

TRNS:6459
ISSUES IN TRANSLATION
Fall 2024

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11 a.m. – 12.15 p.m., 161 VAN

Instructor: Jan Steyn, 638 Phillips Hall

Departmental Website: <https://translation.uiowa.edu>

Office Hours: Wednesdays, noon – 3 p.m. + by appointment; [please let me know if you are planning to come to office hours: sometimes they will be held in my physical office, sometimes on Zoom.](#)

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Course Home: The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) is the home of this course, and CLAS governs the policies and procedures for its courses. Graduate students, however, must adhere to the [academic deadlines set by the Graduate College.](#)

Course ICON site: To access the course site, log into [Iowa Courses Online \(ICON\)](#) <https://icon.uiowa.edu/index.shtml> using your Hawk ID and password.

Catalog Description: Theories of, and critical essays on, translation, with emphasis on 20th- and 21st-century thinking about literary translation as cultural transfer, a form of political agency, a source of artistic influence, and as a creative writing art.

Full Description: Students in this course will study a range of writings about translation, from well-established texts in the translation theory canon, to more poetic contemporary works challenging and attempting to expand that canon, to pragmatic works written by practicing translators, to influential belletristic statements about the nature of translation and language. In doing so, they will ask questions about the ethical, political, and aesthetic dimensions of translation. They will directly relate theory to the practice of translation in an exercise requiring them to translate a literary text “under the influence” of a translation theorist. They will try their hands at the emergent nonfiction genre of translation memoir. And they will make a brief contribution to the vitally important field of learned and reflexive translation criticism.

Anticipated learning outcomes:

Through a mixture of reading, writing, reflection, and discussion, we aim to familiarize ourselves with:

- classical statements about translation
- some of the contemporary responses, reformulations, departures, inventions
- the hermeneutic space of translation
- the role of method, intuition, and creativity in translation
- ways of thinking about translation as (re-)writing and (co-)creative process
- ethics, politics, and aesthetics of translation
- how to read and write about translation and participate in the translation discourse community

Required Readings:

In this course, you will be reading a mix of: 1) **translation theory**; 2) **craft reflections**; and 3) **translation diary and memoir**, and 4) **fictional work in/ about translation**. Most of the **translation theory** we will read will have implications for the (ethical, political, and aesthetic) practice of literary translation, and together we will tease out those implications (which are not always obvious). The **craft reflections**, written exclusively by practicing translators, are often more directly normative and overtly pragmatic. They are also useful sources of *translation discourse* – the vocabularies and concepts deployed when people speak about translation. The **translation diary and memoir** are important emergent genres of nonfiction. They allow for particularly personal and fine-grained accounts of translation practice, but also for translators to reflect on broader issues of cultural exchange, language acquisition, pedagogy, literary style, and so forth. You will be reading these works partly as models for the translation diary that you will keep throughout the semester. The **fictional works** either allow us to test our theoretical concepts against actual translation practice (as we'll do with al-Ḥarīrī in Michael Cooperson's translation), or, borrowing a phrase from Rosemary Arrojo, they present us with "fictional translators" – translator characters that, because of the fictional frame, can reveal (or project) insights into the translator's interiority, concerns, relationships, etc. (Jennifer Croft's novel is an example of the latter).

You are required to purchase the following books for this course:

- Kavita Bhanot & Jeremy Tiang (eds.), *Violent Phenomena: 21 Essays on Translation* (London: Tilted Axis Press, 2022)
- al-Ḥarīrī, *Impostures*, trans. Michael Cooperson (New York: NYU Press, 2021)
- Jennifer Croft, *The Extinction of Irena Rey* (London & New York: Bloomsbury, 2024)

These books are available at Prairie Lights, and I encourage you to buy them there. They are also available through Iowa Book. All other supplementary readings & viewings will be provided via ICON.

In addition, you will (co-)select readings from and (co-)lead a course discussion about one of the following books. You certainly do not have to purchase all of these, though they are each interesting in their own way.

- Esther Allen and Susan Bernofsky (eds.), *In Translation: Translators on Their Work and What It Means* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013).
- Nuzhat Abbas (ed.), *River in an Ocean: Essays on Translation* (Toronto: Trace Press, 2023).
- Kate Briggs, *This Little Art* (London: Fitzcarraldo Editions, 2017).
- Daniel Hahn, *Catching Fire* (Edinburgh: Charco Press, 2022).
- Johannes Göransson, *Transgressive Circulation* (Minneapolis MN: Noemi Press, 2018)
- Mark Polizzotti, *Sympathy for the Traitor* (Boston: The MIT Press, 2019)

Recommended material:

The pieces marked as “FURTHER READING” on the course schedule are all available on the course website. They are intended to be useful next steps for exploring a particular topic, for your final project assignment or simply for your own pleasure. I will remain available after the semester is over to help you more deeply explore any of the themes raised in our course.

