CONCEPT
Standard languages are in most cases based on culturally significant textual traditions. By virtue of representing the cultural heritage, standard written languages often differ from the contemporary spoken varieties. In cases of a strict functional differentiation between the written language and the spoken language, we encounter diglossia (in accordance with Fergusson’s definition). Although such functional differentiations may persist over centuries, many cases of dissolution of diglossia have been attested over the past centuries. The exact nature of these processes forms the topic of our coming conference on July 1-2, 2011 at the University of Heidelberg.

The main focus of investigation of the research project “Language and cultural translation” within the Cluster of Excellence “Asia and Europe in a global context: Shifting asymmetries in cultural flows” at the University of Heidelberg, has been on linguistic, cultural, and social changes associated with the dissolution of the diglossic situation in Japan in the 19th century in comparison with other cultures of Asia and Europe, particularly Eastern Europe. Towards the end of the 19th century, the Japanese culture opened up to European influences and literary translation introduced new literary models which led to a new awareness of the functional possibilities of the spoken language. This was the background of the genbun itchi movement in Japan, a language reform which promoted the spoken language to the status of the literary language. There were similar processes in Russia one century earlier.

This conference aims at comparing these processes of Japanese with similar developments in other Asian and in European languages. Specialists from Asia, Europe and the U.S. have been invited to report on their research which focuses on the dissolution of diglossic situations in different language communities.

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For further information to the Cluster “Asia and Europe in a Global Context” visit:

www.asia-europe.uni-heidelberg.de.
Conference of the project group D9: Linguistic Awareness and Dissolution of Diglossia

Friday, 1 July 2011

10:00 Judit Árokay (Heidelberg) Welcoming address

10:15 Jadranka Gvozdanovic (Heidelberg) "Understanding the Essence of Diglossia"

11:05 Neil Bermel (Sheffield) "Czech Diglossia: Dismantling or Dissolution?"

11:55 Massimilano Tomasi (Bellingham) "‘Genbun itchi’ and ‘La Questione Della Lingua’: Theoretical Intersections in the Creation of a New Written Language in Meiji Japan and Renaissance Italy"

14:30 Yeounsuk Lee (Tōkyō) "Homogenization or Hierarchization? A Problem of Written Language in the Public Sphere of Modern Japan"

15:20 Elisabeth Kaske (Pittsburgh) "Diglossia and its Discontent: The Linguistics of National Crisis in Early Twentieth Century China"

COFFEE BREAK

16:45 Chris Wen-chao Li (San Francisco) "Seismic Shifts in the Diglossic Makeup of Chinese: How Global and Regional Superlanguages are Driving Local Dialects to Extinction"

17:35 Jinzhi Su (Beijing) "Diglossia in China: Past and Present"

Saturday, 2 July 2011

09:00 Olga Yokohama (Los Angeles) "Towards a Discourse-pragmatic Theory of Translation"

09:50 Judit Árokay (Heidelberg) "Discourses on Poetic Language in Early Modern Japan and the Awareness of Linguistic Change"

COFFEE BREAK

11:10 Katharina Kunz (Heidelberg) "Language Awareness in Russia in the 19th century"

12:00 Michiaki Kawato (Tōkyō) "Diglossia and Literary Translation in Later 19th Century Japan"

LUNCH

14:20 Jeffrey Angles (Kalamazoo) "How to Turn a Lilac into a Peony: The Territory of Translation in Late-Nineteenth Century Japan"

15:10 Noriy Hoozawa-Arkenau (Heidelberg) "Translators in a Diglossic Language Situation in Japan"

COFFEE BREAK

16:30 Darja Miyajima (Heidelberg) "Inspiration for Modernization: Translations of Literary Works in China at the Beginning of the 20th century"

17:20 FINAL DISCUSSION