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The New World Order Metanarrative in Translation on Twitter: A Cross-Cultural and Cross-Linguistic Approach

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Abstract This paper examines the social role of translation and mediation in propagating a New World Order metanarrative on Twitter. This metanarrative is constructed through various narratives, ranging from true statements-- often decontextualized or distorted-- to alternative information, dissenting voices, fake news, and extreme conspiracy theories. Drawing on culturalist approaches to conspiracy theories and fake news, the study uses the concept of 'uncertain knowledge' to view these phenomena as cultural constructs. Using narrative theory and critical discourse analysis related to translation and far-right discourse, this paper investigates the profile(s) of these online activists and how translation is used to foster transnational activism, mobilize like-minded individuals with primarily far-right values, and challenge the so-called globalist elite. It explores a trilingual corpus with tweets in Greek, French, and English. The corpus includes bilingual texts, translated tweets, videos, memes, and hyperlinks, shedding light on their content, sources, mediators' profiles, translation accuracy, and social functions.

Keywords: *New World Order metanarrative, Translation, Online extreme activism, Tweets, Narrative theory, Framing analysis*

1. Introduction

Social media provides new avenues for communication and access to mainstream information, as well as alternative information, dis-information, and the spread of fake news and conspiracy-related narratives (Allcott & Gentzkow, 2017; for a review, see also Aïmeur et al., 2023). Conspiracy theories tend to thrive during instability and global crises, and this was particularly evident during the Covid-19 pandemic (Palecek & Hampel, 2024). During this time, conspiracy theorists, primarily from far-right circles, used alarming scenarios to promote a fictional dystopian future known as the New World Order (NWO) (Baider & Constantinou, in press). The NWO theory predicts the collapse of Western civilization due to a secret organization that aims to take over the world. This group is believed to be orchestrating major global events, such as terrorist attacks and pandemics, to destabilize the world for their own gain (Baider & Constantinou, in press; Mora-López, 2022). On social media, the NWO is constructed through a wide

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array of personal, public, and alternative disciplinary narratives, both discursively and semiotically, transcending linguistic and cultural barriers.

Translation plays a vital role in reproducing and spreading extreme narratives and, thus, in forming a particular transnational digital activism aimed at seeking resistance and social change among like-minded communities. However, while conspiracy-related narratives have attracted scholarly attention, mainly in Communication and Critical Discourse Studies (Baider, 2023; Demata et al., 2022; Musolff, 2023; Rogers, 2020; Rossini, 2023; Wiggins, 2023), this phenomenon remains underexplored in Translation Studies (Pérez-González, 2022; Zou, 2021), despite the significant role of translation/ mediation in spreading conspiracy narratives on social media.

This paper sets out to examine the social role of translation in spreading conspiracy narratives and how this transnational online activism is built and reinforced through translation. Drawing on narrative theory (Baker, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2010, 2013), critical discourse analytic approaches to far-right discourse (Baider & Constantinou, in press), and culturalist approaches to conspiracy theories to envisage conspiracy theories as 'uncertain knowledge' (Boullier et al., 2021; Fine, 2015; Harambam, 2020), this study explores, from a cross-cultural perspective, a trilingual corpus (Greek, French, English) culled from Twitter.

In doing so, our research aims to answer the following questions:

1. What are the salient topics that are translated?
2. Who translates or uses already translated texts, and what are the main sources of these texts and their translations?
3. How are the texts translated?
4. What do Twitter users do with translations of extreme narratives?

Therefore, it investigates a) the salient topics that make up this NWO metanarrative, b) the sources of these narratives, c) the ideological profiles of these online mediators, e) the accuracy of these translations, and f) the social functions performed through translation.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1. The NWO Metanarrative, its Origins and the Culturalist Approaches to Conspiracy Theories

The New World Order is a phrase coined by the senior George Bush in his 1990 post-Gulf War speech before the US Congress, but it has been employed to describe diverse contemporary issues such as the post-Cold War balance of power, economic interdependence, and the rise of nationalism (Kessler, 1997: 1; Lazar & Lazar, 2004). It has also become a synonym for globalization. However, within the spectrum of conspiracy theories, the NWO appears to have taken on various dimensions and spawned multiple meanings and interpretations. According to the NWO metanarrative, a small, secretive group of elitists aims to create a global, totalitarian government that controls the world's population (see also Mora-López, 2022). Their aim is to 'reset' the world order using different machinations and weapons, including planned disasters and pandemics. Their ultimate goal is to depopulate the planet and digitally captivate and enslave the rest of the world, imposing a new form of totalitarianism (Mora-López, 2022). The Covid-19 pandemic, for instance, also known as the 'plandemic', has been seen as part of the NWO agenda. In this context, widespread extreme conspiracy-related narratives and alternative disciplinary narratives led people to become sceptical of the vaccines (Baider & Constantinou, in press).

Contrary to the 'pathologizing paradigm' (Boullier et al., 2021) of conspiracy theories, which tends to explain adherence to conspiracy theories through individual psychological deficiencies and cognitive biases, framing these beliefs as irrational and pathological (Butter & Knight, 2018), the NWO metanarrative is conceptualised here as a set of cultural constructions reflecting cultural concerns (cf. Boullier et al., 2021; Deutschmann, 2020; Harambam, 2020). As Boullier et al. (2021) pertinently put it, there is no widely accepted, rigorous conceptual framework to fully understand and categorize phenomena like conspiracies and fake news. Drawing on Fine's research (2015), Boullier et al. (2021) adopt the term 'uncertain knowledge' as it captures the fluidity of these concepts and the gap in acquiring a deeper understanding of such phenomena. More specifically, the concept of uncertain