We will use multiple chapters from the following books, which are not required, but highly recommended:

- Jan Steyn (ed.), *Translation: Crafts, Contexts, Consequences* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022)
- Lawrence Venuti (ed.), *The Translation Studies Reader*, 4th ed. (New York: Routledge, 2022)

The following two books are recommended as remarkably well-put-together companions to translation studies (and, to a lesser extent, translation theory proper). The first book is more elementary, the second more comprehensive:

- Matthew Reynolds, *A Very Short Introduction to Translation* (Oxford: OUP, 2016)
- Jeremy Munday, *Introducing Translation Studies*, 4th ed. (New York: Routledge, 2016)

You should try to consult the following sites regularly during the semester so as to get a sense of contemporary literary translation discourse in the USA:

- <https://www.asymptotejournal.com>
- <https://www.wordswithoutborders.org>
- <http://translationista.com>
- <http://www.rochester.edu/college/translation/threepercent/>

The following are some translation podcasts worth listening to (and considering as models should you choose to do produce audio for the final project):

- Translators Note (notice that there is no apostrophe in “translators”)
- Women in Translation
- On Translation
- Translating the World
- Paraphrasis

You should also keep up with literary translation discourse on those social media platforms you frequent. The Facebook “Literary Translation” group (founded and managed by our own Aron Aji), for instance, has just short of 5,000 very active members, many of them literary translators.

Academic Honesty and Misconduct

All students in CLAS courses are expected to abide by the [CLAS Code of Academic Honesty](#). Undergraduate academic misconduct must be reported by instructors to CLAS according to [these procedures](#). Graduate academic misconduct must be reported to the Graduate College according to Section F of the [Graduate College Manual](#).

Student Complaints

Students with a complaint about a grade or a related matter should first discuss the situation with the instructor and/or the course supervisor (if applicable), and finally with the Director or Chair of the school, department, or program offering the course.

Graduate students should contact the CLAS [Associate Dean for Graduate Education and Outreach and Engagement](#) when additional support is needed.

Drop Deadline for this Course

You may drop an individual course before the deadline; after this deadline you will need collegiate approval. You can look up the [drop deadline for this course](#) here. When you drop a course, a “W” will appear on your transcript. The mark of “W” is a neutral mark that does not affect your GPA. Directions for adding or dropping a course and other registration changes can be found on the [Registrar’s website](#). Graduate students should adhere to the [academic deadlines](#) and policies set by the Graduate College.

Grading System and the Use of +/-

Final grades will be awarded based on the following ranges:

A	B	C	D	F
A+ 98-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69	F < 59
A 93-97	B 83-86	C 73-76	D 63-66	
A- 90-92	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	D- 60-62	

Course Grades

Final course grades will be assessed based on your performance in the following activities:

- 1) A grade for **in-class performance (25%)**
- 2) A grade for your **translating-under-the-influence (TUI) project (25%)**
- 3) A grade for your **public-facing translation memoir (25%)**.
- 4) A grade for your **critical essay (25%)**

Your **IN-CLASS PERFORMANCE** grade is a record of: 1) your preparedness and activity in general class discussion, including doing out-of-class exercises, 2) your performance in your role as **discussion leader (for “book club” and for the book you signed up for)**; 3) your engagement with peers and their work.

For your **TUI assignment**, you will choose a prose passage or a short poem to translate twice: once as you would normally, and the second time while “under the influence” of a theorist covered in the course. Be bold, be adventurous, be inventive. We will discuss your translations in class. Please be sure to include either a translator’s note or a significant passage in the assignment that discusses which theorists your translation is “influenced” by and how.

Your public-facing **TRANSLATION MEMOIR** should include both translation drafts and commentary. This could be in sequential diary format, or organized more creatively. It may be physical or electronic, your choice. It should contain and reflect on the translation work we do throughout the semester. It should take inspiration from the published examples of translation diaries and memoirs that we read. It should contain at least two entries per week, whether these are dated or not, appear in order of their composition or not. It may contain thoughts about translation from outside the immediate context of our course, provided that you come up with them during the semester. You will submit the first half of your memoir/ diary (weeks 2-7) for comments (but no grade) from the instructor.

Your **CRITICAL ESSAY** will be a theory-inflected take on a newly published work of literary translation. Your piece should aim to contribute to our common, ever-developing translation discourse by *explicitly* integrating insights from the critical texts you have studied this semester (i.e. name the theorists and translators you refer to). The project may be: written and formatted like a standard academic term paper; recorded as an audio file, using podcast conventions; or produced as a video lecture, using visual materials to illustrate your argument. Whichever format you choose, the written (script) version should be 5-7 pages in length (Times New Roman, 12-pt font, 1-inch margins).

