance studies, the notion of unperformability has not been adequately theorised. This is despite plays being frequently labelled unperformable by theatre professionals with regards technical constraints or a perceived lack of interest for live audiences. There has also been considerable work on the fear and repression of performance practices, from Jack Goody's seminal *Representations and Contradictions* (1997) to the *Observatoire de la vie littéraire's* ongoing project on the hatred of theatre.

The concept of untranslatability, on the other hand, is old in translation studies, but continues to gather substantial interest. Barbara Cassin's *Dictionary of untranslatables* (2014) has become a bestseller, and there is a thriving discussion among theoreticians about the supposed impossibility of translating certain terms or even texts between languages. As for practice, it has informed, contradicted and ignored theoretical debates. For instance, Schopenhauer attempted to translate Kant despite having previously declared his work untranslatable, and for experimental groups such as the *Outranspo*, the notion of untranslatability constitutes a challenge to provide a translation.

The aim of this conference is two-fold. First, it seeks to uncover the relationship between unperformability and untranslatability, to establish correlations between the two terms and underlying paradigms. Second, it aims to subvert the notions in the two respective fields, by suggesting that what is, in fact, denoted by them is simply unrealised potential.

Conference Programme

Day 1	
1200	Registration and Lunch
1300	Dominic Glynn & James Hadley
	Welcome and Introduction
	Panel 1
	1) Lorna Shaughnessy
	Lorna Shaughnessy lectures in Spanish in Galway. She is currently working on a series of articles on Hispanic versions of the Iphigenia myth in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Three of these have been published by the Bulletin of Hispanic Studies, the Colegio de México and Classical Reception Studies. She has published translations of Mexican and Galician poetry, and was shortlisted for the Popescu Prize in 2013. Her dramatic monologues based on the sacrifice of Iphigenia, <i>The Sacrificial Wind</i> , will be staged as part of the <i>Cúirt International Festival of Literature</i> in April, 2017.
	Static or Status Quo? The 'performability' of Alfonso Reyes' Cruel Iphigenia
1330	The literary works and cultural institutions co-founded by Alfonso Reyes (1889-1959), play a key role in Mexico's state-sponsored, cultural status quo. Given his role in public life as co-founder of Mexico's oldest postgraduate University, it is understandable that his relationship to the state has traditionally been presented in uncomplicated terms by Mexican academics. A reluctance to interrogate the socio-political dimension of some of his most revered artistic works is also perceptible, particularly in the case of his 'dramatic poem', <i>Cruel Iphigenia</i> . This dimension is lacking in scholarship on the text in both Spanish and English.
	Remarkably, the text was not professionally staged in Mexico between 1924 and 2014. A general consensus seems to have settled in theatre circles that the highly poetic and highly 'static' nature of the text somehow rendered it at worst 'unperformable', at best, not sufficiently dynamic to warrant production. These assumptions are questionable on many fronts. The reliance on poetic text to narrate events rather enact them is a conscious imitation by Reyes of the Classical sources of the story. However, this has never been cited in Mexican theatre as a reason not to perform Euripides or other classical texts. Moreover, the experimental and dynamic nature of modern Mexican theatre makes this assumption unconvincing.
	This paper argues that the 'unperformability' (or underperformed nature) of this text has more to do with the political background against which it was written, a post-revolutionary Mexico racked by continuing violence. It also analyses the ways in which the 2014 production by 'The National Theatre Company' and 'Contemporary Centre for Musical Experimentation' challenges the way <i>Cruel Iphigenia</i> is persistently read as a metaphor for reconciliation by drawing on the context of violence in Mexico today.
	2) Salomé Paul
	I am a first-year PhD student in comparative literature at Paris-Sorbonne University and University College Dublin under the supervision of Messrs Bernard Franco and Eamonn Jordan. My thesis, <i>Contemporary Variations upon The Greek Tragic Myth in Anouilh's, Sartre's, Camus', Paulin's, Kennelly's and Heaney's Theatre</i> , is mostly about political reception and translation of Greek myth and tragedy on the modern stage. Thus, problems of translating and of performing are one of the main interests of my research.