knowledge refers to a heterogeneous set of representations of the world that are often dismissed as 'conspiracy theories' (Boullier et al., 2021). Fine (2015) explores how the legitimacy of knowledge is contested and, at the same time, asserts that knowledge involves a truth claim made by particular actors and judged by others. This knowledge is embedded within a social context, and it is linked to domains of power (Fine, 2015). 'Uncertain knowledge,' therefore, refers to claims such as rumors, opinions, beliefs, and conspiracies that lack direct access to secure and definite knowledge (Fine & DiFonzo, 2011). As Boullier et al. (2021) note, such claims are debated within communities that serve as gatekeepers of truth, highlighting a larger struggle for epistemic authority. In the same line of thought, Deutschman (2020, p. 22) conceptualises conspiracy theories as conspiracy narratives and points out that when engaging in discussions about stories within conspiracy theories, one should refrain from labelling conspiracy narratives "as totally wrong or misleading but instead simply treat them as narratives whose ontological status—true, false, or fictitious—is often unclear". Moreover, conspiracy theories based either on factual or fictitious discourse present alternative explanations that compete with established accounts of how certain events or phenomena likely occurred and should not be ignored. Similarly, Palecek and Hampel (2024) place the phenomena of conspiracy theories within historical and cultural contexts and propose to classify them into several tropes, including the deliberate spreading of diseases, the existence of hidden internal enemies, and external threats, and apocalypticism.

In this regard, by exploring the dynamics of how knowledge is built, validated, and challenged without prejudging the legitimacy of the involved groups, the concept of uncertain knowledge facilitates a more thorough sociological analysis (Boullier et al., 2021; Fine, 2015). Moreover, considering conspiracy theories as knowledge enables us to explore their role in identity construction, their relationship to power, and their patterns of circulation (Boullier et al., 2021; Adell-Gombert, 2011). Knowledge serves as an identity resource that fosters a sense of belonging to a particular community. It is also often used to disqualify those whose knowledge diverges, a dynamic frequently observed in scholarly communities regarding parasciences (Delbos, 1993; Lagrange, 1993).

2.2. Narrative Theory of Translation and Framing Analysis

The NWO narratives can be both discursively and symbolically deployed via talks, texts, and images that are intertextually and multimodally connected. In this context, translation, either in its intersemiotic or interlinguistic form, viewed as a particular form of (re-)narration and recontextualization, appears to operate as "an instrument of mind in the construction of reality" (Bruner, 1991, p. 6) and, here, of uncertain knowledge among like-minded people. Online activists acting as translators or mediators provide re-narration(s) and become accommodators of such narratives, which in turn reflect and/or construct social and ideological identities (Kaniklidou, 2018). In this sense, translation amounts to a particular digital activism related to political and ideological engagement that fights for resistance and seeks social and political change (Tymoczko, 2010).

Drawing on Somers and Gibson (1994), Baker (2005, 2006) describes four types of narratives: a) ontological or personal, b) conceptual or disciplinary, c) public, and d) master or metanarratives. Ontological, or what Baker calls 'personal' narratives, are "stories we tell ourselves about our place in the world and about our own personal history" (Baker, 2005, p. 5). These narratives are interpersonal and, therefore, social in nature. Public narratives are stories that are elaborated and circulated among social and institutional formations; they override the individual since they include the various discourses of educational institutions, political and activist movements, the nation, the media, etc. (Baker, 2005). Meta or master narratives are those narratives "in which we are embedded as contemporary actors in history" (Somers & Gibson, 1994, p. 61). Without translators' and interpreters' intervention, these narratives would not travel across languages and cultures, nor would they develop into global metanarratives (Baker, 2005).

Indeed, translated tweets of the NWO metanarrative are the vehicles for these types of narratives: they enable the circulation of personal stories, alternative scientific knowledge, and dissenting public voices (for instance, non-systemic politicians). These tweets become stories that online activists subscribe to and, in this way, serve to shape their behaviour toward other people and the events in which they are embedded (Baker, 2007). Moreover, each translated tweet acts as a fragment of the broader NWO metanarrative, requiring other tweets or other textual and visual materials to provide a comprehensive

understanding of this master narrative. Therefore, translated tweets viewed as narratives are neither chronologies nor undifferentiated lists of happenings; rather, they are scenarios that are "temporally and causally constituted in such a way as to allow us to make moral decisions and act in the real world" (Baker, 2007, p. 155). As Baker pertinently put it, contrary to "power-insensitive" approaches to translation, which privilege concepts such as 'norms' (Toury, 1995) or dualistic notions like foreign-nization vs domestication (Venuti, 1993), narrative theory contributes to explaining human behaviour in dynamic terms, since it "recognizes the complexity of being embedded in crisscrossing, even competing, narratives" (Baker, 2007, p. 154). The narrative approach to translation recognizes that dominance and resistance not only influence our behaviour and discursive choices but "they are also always in a relationship of tension" (Baker, 2007, p. 167). These mediators act as digital activists who give voices and extend "narrative space" through translation, which becomes "a means of reversing the symbolic order" (Baker, 2013, p. 25).

Importantly, all narratives are constructed on the basis of evaluation, a concept that allows online mediators to selectively appropriate "a set of events or elements from the vast array of open-ended and overlapping events that constitute experience" (Baker, 2010, p. 352). From this perspective, what matters in translation is not only how a text is translated but also what is selected for or omitted from the translation.

In this regard, framing is crucial: it involves both selection and salience. To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text (Entman, 1993). Partial stories or scenarios refer to "any kind of coherent segment of human beliefs, actions, experiences, or imaginings" that can be associated with an underlying conceptual frame (Fillmore, 1975, cited in Musolff, 2006, p. 27). In this context, framing is an essential concept insofar as it helps us understand how some aspects of the NWO metanarrative are perceived and evaluated to causally construe a counter-narrative. Paraphrasing Entman's definition of framing, we could say that translation (or any form of mediation) involves choosing some aspects of a perceived reality and emphasizing them in a translated text (Entman, 1993) with the purpose of fabricating a certain truth and/or fighting against perceived threats and enemies. In our study, frames serve as the underlying foundations on which narratives are deployed (Aukes et al., 2020) and thus help to map out the main themes of the NWO master narrative because framing involves not only selection but also salience (Entman, 1993). Salience is reduced here to the concept of frequency (Baider & Constantinou, in press) in the most frequent topics identified in the corpus under study.