Your project should combine theoretical readings and close textual/translation analysis in order to present a cogent and compelling argument about any one of the central questions of our class, and it should do so while extensively discussing one translation of a literary work. While there are myriad ways to do this well, you can find goof models in Adrienne Rose’s “On X” and Diana Thow’s “Activating Translation”.

Please choose a published literary work, translated from your source language in the last 3 years. And when analyzing this work, please apply critical concepts gleaned *from our course*. Your piece needs to perform a substantive critical analysis that treats the text more deeply than a standard book review would.

FIRST STEP: Topic Proposal/Abstract
DUE: end of week 9

At this point in the semester, you are ready to refine your topic and articulate a working thesis that is complex enough to sustain serious critical discussion. Your Topic Proposal/Abstract is a one-page, 250-word document that describes the scope of your project. State your preliminary idea. Briefly discuss the how you intend to develop and support this idea. State anticipated conclusions.

SECOND (OPTIONAL) STEP: Draft Reviews
DUE: end of week 12 [I cannot guarantee substantive feedback on drafts that come in later than this].

THIRD STEP: Final Submission Version
DUE: Exam Week – midnight on Thursday, December 19

Provisional Schedule:

Week	To Read/ Watch/ Listen:	Homework:
INTRODUCTIONS: A TRANSLATION THEORY CANON?		
<p>1a Aug 27</p> <p>Theory & (vs.?) Practice</p>	<p>SUPPORTING READINGS FOR OUR FIRST SESSION:</p> <p>B.J. Woodstein, <i>Translation Theory for Literary Translators</i> [excerpt on ICON]</p> <p>Mark Polizzotti, “Ground Rules” from <i>Sympathy for the Traitor</i> [ICON]</p> <p>Lawrence Venuti, “Towards a Translation Culture”</p> <p>Jeremy Munday, “Theories of Translation” [ICON]</p> <p>Sophie Hughes, “The Art of Translation” in the <i>NYT</i> of July 7, 2023</p>	<p>We will begin our course with a general discussion of the sometimes-fraught relation between theory and practice in the field of literary translation. While very few people would contend that “literary theory” ought to have direct implications for the writing of literary texts, when it comes theories of literary translation, commentators are much more likely to ask how (and even whether) it influences practice. Come prepared to talk about your own relationship to theory (or fields of theory) and your hopes about how they might evolve.</p> <p>Today’s readings are recommended/ optional. After today, doing the readings in advance is required.</p> <p>The introduction to Polizzotti’s delightful translation memoir is virulently and avowedly “anti-theory.” Lawrence Venuti’s essay in <i>M-Dash</i>, on the contrary, argues against what he calls “belletrism” in translation commentary (such as Polizzotti’s).</p> <p>Munday’s chapter from the 2022 <i>Cambridge Handbook of Translation</i> gives a brief (and, inevitably, partisan) synopsis of translation theories, ancient to contemporary, and the role they play in translation studies.</p> <p>We will try to look at this article (more or less effectively paywalled despite the University’s access to the <i>New York Times</i>) together in class.</p>
<p>1b Aug 29</p> <p>Canon?</p> <p>SIGNUPS: Book Club; Theory Presentation & Discussion.</p>	<p>Sawako Nakayasu, <i>Say Translation is an Art</i> [ICON]</p>	<p>The goal for today’s session is to think of translation theory as having its own canon: a series of texts that people inside the translation theory discourse community (translators, theorists, critics, academics, and publishers) hold as being “in common.” Since translation <i>theory</i> – systematic and philosophically reflexive conceptions of translation – is relatively new (unlike the much older more general discourse about translation), and since <i>translation studies</i> is an even newer phenomenon, the canon of translation theory texts is still in the process of being established. And, like all literary canons, it is actively contested. Nonetheless, we can begin to get a glimpse of how such a canon (set of texts recognizable to a defined readership) <i>functions</i> when looking at Sawako Nakayasu’s <i>Say Translation is an Art</i>.</p> <p>While reading Nakayasu’s stimulating poetic text, note down in two columns: a) the references and allusions that you do understand + how Nakayasu’s invocation of these texts and figures aid your understanding of her project, and b) those that you don’t yet understand without the help of further research. Bring these notes to class.</p>