	Sartre's Trojan Women: Incomprehensible Greeks
1400	Translating and performing a Greek tragedy on the modern stage seems to be common since plots of tragedies have been regarded as universal stories about humanity and divinity. However, this statement doesn't take into consideration the political purpose of theatre during Antiquity, and thus, doesn't identify some particularities of Greek tragedy that are no longer intelligible for a modern audience. Sartre was well aware of this when he wrote a version of Euripides' <i>Trojan Women</i> : I will demonstrate that Sartre's new version and its staging highlight the universal meaning of the drama, while the meaning of the Greek one would have been unintelligible to a modern audience.
	First, I will examine Sartre's translation of the euripidean drama. It may seem debatable to talk about translation as Sartre modified Euripides' text. Classical dramas allude a lot to mythological stories, but most of them are unknown to a modern audience, and Sartre had to cut some mythological allusions, and develop some others. For instance, he added a scene to make clear Hecuba's fate in order to clarify the tragic ending of the <i>Trojan Women</i> . These alterations

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	<p>highlight that some parts of classical tragedies are untranslatable for modern stage as they would not have been understood by a modern audience. In the same way, some concepts, mostly political ones such as « Europe », even if they exist in modern language, don't have the same meaning in Greek, and are, in a way, untranslatable. Finally, I will examine Cacoyannis' staging of Sartre's drama. The set was made neutral as it could be a shore anywhere in the world and the same logic was applied to the Trojan characters' suits. These setting choices highlight the unperformability of a Greek style tragedy in order to allude to modern times issues through a Greek story.</p>
	<p>3) Siobhán McElduff</p>
	<p>Siobhán McElduff is an Associate Professor at the University of British Columbia. She is the author of <i>Roman Theories of Translation</i> (2013), co-editor of a collection of papers on ancient Mediterranean translation (<i>Complicating the History of Western Translation</i>, 2012). She is currently working on the translation of gesture from Greece to Rome, and on a separate project on the working classes and classics in the 18th and 19th centuries. She is a practicing translator and has published a volume of Cicero's speeches (<i>In Defense of the Republic</i>) for Penguin Classics.</p>
	<p><i>Greek Gestures and Roman Voices: Translating the unperformable in ancient Rome</i></p>
1430	<p>A Roman in the 3rd century CE scratches his head with the wrong finger and is immediately labelled a sexual deviant. A 1st century imperial professor of oratory attacks the use of the trembling hand as a stagy move imported to Rome from Greek schools. A Roman rhetorician visiting Athens in the 2nd century CE angrily wraps his head in his robe and lies on his back while reciting Roman translations of Greek lyric poetry at a dinner party.</p> <p>In the ancient Greek and Roman world gesture mattered, and mattered a great deal. Nowhere was this more true than in Roman rhetoric, where the elite male body and all its movements faced intense and continual scrutiny both in public and private. Fame and political glory depended on the perfect command of a complicated system of gesture as well as the use of the right language. This presented a unique problem for Roman orators translating Greek speeches in Latin or Latin speeches into Greek, activities which were a not insignificant portion of their training and literary activity. Translations were intended to be performed, but performing Greek oratory in Latin created its own uniquely uncomfortable issues for Romans, as the two systems of gesture differed in important ways. The situation was not helped by the fact Roman orators were expected to be (ideally) the speaking and moving embodiment of Romanness, and thus were not eager to be seen as Greek mouthpieces even in translation. Such issues, this paper will argue, ultimately resulted in certain types of direct forms of oratorical translation being eschewed by elite Romans because they were unperformable, or at least not performable without severe political and social risks.</p>
1500	Coffee break
	Panel 2
	<p>4) Alice Folco</p>
	<p>Alice Folco is Senior Lecturer in the Performance Department of Grenoble-Alpes University, France, where she belongs to a lab named LITT&ARTS. Her PhD dealt with drama critiques written by symbolist poet Stéphane Mallarmé. Her current field of expertise is French performances in the late nineteenth century. Since 2013, she has been leading with Séverine Ruset a project on the notion of "injouable" (symposium "(Un)play the unplayable" in 2013; <i>Revue d'Histoire du Theatre's</i> issue "l'injouable au theatre" in 2015; <i>European Drama and Performance Studies' issue "Déjouer l'injouable: la scène contemporaine à l'épreuve de l'impossible"</i>, 2017).</p>