3. Methodology

3.1. The Corpus

The study is based on a trilingual corpus culled from the social platform Twitter. It consists of 360 tweets, with 180 for the Greek dataset and 180 for the French dataset. These tweets were collected between January 2021 and May 2023. The French and Greek datasets comprise bilingual texts (mainly from English into Greek or French) posted as tweets. These contain translated texts or talks, videos, memes, and hyperlinks to translated articles published by alternative media (see section 4. Results).

3.2. Procedure

Tweets were manually collected using specific keywords in both languages during the same periods to ensure comparability:

- **Greek:** *Νέα Τάξη Πραγμάτων* (New World Order), *ΝΤΠ* (NWO), παγκοσμιοποιητές (globalists), *Μεγάλη Επανεκκίνηση*/*Μεγάλη Επαναφορά* (Great Reset).

- **French:** *Nouvel ordre mondial* (New World Order), *NOM* (NWO), *mondialistes* (globalists), *grande réinitialisation* (Great Reset).

Additional language-based research was conducted to collect tweets that did not use the specific French and Greek keywords but included content related to the NWO metanarrative. For this purpose, the same English keywords were used: *New World Order*, *NWO*, *globalists*, and *Great Reset*. These keywords

could appear in the tweets, the content of the article or video, or in the hashtags framing the tweets under attention. The collection was limited to tweets containing translated texts, both with and without the respective original texts. During this process, tweets, newspapers, blogs, and videos in English were also consulted to verify the content of the original texts and the accuracy of the translations. In some cases, particularly with the French dataset where fewer hashtags were used, we had to search for the corresponding translations using words, phrases, or names employed in the original texts.

In this study, we focused on: a) the sources, to identify where these translated narratives originate (who translates them, for whom, and where they are subsequently published, especially if hyperlinks are involved); b) the salient topics, to analyze what content is selected for translation and mediation; c) the level of accuracy, to evaluate the strategies used to translate or mistranslate the original texts; and d) the social functions, to investigate what Twitter users achieve by translating a text or sharing a translation.

We first conducted a quantitative analysis of the media, text genres, and salient topics found in the two datasets. To shed light on the mediators' ideological profiles, we will draw on previous research targeting far-right discourse and the identity construction of far-right partisans, considering pseudonyms and affordances as particular identity and ideology markers (Baider & Constantinou, in press). The study will also examine the hyperlinks to determine the sources on which online activists rely.

As previously noted, we adopt narrative theory for our analysis and view translated tweets as 'partial' narratives that contribute to building the NWO metanarrative. The NWO is considered a metanarrative rather than a simple narrative, as it is built on a wide array of stories shared by like-minded individuals worldwide. The qualitative analysis focuses on the most recurrent topics and the protagonists of the NWO metanarrative, as these unfold in our data.

4. Results

4.1. Overview of the Results: Means, Salient Topics and Ideological Profiles

Our comparative analysis of the French and Greek datasets reveals distinct means and text types employed by online activists to promote their anti-NWO narrative on Twitter, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Means and Text Types in French and Greek Datasets

Text type	French Dataset (Count)	Greek Dataset (Count)
Tweets with a video	79	54
Tweets – with a translated text (statement, signal phrase, etc.) with or without a picture	48	40
Tweets with memes/cartoons	42	30
Tweets with a hyperlink leading to an article	11	56

The French dataset shows a strong preference for video content, with 79 tweets featuring videos, indicating a focus on using dynamic and engaging media to capture audience attention. In contrast, the Greek dataset predominantly features tweets with hyperlinks to articles from alternative media outlets, accounting for 56 instances. The videos were subtitled and/or dubbed and/or accompanied by a translated summary. Both datasets show online users' tendency to make substantial use of translated texts to convey their messages and overcome language barriers. Posts were bilingual, multilingual, or monolingual, i.e., reporting a translated statement without citing the original text. These texts included quotes that were either false claims, distorted or manipulated statements, or true statements partly reframed and or selectively appropriated. They were translated mainly from English into the languages under study. Other languages found included Spanish, Russian, German, and Dutch. Due to space constraints, tweets originally written English will not be presented and discussed in this study.

As for thematic salience, Table 2 summarizes the main thematic topics addressed in the French and Greek datasets.

Table 2
Salient Topics

Salient topics	French dataset	Greek dataset
Technology and democracy issues -2030 Agenda	75	85
Climate change (including food issues)	51	28
Health issues (vaccines, Covid 19, other planned pandemics)	28	26
War in Ukraine	5	12
Migration	-	9
Gender issues	1	11
Other (generalities about the NWO or more topics)	20	9

The thematic focus on technology and democracy issues, along with the 2030 Agenda, is significantly prominent in the corpus, with the Greek dataset showing a slightly higher focus (85 tweets) compared to the French dataset (75 tweets). Tweets warn against the imposition of a totalitarian regime that will be achieved through the so-called 'one-world government', '15-minute cities', and the social credit system. Other concepts related to the 2030 Agenda found in both datasets include digital identity, digital tyranny, and transhumanism.

Climate change and health issues are also major concerns, albeit more so in the French dataset than in the Greek dataset. Health issues include vaccines, Covid-19, and other allegedly planned pandemics, while climate change is represented as a 'climate scam' and is associated with the NWO agenda (such as climate lockdowns, depopulation, chemtrails, etc.). The food crisis and the promotion of new food habits (such as insect-based food, synthetic meat, and 'celebrity meat') are also issues associated with climate change and are described as part of the globalists' plan.

The war in Ukraine is depicted as Ukraine being the first country to fully implement the NWO. This topic is discussed more often in the Greek dataset than in the French dataset.