		Nakayasu's chapbook is also making an argument about literary translation. Please try to reformulate (or, as you may call it later in the quarter: paraphrase / reword / intralingually translate) Nakayasu's argument into your own words.
1. THE TRANSLATOR AS CO-CREATIVE AGENT		
2a <small>Sep 3</small> Freedom & Subversion	John Dryden, "From the Preface to Ovid's <i>Epistles</i> " [ICON] Jill Levine, "Introduction" from <i>The Subversive Scribe</i> [ICON] Lydia Davis, "Twenty-one Pleasures of Translating (and a Silver Lining)" in <i>Essays 2</i>	Note the spectrum of translation practices (from metaphrase, to paraphrase, to imitation) laid out by Dryden + Dryden's normative statements about which practices are best. Then read Jill Levine's bracing "Introduction". Come to class prepared to discuss where Levine's "subversive" practices fall on the (incompletely filled out) spectrum that Dryden begins to sketch out, as well as how you conceive of the limits of the translator's agency in your own practice. Read Lydia Davis enumerating the "pleasures" she finds in translating. Make a note of which pleasures are tied to the translator's co-creative agency and which ones exist precisely in opposition to that.
2b <small>Sep 5</small> Critical-Creative Practice + Translation diary/ memoir	Delphine Grass, <i>Translation as Critical-Creative Practice</i> (excerpts on ICON) Daniel Hahn, <i>Catching Fire: A Translation Diary</i> (Excerpt on ICON) + Emma Ramadan, " A Translator's Diary ,"	Delphine Grass's very short book in Cambridge University Press's "Elements" series argues to expand our sense of what can be included as "translation theory." Please come to class with a list of the kinds of texts (or ways of reading) this may entail. Begin your own translation memoir/ diary . Look to Hahn's book and Ramadan's blog for inspiration. Try to include some fragments of your own literary translations alongside reflections on the readings from this course for each week. We will briefly discuss the Hahn & Ramadan text (we will return to Hahn in a student-led discussion later in the semester) as well as the possibilities for this assignment at the end of our class today.
3a <small>Sep 10</small> Questioning the original/ translation hierarchy	Karen Emmerich, excerpt from <i>Literary Translation and the Making of Originals</i> Janet Hendrickson, " Translating the Dictionary " in <i>Words Without Borders</i>	Think about Emmerich's argument about how translations retroactively produce and fix the so-called "originals" that they are ostensibly based on. Come prepared with thoughts about the relationship that Janet Hendrickson has to the "original" in her radical translation of Sebastián de Covarrubias's <i>Treasure of the Castilian or Spanish Language</i> . Ask yourself: What does Hendrickson do, in an exaggerated fashion, that Emmerich claims all translators do?
3b <small>Sep 12</small> Retranslation + Book Club!	Theory @ Iowa #1: Adrienne K.H. Rose, "On X: Embodied Retranslation and Defacement in Brandon Brown's Catullus 85" [CCC – ICON] OPTIONAL RECOMMENDED READING Jorge Luis Borges, "The Translators of <i>The Thousand and One Nights</i> ," trans. Esther Allen. [ICON]	Today we take a brief dip into the vast pool of retranslation studies, extending the question of originality (please do bring Karen Emmerich's book back into the conversation). The delightful optional piece by Borges touches on a theme that have been dominant in retranslation studies: rivalry and competition between translators, together with the question of how, or according to which standards one may <i>evaluate</i> or <i>judge</i> one translation against another. Adrienne Rose's much later text, focusing on retranslations of Catullus 85 – "Odi et amo" –, reveals cases where the purpose of a retranslation is not to produce a <i>better</i> version but rather a <i>more urgent</i> one, suited to the times, or a <i>more idiosyncratic</i> one, where the signature of the translator-poet is more important than the imprimatur of the original poet. Come to class with some clear ideas about: 1) whether rivalry is an adequate description of the relationship between re-translators, 2) how we can <i>judge</i> the quality