	<p><i>The French "injouable", from Voltaire to Vitez</i></p>
1530	<p>Whereas the English language uses three rather equivocal notions – the "unplayable", the "unstageable" and the "unperformable" – to characterise different types of theatrical impossibility, French encompasses that which resists the stage under one word: "l'injouable". I'd like to discuss the semantic evolution of this notion from the 18th century to today, while stressing the shift in the historically numerous and varied value judgments attached to it. Given my field of expertise, I will first lay particular emphasis on 19th century examples, such as Musset's <i>Lorenzaccio</i>, Hugo's <i>Théâtre en liberté</i>, Mallarmé's <i>Hérodiade</i>, but also on the debate surrounding whether or not to stage Shakespeare's <i>Hamlet</i>. Then I intend to show how, in the 20th century, the adjective was not cast into obsolescence when theatre liberated itself from the exclusive patronage of the mimetic aesthetic and when "[making] theatre out of everything" became possible, as director Antoine Vitez once stated. On the contrary, in correlation with the rise of stage directors, the word has lost (part of) its normative power: it no longer implies a writer's lack of pragmatism but measures the creativity of stage directors in the face of challenge.</p>
	<p>5) Karen Quigley</p>
1600	<p>Karen Quigley is Lecturer in Theatre at University of York, UK. Her current book project investigates moments of unstageability in modern European theatre, bringing fresh insight to the trope of the unstageable in theatrical text and performance. Other research projects in progress include an exploration of the teaching of site-based</p>

	<p>performance practices in university contexts, and a performance piece about the relationship between sound, music and memory.</p> <p><i>'This play is getting in the way of me explaining it': Unperformable texts, oscillatory pleasure, and the creativity of theatrical adaptation.</i></p> <p>Acknowledging the recent re-evaluation of adaptation's definitions and processes by and for theatre studies scholars (including Margherita Laera, Katja Krebs, Martin Puchner and Patrice Pavis), and following from its much longer history in screen studies, I argue in this paper that intra-medial theatrical adaptation presents an ideal opportunity for thinking about perceived notions of unstageability and unperformability, particularly in terms of the seeming impossibility that is transformed, reinforced or illuminated through the process of adaptation.</p> <p>The central case study in this paper is Anton Chekhov's first play, written in 1878, discovered in 1923, posthumously entitled <i>Platonov</i> (other posthumous titles include <i>Fatherlessness</i> or <i>Untitled Play</i>), and generally dismissed as unstageable and unperformable due to its astonishing and rambling excess of action, themes, characters, genres and words. The theatrical resistance suggested by this text has been reframed as a creative challenge enthusiastically taken up in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries by a range of British and Irish practitioners. For example, Michael Frayn's 'adaptation' (<i>Wild Honey</i>, working with his own translation), David Hare's 'version' (<i>Platonov</i>, working with Helen Rappaport's 'literal translation'), and Irish performance company Dead Centre's 'new play' (<i>Chekhov's First Play</i>, working with Laurence Senelick's translation), all of which have premiered or been revived in 2015-16, acknowledge in different ways the unperformability that imbues Chekhov's text. Each of these productions works with, against and through the inherent impossibilities of the 'original' text in exciting ways, seeing unperformability as an exciting creative charge and impulse, rather than as a reason to avoid staging the text.</p> <p>The paper focuses in particular on Dead Centre's <i>Chekhov's First Play</i>, and its responses to and disruptions of the challenges presented by the seemingly unperformable text. Harnessing Linda Hutcheon's sense of 'oscillation' between texts in an adaptation context, (specifically intra-medial adaptation in this case), I aim to locate and investigate the pleasure (for the theatre-makers and the spectators) derived from the oscillation between an unperformable text and its adaptation, both on the page and in production.</p>