Gender issues are scarcely mentioned in the French dataset but receive attention in the Greek dataset. In this dataset, heteronormativity is projected as being the only normal option, and other sexual orientations are demonized and depicted as being promoted by the NWO.

Nationalism and migration issues are portrayed as the nation being in danger from the 'invasion' of migrants. The migration of non-Western civilians and interracial marriages are represented as weapons for the NWO elitists to achieve the so-called Great Replacement. Migration appears only in the Greek dataset.

From a sociological viewpoint, it is also important to understand who translates or who is involved in spreading or reproducing such narratives. According to our data, these online activists are:

- Twitter users sharing extreme and/or alternative viewpoints;
- Bloggers maintaining their own blogs to share such narratives;
- Alternative media contesting dominant discourse.

Alternative media and Twitter users (individuals) all exhibit indicators that reveal their 'ideological habitus'. These indicators include textual material (the name of the media or individual pseudonyms), as well as visual affordances (avatars or other visual material such as memes accompanying the articles) that are considered virtual identity and ideology markers (Baider & Constantinou, in press). Pseudonyms in both datasets show a similar ideological habitus, one which appears to align with extreme right-wing positionings (Baider & Constantinou, 2017). More specifically, we have found pseudonyms denoting a white supremacy or nationalist stance (*blancs et fiers de l'être*, white and proud of being so; *French Patriot*, *France Résistance*; *patriotiko.gr*, patriotic.gr), along with an indicator of their religious doctrine (*Chrisa*ΘΡ*Greek*✝; *Κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός,* ✝ Lord Jesus Christ ✝; *Evangeliques info*). Other pseudonyms are associated with conspiracy theories (*gauloise non génétiquement modifiée*, non-genetically modified Gallic; *flat Earth Zone*, *Επίπεδη Γη* Flat Earth, *Flat Earth Greece*) or awakening (*Me/revealedEye*). Pseudonyms may also reveal contempt or irony towards people not sharing their viewpoints (*brainless rabbit*; *brainless*

partisans; *Black Sheep's Matters*; *la Vérité qui derange*, the Truth that bothers). Similarly, avatars reveal similar identity and ideology markers that revolve around family, religion, and nation, while hinting at conspiracy theories (illuminati theory) that are connected to the NWO narrative (see Mora-López, 2022).

Figure 1
Avatars as Ideology Markers



As for the alternative media agents, including bloggers circulating alternative information, naming reveals similar attitudes, as shown in Table 3. This becomes more evident in the Greek dataset. For instance, blog names such as *skeftomasteelhnika* (we think Greek), *Hellenic revenge*, *ellinikiafipnisis*, (Hellenic awareness), etc., function as frames and suggest a patriotic stance, and a concern about awakening, which is present in the far-right discourse. The 'awakening' aspect is also present in the French and English language alternative media (*Wide awake MEDIA*). Anti-systemic stances are also suggested in both French and Greek datasets (*wantedpedo-officiel.com*; *anti-media.gr*; *Lesmoutonsrebelles.com*).

Table 3
Names of Information Sources

Greek data Names of blogs and alternative media (online newspapers)	French data Names of blogs and alternative media (online newspapers)/ videos	Source texts (mainly from English into Greek/French)
Sketomasteellhnika.blogspot.com	réseauinternational.net	Dailymail.com;
Hellenicrevenge.blogspot.com	Lesmoutonsrebelles.com	Epochtimes
ellinikiafipnisis.blogspot.com	Ici.radio-canada.ca	Wide awake media
Molwnlave.net	wantedpedo-officiel.com	Greek dataset
Kanenazori.com	Forbes.fr	Expose.new.com
Pro-news.gr	Capital.fr	Rumble.com
Attikanea.info.gr	Fr.diverstitore.com	infowars
greeknewsondemand.com	Odysee.com	Naturalnews.com
voicenews.gr	International Space Agency	
bankingnews.gr	Planetes 360.fr	
rumble.com	….....	
primenews.press	Most videos come from Videos	
antimedia.gr (1)	Wide awake MEDIA	
Anazitiseis.gr	TikTok	
Triklopodia.gr		
Warnews247.gr		

Many of these translations are also accompanied by hashtags that reveal the ideological stances of these online activists and frame their narratives within a conspiracy-related context. Some of these hashtags are:

> #VaccineGenocide #DepopulationAgenda #SocialCreditSystem #NWO #Agenda2030 #GreatReset #WEF #WHO #BigPharma #vaccinedeaths #diedsuddenly #GreatReset #NWO #Agenda2030 #WEF #WHO #KlausSchwab #BillGatesBioTerrorist #FauciFiles #Harari #Rothschild #Rockefeller #DigitalID Nouvelordremondial#zionisme

4.2. The Protagonists, the Main Scenarios, and Social Functions of Translating the NWO Metanarrative

From a narrative perspective, the above indicators, together with the translated narratives, frame the main scenarios and their protagonists. Based on our data, protagonists are social, political, and economic actors who are described as having planned the NWO and Great Reset agendas. More specifically, the World Economic Forum (WEF) and its leader, Klaus Schwab, as well as Bill Gates, Henry Kissinger, and the Rockefeller and Rothschild families are prominent figures. Other protagonists contributing to the implementation of the NWO include state leaders such as French President Emmanuel Macron, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, EU leaders (e.g., Ursula von der Leyen), the WHO Director-General, and the well-known historian and philosopher Yuval Noah Harari. Our data analysis has also revealed other social and political actors and scientists who offer alternative viewpoints (e.g., Patrick Moore, Robert Kennedy Jr., Michael Yeadon) and contest mainstream narratives. These individuals are seen as heroes and are depicted as fighting against the NWO agenda. As previously mentioned, several translated tweets included multilingual videos, dubbed or subtitled in more than one language.