	<p>Jennifer Croft, <i>The Extinction of Irena Rey</i> (up to end of Chapter 10 – p.95)</p> <p>Optional Recommended Reading: Jennifer Croft, <i>Homesick</i> (excerpts on ICON)</p>	<p>of a retranslation, and 3) how much license you think a re-translator can or should take.</p> <p>In the second half of our session, we begin our “book club” with Jennifer Croft’s novel. The purpose of reading this book is two-fold: 1) to provide us with examples of translation discourse, models of the translator’s subjectivity, and prompts for thinking about translation; 2) to prepare for Jennifer Croft’s Ida Beam lecture and visit (October 19-22).</p> <p>Each session of our “book club” is student-lead (following our week 1 signups). Today’s discussion leader is: 1)_____.</p>
<p>4a Sep 17 Echo & the Diva: Female Figures of Subversion</p>	<p>Jhumpa Lahiri, “In Praise of Echo” [PDF on ICON]</p> <p>Fiona Bell, “The Diva Mode of Translation” [ICON]</p>	<p>Today we continue our reflections on the nature of originality with Jhumpa Lahiri’s essay, spurred by her own translation experience. Come to class with notes and questions.</p> <p>Like Lahiri’s piece, Bell’s popular essay in <i>Asymptote</i> is representative of a rich vein of metaphorical thinking about translation. In this case, rather than to the Narcissus/ Echo myth, translation is likened to (or conflated with) musical performance and interpretation. We will end our class with thoughts about what kind of <i>agency</i> the “diva mode” carves out for the translator.</p>
<p>4b Sep 19 Translator Studies + Book Club!</p>	<p>Theory @ Iowa #2: Diana Thow, “Activating Translation” [PDF on ICON]</p> <p>Jennifer Croft, <i>The Extinction of Irena Rey</i> (up to end of Chapter 21 – p.206)</p> <p>Lucas Klein, “On Translating Chinese Poetry”</p> <p><i>M-Dash</i>, “Translation Tal”k: Christi Merrill”</p>	<p>One of the downstream consequences of taking seriously the translator’s co-creative agency, is that translators and translations merit critical scholarly study as much as authors do. We see this kind of attention promoted by Michelle Woods in her excellent <i>Kafka Translated</i> (2013) and as editor of <i>Authorizing Translation</i> (2020, the introduction of which is included as optional recommended reading for today). We will see another example when we come to read parts of Kate Briggs’s <i>This Little Art</i>. Today we see it in the form of Diana Thow’s article on Louise Varèse’s translation of Arthur Rimbaud’s <i>Illuminations</i>. Please come to class ready to discuss, 1) how Thow’s close reading of translation choices accords agency to the translator (bring specific passages); 2) how Thow deploys translation theory to make her argument about Varèse’s translation (bring specific passages); 3) how Thow places Varèse’s translation in historical context, specifically as regards translation norms (bring specific passages).</p> <p>The second portion of our session is dedicated to book club! Today’s discussion leader is: 2) _____.</p> <p>Note that will have Lucas Klein and Christi Merrill deliver the Maureen Robertson memorial lecture today. In preparation for that we will, in the final minutes of class, discuss Klein’s short video (2 minutes and 38 seconds 😊) and Merrill’s brief interview in <i>M-Dash</i>.</p>

<p>5a Sep 24</p> <p>Prismatic Translation</p>	<p>Matthew Reynolds, "Introduction" to <i>Prismatic Translation</i> [ICON]</p> <p>+</p> <p>Ariana X. Jacobs, "Extreme Translation" in <i>Prismatic Translation</i> [ICON]</p>	<p>Today we ask the question "What do multiple translations or versions allow us to see about a text, its hidden meanings, and its potentialities?" by considering the Oxford Comparative Criticism and Translation group's concept of "prismatic translation." Read the assigned texts and come to class with ideas about the usefulness and limitations of this concept, as well as other translated works it can be fruitfully applied to.</p>
<p>5b Sep 26</p> <p>The Sounds of Languages + Book Club!</p>	<p>Theory @ Iowa #3: Aron Aji, "Covalent Effect: Literary Translation Practice and the Pedagogy of the Multilingual Workshop"</p> <p>Jennifer Croft, <i>The Extinction of Irena Rey</i> (up to end of the book)</p>	<p>Please read Aron Aji's riveting chapter (which takes our own MFA program as its object!). Come to class ready to describe: 1) Aji's method for "covalence," 2) how this method might or might not impact your own, 3) his argument for the value of a multilingual translation setting.</p> <p>Today's discussion leader is: 3) _____.</p>
<p>6a Oct 1</p> <p>Author Identity and (vs.?) Translator Identity – 'Blackness' as Example</p> <p>Translation Agency Refracted through Identity Questions: Race continued...</p>	<p>Kaiama L. Glover, "'Blackness' in French: On Translation, Haiti, and the Matter of Race" in <i>VP:21EoT</i></p> <p>Layla Benitez-James, "Proust's Oreo" in <i>VP:21EoT</i></p> <p>FURTHER READING (please bring these into the discussion if you've managed to read in advance):</p> <p>John Keene, "Translating Poetry, Translating Blackness"</p> <p>Haidee Kotze, "Translation is the Canary in the Coalmine"</p> <p>Corine Tachtiris, <i>Translation and Race</i> (book available on ICON).</p>	<p>Our speculations thus far about "originality" and "co-creation" and "agency" become significantly complicated when literary works (and their translations) rely significantly on lived experience that produces readable belonging to identity categories (each, of course, to some extent culturally specific and to some extent translatable). Today we will focus solely on the paradigmatic category of race. There is of course more to be said about questions of race and translation, but for today, please come to class with thoughts about these readings and: 1) how they impact our discussions about "originality" and "creativity" this far, and 2) their implications for your own practice (as translator, but also reviewer, editor, teacher, educated supporter of literature, etc.)</p>
<p>6b Oct 3</p> <p>Politics, Colonialism, and "Originals"</p>	<p>Gayatri Spivak, "The Politics of Translation" [ICON]</p>	<p>Today we will continue to explore the translator's (co-creative?) agency and the translation's relationship to an original, now from the political angle lent by Spivak's text.</p> <p>Spivak's beautiful and complex essay contains manifold insights and will become a touchstone for us in this course. For today, however, please focus mainly on three questions: 1) how does the distinction</p>

