

Critical Approaches to Translation

Have we taken a “translation turn”? Recent work in literary and cultural studies has become more aware of transnational connections between cultures, the global context of literary works, and the pathways of inspiration between writers of various languages. In short, these critics have focused increasingly on translation. At the same time, the new discipline of Translation Studies has been transformed from a sub-set of Linguistics into a wide-ranging set of approaches and has claimed status as a discipline on its own, with its own methods and claims on the study of translation. This seminar will explore the interactions of these two broad groups of critics sharing a similar object of study.

Drawing on a variety of critical perspectives and geographical regions, this class will survey recent critical approaches to translation, engaging questions such as, what translates from one literary culture to another?, how does meaning circulate? and, what roles do translators play in cultural transformation? We will read studies of translation in different topics of current interest, for example: constructions of race and gender, world literature, and Holocaust memory.

Policies

Participation

A seminar depends on the active engagement of all participants. Please be present and on time for every session, to show your engagement with the class and respect for your colleagues. A pattern of absence or lateness can affect your grade adversely.

In order to participate actively, you should go beyond reading the assignments, to preparing them for discussion. At the beginning of each session, you should be able to state the main ideas and methodology of critical works, and the main themes and structure of the creative works assigned. You should have specific comments to make on the author’s approach—what you understand the author wants to do, and what you think of it. You should also keep track of those parts of the reading that are confusing, unclear, or hard to place in the general context of the course. Making notes on these points will be a great aid to your participation and the over-all class discussion.

Communication

When you send email regarding class, please **include “HUSL 6381” in the subject line**. This lets me filter out important messages from spam. Please do not send me email via eLearning. If I have not responded to your email within two days, then something has gone wrong; please pester.

Assignments

Annotated Bibliography

Your final project for this class will be an annotated bibliography, including a 3 to 5 – page rationale and ten titles. The rationale should describe a particular research project, linked somehow to the seminar’s themes or readings. The project should be as well defined as a seminar paper would be. For example, “Reading *Don Quixote* as a Translation from Arabic” is a better project than “Spanish Translation.” The rationale should explain why this topic makes an interesting contribution to Translation Studies, what methods its research requires, and what concrete texts or cases it will study.

Each annotation should begin with a full citation, and it should cover the book’s central claims, its organization, and its particular examples. You should identify the book’s critical context (who is the author talking to) and its relationship with other titles in your bibliography. Note any questions the book raises for you or potential problems you see with its approach. The annotations should be (at least!) 300 to (at most!) 500 words. Follow MLA format throughout, including double-spacing.

This assignment fits a survey course, because it allows you to define, within the broad reach of our readings in the field, a zone of personal interest. As such, it offers good practice for finding portfolio or dissertation projects and, especially, for defining doctoral exam fields.

Adamson, Walter. *Avant-Garde Florence: from Modernism to Fascism*. Harvard UP, 1993.

Although he does not treat translation, Adamson’s study of the cultural politics among the Futurists of Florence makes an interesting comparison with Blaga’s case. Adamson argues that Mussolini built his fascism from the cultural materials Futurists discovered and created. As such, he employs a theory which allows him to move freely between art works and the discourse of politics. Adamson, like Verdery, aligns himself with Bourdieu in reading artists’ production (painting, literature, journalism) as position-taking within a social field. Although his analyses of this production always focus on the social context of their production and interpretation, he does extend his theoretical perspective into textual space:

[Bourdieu] by no means suggests that we should regard particular texts as corresponding in any simple, reductive way to positions in a field. On the

contrary, texts—especially those with complex, “worklike” features, as against those with mere documentary value—may themselves be regarded as force fields homologous to larger fields. That is, complex texts characteristically embody contradictory or contesting impulses that tend to mirror larger social and ideological conflicts. (6)

The last sentence of this passage explains why over the course of his book Adamson never reads the internal workings of a text. This position does not allow the possibility that a text would not fit with the larger field. By forcing the text into the passive role of a “mirror,” Adamson denies the active force of the art work’s difference. In other words, the modes by which a text signifies are not distinct from those by which the text (or its author) positions itself in the social field. It seems to me that these processes work differently, and one must translate from one mode to the other in order to read works contextually. By collapsing one into the other, Adamson ignores the most interesting part about reading texts and contexts, that moment of translation to which Liu is attentive.