1630	<p>6) Séverine Ruset-Penketh</p> <p>Séverine Ruset is Senior Lecturer in Theatre studies at the University of Grenoble Alpes, France. Her research focuses on European contemporary theatre (particularly British) and favors a socio-aesthetic approach. She recently co-edited with Alice Folco <i>L'injouable au théâtre</i> in <i>Revue d'Histoire du Théâtre</i> (2015) and <i>Déjouer l'injouable : la scène contemporaine à l'épreuve de l'impossible</i> in <i>European Drama and Performance Studies</i> (tbp 2017), and with Bérénice Hamidi-Kim <i>Troupes, companies, collectifs dans les arts vivants : organisations du travail, processus de création et conjuncture</i> (L'Entretemps, tbp 2017). She is currently completing a monograph on English contemporary drama for Editions Classiques Garnier.</p> <p><i>The unperformable on the contemporary stage: appeal and limits</i></p> <p>Given the emphasis placed by European performing arts organisations in their marketing material on the way the performances they host or produce strive towards "staging the unstageable", or more generally making the impossible possible, the unperformable can be seen as exercising a strong appeal on artists today, and even more decisively, as contributing to the dynamic of large chunks of contemporary theatre. Starting with a general comparison of the different fashions in which subsidized and commercial theatres relate to creative challenges in both French and British contexts, I will demonstrate that this dynamic depends on the way artistic ambitions and aesthetic trends interplay with socio-political incitements and economic constraints.</p> <p>My aim is to investigate how such interplay impacts, not only on the nature and frequency of the provocations which are brought to the stage, but on their ability to challenge audience's expectations and push the limits of the theatrical form. This will lead me to focus on the specific case of French public theatre, where the key players - beneficiaries and administrators of public funding alike - all claim to favor aesthetic risks, so that one could consider the interplay to be particularly conducive to gaining ground over the unperformable. What possibilities and impossibilities does it actually generate? What consequences does it have on the artists' creative freedom and the way they perceive it? Based on some interviews with artists, and on the study of some mission statements and season brochures, my paper will discuss those questions in the light of some recent petitions issued from the cultural sector, which denounce increased political interference and insidious forms of censorship in the name of so-called popular demand. I will also focus on recent pressure groups' attempts to create scandals around certain plays, such as Emilie Le Roux's</p>

	production of <i>Mon frère, ma princesse</i> (2014) by Catherine Zambon, which has been targeted by conservative gender identity watch groups.
1700	Comfort Break
	7) Nicholas Johnson & David Shepherd
	Dr David Shepherd initiated this project and will work as dramaturge and co-adaptor for the performance. In addition to his published interests in other areas of biblical studies, Dr Shepherd has in recent years explored the reception of the Bible in the visual and performing arts of the first decades of the twentieth century. He is the author of <i>The Bible on Silent Film: Spectacle, Story and Scripture in the Early Cinema</i> (Cambridge UP, 2013) and the editor of <i>The Silents of Jesus in the Cinema (1897-1927)</i> (Routledge, 2016). Given the close relationship between theatrical stage and cinema screen in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Dr Shepherd's interest and investment in the adaptation and interpretation of Brecht's David-fragments for the stage is a crucial component of the next phase of his interrogation of the reflection and refraction of biblical traditions in the visual and performing arts of the early twentieth century more generally. Dr Shepherd is director of Trinity's Centre for Biblical Studies.
1730	Dr Nicholas Johnson is the translator and director on the project. A leading practice-based researcher in the field of Beckett Studies with recent theatre credits including <i>No's Knife</i> (Lincoln Centre, New York) and <i>Cascando</i> (Pan Pan, Dublin), Dr Johnson co-edited the special issue on performance of the <i>Journal of Beckett Studies</i> (23. 1, 2014) and founded the Samuel Beckett Laboratory, where he has developed a methodology for workshop-based performance research. Dr Johnson researched Brecht in 2004 and 2005 as part of a DAAD Fellowship in Berlin, and also has an established profile as a literary translator of German drama, particularly of the Weimar era. He has translated and directed works by Ernst Toller, Max Frisch, Franz Kafka, and Georg Trakl. Dr Johnson leads the Creative Arts Practice research theme in TCD and is a co-director of the Samuel Beckett Summer School.
	<i>The David Fragments</i>
	The David Fragments is a collaborative practice-as-research project based at Trinity College Dublin, developed by David Shepherd of the Centre for Biblical Studies and Nicholas Johnson of the School of Drama, Film, and Music. Its goal is to investigate the incomplete "David" material written by Bertolt Brecht in 1920-21 for a range of different research communities and potential outputs, including the first English translation and the first English performance of this material.
