



International Colloquium

Université de Limoges, Faculté des Lettres et des Sciences Humaines (France)



Performing Translated Flamenco: Dance, Song and Music

Thursday 30 March 2023 and Friday 31 March 2023

Organisers: Chloé Houillon (ACCRA, CREA, Fundación Cristina Heeren), Marion Lapchouk-Ortega, Anne-Sophie Riegler (EHIC) and Vinciane Trancart (EHIC)

Call

The translation of songs raises the question of the diversification of transmission to new audiences. Does it not contribute to multiplying the ways of accessing a cultural heritage? We can think that it favours the transfer and the internationalization of cultures. Flamenco would then be no exception, especially since it combines song, music, and dance.

Therefore, the EHIC laboratory of the University of Limoges in France, the ACCRA laboratory and the CREA centre of the University of Strasbourg, as well as the Fundación Cristina Heeren of Seville are organizing an international colloquium on flamenco art when it is translated into a foreign language.

This event is an extension of the work of the Trad. Cant. Flam. workshop, which has been translating songs from *Anthología del cante flamenco* since 2019 (Perico el del Lunar, 1954). The objective of this workshop, since its beginning, is to offer a French version of *cantes* that is singable in a flamenco style. In 2020, the Study Day and Workshop “Translating Flamenco Songs” made it possible to verify the singability¹ of the repertoire translated by this workshop. To date, four translations have been made and approved as a result of a joint collaboration between researchers and artists, who tested the singability of the obtained versions. These recordings, along with their transcriptions, are published both in Spanish and French in *FLAMME (Fusing Languages, Alterities, Marginalities, Media, Ethic)*, n°2 “Flamenca culture: cante and translation” (2022)².

The planned colloquium aims to continue and complete this project in order to analyse sung and danced performances that focus on translated flamenco. These reflections on translation as a vector of creation will focus on the “danceability”³ of flamenco in a foreign language and on the adaptation of these translations to other artistic styles. This colloquium bets on questioning the aesthetic presuppositions that condition the production and reception of flamenco. It is part of the continuity of a thematic line of innovation and experimentation in resonance with contemporary debates (such as shaking up, decompartmentalizing the *cante*, *toque*, *baile* triptych).

The proposals may relate to different contexts and to languages other than French.

The event will revolve around two complementary approaches: one scientific, the other artistic. It will involve both exposing and commenting on translations and performances and trying to put them into song and / or dance and / or music.

The study day (Thursday 30 March) will be dedicated to the presentation of research.

The workshop (Friday 31 March) will be dedicated to collective translation and will provide space for vocal and dancing interpretations. It will also allow dialogues with the artists, with the particular aim to continuing the work of the Trad. Cant. Flam. workshop.⁴

These days are therefore open to researchers (from various disciplines, such as languages, literatures, linguistics, history, philosophy, arts, etc.), to specialists of translation and to artists (flamenco or not). The framework for collective thinking will be multidisciplinary and theoretical-practical.

The proposed lines of work are as follows:

¹ Singability is « *the quality of being singable* » (« Singability », 2000). Franzone defines it from a functional point of view as « *a musico-verbal fit of a text to music* » (Franzone, 2008, p. 373).

² Available on <https://www.unilim.fr/flamme/339>

³ Term modeled on « singability ».

⁴ Since 2019, the workshop has translated and analysed the *Antología del cante flamenco* by Perico el del Lunar [1954] and the members want to translate it in full.

1. Translation and singability

a. Translations Singability in a flamenco style

The translation of the song raises specific questions concerning content and form. In line with the first works of the Trad. Cant. Flam. workshop., we will continue to ask ourselves the question of the choices and priorities to be established with regard to the translation of language registers, Roma vocabulary, andalusisms, prosody, specific metrics, etc. Singing demonstrations of these translations in a flamenco style may be accepted. All proposals for translations, commentaries, and interpretations from oral or transcribed flamenco sources will be examined by the organizers, with a preference for works focused on the *Antología del Cante Flamenco* (Hispanvox [1954]).

b. Translations Singability in a non-flamenco style

The flamenco *copla* is no longer necessarily considered in terms of its generic specificity and can even be considered independently of its genre. It turns out to be fruitful to wonder about the transformations engendered by the changes of form and style which invite other implementations of translated flamenco. Do such approaches modify the link between the translator and his object of study and the status of the translated text? How to apprehend a pre-existing translation with a view to adapting it to another register? Convergence or divergence? Adaptation or temptation to retranslate? What would be the singability criteria to be favoured when (re)translating a flamenco song for a version sung in another musical style? We can also wonder what the impact of the translation on the musical accompaniment of the song would be in a flamenco style or not.

2. Translation and danceability

From this first axis, a second follows, that of the interpretation of song through dance. How is the communication between the actors (*cantaor*, *bailaor*, *tocaor*) modified by the change of language?

Two paths can be suggested:

a. The danceability of translations in a flamenco style

We will try to find out how translations “work” in the context of flamenco practice. According to this objective, it would perhaps be a question of relying on a “hexathlon” derived from Peter Low’s “pentathlon” on which the Trad. Cant. Flam. workshop. has been based until now, while adapting it to flamenco songs (Low, 2005; Riegler & Trancart, 2022). Peter Low’s original pentathlon consists of paying attention to five criteria together when translating a song: singability, meaning, naturalness, rhythm, and rhyme. Peter Low himself suggested the idea of a sixth parameter: he found it relevant, for example for the translation of operas, to seek the dramatic effectiveness of the translation. In the case of flamenco, the sixth parameter not to be neglected would be, likewise, that which would concern the passage to the stage or quite simply to the performance—for example in the form of rehearsal, concert, staging, figure–, in flamenco dance. One could thus reflect on the idea of “danceability” in connection with the rhythmic *compás*, the melodic models and the possible ornaments.

b. **The danceability of translations in a non-flamenco style**

We will wonder what the effects of a translation on the danced movement can be, when we choose a musical style other than flamenco: putting the text into dialogue with the physical practice, considering the materiality of the sounds, comparative choreographic analyses, feelings of the dancers, etc. Conversely, what would be the influence of the danced movement on the song?

3. **Transmission and reception**

The translation of a *cante* and its performance, including dance, invites us to question the nature of the listener-spectators and the methods of reception. Is the meaning made (more) accessible thanks to the change of language? Do the *coplas* disappear behind the performance or are they, on the contrary, highlighted by it? What are the emotional effects of these metamorphoses?

As for the previous axes, we can wonder about these questions of transmission and reception in a flamenco style or not.

Languages

French, English, Spanish, Italian

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Performative Approach

This line of work applies to artists. Singers, musicians, and dancers (flamenco or not) may interpret translated *coplas*. These interpretations may be presented during the workshop (31 March). Musical genre is open, as well as instrumental group (possibility of *a cappella* or with accompaniment)⁵.

Nota Bene: 1) Artists can ask for translations in advance.

2) Some professional artists will participate in the workshop.

Event venue

Faculté des Lettres et des Sciences Humaines, Université de Limoges
Campus Vanteaux
39E Rue Camille Guérin
87036 Limoges
France

Important dates

- Submission date: 30 September 2022

⁵ It is possible to send the organizers videos of the performances in advance.

- Response to the authors: November 2022

Proposals with a title, an abstract (**250 words maximum**) and an academic biography (250 words maximum) are to be sent in a single PDF file called Name_Flamenco_Limoges to trad.cant.flam@gmail.com, no later than September 30.

Reference Url: <https://www.unilim.fr/ehic/>

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