Figure 1 reproduces, through translation with the simultaneous use of three languages (English, German, and French), a conspiracy scenario according to which a small elitist group, called the 'rootless international clique', aims, through fabricated crises, to separate and polarize people, turning them against each other.

Figure 1

Elite Conspiracy Narrative



Figure 2

Unmasking the Great Reset



Translation is used to retell the content of alternative information. For instance, in Figure 2, the activist translates the headline of an article published by Expose-news.com, using the lexical choice *ξεμπροστιάζοντας*, meaning "revealing publicly, in the presence of others, the unworthiness, faults, or dishonesty of someone" (Triantafyllidis, 1998). This definition is more negatively charged than other choices, e.g., *αποκαλύπτοντας* (revealing) or *ξεσκεπάζοντας* (uncovering), translations proposed by bilingual dictionaries such as Wordreference. Additionally, the decision to reproduce the English text along with the visual message helps reinforce the narrative of the Great Reset as a conspiracy plan to destroy the world.

The elitists' agendas are uncovered and exposed not only by alternative media but also by alternative and non-systemic political voices. Online activists reproduce these anti-systemic political voices to perpetuate and legitimize their narratives, reinforcing a common ground among like-minded individuals. They draw on political figures such as Christine Anderson (EU MP), Malcolm Roberts (Australian Senator), Gideon van Meijeren (a Dutch politician), and former USA President Trump, all representing far-right ideology. These same political actors appear in both datasets, with their

statements accurately translated in subtitles to reflect the ideological values shared by the community. It is argued that accuracy in translating alternative voices resonates with the community's ideological values. For instance, in the tweets below, online activists use subtitled and/or dubbed videos featuring Christine Anderson (Figures 3 and 4), a far-right member of the European Parliament, to raise awareness about the perceived dangers of the so-called 15-minute cities and the social credit system, urging people not to be deceived.

Figure 3
Warning against the 15-Minute City Agenda



Figure 4
Warning against the 15-Minute City Agenda



Both French and Greek activists reframe the translated statements of Christine Anderson to align with their ideological narratives. Adopting a subtly ironic tone, the French activist implies that, despite constant warnings against the alleged globalists' agendas, the public is distracted by issues or crises mainly fabricated by the media ('telereality', 'a 100% media-driven pandemic'). The use of the expression *petit à petit, l'oiseau fait son nid* (little by little, the bird makes its nest) suggests that the gradual implementation of 15-minute cities is a calculated strategy towards increasing governmental control. The Greek activist, on the other hand, employs a more confrontational tone, asking, *πόσο ανόητος μπορεί να είσαι για να στηρίζεις αυτό το σύστημα* (how stupid can you be to support this system) explicitly accusing those who believe in systemic political parties (New Democracy, SYRIZA, PASOK) of naivety or foolishness. This framing positions Anderson's statements as a critical revelation and a direct challenge to the supporters of established political entities.

Lexical choices play a crucial role in reframing alternative political discourse, often serving to dramatize narratives and influence public perception. For instance, in Figure 5, a Greek online activist reframes Christine Anderson's statement by employing the livestock metaphor. The specific phrase *θα μαντρώσουν τους ανθρώπους* (they will corral people) not only translates the original message but also conceptualizes people as livestock. This dehumanization strategy serves to dramatize the predicted future scenario, making it appear more alarming and urgent. By comparing people to livestock, like the sheep metaphor, the activist invokes imagery of control, helplessness, and exploitation, which can elicit strong emotional reactions from the audience. This metaphor suggests that people will be herded and controlled by those in power, stripping them of their autonomy and dignity. Additionally, this lexical choice disparages the ideological Other, positioning the globalists as the oppressors who dehumanize and control the masses. It also reinforces a dichotomy between the oppressed Us and the oppressive Them, solidifying in-group identity and justifying resistance against the alleged threat.

Similarly, lexical choices and visual elements in Figure 6 serve to amplify the perceived dangers of the 15-minute cities project. For instance, the French Twitter user reproduces part of a video while adding

affordances such as exclamation marks to accentuate the project's threat to personal freedom. This combination of lexical and visual elements functions to heighten the sense of urgency and danger.

Figure 5
The Livestock Metaphor as Dehumanization Strategy



Figure 6
Exclamation Marks to Foreground the Alleged Dystopian Future



Twitter users translate quotes from videos by selecting what they judge as most important. Greek Twitter users, as in Figure 7, either translate into Greek what their transnational comrades write or summarize the content of the videos. Online activists also translate alternative political discourses to re-inform and reveal 'secret machinations' embedded in the Great Reset narrative, such as Malcolm Roberts' statement. Both Greek and French Twitter users, as shown in Figures 7 and 8, translate the metaphor literally 'dropping absolute truth bombs'. The Greek user relates this narrative to the local context to convey their anti-systemic message by emphasizing that the Greek government and other political parties serve the globalists' agenda, i.e., the so-called Great Reset.

Figure 7
Exposing the WEF and the Great Reset Agenda



Figure 8
Exposing the WEF



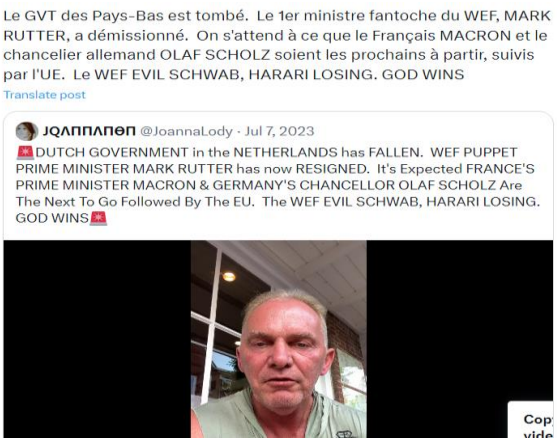
In the comments, even if the translated statements are quoted to emphasize the authenticity of the cited words, the structure may be slightly modified (shorter message) without altering the intended message of the text. Twitter users translate tweets to share common values and beliefs. In Figure 9, the Twitter user translates almost literally what their peer wrote about the Great Reset and the person behind it (Klaus Schwab, demonized through naming, particularly with the use of the lexical unit 'Evil' as a name) while reproducing almost the same affordances (exclamation marks, emojis). Figure 10 exemplifies the way online far-right and anti-EU activists use translation to convey their anti-systemic and eurosceptic stances and reinforce in-group cohesion among like-minded people. It conveys a strong

