

The Role of Literary Translations in Immigrant Periodicals in the USA: Cultural Image Making and Identity Building through Translation

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The aim of the presentation is to highlight the transfer of information about national and cultural images through literary translation in the periodicals published by an émigré community in the US in the interwar period. Since every translation involves the dissemination of certain cultural images (Doorslaer 2012), I will argue that by means of the English translation of specific literary works published in the immigrant periodicals, immigrant diasporas in the US attempted to construct their own representation of their original culture, and communicate this image to mainstream US culture. I will focus on the role of literary translations published in 3 periodicals within the Slovene immigrant community in the USA in the interwar period, paying particular attention to the selections of source texts and the packaging of target texts (Kahf 2000). It will be argued first, that these translations published in the newspapers were key to the building of the imagined community of Slovene-Americans in the spirit of nineteenth-century nation building enterprises (Anderson 2006, Pogacar 2017); and second, that by means of the English translation of specific literary works, the immigrant diaspora of Slovene-Americans in the US attempted to construct their own representation of their original culture, and communicate this image to mainstream US culture. By contributing to the construction of national and cultural images of Slovene-Americans, translations thus became an active part of intra-cultural communications between a marginalized and dispersed immigrant linguistic community (Gentzler 2007) and the majority English-speaking society, both of which, together with other immigrant communities, helped constitute the US culture.

References

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