		Spivak makes between the logic and rhetoric of language lead to two very different relationships to the “original”? 2) If, as Spivak says, the “task of the translator is to facilitate ... love between the original and its shadow, a love that permits fraying,” then what must the translator’s relationship to the culture of the original text be?, 3) What does it mean for the translator to be able to “discriminate on the terrain of the original”? What kind of training and background would that require? What kind of eventual readership would such a translator have in mind while producing a translation?
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2. GENRE(S) & STYLE

<p>7a Oct 8 Drama</p>	<p>B.J. Woodstein, <i>Translation and Genre</i> (“Introduction” + “Genre 2: Drama”)</p>	<p>Please come to class ready to discuss the singularity of translating dramatic texts according to B.J. Woodstein. Please also reflect on the dramatic aspects of some of the (non-drama?) texts that you translate.</p> <p>We will spend part of our class today playing with some theater translation.</p>
<p>7b Oct 10 Poetry</p> <p>Weeks 2-7 of your Translation Memoir/Diary due by midnight on Friday.</p>	<p>Robert Bly, “The Eight Stages of Translation” (ICON)</p> <p>+</p> <p>Mona Kareem, “Western Poets Kidnap Your Poems and Call Them Translations” in <i>VP:21EoT</i></p> <p>OPTIONAL FURTHER VIEWING/ READING:</p> <p>Mona Kareem, “Against Translation, Against Visibility”</p> <p>Jen Calleja & Sophie Collins, “She Knows Too Much: ‘Bridge Translations’, ‘Literal Translations’, and Long-Term Harm</p>	<p>Today we will begin with the Robert Bly’s text, which has been a classic of translation theory, especially among poets. This text is unusual in the contexts of our course because – some very smart reflections notwithstanding – it ultimately presents an algorithmic approach to translation: a step-by-step how-to guide. Come ready to discuss, in a generous spirit, the <i>positive</i> value of reading such prescriptive translation theory (even if we don’t necessarily plan to follow it).</p> <p>The second half of our session will be dedicated to Mona Kareem’s viral piece arguing against the practice of “bridge translation,” which is popular mainly among poets. Come to class ready to discuss the practice, its problems, and (if you feel like being controversial) its remnant potentialities that may (still) be (otherwise) deployed.</p>
<p>8a Oct 15 Poetry: Rilke</p>	<p>Clive Scott, “Introduction” + “What the Translation of Poetry Is” out of <i>The Philosophy of Translation</i> (2023) [ICON]</p>	<p>Today we will encounter Clive Scott’s wild phenomenological approach to translating poetry. Skim his introduction and read his chapter on “What the Translation of Poetry Is” attentively, thinking of ways in which you might adopt Scott’s perspective and replicate his experiments.</p>
<p>8b Oct 17 Book Club!</p>	<p>al-Ḥarīrī, <i>Impostures</i>, trans. Michael Cooperson (front matter, “Foreword: In Praise of Pretense”, “Introduction”, “Note on the Translation”, “The Author’s Introduction” + <i>Impostures</i> 1-3)</p>	<p>Today we begin Michael Cooperson’s self-acclaimed “groundbreaking” translation of the maqāmāt of al-Ḥarīrī. Today’s discussion leaders are: 4) _____, 5) _____, 6) _____.</p>

