

French” (339–340). One might in turn compliment Craig for the “herculean task” of reading and comparing multiple translations, which even the most devoted readers of Proust will rarely find time to do. Despite its narrow focus, his overview of the translation and publication history of Proust’s work in both English

and Spanish provides broader insights into the international reception of European modernism.

CHARLES SABATOS
Yeditepe University
Turkish Republic

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4166-9320>

ANTONIO BARNÉS – MAGDA KUČERKOVÁ (eds.): The Figurativeness of the Language of Mystical Experience: Particularities and Interpretations

Brno: Masaryk University Press, 2021. 279 pp.

ISBN 978-80-210-9997-5, DOI 10.5817/CZ.MUNI.P210-9997-2021

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31577/WLS.2023.15.3.12>

The collected volume *The Figurativeness of the Language of Mystical Experience: Particularities and Interpretations*, edited by Antonio Barnés and Magda Kučerková, constitutes a relevant contribution to the current academic debate on religions. In addition to the interest the book holds for specialized researchers, its chapters offer an appropriate balance between academic quality and a language accessible to a wide range of readers, thus appealing to a general audience whose attention to mystical issues has grown in last decades. In terms of content, the volume presents a clearly structured idea of the mystical experience around the axis of the figurativeness of language. This structuring axis is in turn articulated around nodal issues (anthropology, epistemology, symbolism, rhetoric, existential perspective and art), which cover different facets of the mystical experience.

In the first chapter, the reader will discover mysticism from an anthropological perspective thanks to the contributions by Francisco Javier Sancho Fermín on the different levels of mystical experience, Silvia Brodňanová on imagination as a potential factor in Teresa de Jesús’

works, Lucie Rathouzská on imaginative contemplation in the 14th-century English mystics, and by Ján Gallik on death as radical border in Jan Čep’s novel *Hranice stínu* (The border of a shadow, 1935).

Chapter 2 explores another nodal point for the understanding of mystical experience: epistemology. It includes essays by Silvia Julia Campana on mystery between Martin Heidegger, Maister Eckhart and the contemporary Argentinian poet Hugo Mújica, Fabiano Gritti on David Maria Turolde’s dialogue with the Absolute, Andrea Raušerová on the reflections of the Czech novelist Julius Zeyer, and Silvia Rybárová on the presence of silence in the work of Sylvie Germain.

Symbolism, one of the fundamental questions of the figurativeness of mystical experience, is addressed in Chapter 3 through Antonio Barnés’s study on the Machadian perspective on dreaming and childhood. His reflections are complemented by Ján Knapík’s section on Jung’s notion of self in St. Teresa of Ávila, and Magda Kučerková’s thought-provoking analysis of the symbol of the heart as a path to deification.

The different uses and types of language in mystical experience are dis-

cussed in Chapter 4 through the reflections of Zuzana Cívánová and Monika Brezováková on Laura Montoya Upegui, Róbert Horka on the paradox in Sedulius, Edita Prihodová on the parables and expressions of Ignatius of Loyola and his spiritualisation of secular images, Monika Šavelová on Angela of Foligno in comparative perspective, and Edita Hornáčková Klápicová on the language used in St. Teresa of Ávila's *El Castillo Interior* (*The Interior Castle*, 1577).

The existential perspective of mystical experience is dealt with in Chapter 5 through contributions by Petra Kaizerová on the language of the 19th-century movement known as Slovak messianism, Václava Bakešová on the trace of the poetics of reconciliation from Marie Nöel to Sylvie Germain, and Jana Juhásová on the influence of Saint John of the Cross in the work of Erik Jakub Groch.

Finally, Chapter 6 tackles the artistic perspective, giving room for other cultural interpretations that go beyond the linguistic approach. It includes reflections by Pavel Štěpánek on the scenography of the breastfeeding of St. Bernard in Alonso Cano's painting, Eva Pariláková on the table as a symbol in contemporary art, Mónica Sánchez Tierraseca on the mystical language of Hilma af Klint, and Juan Agustín Mancebo Roca on the mysticism of the contemporary artist James Lee Byars.