Presentation

You will give one seminar presentation, describing a critical book from the field of translation studies. You are responsible for choosing the book, and all titles must be cleared with me, ahead of time. The presentation (spoken, not read) covers the same content as an annotation, and in fact, you are welcome to include your presentation title in your annotated bibliography. The presentation lasts about 15 minutes, plus time afterwards for questions.

Final Grade

Your final grade will be determined roughly along these percentages: bibliography, 75%; presentation, 15%, participation, 10%. In practice, this distribution means that even with an excellent final project, a poor job in the other class requirements can result in a B or C.

Readings

Texts

Brodzki, Bella. *Can These Bones Live?: Translation, Survival, and Cultural Memory*. Stanford UP, 2007. 0804755426

Mayhew, Jonathan. *Apocraphal Lorca*. U Chicago P, 2009. 0226512037

Cornish, Allison. *Vernacular Translation in Dante's Italy: Illiterate Literature*. Cambridge, 2013. 1107693659

Venuti, Lawrence, ed. *The Translation Studies Reader*. 3rd ed. Routledge, 2012. 0415613485 (noted on syllabus as “Reader”)

Several readings are available on the seminar's eLearning site, noted as "eLearning." Those here below marked "further reading" are not required. These are other readings in the same vein as that week's required texts, offered for those interested in further research on the topics. See also the bibliography in *Reader*.

Schedule

8/25	Introductions
9/1	Labor Day Holiday
9/8	<p>Reader: Jakobson, Toury, Steiner, Lefevere</p> <p>Further reading: Barnstone, Willis. <i>The Poetics of Translation : History, Theory, Practice</i>. New Haven: Yale UP, 1993. Bassnett, Susan. <i>Translation Studies</i>. Routledge, 1980. Gentzler, Edwin. <i>Contemporary Translation Theories</i>. Routledge, 1993. Hermans, Theo. <i>Translation in Systems: Descriptive and System-oriented Approaches Explained</i>. Routledge, 2014. Lefevere, André. <i>Translation, Rewriting, and the Manipulation of Literary Fame</i>. Routledge, 1992 Pym Anthony. <i>Exploring Translation Theories</i>. Routledge, 2009. Robinson, Douglas. <i>The Translator's Turn</i>. Johns Hopkins UP, 1991. Toury, Gideon. <i>Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond</i>. 2nd ed. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2012. Tymoczko, Maria. <i>Enlarging Translation, Empowering Translators</i>. Routledge, 2007.</p>
9/15	<p>Reader: Benjamin</p> <p>eLearning: Benjamin, Walter. "The Task of the Translator." Trans. James Hynd and E. M. Valk. <i>Delos</i> 2 (1968) 76 - 99. de Man, Paul. "Conclusions: The Task of the Translator." <i>The Resistance to Theory</i>. U of Minnesota P, 1986. 73 – 105.</p> <p>Further reading: Benjamin, Andrew. <i>Translation and the Nature of Philosophy: A New Theory of Words</i>. Routledge, 1989. Benjamin, Walter. "The Task of the Translator." Trans. Harry Zohn. <i>Illuminations</i>. Ed. Hannah Arendt. Schocken Books, New York: 1969. Budick, Sanford, and Wolfgang Iser, eds. <i>The Translatability of Cultures : Figurations of the Space Between</i>. Stanford UP, 1996. Davidson, Donald. <i>Inquiries into Truth and Interpretation</i>. 2nd ed. Oxford UP, 2001.</p>