1900	Dinner
Day 2	
	Keynote Presentation
	8) Geraldine Brodie
	Geraldine Brodie is a Lecturer in Translation Theory and Theatre Translation at University College London. Her research and publications centre on theatre translation practices in contemporary London, and she also created the UCL Theatre Translation Forum in collaboration with the Gate Theatre Notting Hill. Recent publications include the special issue, 'Martin Crimp: playwright, translator, translated', of the <i>Journal of Adaptation in Film and Performance</i> (2016), co-edited with Marie Nadia Karsky. Her monograph, <i>The Translator on Stage</i> (Bloomsbury) and the volume <i>Adapting Translation for the Stage</i> (Routledge), co-edited with Emma Cole, will be published later this year.
	<i>Dead or alive? Theatrical retranslation and the paradox of (un)translatability</i>
0930	Translation is a paradox in practice and concept, captured in Derrida's 'necessary impossibility'. Communication requires translation, but translation can never wholly communicate its source. And yet Barbara Cassin, as her French-language <i>Dictionnaire des Intraduisibles/Dictionnaire of Untranslatables</i> was itself in the process of translation, took the view that there was 'aucun paradoxe ici' – 'no paradox here'. Cassin credits this to the 'energy of untranslatables': far from remaining untranslated, they are translated over and over again. My talk investigates the energy of translation, specifically retranslation, in theatrical performance. Just as Cassin sees the English edition of her dictionary as a 'translation-adaptation-reinvention', so translated plays are reinvented and adapted in performance, with retranslation releasing the energy of the untranslatable element that exists in every text. That energy can bestow new life on a text, particularly in the theatre where assumptions about how the works of canonical playwrights should be performed can lead to stasis in the development of productions. Peter Brook abhorred the fixity of 'Deadly Theatre', advocating rediscovery and the search for an ever-elusive 'true play' to create a living theatre. I will discuss the role of retranslation in uncovering the potentiality of classic texts, but I will also consider translational challenges in dynamic theatrical modes – devised, site specific, immersive – that may be thought of as untranslatable. Is it possible to capture the liveness of theatre and translation in these circumstances? I will argue that the impossibility of translation can generate a creativity in the performance of a translated text that points out the multivocal nature of the source, and of translation itself.

1030	Coffee break
	Panel 4
	9) Junjie Jang
	Junjie Jiang is a master student at Harvard University. She received her B.A. from Columbia University, <i>summa cum laude</i> , Phi Beta Kappa.
	Translating the play Toilet—(re)creating slangs, puns, and wordplays; introducing the footnote as a character, or recreating scenes from context?
1100	<p>I am in the process of translating the three-act play, <i>Toilet</i>, by Guo Shixing, a contemporary Chinese playwright based in Beijing. There are many difficulties in this task; they represent at once challenges and opportunities for creativity. I consider translation to be less of a mechanical process of finding equivalents than it is a process of re-creation, a form of rewriting inspired by the original. One can argue that <i>Toilet</i> is untranslatable and (especially when translated) unperformable.</p> <p>First, the playwright does not limit himself to standard Mandarin but uses numerous slang words and other colloquialisms from the local Beijing dialect, as well as, on occasion, obsolete slang and argot from previous decades. Many of these expressions are foreign to Chinese people who are not from Beijing or who are from younger generations. Even a non-Beijngnese Mandarin speaker would benefit from some level of translation. Such nonstandard phrases are frequently very rich in meaning. How can I find or create expressions in English that boast similar richness, vividness, and local color? For example, the very first challenge is how to translate the characters' nicknames. Two of the male characters have the Beijing slang word <i>ye</i> 爺 in their nicknames. <i>Ye</i> has at least five different meanings with very different overtones—depending on the context, <i>ye</i> can be a colloquial way to call papa or grandpa, it can be a respectful honorific to address an official or a scholar, or it can be used ironically to show disrespect and sarcasm. A pickpocket in the play is simply named after the Beijing slang word for “pickpocket,” <i>foye</i> 佛爺. Its meaning is very clear to a person who speaks Beijing dialect; however, it creates a challenge for translation. How can I convey the multiple shades of meaning as well as the cultural richness of one simple word? Two main characters, the father and the son who clean the toilet in the play, have the family name <i>Shi</i> 史. <i>Shi</i> means “history,” yet it is also a homophone of <i>shi</i> 屎, which means “shit” and is