anti-globalist sentiment, criticizing key political figures and institutions perceived to be under the influence of the WEF. The activist translates literally his/her Dutch comrade's words about the resignation of Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte, labeling him a 'puppet' of the WEF. The tweet predicts that French President Emmanuel Macron and German Chancellor Olaf Scholz will be the next to step down, followed by the European Union. The translation appears to preserve the original ideological meaning effectively and maintains the same emotionally charged language. Both texts describe the WEF and its associates derogatorily, using terms like EVIL SCHWAB and celebrating their perceived downfall with phrases like GOD WINS, which remain untranslated. This consistency in tone and message suggests a faithful translation of the original sentiment and intent.

Figure 9
Translating Statements from Far-Right EU Mps to Expose the WEF



Figure 10
Demonizing the WEF, Predicting the EU's Downfall



As noted earlier, denial of climate change is also part of the NWO metanarrative. Activists translate from English into French and Greek alternative scientific narratives that contest the dominant discourse about climate change. Similar to previously analyzed tweets, the translations faithfully render the ideologically charged message from alternative media. For instance, in Figures 11 and 12, the translations of Dr. Patrick Moore's statements, a former co-founder of Greenpeace, assert that the dominant narrative around climate change, which he frames here as hysteria, is a complete fabrication. These translations, often propagated by alternative media outlets such as *Climate Depot* and *Wide Awake Media*, play a crucial role in disseminating scepticism about climate change, aiming to influence public opinion by challenging the dominant scientific consensus.

Figure 11
Translating Alternative Scientific Narratives to Contest Climate Change



Figure 12
Translating Alternative Scientific Narratives to Contest Climate Change



Apart from translating dissenting voices, activists often opt to translate dominant disciplinary narratives in order to contest them. The same videos are also translated into different languages. Speaking on a WEF panel, Mrs. Melissa Fleming, the head of the United Nations Department of Global Communications, is shown boasting about collaborating with Google to censor search results that counter the narrative on human-caused climate change. In Figures 13 and 14, online activists, through selective appropriation, faithfully translate her statements into Greek and French, to highlight and critique what they perceive as manipulation of information by powerful institutions, while contesting Fleming's epistemic authority. The Greek addition of the word *παρακολουθήστε* (watch) introduces an imperative form, directly addressing the audience and urging them to engage with the content. This enhances the persuasive force of the tweet, making it not just a passive translation but an active call to action.

Figure 13
Exposing UN's Attempt to Censor Climate Change Dissent



Figure 14
Exposing UN's Attempt to Censor Climate Change Dissent

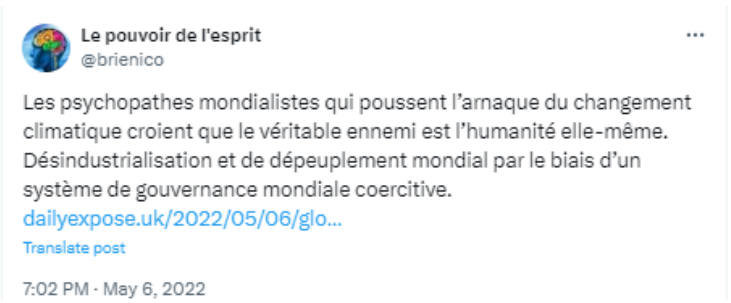


Figures 15 and 16 exemplify how online activists use literal translations and shared sources to propagate a unified transnational narrative. Both tweets translate the phrase 'globalist psychopaths pushing the climate change scam' directly into French and Greek, respectively, maintaining the original message's emotional impact and rhetorical force. The French tweet expands on this narrative by introducing specific consequences, such as deindustrialization and global depopulation, enhancing its relevance to French-speaking audiences. Significantly, both tweets link to articles from expose-news.com and dailyexpose.uk, integrating local contexts into a global discourse and fostering a sense of shared struggle among like-minded individuals across borders. This strategy not only amplifies their reach but also reinforces a cohesive identity and solidarity among disparate groups, uniting them under a common cause against globalists.

Figure 15
Disparaging the Globalists and Their Narrative on Climate Change



Figure 16
Disparaging the Globalists and Their Narrative on Climate Change



Extreme alternative activists draw on uncertain knowledge produced or spread by well-known conspiracy theorists such as Dr. Vernon Coleman to propagate their narratives, as evidenced in both the French and Greek tweets (Figures 17 and 18). The French tweet translates Dr. Coleman's message about the dangers of social credit systems and government control, warning of an impending 'dystopian digital dictatorship.' By presenting this message in French and linking it to a local article, the tweet seamlessly integrates a global narrative into the French-speaking context, tapping into fears of surveillance and loss of personal freedoms. The visual and textual content connects concerns about digital control in China to a broader audience, fostering a sense of solidarity among all those opposed to perceived authoritarian measures.

The Greek tweet, translated by *ellinikiafipnisis* (Greek awakening), adapts Dr. Coleman's stark warning about the intentions of globalists, conveying a message that 'the globalists want us hungry, broke, and dead.' This translation frames the narrative within a post-apocalyptic imagery and links it to a local blog post, making it particularly resonant with Greeks who share such ideas and concerns. The tweet aligns local frustrations and fears of economic hardship and societal collapse with global conspiracies, suggesting that these issues are orchestrated by a malevolent global elite. This becomes particularly evident when looking at the hashtags and words reframing the article: these mainly attack the government and the Prime Minister, Kyriakos Mitsotakis, depicted as criminals and involved in conspiracy projects in collaboration with other imagined culprits including Bill Gates (*Παγκοσμιοποιητές:* Globalists; *Νέα Τάξη:* New Order; *Παγκοσμιοποίηση:* Globalization; *νδ_παρακράτος*: nd_parastate; *νδ_εγκληματίες*: nd_criminals, *ΝΔ_ΣΥΜΜΟΡΙΑ*: ND_GANG, etc.). It should be mentioned that ND refers New Democracy, a Greek political party in power.