	<p>Derrida, Jacques. <i>The Monolingualism of the Other</i>. Johns Hopkins UP, 1998.</p> <p>Graham, Joseph, ed. <i>Difference in Translation</i>. Cornell UP, 1985.</p> <p>Jacobs, Carol. "The Monstrosity of Translation." <i>MLN</i> 90 (1975) 755 – 66.</p> <p>v. o. Quine, Willard. <i>Word and Object</i>. MIT Press, 1960.</p>
9/22	<p>Reader: Appiah</p> <p>eLearning:</p> <p>Bhabha, Homi. <i>The Location of Culture</i>. Routledge, 1994.</p> <p>Cheyfitz, Eric. <i>The Poetics of Imperialism : Translation and Colonization from the Tempest to Tarzan</i>. Expanded ed. U of Pennsylvania P, 1997.</p> <p>Further reading:</p> <p>Bassnett, Susan, and Harish Trivedi, eds. <i>Post-Colonial Translation: Theory and Practice</i>. Routledge, 1999.</p> <p>Chow, Rey. "Film and Ethnography; or, Translation between Cultures in the Postcolonial World." <i>Primitive Passions: Visuality, Sexuality, Ethnography, and Contemporary Chinese Cinema</i>. Columbia UP, 1995.</p> <p>Hitchcock, Peter. <i>The Long Space: Transnationalism and Postcolonial Form</i>. Stanford UP, 2009.</p> <p>Kilito, Abdelfattah. <i>Thou Shalt Not Speak My Language</i>. Trans. Wail S. Hassan. Syracuse UP, 2008.</p> <p>Niranjana, Tejaswini. <i>Siting Translation: History, Post-Structuralism, and the Colonial Context</i>. U of California P, 1992.</p> <p>Simon, Sherry, and Paul St-Pierre. <i>Changing the Terms: Translating in the Postcolonial Era</i>. U of Ottawa P, 2000.</p> <p>Tymoczko, Maria. <i>Translation in a Postcolonial Context: Early Irish Literature in English Translation</i>. St Jerome P, 1999.</p>
9/29	<p>Reader: Schleiermacher</p> <p>eLearning:</p> <p>Venuti, Lawrence. <i>The Translator's Invisibility</i>. 2nd ed. Routledge, 2008.</p> <p>Further reading:</p> <p>Bellos, David. <i>Is That a Fish in Your Ear?</i> Faber, 2012.</p> <p>Berman, Antoine. <i>The Experience of the Foreign: Culture and Translation in Romantic Germany</i>. Albany: State U of New York P, 1992.</p> <p>Bernofsky, Susan. <i>Foreign Words: Translator-Authors in the Age of Goethe</i>. Wayne State UP, 2005.</p> <p>Grossman, Edith. <i>Why Translation Matters</i>. Yale UP, 2011</p> <p>Venuti, Lawrence. <i>Translation Changes Everything</i>. Routledge, 2013.</p>

10/6	Reading week, no class
10/13	<p>Reader: Chamberlin, Spivak</p> <p>eLearning: Simon, Sherry. <i>Gender in Translation</i>. Routledge, 1996.</p> <p>Further reading: Davis, Kathy. <i>The Making of Our Bodies, Ourselves: How Feminism Travels across Borders</i>. Duke UP, 2007. von Flotow, Louise <i>Translating Women</i>. U of Ottawa P, 1997. Hurst, Isobel. <i>Victorian Women Writers and the Classics: The Feminine of Homer</i>. Oxford UP, 2008. Johnson, Barbara. "Taking Fidelity Philosophically." <i>Difference in Translation</i>. Ed. Joseph Graham. Cornell UP, 1985. Larkosh, Christopher, ed. <i>Re-Engendering Translation: Transcultural Practice, Gender/Sexuality and the Politics of Alterity</i>. Routledge, 2012. Prins, Yopie. <i>Victorian Sappho</i>. Princeton UP, 1999.</p>
10/20	<p>Reader: Rafael</p> <p>eLearning: Bermann, Sandra and Michael Wood, eds. <i>Nation, Language, and the Ethics of Translation</i>. Princeton UP, 2004.</p> <p>Further reading: Dingwaney, Anuradha, and Carol Maier, eds. <i>Between Languages and Cultures : Translation and Cross-Cultural Texts</i>. U of Pittsburgh P, 1995. Edwards, Brent Hayes. <i>The Practice of Diaspora: Literature, Translation, and the Rise of Black Internationalism</i>. Harvard UP, 2003. Liu, Lydia. <i>Translingual Practice: Literature, National Culture, and Translated Modernity—China, 1900-1937</i>. Stanford UP, 1995. Lomas, Laura. <i>Translating Empire: José Martí, Migrant Latino Subjects, and American Modernities</i>. Duke UP, 2003. Rafael, Vincent. <i>The Promise of the Foreign: Nationalism and the Technics of Translation in the Spanish Philippines</i>. Duke UP, 2005.</p>
10/27	<p>Brodzki</p> <p>Further reading: Felstiner, John. <i>Paul Celan: Poet, Survivor, Jew</i>. Yale UP, 2001. Insana, Lina. <i>Arduous Tasks: Primo Levi, Translation and the Transmission of Holocaust Testimony</i>. U Toronto P, 2009.</p>

