Liberal Arts College Fall 2020

#### LBCL 494 (Honours Seminar) THINKING ABOUT TRANSLATION

#### MW 16:15-17:30

**via ZOOM**

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**Office hours: TBA**

**Course description:**

The seminar was conceived as a place to do what its title promises: think about translation. Now, “translation” can be defined in many ways, some of them broad enough to include pretty much anything. Though I would not exclude any approach we might become interested in, I would try to keep things loosely focused by using as our starting point the way translation figures in the LAC curriculum. Absolutely essential to its existence, it is hardly ever reflected upon; we tend to accept it as a neutral fact. When it attracts our attention at all, it is because we think we have spotted an error or mistranslation. And even when we sense that there is much more to it than this, there is never time for closer scrutiny in class. Hence this seminar.

As a work in progress, the seminar will be shaped throughout by the participants’ interests, preferences, and suggestions. This is why the schedule below is labelled “provisional”; it will change, probably quite a lot, in the course of the semester. We will aim at a roughly 50-50 mix of theory and practice, alternating more general discussions sparked by a selection of short readings on a particular topic with sessions looking at specific translations, comparing translated passages, attempting translation ourselves (perhaps in the form of a translation slam), playing with chain translations, etc. This will allow us to look at the same or related issues from an enriching variety of different angles.

**Prerequisites:**

All you need is a love of and open-minded interest in language and literature, as well as curiosity about how they work. There is no real need to be familiar with languages other than English.

**Course requirements:**

Active and committed participation in this collective endeavour is essential; it will include informal oral contributions (introducing and/or leading discussions of theoretical or literary texts, preparing mini-reports on specific passages for dissection, etc.). There will also be a longer formal presentation, which can (but need not) be related to your term project. Both the formal presentation and the term project itself can be shared with another student. You can choose a traditional research essay (15-20 pages) on whatever topic interests you, but you can also produce a translation of your own, accompanied by an introduction and commentary; creative work of other kinds is also a possibility. If you share the work with a friend, I will expect from each of you a 1-page account of your collaborative work. A detailed proposal (1 page or so plus a lightly annotated working bibliography) is due three weeks before the paper itself. There will be no final exam, just a short (c. 2 pages) retrospective reflection on the seminar.

**Readings:**

There are no set texts. You will receive readings for each class a week or so ahead of time.

**Attendance policy:**

Seminar attendance is mandatory. You are permitted 2 no-questions-asked absences. Each unexplained absence above and beyond this quota will reduce your final grade for the course.

**Assignments and grading:** Participation

(including informal contributions) 30%

Formal presentation 15%

Project proposal 5%

Project paper 40%

Final reflection 10%

**Important information: Online term**

\* Due to the current exceptional circumstances, all seminars will be held online. Attendance and participation are required. Zoom seminars will operate as close to in-class seminars as we can manage. Your camera should be on and your mike off when others are speaking. The goal is to move the seminar to the online format with as much fluidity and engagement as possible. Together we will aim to create an atmosphere which replicates the seminar classroom.

\* The University reminds you that content belonging to instructors shared in online courses, including, but not limited to, online lectures, seminars, course notes, and video recordings of classes remain the intellectual property of the instructor. It may not be distributed, published or broadcast, in whole or in part, without the express permission of the faculty member. Students are also forbidden to use their own means of recording any elements of an online class or lecture without express permission of the instructor. Any unauthorized sharing of course content may constitute a breach of the Academic Code of Conduct and/or the Code of Rights and Responsibilities.

\* Stable internet and computer access are necessary. Try to find a quiet, private, and comfortable place for classes. You may find headphones helpful for concentration. Note that I cannot answer any technical questions. Consult with IITS for all technical issues, access issues, and Moodle issues at: [help@concordia.ca](mailto:help@concordia.ca) or 514-848-2424 ext. 7613.

**Course schedule** (*very* provisional; will certainly change)

**Wk Monday Wednesday**

1 Sept. 7 **Labor Day** Sept. 9 Introduction

2 Sept. 14 What is (and is not) translation? Sept. 16 Practical work

3 Sept. 21 Is translation even possible? Sept. 23 Practical work

4 Sept. 28 Major dichotomies Sept. 30 Practical work

5 Oct. 5 Translation & literary history Oct. 7 Practical work

6 Oct. 12 **Thanksgiving (no classes)** Oct. 14 Translation & gender

7 Oct. 19 Practical work Oct. 21 Translation, (post-)colonialism,

globalization

8 Oct. 26 Practical work Oct. 28 Translation, ideology, censorship

9 Nov. 2 Practical work Nov. 4 Special case: translating fiction

10 Nov. 9 Practical work Nov. 11 Special case: translating poetry

11 Nov. 16 Practical work Nov. 18 **Project proposals due!**

12 Nov. 23 Practical work Nov. 25 Special case: translating drama

13 Nov. 30 Practical work Dec. 2 Special case: translating philosophy

14 Dec. 7 Practical work Dec. 8 Wrapping up. **Papers due!**

**Tuesday**

**SUGGESTED FURTHER READING**

**Handbooks, Companions, Encyclopedias**

The compendia listed below are all very good starting points for research. Most are no more than a few years old, which makes them reliable guides to recent scholarship, as well as to still relevant older work. **N.B.** If a book is marked as “available online,” you can download and/or print individual chapters from the Concordia Library website. If the note says “available as e-book,” the entire book is downloadable from the Library website, sometimes in a variety of formats.

Baker, Mona, and Gabriela Saldanha, eds. *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*. 3rd ed. Routledge, 2020. (Available as e-book.)