Having briefly presented the contents, it is worth asking: what does this book bring to the knowledge of a field such as mysticism, in which public interest – as we have mentioned – has increased in recent decades? *The Figurativeness of the Language of Mystical Experience* offers a fresh approach to the mystical experience for three main reasons. Firstly, it provides an analysis of lesser-known mystical traditions, which are brought into interaction with those that have been considered as the peak works of mysticism (John of the Cross, Teresa of Jesus or

Meister Eckhart). Secondly, it places mystical traditions in a comparative perspective thanks to the inclusion of a wide variety of diverse texts. These primary texts include not only mystical works from different historical periods (from Late Antiquity, with authors such as Sedulius or Pseudo-Dionysius, to contemporary literature), but also from a broad range of literary and linguistic traditions (Slovak, Czech, Spanish, Argentinian, Colombian, Italian, and French literatures). In terms of interdisciplinarity, although the title, which focuses on the notion of “figurativeness”, would lead us primarily to cultural studies, the book goes beyond these contributions and encompasses other disciplinary approaches. The different academic backgrounds of the contributing authors also give the volume a literary, artistic, philosophical, historical and cultural focus when analyzing the mystical experience, and reinforce its interdisciplinary perspective. Finally, the third innovative aspect of this work lies in its internationality. This project stems from a joint collaboration between the Slovak and Spanish academic contexts, notably the Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra (Slovakia) and the “Proyecto Dios en la Literatura Contemporánea” (Spain). These two promoters of the book have been joined by other academics and scholars from other institutions in Spain and Slovakia, as well as from other contexts, such as Italy and Czechia. This internationality of the book is reinforced by the use of the English language in all the chapters, which favors the access of an international audience to the volume.

In my opinion, *The Figurativeness of the Language of Mystical Experience: Particularities and Interpretations* constitutes a significant contribution to both the continuation of the scholarly debate on a topic of growing importance and the interests of wider audiences. Both researchers and the public, in turn, show

the paradoxical topicality of mystical experience, which sometimes seems to be far from life in the “immanent frame” of secularized societies, yet continues to attract the attention of authors from different contexts, disciplines and per-

spectives, such as those who make up the present volume.

RAFAEL RUIZ ANDRÉS
Complutense University of Madrid
Spain

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9667-3052>

YIFENG SUN: *Translational Spaces: Towards a Chinese-Western Convergence*

Abingdon – New York: Routledge, 2021. 202 pp. ISBN 978-0-367-65478-8

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31577/WLS.2023.15.3.13>

Yifeng Sun’s book, *Translational Spaces: Towards a Chinese-Western Convergence*, offers a comprehensive account of his research on translation in the Chinese-Western context. Sun argues that translation takes place in the spaces between two languages, and by creating dynamic spaces, translators can bridge cultural differences and promote intercultural communication. He emphasizes the significance of considering diverse spaces, such as national, social, cultural, historical, and aesthetic experiences, in addressing issues related to multicultural contexts, translators’ subjectivity, and untranslatability. Sun proposes that expanding our understanding of translation is essential for negotiating and interpreting more possibilities. The book, a synthesis of Sun’s years of thinking on the subject, is composed of an introduction, nine chapters, and a conclusion.

Chapter 1, “Translation and Spaces”, discusses the notion of space in translation and proposes a systematic approach to understanding translational spaces. Sun argues that translational space is a multidimensional concept that comprises dynamic and heterogeneous spaces rather than static and homogeneous ones. He illustrates the textual and cultural distances between source and target texts and emphasizes the importance of context. Sun also uses spatial interpretations

to examine traditional translational topics, such as “functionalism”, “thick translation”, “indirect translation”, and “hard translation”.

Chapter 2 explores the concept of distance as it pertains to translation. Sun propounds that distance, whether temporal or linguistic, is a crucial aspect of translation that can be manipulated by translators to enhance cross-cultural communication. Through a combination of speculation and concrete translation examples, the author provides a comprehensive examination of distance in the context of translation. One of the main points made in the chapter is that translational distance is an objective reality that cannot be avoided. Historical texts, for example, pose a challenge to translators who must decide whether to bring the past into the present or maintain historical distance. Additionally, translators can intentionally create distance to mediate or intervene in the translation process. Emotion and psychological distance between source and target readers must also be considered when adjusting translational distance. Aesthetic distance between source and target cultures is also relevant to consider. Translators must be able to make constant distance shifts to produce the best possible translation.

Chapter 3 explores the concept of cultural translation and cosmopolitan translation, with the latter being an extension