automatically associated with the toilet. The visual and aural similarities between the <i>pinyin</i> (the Romanization of Chinese characters) <i>shi</i> and the English word “shit” are very convenient for me as the translator. However, I have to coin the word “shitstory”—the shit’s story as history—and insert a whole dialog that is not in the original to elaborate on the implicit pun that is immediately recognizable in Mandarin. There are brilliant wordplays like this throughout the play; however, the loss in translation is unavoidable even though I try to convey as much as possible. I, however, do not feel so disheartened for such loss because whatever richness the translated text loses here, it gains elsewhere—when I insert into the original new wordplays I create in English.</p> <p>Second, the play is loaded with contexts. It is set inside and outside a public toilet in Beijing in the early 1970s, the mid 1980s, and the late 1990s, with its three acts taking place in the three respective eras. The overall structure of using the public toilet, where people from all walks of life crossed paths, to at once provide the backdrop and explore each era in miniature is ingenious. Since Guo deliberately sets the scenes against the political, economic, and social circumstances of the respective decades, there are slogans, buzzwords, anecdotes, and political and popular culture references peculiar to a certain decade that are unfamiliar to an average English reader/audience and sometimes even a young Chinese reader/audience. What are the effective strategies to convey such contexts? If the translation is only intended for reading, I can simply use extensive footnotes. However, how can I make the translation performable? I try to insert short explanations in the main text when the text allows. When such insertion is not possible, I experiment with introducing the footnote as a character in the play and (re)creating scenes from the political and cultural context.</p>
	10) Justine Houyaux
1130	<p>Justine Houyaux (b. 1985) is a PhD candidate at the Faculty of Translation and Interpretation of the UMONS (Belgium) where she has taught English for six years. Her PhD focuses on the strategies of transfer of realia in the French translations of <i>Alice</i>. She has participated to the <i>Alice in a World of Wonderland</i> project (published in 2015) as a translator and editor, and has been a member of the Lewis Carroll Society since 2011.</p> <p>(Un)Translating Alice's Adventures in Wonderland to French: Strategies of Transfer of Realia (1869-2009)</p> <p>This paper gives an overview of the strategies of transfer of realia (or culture-bound elements) in the French translations of <i>Alice's Adventures in Wonderland</i>. More precisely, it discusses the findings of a corpus-based study of the 22 full translations of <i>Alice's Adventures in Wonderland</i> into French from 1869 to 2009.</p>

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	<p>Vlahov and Florin defined realia as “words (and composed expressions) of the popular language representing denominations of objects, concepts, typical phenomena of a given geographic place, of material life or of social-historical peculiarities of some people, nation, country, tribe, that for this reason carry a national, local or historical colour; these words do not have exact matches in other languages” (Vlahov and Florin: 1955; 1969; 1993). In other words, realia are bumps in the text where readers can sense that the text is indeed a translation; that it comes from a foreign language and a foreign culture.</p> <p>The corpus, designed for the purpose of my doctoral dissertation, contains 137 instances of realia and their transfer strategies in the 22 French translations. The realia that have been observed serve as indicators of a local translation strategy that can be placed on a foreignisation/domestication (in Lawrence Venuti’s words) scale in order to measure the foreign cultural permeability of the French language over more than a 140 years of presence of this masterpiece in France.</p> <p>Crucially, the translation corpus and the persistence in retranslating Alice make it possible for a diachronic quantitative study to take place, together with an attempt of a qualitative explanation of the choices made by the French translators who have had to reconcile the irreconcilable — and translate the untranslatable.</p> <p>References</p> <p>Florin, Sider (1955 ; 1993). “Realia in Translation.” Zlateva, Palma (ed.), <i>Translation as Social Action: Russian and Bulgarian Perspectives</i>, London: Routledge, 123-128.</p> <p>Venuti, Lawrence (1995). <i>The Translator’s Invisibility: A History of Translation</i>. London/New York: Routledge.</p> <p>Vlahov, Sergej & Florin, Sider (1969). Neperovodimoe v perevode. Realii. <i>Masterstvo perevoda</i> [translated and online: http://courses.logos.it/pls/dictionary/linguistic_resources.cap_3_33?lang=EN, last retrieved on the 6th of December, 2016], 432-456.</p>