<p>9a Oct 22</p> <p>Style + Book Club!</p>	<p>Jean Boase-Beier, "Style and the Practice of Translation" from <i>Translation and Style</i>.</p> <p>+</p> <p>al-Ḥarīrī, <i>Impostures</i>, trans. Michael Cooperson (Impostures selected from 4-30: two impostures per discussion leader)</p>	<p>Please read the chapter from Jean Boase-Beier's (highly influential) book about translation and style in conjunction with the Cooperson translations of al-Ḥarīrī for today. How does Cooperson's work bear our or gainsay Boase-Beier's claims?</p> <p>Forgery exercise: Please prepare a brief single PowerPoint slide for today in which you insert a sentence or clause into one of the theory texts we've already read, doing so in the style of the original.</p> <p>Today's discussion leaders are: 7) _____, 8) _____.</p>
<p>9b Oct 24</p> <p>Poetry: Baudelaire + Book Club!</p>	<p>Walter Benjamin, "The Translator's Task", trans. Steven Randall [ICON]</p> <p>OPTIONAL FURTHER READING:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Samuel Weber, from <i>Benjamin's -abilities</i> [ICON] - David Bellos, "Halting Walter" [ICON] - Don Mee Choi, <i>Translation is a Mode = Translation is an Anti-neocolonial Mode</i> [PDF on ICON] <p>al-Ḥarīrī, <i>Impostures</i>, trans. Michael Cooperson (Impostures selected from 30-50: two impostures)</p>	<p>Today we begin discussing one of the most important, elusive, valuable, and controversial texts in translation theory. When reading Benjamin and compiling your comments and questions for class, keep in mind that this was Benjamin's translator's introduction to his translations of Baudelaire. Note that we will, quite deliberately, limit our discussion of this text to a <u>maximum of 40 minutes</u>. If past iterations of this course are an indication, lovers of Benjamin will bring him back into our discussions and in their TUI assignments.</p> <p>Draw up a list of the translation metaphors deployed by Benjamin and bring it to class.</p> <p>Today's discussion leader is: 9) _____.</p>

American Literary Translator's Association Annual Conference Oct 25-28

3. ALTERITY, FOREIGNNESS, POWER

<p>10a Oct 29</p> <p>Trials of the Foreign</p>	<p>OPTIONAL RECOMMENDED FURTHER READING: Friedrich Schleiermacher, "On the Different Methods of Translating," trans. Susan Bernofsky [ICON]</p> <p>Lara Vergnaud, "A bowl is a bowl is a cup"</p>	<p>Schleiermacher's rich and complex philosophical investigation is often reduced by later readers to his summation of the quandary of the "translator proper," namely: "Either the translator leaves the writer in peace as much as possible and moves the reader toward him; or he leaves the reader in peace as much as possible and moves the writer toward him." Following Venuti, the former approach has often been called "foreignizing" and the latter "domesticating."</p> <p>As a summary of how Schleiermacher has been taken up by translation theory, please watch the following video by Peter Constantine & Brian Sneed, "Domestication & Foreignization in Translation" (10-minute YouTube video intended for undergraduates, but still useful for the recap and explanation).</p> <p>Please read Vergnaud's piece as a detailed example about how theoretical concerns about the different methods Schleiermacher</p>
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	<p>Antoine Berman, "Translation and the Trials of the Foreign," trans. Lawrence Venuti [ICON]</p>	<p>describes play out for a particular translator engaged in a particular project.</p> <p>After briefly discussing the short piece by Vergnaud in the light of Schleiermacher's theory in Venuti's terminology (see above), we will spend the bulk of our class today considering Berman's famous 12 "deformations" (tendencies in mainstream translation to "deform" aspects of the original in the name of fluency): Rationalization; Clarification; Expansion; Ennoblement; Qualitative Impoverishment; Quantitative Impoverishment; Destruction of Rhythms; Destruction of Underlying Networks of Signification; Destruction of Linguistic Patterning; Destruction of the Vernacular Network or Its Exoticization; Destruction of Idioms and Expressions; Effacement of the Superimposition of Languages. We will spend class time paraphrasing each tendency and coming up with new examples of each, so please prepare for this in advance.</p>
<p>10b Oct 31 Translating Into English (A Language of Power)</p>	<p>Eluned Gramich, "The Combined Kingdom: 'Decolonizing' Welsh Translation" <i>VP:21EoT</i></p> <p>Anton Hur, "The Mythical English Reader" <i>VP:21EoT</i></p> <p>RECOMMENDED ON THE TOPIC:</p> <p>Vicente L. Rafael, "Translation, American English, and the National Insecurities of Empire" [ICON]</p> <p>Gayatri Spivak, "Translating into English" [ICON]</p>	<p>Come to class, having read the Gramich and Hur articles, with a sense of your own positionality as a translator <i>into English</i>, which is to say into an imperial and dominating language. Be prepared to relate your position to specific parts of the readings.</p>
<p>11a Nov 5 Foreignness?</p>	<p>Sawad Hussein, "Why Don't You Translate Pakistanian?" in <i>VP:21EoT</i></p> <p>David Bellos, "Fictions of the Foreign: The Paradox of 'Foreign-Soundingness'" [ICON]</p>	<p>While Berman's deformations (from a week ago) are mainly identifiable by an expert conversant in both languages, Hussein and Bellos respectively draw our attention to an extra dimension surrounding the idea of "foreignness" in a text: what readers with no access to the original assume about or project onto a text, an author, or a translator based on only small fragments of apparent foreignness. From these two texts we learn that foreignness is has as much to do with ideology, chauvinism, and cultural assumptions as it does with any technical translation problems. Come to class with notes and questions.</p>
<h2>Student-Led Book Discussions</h2>		
<p>11b Nov 7</p>	<p>Nuzhat Abbas (ed.), <i>River in an Ocean: Essays on Translation</i>.</p>	<p>Today's discussion leaders are: 1)_____, 2)_____.</p>
<p>12a Nov 12</p>	<p>Esther Allen and Susan Bernofsky (eds.), <i>In Translation: Translators on Their Work and What It Means</i></p>	<p>Today's discussion leaders are: 3)_____, 4)_____.</p>
<p>12b Nov 14</p>	<p>Johannes Göransson, <i>Transgressive Circulation</i></p>	<p>Today's discussion leaders are: 5)_____, 6)_____.</p>

