



# The Translation Zone: A New Comparative Literature (Translation/Transnation)

*Emily Apter*

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Translation, before 9/11, was deemed primarily an instrument of international relations, business, education, and culture. Today it seems, more than ever, a matter of war and peace. In *The Translation Zone*, Emily Apter argues that the field of translation studies, habitually confined to a framework of linguistic fidelity to an original, is ripe for expansion as the basis for a new comparative literature.

Organized around a series of propositions that range from the idea that nothing is translatable to the idea that everything is translatable, *The Translation Zone* examines the vital role of translation studies in the "invention" of comparative literature as a discipline. Apter emphasizes "language wars" (including the role of mistranslation in the art of war), linguistic incommensurability in translation studies, the tension between textual and cultural translation, the role of translation in shaping a global literary canon, the resistance to Anglophone dominance, and the impact of translation technologies on the very notion of how translation is defined. The book speaks to a range of disciplines and spans the globe.

Ultimately, *The Translation Zone* maintains that a new comparative literature must take stock of the political impact of translation technologies on the definition of foreign or symbolic languages in the humanities, while recognizing the complexity of language politics in a world at once more monolingual and more multilingual.

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