	Ryland, Charlotte. <i>Paul Celan's Encounters with Surrealism: Trauma, Translation and Shared Poetic Space</i> . Legenda, 2010.
11/3	<p>Reader: Cronin, Simon</p> <p>eLearning: Casanova, Pascale. <i>The World Republic of Letters</i>. Trans. M. B. DeBevoise. Harvard UP, 2004.</p> <p>Further reading: Cronin, Michael. <i>Translation and Globalization</i>. Routledge, 2003. ---. <i>Across the Lines: Travel Language and Translation</i>. Cork UP, 2000. Ricci, Ronit. <i>Islam Translated: Literature, Conversion, and the Arabic Cosmopolis of South and Southeast Asia</i>. U of Chicago P, 2011.</p>
11/10	<p>eLearning: Apter, Emily. <i>Against World Literature: On the Politics of Untranslatability</i>. Verso, 2013. Damrosch, David. <i>What Is World Literature?</i> Princeton UP, 2003. Moretti, Franco. <i>Distant Reading</i>. Verso, 2013.</p> <p>Further reading: Apter, Emily. <i>The Translation Zone</i>. Princeton UP, 2005. ---, et. al, eds. <i>Dictionary of Untranslatables: A Philosophical Lexicon</i> (Princeton UP, 2013). Emmerich, Michael. <i>The Tale of Genji: Translation, Canonization, and World Literature</i> Columbia UP, 2103. Moretti, Franco. <i>Atlas of the European Novel: 1800-1900</i>. Verso, 1999.</p>
11/17	<p>Cornish</p> <p>Further reading: Beer, Jeanette and Kenneth Lloyd-Jones, eds. <i>Translation and the Transmission of Culture Between 1300 and 1600</i>. Kalamazoo, MI: Western Michigan U Medieval, 1995. Gutas, Dimitri. <i>Greek Thought, Arabic Culture: The Graeco-Arabic Translation Movement in Baghdad and Early 'Abbasaid Society</i>. Routledge, 1998. McElduf, Siobhán. <i>Roman Theories of Translation: Surpassing the Source</i>. Routledge, 2013.</p>
11/24	Fall Break

12/1	<p>Mayhew</p> <p>Further reading: Davis, Paul. <i>Translation and the Poet's Life: The Ethics of Translating in English Culture, 1646-1726</i>. Oxford UP, 2009. Federici, Federico. <i>Translation as Stylistic Evolution: Italo Calvino Creative Translator of Raymond Queneau</i>. Rodopi, 2009. Huang, Yunte. <i>Transpacific Displacement: Ethnography, Translation, and Intertextual Travel in Twentieth-Century American Literature</i>. U of California P, 2002. O'Neill, Patrick. <i>Polyglot Joyce : Fictions of Translation</i>. U of Toronto P, 2005. Woods, Michelle. <i>Kafka Translated: How Translators have Shaped our Reading of Kafka</i>. Bloomsbury Academic, 2013.</p>
12/8	Conclusions

These descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.