1200	<p>11) Faisal Hamadah</p> <p>Faisal Hamadah is a researcher and teaching associate at Queen Mary University. His research deals with the history of Arabic theatre and Kuwait’s theatre movement specifically, with an emphasis on the relationship between the developing theatre movement and the development of the modern state. He teaches on twentieth century political theatre more broadly. In addition to his academic work, he works as a theatre translator, most recently collaborating with Syrian-Palestinian playwright Yasser Abu Shaqra on a trilogy of plays, and with playwright Sulayman al-Bassam on his forthcoming <i>Petrol Station</i>.</p> <p>On the untranslatability of cruelty</p> <p>How does one translate the potential affective impact of a contemporary play into a language-context where much of the force would be lost? This was the challenge I faced in translating Palestinian-Syrian playwright Yasser Abu Shaqra’s <i>Qabl al-Asha</i> (Before Dinner) from Arabic into English. The play, which begins as a domestic drama under the shadow of the unfolding Syrian revolution, escalates into a reflection on the role of the artist, specifically the playwright, when their intended audience no longer exist, having been decimated by unprecedented violence and state repression. The play then explodes into a brutal deconstruction of modern Arabic identity. To achieve this, the play poses a number of challenges for the English-language translator. On the most immediate, linguistic level, the play is written in an unstable Palestinian-Syrian colloquial dialect with generational inflections depending on who is speaking and frequent shifts into alternative registers. Related to this challenge is the vast cache of cultural signifiers that the play puts to work in constructing the edifice of modern Arabic identity that it then savagely tears down. Here the play moves between Islamic epics, mid-century Egyptian cinema and contemporary Lebanese hip hop. While the facticity of these signifiers is inescapable in the Arabic, their specificity will inevitably be obscured in any English language translation, especially one made for the stage. Finally, it is the play’s attempts to shock an intended audience that poses the most significant challenge for the translator. How does one carry over the cruelty that inheres in the structure and dialogue to an English-speaking audience, one who is by now expecting what George Potter calls ‘global refugee chic’ productions? To what, what are the translator’s responsibilities between fidelity and domestication, between the ‘militant particularism’ of an original and a necessary legibility in performance dictated by globalized market trends?</p>
1230	<p>Lunch</p> <p>Panel 5</p>
1400	<p>12) Andy Lavender</p> <p>Andy Lavender is the incoming Head of the School of Theatre, Performance and Cultural Policy Studies at the University of Warwick. He is Professor of Theatre & Performance and former Head of the School of Arts at the University of Surrey. Recent publications include <i>Performance in the Twenty-First Century: Theatres of Engagement</i> (London and New York: Routledge, 2016) and ‘Modal transpositions towards theatres of encounter, or, in praise of “media intermultimodality”’ (<i>Theatre Journal</i>, 66:4, 2014, 499-518).</p>

	<p><i>(Un)Performing the unthinkable: Brexit, Trump and the performativity of knowledge</i></p> <p>This paper explores questions of truth and theatricality, the real and performance, in relation to recent events in democratic political process. It takes two paradigm-shifting points of reference, Donald Trump’s successful US presidential campaign and the successful ‘Leave’ campaign in the UK’s referendum on membership of the European Union, to examine the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preceding perspectives on the ‘unthinkable’ and ‘unperformable’ nature of the proposed disruption; - Processes of ‘truth-turning’ that ‘unperform’ the stability of the status quo; - The performance of position in public discourse, and the simultaneous denial that the position is being performed (in favour of an immanentist view); - The victory of the unthinkable and its manifestation in both performance and (as a form of ‘unperformance’) actualisation. <p>The paper subjects selected elements of both campaigns to an analysis that uses terms and tropes from theatre and performance studies (to do with characterisation and personification, dramatic structure, <i>mise en scène</i>, occlusion, immersion, affective encounter and dramaturgy of effect), in order to explore how public discourse is both performed and unperformed – that is, presented theatrically on the one hand, and radically (re)actualised as opposed to represented on the other. It thereby examines how that which was held to be unachievable (unperformable) was effectuated, and how prevailing conventions were transcended by serially re-performing the unperformable.</p> <p>The paper reflects briefly upon the larger context for such developments amid what has been termed a ‘post-truth’ environment for cultural production. The Brexit referendum and the Trump ascendancy each demonstrate the interrelation of mediatisation, political and civic discourse, and representation (democratic/mediated). They beg questions of the performativity of knowledge, where that which we understand in common is clinched in the public sphere. The notion of ‘unperformance’ may provide an especially productive way of thinking about the subversions performed by both processes.</p>