Figure 17

Warning Against a Dystopian Digital Dictatorship



Figure 18

Warning About Globalists' Intentions



Online extreme activists go even further by translating and manipulating uncertain knowledge that is based on unchecked information, in this way contributing to fearful scenarios and spreading fake news. In this context, translation and reframing amplify and broaden their narratives, as demonstrated by the tweets referencing Magnus Soderlund's controversial statements. The French tweet from *Verity France*, as shown in Figure 19, claims that a scientist recommends eating human meat to combat climate change, which is an extreme and absurd assertion designed to provoke immediate outrage. This shocking narrative exploits the public's concern over climate change and distrust in scientific experts by presenting a grotesque and morally repugnant solution, thus creating a false dichotomy between people with common sense and insane expert recommendations.

Similarly, in Figure 20, the online activist uses direct quotes to make the text more convincing for believers, presenting it as a true statement: 'Eating human meat from the dead can help save the human race. We could overcome the taboos in which we don't eat each other.' The visual message, consisting of a meme of Söderlund's head on a plate, semiotically reinforces the distorted claim. This combination

of textual and visual elements serves to deepen the emotional response from the audience, evoking fear, disgust, and moral outrage. By presenting such extreme views as factual statements endorsed by experts, these tweets not only spread panic but also undermine public trust in scientific discourse and rational debate. The integration of hashtags like #GreatReset and #ΝΤΠ (NWO) links the narrative to broader conspiracy theories, creating a cohesive yet false narrative that resonates with exaggerated and extreme narratives that are being shared on social media through translation.

Figure 19
Manipulating Unchecked Information and Spreading False Narratives



Figure 20
Manipulating Unchecked Information and Spreading False Narratives



Figure 21 presents a stark example of how misinformation can be propagated through selective appropriation and mistranslation.

Figure 21
Distorting the Intended Message of The WEF Leader

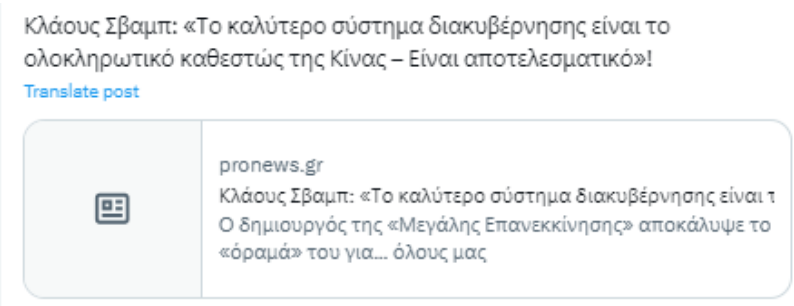


Figure 22
Translating Partially the Intended Message of the WEF Leader's Statement



Klaus Schwab's original statement at the APEC 2022 was nuanced, recognizing China's impressive achievements and its attractiveness as a model for some countries, while simultaneously stressing the importance of respecting each nation's right to determine its own governance system and cautioning against imposing systems. Here are his exact words: *"I respect China's achievements which are tremendous over the last forty years. I think it's a role model for many countries, but I think also we should leave to each country to make its own decision what system it wants to adopt and I think we should be very careful in imposing systems, the Chinese system is only very attractive model for quite a number of countries"*.

This perspective was stripped of its complexity in the English language alternative media, which selectively highlighted Schwab's recognition of China as a role model, downplaying his warnings about imposing systems and the significance of national self-determination.

This selective appropriation misleads the audience by omitting key elements that provide a fuller understanding of Schwab's views. One example of such manipulation is the following:

> China is a 'role model' for many countries, according to World Economic Forum (WEF) boss Klaus Schwab, in a recent interview with Chinese state media. "I think we should be very careful in imposing systems," Schwab added, "but the Chinese model is certainly a very attractive model for quite a number of countries".

The Greek version, as shown in Figure 21, distorts Schwab's message, transforming it into a bold endorsement of China's totalitarian regime as the best and most effective system of governance. This reframing misinterprets and amplifies the original statement to fit an extreme narrative, likely aiming to provoke or validate certain political beliefs. Such manipulation exemplifies how statements can be decontextualized and reframed to serve specific agendas and construct false knowledge.

In contrast, the French tweet (Figure 22), despite originating from *The Epoch Times*, a source known for manipulating information and spreading fake news, maintains a relatively neutral tone and does not distort Schwab's words to the same extent. However, it still omits the important context of his caution against imposing systems and the need to respect national self-determination, which can lead to a misleading interpretation of his stance.

The construction of the Enemy is also achieved by building a transnational Self, as exemplified by online activists who use translation to unify identities and mobilize collective action against a presumed global elite. The repetition of phrases like 'We are MANY, we are UNITED, and we are READY', as shown in Figures 23 and 24, serves as a rallying cry, infusing the discourse with a sense of urgency, solidarity, and empowerment. This consistent refrain unifies individuals across linguistic and cultural boundaries, framing the narrative as a binary opposition of Us versus Them, and positioning these online communities against a globalist elite. The use of literal translations in Greek and French tweets preserves the original message's rhetorical force and emotional resonance, making the narrative accessible and relevant to local contexts. By addressing the so-called globalists in Greek and aligning protests with the Bilderberg meeting in French, the tweets integrate global and local narratives, fostering transnational cohesion. Supporters from diverse languages, cultures, and racial backgrounds identify with a shared cause and clear-cut narrative, effectively constructing resistance and solidarity against a perceived global conspiracy.

