

Institute for Japanese Studies Lecture Series

## Translate, Ignore, or Cut Altogether? Translating Polyphony and Polygraphy in Haruki Murakami's Works

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Thursday, September 29, 2016  
4:00-5:30 pm  
Scott Lab 024  
201 W 19th Ave



**Abstract:** Haruki Murakami has been a very popular writer for over 35 years, his fame unprecedented for a Japanese writer and his work translated into fifty languages. Murakami is known for his own style of Japanese language: he often uses words and expressions from other languages, and makes some of his characters speak in dialect, or in *katakana* instead of *kanji*. Relying mainly on examples from Murakami's recent works, the talk analyzes practices used by different translators in rendering such language. It also discusses the question of the often-extensive cuts and abridgments in the English translations, showing that, compared to other language versions, sometimes the English versions appear closer to being adaptations than translations.

**Bio:** Educated in Poland and Japan, Anna Zielinska-Elliott is a translator of modern Japanese literature into Polish. Best known for her translations of Murakami Haruki, she has also translated Mishima Yukio and Yoshimoto Banana. She is the author of a Polish-language monograph on gender in Murakami's writing ["Haruki Murakami and the Actors in His Theater of Imagination," 2015], a literary guidebook to Murakami's Tokyo, and several articles on Murakami and European translation practices relating to contemporary Japanese fiction. Zielinska-Elliott teaches Japanese language, literature, and translation studies at Boston University, where she is head of the Japanese language program.

*This event is sponsored in part by the Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures and a U.S. Department of Education Title VI grant to The Ohio State University East Asian Studies Center.*

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