1430	<p>13) Karin Sibul</p> <p>Karin Sibul is a conference and diplomatic interpreter and a postgraduate student at Tartu University in Estonia. She teaches a course on diplomatic interpreting and the history of interpreting at Tartu University and Tallinn City University, Estonia and has been a moderator at national conferences focusing on different aspects of interpreting.</p> <p>Her research focuses on the analysis of symbolic capital in the diachronic development of interpreting in Estonia.</p> <p><i>(Un)interpretable and (Un)performable: Challenges Faced By a Diplomatic Interpreter</i></p> <p>This presentation deals with challenges a diplomatic interpreter faces.</p> <p>If in his foreign policy speech the president refers to “a Siberian lice comb” or “a unique boat carved out of a single trunk of an aspen tree”, the interpreter may be caught unawares. It is easy to get lost and to doubt one’s judgment in such a situation, leading the interpreter to consider whether the speech is interpretable and whether the interpretation is performable. This is particularly true when the interpreter is not a native of the country in which the speech is given. The major difficulty in diplomatic interpreting is that the interpreters are under enormous responsibility and pressure not to make any mistake that might cause a diplomatic incident and must also deal with the trust and faith vested in them to cope with that responsibility. Can this prove an obstacle to the interpreter’s creativity, which is necessary in order to overcome uninterpretable stumbling blocks? Interpreters of smaller languages such as Estonian nearly always interpret in both directions. The diplomatic interpreter has to cope with terminology at interpreted events that often last from five to fifteen minutes and that touch upon a vast range of topics and has to be able to respond to quick exchanges without being provided with any broader context. The interpreter’s professionalism lies partially in the invisibility of the interpreting act, facilitated by terminological fluency; the terminological preparation remains invisible as well.</p> <p>Does a diplomatic interpreter have any coping tactics if the speech contains uninterpretable phrases and the interpreter feels the interpretation thereof may be unperformable? This is like standing under Niagara Falls: buffeted by an unstoppable flow of water, there is no getting back up once one falls.</p>
1500	<p>14) Charlotte Thevenet</p> <p>Charlotte Thevenet is a postgraduate student in French literature at UCL. Her thesis looks at texts with an unusual layout among Derrida’s writings, and focuses on the rhetoric of commentary at work in these texts.</p> <p><i>How are you going to translate that?" (Un)performing the untranslatable in Jacques Derrida's "Living On"</i></p>

(Un) performable & translatable

In "Living On", Jacques Derrida addresses his translator: "How are you going to translate that, *récit*, for example?" (Derrida 1979, 86), stating the untranslatability of his text and acknowledging its future translation at the same time. The layout of the text itself stages this gap: on the top three-quarters of the page reads a commentary on Blanchot and Shelley, comparing *The Triumph of Life* and *L'arrêt de mort*; on the bottom quarter is laid out a "journal de bord", some "border lines" which are also a "shipboard journal" and a "journal on *bord*" (Derrida 1979, 82; translator's note), a journal literally on the edge. Both deal with translation, and both seem specifically designed to hinder translation. To the extent that a translation requires a rigid hierarchy between the textual genres (primary texts, commentary, citations...), then "Living On" is untranslatable. Transgressing every possible textual boundary, the text lives "on": on the "edge" (Derrida 1979, 77) between a word always-already translated ("That makes three languages I'm writing in" (Derrida 1979, 76)) and its impossible translation, between textual performance and its impossible utterance. First, I would like to show how untranslatability is staged and performed; staged through the direct provocations the enunciator throws at his future translator, and performed through the unreadable layout and the multiplication of references that run through the text. Then, I will suggest that the performance of untranslatability, this writing on the edge, far from preventing it, actually calls for the intervention of the other: resisting the "dream of translation without remnants, a metalanguage that would guarantee orderly flow between 'entry language' and 'exit language' (e.g., of a translating computer)", "Living On" performs a writing in translation and invites a translation focused on creating new remnants rather than on reducing them.

1530 Closing remarks