



**Baker Centre for Translation  
& Intercultural Studies  
Shanghai Jiao Tong University**



## **How to Write Translation History?**

**Public lecture by Professor Theo Hermans (University College London, UK)**



[The ARTIS International Research School](#), 6-11 July 2020

Venue: TBC

Wednesday 8 July 2020, 16.30-18.00



The history of translation has received much scholarly attention in recent years. A number of large-scale studies tracing the development of translation in various countries have appeared in print or are currently being published or planned, and there has been a flurry of theoretical and methodological interest. Yet so far, little has been done to connect historical research to the practicalities of writing a history of translation.

In the course of a long career, Theo Hermans has written extensively about concepts and practices of translation in the Early Modern period and in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. His public lecture will address both conceptual and practical issues concerning the historiography of translation. The lecture considers three aspects of translation historiography: accounting for changing practices and concepts of translation through history; explicating how translations engage with and reflect the historical circumstances surrounding them; and tracking the effects and impacts of translation in historical development. In proposing practical ways of dealing with these issues, a narrative approach debated among historians since the 1960s is adopted. Theoretical work done by the likes of Hayden White and Frank Ankersmit is referred to and issues such as narrative construction and validation, agency and structure, and perspective and reflexivity are discussed. Examples involve different modes of translation in different locations and times.



Theo Hermans is Emeritus Professor in Translation Studies at University College London (UCL), a member of the Flemish Academy and an Honorary Research Fellow at the University of Manchester. His monographs include *The Structure of Modernist Poetry* (1982), *Translation in Systems* (1999, reissued as a Routledge Translation Classic in 2020) and *The Conference of the Tongues* (2007). He is the editor of *The Manipulation of Literature* (1985), *The Flemish Movement* (1992), *Crosscultural Transgressions* (2002), *Translating Others* (2 vols., 2006) and *A Literary History of the Low Countries* (2009).