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**Fernández, Fruela (2021). *Translating the Crisis. Politics and Culture in Spain after the 15M*. London/New York: Routledge, pp. 169, £120/£33.29. ISBN: 978-1-138-31084-1.**

*Translating the Crisis: Politics and Culture in Spain after the 15M*, by Fruela Fernández, is a contribution that belongs with recent trends within Translation Studies that call for a wider understanding of what has traditionally been known as translation, along the lines of the “Outward Turn” described by Bassnett and Johnston (2019) and of “Post-Translation Studies” (Nergaard and Arduini 2011; Gentzler 2017). Adopting as a starting point what the author describes as “expanded translation”, the book examines translation processes that do not crystallize into relationships between a source and a target text, but which imply complex political and discursive interactions that give shape to social movements, often riddled with tensions and imbalances that may emerge in and become visible in (para)textual elements, comments in social networks, interviews, meetings, traditional media, and many other forms of linguistic exchanges and formats in which they may occur.

This proposal, located at the crossroads between Translation Studies and Social Movement Studies, examines, with a necessarily interdisciplinary approach, scenarios of political and social crisis that take place in the contemporary global(ized) world, focusing on the Spanish political scene of recent years, after the appearance of the so-called anti-austerity “15M movement” which began around 2011. This work fills a gap that had been highlighted by academic authors (Baker 2016: 6) and is a response to the “communicative turn” (Lievrouw 2011: 57) that is taking place in social movements, which use translation as an essential tool to convey their concerns to different sectors of society both at national and international level.

In this work, Fernández advocates an enlarged view of translation, and explores the capacity of the practice to regenerate activism through the inclusion of new terms and the importation and adaptation of alternative discourses from different contexts within an increasingly interconnected and small world, marked by the ubiquity of social media. In the first chapter, the author defines translation as a specific form of communication that enables the commonality of different types of activism in their fight for different causes. Based on the assumption that translation can be equated with a form of activism, the chapter goes on to prove that the development of a global solidarity would be virtually impossible without the intervention of translation processes. These processes can bridge the linguistic gaps in the current globalized world order, and make it possible for joint transnational reactions to emerge, based on the communication between activist groups.

With this same open translational approach, the second chapter discusses translation as a structuring element that takes part in the social

movements that emerge in response to the prevailing social and political climate. Both at the level of names —i.e., in relation to the titles of the movements—and at an organizational level—i.e., as regards the contact and the relationship among movements in different countries—, translation acts as a bridge and can be used as a tool to understand the mechanisms with which these social movements operate. It is through translation that social movements such as 15M can find new resources to define themselves, as well as new points of reference in other groups. In the specific case of the Spanish context, Fernández describes how the narratives that have been inherited from the country's transition to democracy have prevailed over other potential routes of development for the country. Furthermore, he presents translation processes as forms of political response that can be useful to find new formulas, models and alternative references to (re)shape contemporary realities. As an example, the chapter discusses in depth the rediscovery—through translation—of books and authors from the past that have been used to conceptualize, and serve as a reference for, the current situation. The chapter also develops an interesting analysis of translation as an important and pivotal tool used by politically committed publishing houses to spread content on social, academic or cultural activism, amongst other topics. The author places special emphasis on paratexts and on their political usefulness as a strategy to give visibility to specific readings and perspectives within the publishing field.

The next chapter focuses on the concept of “commons” and the implications of the different translations used in the Spanish context of the 15M movement, together with the challenges that the term poses due to the different nuances that it can acquire depending on the translation that is selected. The activist element of translation is also discussed in relation to the different groups and projects associated with this movement, an overview of which is presented. Throughout these pages, the author provides examples of and responses to some questions that scholars such as Baker (2013), Pérez-González (2016), and Piróth and Baker (2019) have posed on the conflicting and contradictory nature of activism in and from the point of view of translation. Through a detailed analysis of real examples within the 15M movement, he reveals to what extent translation is present within specific proposals presented by different organizations and how it even plays an important part in their creation.

Following this same theoretical line, the fourth chapter emphasizes the central character of translation by focusing on the inclusion and development of feminist concerns into the 15M movement. The argument presented invokes Foucault's concept of “genealogy” to reveal how feminism incorporated into the 15M movement brought into question the immovable character of structures that were considered to be natural but which are in fact shaped in tune with the prevailing patriarchal system. This was achieved, according to the author, by means of collaborative and collective events mediated by translation and linked to the concept of

“commons” that is recurrently examined throughout the entire book. As in the previous chapter, this section analyzes the publishing policies applied by the feminist movements within these social initiatives and explores the renewal of different concepts—such as the specific case of “care”—and the emergence of a new language through translation that enables the creation of a particular political perspective.

The two last chapters, which focus on the current Spanish social and political scenario, reveal how translation nurtures the social movements that emerge in response to some of the most pressing problems for the citizens. Once again, under the aegis of “expanded translation”, the fifth chapter focuses on the translation of concepts that have been imported into the Spanish context. As Fernández argues, translation has enabled the appearance of alternative narratives which resist hegemonic viewpoints on the country’s economy and which address the problems derived from the housing crisis, the preponderance of tourism in the country’s economy and the severe impact of the economic downturn on national employment rates. One particularly relevant contribution of this work is the study of these alternative narratives as they have emerged within transnational debates and of the way in which they have been imported and adapted to rebel against the dominant Spanish economic model with a view to influencing the evolution of a global economic system that only aspires to obtain the highest possible profit. This section analyses in depth different translation strategies applied by various Spanish groups in an attempt to spread alternative critical narratives, for example in relation to incoming tourism and to its potential limits and restrictions, or in a selection of texts published by the journal *Cul de Sac* to generate a critical debate around the concept of “progress”.

Finally, the last chapter studies the case of the Spanish political party Podemos [“We Can”] as an example of a product that has been translated at different levels. As Fernández points out, a major part of the foundations, discourses, and communicative practices of the party are built on processes of interlingual, intralingual and intersystemic translation. In this regard, according to the author, it is possible to interpret the initial framework of Podemos as a translation space in which authors, theoretical paradigms and political systems are recovered from other languages and cultures. The text also explains that the party was born with a clear translational intention –that of making the technical and complex language of politics, full of ideological nuances, accessible for all citizens. Finally, this chapter presents Podemos as a bridge between institutions and different groups that escape the traditional concept of “representation”; this bridging has implied, in itself, a certain degree of transformation — labelled here as translation — of the prevailing hierarchy in the political sphere.

Thanks to its comprehensive theoretical background based on a renewed view of translation, its abundant examples and enlightening case studies

from the current Spanish political context, *Translating the Crisis* is an outstanding starting point to understand social movements and activism simultaneously as agents and products of constant translation processes. This is a solid piece of research that promotes a dialogue between different fields, and is therefore a useful reference work for readers interested in this topic, regardless of their academic background.

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