

Translating East Asia (LA)
TRA304/EAS304 (Spring 2012)
T 1:30-4:20
Instructor: Martin Kern
Office hour: W 1:30-2:30, 210 Jones Hall

Course description

Translation is at the core of our engagement with China, Japan, and Korea, influencing our reading choices shaping our understanding of East Asia. From translations of the classics to the grass-root subtitling of contemporary Anime movies, from the formation of the modern East Asian cultural discourse to cross-cultural references in theater and film, the seminar poses fundamental questions to our encounters with East Asian cultural artifacts, reflecting on what “translation” of “original works” means in a global world where the “original” is often already located in its projected “translation.”

Readings: Ca. 150 pages/week. For this discussion-centered seminar, you must complete all readings before coming to class; furthermore, have them with you in class, either on your laptop or printed out. All readings are available on Blackboard or otherwise online.

Writing requirements: Weekly Blackboard postings on the course’s “Discussion Board.” Midterm (10 pages) and final paper (15 pages). In addition, please team up in groups of two students to serve as discussion leaders for one seminar session. The first student-led seminar should be no later than February 28.

Syllabus

- Week 1 (2/7): **The First Chapter of the Second-Most Translated Book in the World**
- 175 translations of the *Daodejing*:
<http://www.bopsecrets.org/gateway/passages/tao-te-ching.htm>
- Week 2 (2/14): **Thinking about Translation**
- Walter Benjamin, “The Task of the Translator”
 - Naoki Sakai, *Translation and Subjectivity*, 1-39
 - Jacques Derrida, “Des Tours de Babel”
 - Lydia Liu, *Translingual Practice: Literature, National Culture, and Translated Modernity—China, 1900-1937*, 1-42
- Week 3 (2/21): **Orientalism(s)**
- Edward Said, *Orientalism*, 1-28
 - Roland Barthes, *Empire of Signs*
 - Rob Marshall, *Memoirs of a Geisha* (Film)
- Week 4 (2/28): **Poetry Between Languages, Writing Systems, and Literatures**
- “Matsuo Bashô: Frog Haiku (Thirty-one Translations and One Commentary)”
 - “Li Bai Drinking Alone (With the Moon, His Shadow, & 32 Translators)”

- Paul W. Kroll, “Review of Stephen Owen, *The Poetry of the Early T’ang*”
- Stephen Owen, “A Defense”

Week 5 (3/6):

The Mythology of Characters and Signs

- Ernest Fenollosa and Ezra Pound, *The Chinese Written Character as a Medium for Poetry*
- George A. Kennedy, “Fenollosa, Pound and the Chinese Character”
- Steven G. Yao, *Translation and the Languages of Modernism*, 25-51

Week 6 (3/13):

Translating the Classics

- David R. Knechtges, “The Perils and Pleasures of Translation: The Case of the Chinese Classics”
- Norman Girardot, *The Victorian Translation of China*, 235-285, 336-398
- Selections of *Shijing* translations by Jennings, Legge, Pound, Waley, Karlgren, Owen

Week 7 (3/27):

The Making of *Genji* in Japanese and English

- John W. De Gruchy, *Orienting Arthur Waley: Japonism, Orientalism, and the Creation of Japanese Literature in English*, 117-152, 179-183
- Michael Emmerich, “Making *Genji* Ours: Translation, World Literature, and Masamune Hakuchō’s Discovery of *The Tale of Genji*”
- Hiroaki Sato, “‘*Genji*’: the Long and the Shorter of it”
- G. G. Rowley, “Literary Canon and National Identity: The Tale of *Genji* in Meiji Japan”
- Chapter 4 of *Genji* in the translations by Waley, Seidensticker, Tyler

Week 8 (4/3):

Translating Art: Japonisme

- Siegfried Wichmann, *Japonisme: The Japanese Influence on Western Art in the 19th and 20th Centuries*, 8-11, 16-44, 205-257
- Kirk Varnedoe, *A Fine Disregard: What Makes Modern Art Modern*, 24-101

Week 9 (4/10):

The Displaced Original: Is Modern Chinese Literature Made for Translation?

- Stephen Owen, “What is World Poetry? The Anxiety of Global Influence”
- Rey Chow, *Writing Diaspora*, 1-10
- Zhang Longxi, *Mighty Opposites: From Dichotomies to Differences in the Comparative Study*, 127-136
- Stephen Owen, “Stepping Forward and Back: Issues and Possibilities for “World” Poetry”
- Huang Yunte, *Transpacific Displacement: Ethnography, Translation, and Intertextual Travel in Twentieth-Century American Literature*, 164-182
- Bei Dao, *The August Sleepwalker*, selections

Week 10 (4/17):

Shakespeare/Kurosawa

- Akira Kurosawa, *Throne of Blood* (Film)
- Orson Welles, *Macbeth* (Film)
- Stephen Prince, “*Throne of Blood: Shakespeare Transposed*”
- Robert Hapgood, *Shakespeare and the Moving Image*, 234-249
- Erin Suzuki, “Lost in Translation: Reconsidering Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* and Kurosawa’s *Throne of Blood*”
- Peter Donaldson, *Shakespearean Films / Shakespearean Directors*, 69-91
- Donald Richie, *The Films of Akira Kurosawa*, 115-124
- <http://web.mit.edu/shakespeare/asia/>
- Matsuhiro Yoshimoto, *Kurosawa: Film Studies and Japanese Cinema*, 250-269

Week 11 (4/24):

Murakami Haruki: The Making of a Phenomenon in Translation

- Murakami Haruki, *The Elephant Vanishes* (first story: “The Wind-up Bird and Tuesday’s Women”);
- Murakami Haruki, *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* (chapter 1)
- Glynne Walley, “Two Murakamis and their American influence”
- Wendy Lesser, “The Mysteries of Translation”
- Jay Rubin, *Haruki Murakami and the Music of Words*, 2-12, 340-356

Week 12 (5/8):

Fansubbing Anime: The Anarchy of Translation?

- Jordan S. Hatcher, “Of Otakus and Fansubs: A Critical Look at Anime Online in Light of Current Issues in Copyright Law”
- Jorge Díaz Cintas and Pablo Muñoz Sánchez, “Fansubs: Audiovisual Translation in an Amateur Environment”
- Sean Leonard, “Celebrating Two Decades of Unlawful Progress: Fan Distribution, Proselytization Commons, and the Explosive Growth of Japanese Animation”
- Selection of fansub websites and discussions among fansubbers

Note: We need to postpone the regular May 1 session by one week to May 8, that is, into the reading period. Time and place remain the same.