CRITICAL ESSAY PROPOSAL & ABSTRACT DUE		
13a Nov 19	Mark Polizzotti, <i>Sympathy for the Traitor</i> . + TBD	Today's discussion leader is: 7)_____. TBD.
13b Nov 21 LAST WEEK TO GET GUARANTEED FEEDBACK ON CRITICAL ESSAY DRAFTS	Daniel Hahn, <i>Catching Fire</i> . + PEN, the 1969 " Manifesto on Translation "	Today's discussion leader is: 8)_____. Please read the 1969 PEN Manifesto on Literary Translation. Come to class prepared to speak about its assumptions, and how it relates (or doesn't relate) to the translation discourse(s) we've encountered this semester.
<h2 style="color: green;">FALL BREAK: NOVEMBER 24 – DECEMBER 1</h2>		
14a Dec 3	Kate Briggs, <i>This Little Art</i> + PEN, " The 2023 Manifesto on Literary Translation "	Today's discussion leader is: 9)_____. Please read the 2023 PEN Manifesto on Literary Translation. Come to class prepared to speak about its assumptions, and how it relates (or doesn't relate) to the translation discourse(s) we've encountered this semester.
14b Dec 5	<h3 style="color: blue;">"Translating Under the Influence" Presentations</h3>	
15a Dec 10	<h3 style="color: blue;">"Translating Under the Influence" Presentations</h3>	
15b Dec 12 Public-Facing Translation Memoir/ Diary due by midnight on Friday, December 13	<h3 style="color: blue;">"Translating Under the Influence" Presentations</h3>	
Exam Week	<p style="color: red;">Critical Essay due by midnight, Thursday December 19. Because of the proximity to final grades being posted, no late work will be accepted.</p>	

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) Course Policies

Academic Honesty and Misconduct

All students in CLAS courses are expected to abide by the [CLAS Code of Academic Honesty](#). Undergraduate academic misconduct must be reported by instructors to CLAS according to [these procedures](#). Graduate academic misconduct must be reported to the Graduate College according to Section F of the [Graduate College Manual](#).

Student Complaints

Students with a complaint about a grade or a related matter should first discuss the situation with the instructor and/or the course supervisor (if applicable), and finally with the Director or Chair of the school, department, or program offering the course.

Graduate students should contact the CLAS [Associate Dean for Graduate Education](#) and Outreach and Engagement when additional support is needed.

Attendance and Absences

University regulations require that students be allowed to make up examinations which have been missed due to illness or other unavoidable circumstances. Students with mandatory religious obligations or UI authorized activities must discuss their absences with me as soon as possible. Religious obligations must be communicated within the first three weeks of classes.

Exam Policies

Communication: UI Email

Students are responsible for all official correspondences sent to their UI email address (uiowa.edu) and must use this address for any communication with instructors or staff in the UI community.

Drop Deadline for this Course

You may drop an individual course before the drop deadline; after this deadline you will need collegiate approval. You can look up the drop deadline for this course [here](#). When you drop a course, a “W” will appear on your transcript. The mark of “W” is a neutral mark that does not affect your GPA. To discuss how dropping (or staying in) a course might affect your academic goals, please contact your Academic Advisor. Directions for adding or dropping a course and other registration changes can be found on the [Registrar’s website](#). Undergraduate students can find policies on dropping CLAS courses [here](#). Graduate students should adhere to the [academic deadlines](#) and policies set by the Graduate College.

University Policies

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