Beer, Jeanette, M. A., ed. *A Companion to Medieval Translation*. Arc Humanities Press, 2019. (Available online.)

Boase-Beier, Jean, Lina Fisher, and Hiroko Furukawa, eds. *The Palgrave Handbook of Literary Translation*. Palgrave Macmillan 2018. (Available as e-book.)

Class, Olive, ed. *Encyclopedia of Literary Translation into English*. 2 vols. Routledge, 2001.

Gambier, Yves, and Luc Doorslaer, eds. *Handbook of Translation Studies*. Benjamins, 2010.

Harding, Sue-Ann, and Ovidi Carbonell Cortés, eds. *The Routledge Handbook of Translation and Culture*. Routledge, 2018. (Available online.)

Kuhiwczak, Piotr and Karin Littau, eds. *A Companion to Translation Studies*. Multilingual Matters, 2007. (Available online.)

Malmkjaer, Kristen, and Kevin Windle, eds. *The Oxford Handbook of Translation Studies*. Oxford University Press, 2011.

Millán, Carmen, and Francesca Bartrina, eds. *The Routledge Handbook of Translation Studies*. Routledge, 2017. (Available online.)

Rawling, Piers, and Philip Wilson, eds. *The Routledge Handbook of Translation and Philosophy*. Routledge, 2019.

Washbourne, Kelly, and Ben van Wyke, eds. *The Routledge Handbook of Literary Translation*. Routledge, 2019. (Available as e-book.)

**Anthologies**

Lefevere, André, ed. *Translation/History/Culture: A Sourcebook*. London, 1992. (Available as e-book)

An anthology of influential statements on translation from Cicero to the 1930s. Organized by topic: ideology, patronage, poetics, universe of discourse, technique, impact on the development of language and on education, central texts and cultures, etc.

Robinson, Douglas, ed. *Western Translation Theory from Herodotus to Nietzsche*. Very comprehensive; especially good coverage of pre-modern discussions, too often ignored by other translation scholars.

Venuti, Lawrence, ed. *Translation Studies Reader*. 3rd ed. Routledge, 2012. Collects foundational texts in translation studies.

Weissbort, Daniel, and Astradur Eysteinsson, eds. *Translation – Theory and Practice: A Historical Reader*. Oxford, 2006. (Available as e-book) Similar to Lefevere and Robinson, but focused largely on the English tradition.

**General and specialized monographs, article collections, etc.**

Barnstone, Willis. *The Poetics of Translation: History, Theory, Practice*. Yale University Press, 1993.

Bassnett, Susan. *Translation Studies*, 3rd ed. Routledge, 2002. (Available as e-book.)

\_\_\_, and André Lefevere, eds. *Constructing Cultures: Essays on Literary Translation*. Multilingual Matters, 1998.

Bassnett, Susan, and Harish Trivedi, eds. *Postcolonial Translation: Theory and Practice*. Routledge, 1999. (Available as e-book.)

Boase-Beier, Jean, Antoinette Fawcett, and Philip Wilson, eds. *Literary Translation: Redrawing the Boundaries*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. (Available as e-book.)

Cheyfitz, Eric. *The Poetics of Imperialism: Translation and Colonization from* The Tempest *to* Tarzan*.* 1991. University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997.

Eco, Umberto. *Experiences in Translation*. Transl. Alastair McEwen. University of Toronto Press, 2001.

Epstein, B. J., and Robert Gillett, eds. *Queer in Translation*. Routledge, 2017.

Herman, Theo, ed. *The Manipulation of Literature: Studies in Literary Translation*. St. Martin’s, 1985.

Lefevere, André. *Translation, Rewriting, and the Manipulation of Literary Fame*. Routledge, 1992.

Ricoeur, Paul. *On Translation*. Transl. Eileen Brennan. Routledge, 2006. (Available as e-book.) [Original: *Sur la traduction*. Bayard, 2004.]

Robinson, Douglas. *Transgender, Translation, Translingual Address*.Bloomsbury, 2019.

Santaemilia, José, ed. *Gender, Sex, and Translation: The Manipulation of Identities*. St. Jerome, 2005.

Simon, Sherry. *Gender in Translation: Cultural Identity and the Politics of Transmission*. Routledge, 1996. (Available as e-book.)

\_\_\_. *Translating Montreal: Episodes in the Life of a Divided City*. McGill-Queens University Press, 2006.

\_\_\_, and Paul St-Pierre, eds. *Changing the Terms: Translating in the Postcolonial Era*. University of Ottawa Press, 2000.

Steiner, George. *After Babel*: *Aspects of Language and Translation.* 2nd edition. Oxford University Press, 1992.

Tymoczko, Maria, ed. *Translation, Resistance, Activism*. Amherst, 2010. (Available as e-book.)

Venuti, Lawrence. *The Scandals of Translation: Towards an Ethics of Difference*. Routledge, 2002. (Available as e-book.)

*\_\_\_. The Translator’s Invisibility: A History of Translation*. 2nd ed. Routledge, 2008. (Available as e-book.)

Von Flotow, Luise, ed. *Translating Women*. University of Ottawa Press, 2011. (Available online.)

\_\_\_. *Translating Women: Different Voices and New Horizons*. Routledge, 2017. (Available online.)

*\_\_\_. Translation and Gender: Translating in the “Era of Feminism.”* St. Jerome, 1997. (Available online.)

**Bonus: a fun site to play with, whether you are a *Jane Eyre* fan or not** <https://prismaticjaneeyre.org>