Figure 23
Exposing the Culprits and Fostering Translational Cohesion

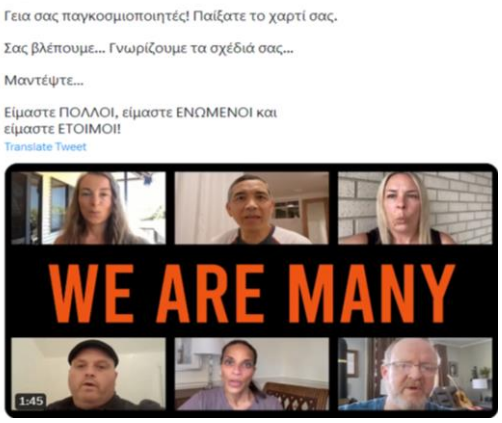


Figure 24
Exposing the Culprits and Fostering Translational Cohesion



Overall, the analysis of our data reveals that translating uncertain knowledge, particularly stories that construct the NWO metanarrative, enables online activists to perform specific social functions:

a) *Promote alternative narratives*: Translation allows online activists to amplify or promote alternative or non-systemic political and scientific narratives while challenging mainstream ideologies.

b) *Promote an alternative way of thinking*: By disseminating translated extreme narratives, online activists encourage an alternative way of thinking, urging individuals to question and scrutinize the motives behind perceived malevolent agendas.

c) *Expose perceived hidden agendas*: Translation helps them to reveal and denounce perceived hidden agendas, alerting people to what they believe are dystopian futures orchestrated by global elites.

d) *Delegitimize the perceived culprits*: Activists reframe and manipulate factual statements to discredit social and political actors, weakening the influence of those associated with the NWO narrative.

e) *Create and enhance polarization*: The spread of extreme uncertain knowledge through translation can exacerbate societal divisions, contributing to increased polarization and tension.

f) *Build solidarity, reinforce empowerment and national and transnational resistance*: By translating these narratives, activists foster solidarity among individuals who question established political structures while creating a common ground for resistance against perceived threats.

5. Discussion

The primary objective of this study was to bring to the fore the significant role of translation in the dissemination of extreme narratives and highlight its impact on encouraging transnational activism. Drawing on narrative theory, culturalist approaches to conspiracy theories, and critical discourse analysis of far-right discourse, this research aimed to understand how online mediators, particularly those sharing far-right values, use translation to construct, reproduce, and propagate narratives around the NWO master narrative that transcend linguistic and cultural boundaries. The study specifically focused on analyzing the profiles of these online mediators, the sources of information they rely on, the translational strategies used to reproduce those narratives, and the social functions they perform through translation.

Translating alternative narratives to build up and reinforce the NWO master narrative proves a particular type of digital activism. As in the case of dominant media translation, this form of digital activism appears to be a process or a means through which alternative media and collective online communities and individuals seek to solidify their values and beliefs (Constantinou, 2017, 2019; Loupaki, 2010) and perform social and ideological functions. In this sense, translation practiced on social media, like any discursive activity, also proves a particular ideology-bound activity that shapes and is shaped by power relations, tensions and ideologies (Fairclough, 2001; Wodak, 2015). This form of online transnational activism achieved through translation enables social media users to construct truth and knowledge discursively and semiotically, thereby influencing public perceptions of events. By translating fringe opinions and claims, these activists are able to enlarge 'the narrative space' (Baker, 2013) and legitimize and spread ideas that might otherwise remain marginalized. In this sense, the recourse to the concept of uncertain knowledge proved particularly helpful, as online mediators translate or propagate translated narratives with varying intensities and contents (Boullier et al., 2021). In other words, they are based not only on invented and fictional scenarios, fake news, or conspiracy theories but also on actual talks and texts of those dissenting scientists or politicians.

The cross-cultural perspective of this study reveals that translation builds common ground in digital communities regardless of language and culture. In this context, translation has been shown to empower online activists to re-inform and galvanize like-minded individuals against perceived global threats. These global threats, which appear to be interconnected (Palecek & Hampel, 2024), along with the

profiles of mediators, resonate with far-right and anti-systemic ideologies and affiliations (Baider & Constantinou, in press). Online activists in both our Greek and French language data use the same content and draw on similar alternative information resources. Despite slight discrepancies in numbers, both French- and Greek-speaking communities depict the same protagonists and retell the same stories. Strategies such as selective appropriation, reframing, amplification, and distortion are employed in both datasets to temporally and causally consolidate the NWO master narrative, thereby serving specific agendas. Most examples reveal an alignment between accuracy and the translation of alternative information that resonates with the communities' ideological values. Conversely, manipulation through selective appropriation and recontextualization is observed when translating dominant discourses.

Consequently, the implications of this study are multifaceted, particularly in terms of understanding the dynamics of digital activism within the context of far-right and anti-systemic ideologies. Translation on social media becomes a powerful tool for constructing and disseminating alternative narratives that challenge dominant discourses. By facilitating the global spread of these narratives, translation contributes to the creation and solidification of extreme, even extremist, networks that can influence public perceptions and political agendas transnationally. In this regard, translation practiced on social media might not only provide a rich terrain for Critical Discourse Studies to offer new insights into far-right and anti-systemic ideologies but also serve as a valuable investigative tool to verify the facts.

Given the findings and implications of this study, further research is needed to delve deeper into the role of translation in digital activism, particularly in multilingual and multicultural contexts. Future studies should expand the scope of data to include a wider range of languages and extreme narratives to better understand the power of these narratives. Additionally, examining the ethical implications of translating conspiracy theories and the potential social consequences of such digital activism is crucial. Such research could contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the intersection between translation, digital activism, and the propagation of extreme ideologies, which remains an under-explored area in Translation Studies.

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