# Sample Syllabus Translating East Asian Languages: Theory & Practice

Instructor: Jim Dorsey
Class time: 10 (MWF 10:10~11:15 & Th 12:15~1:05)

Tel: 603.646.1346 Classroom: TBA



# **Course Description**

Translation is an ancient practice tied intimately to interpretation, cross-cultural understanding, colonization, proselytization, and business. When it crosses vast cultural divides such as between Asia and the West, the challenges are amplified, the issues complicated, and the stakes raised. What are the practical, cultural, and philosophical issues involved? This course explores these questions by studying theories of translation and the history of it the East Asian context while also offering an experiential component in the form of various translation assignments ranging from technical manuals, fiction, and religious texts to poetry, song lyrics, and humor. The focus will be on Chinese, Korean, and Japanese; students hoping to work with other Asian languages should consult the instructor before enrolling. DIST: LRP, NW, LIT (subject to approval)

# Learning Objectives

- Develop a familiarity with various major translation theories from around the world, and apply those theories to one's own translation practice;
- Practice and polish the practical ability to translate from a non-Western language into English;
- Sharpen close reading skills in both English and a second language;
- Learn something of the history of translation both within Asia and between it and the Western world;
- Nurture a sensitivity to the ethical implications of translation and the influence of Euro-centric worldviews on the history and practice of it.

# **Teaching Philosophy**

While I take very seriously my responsibility to orchestrate student learning, I believe that the best outcomes are tied to students' commitment to their own learning. For that reason I encourage you to commit to the course and to your education, to bring mindfulness to your learning. The famous Japanese philosopher/calligrapher Aida Mitsuo (相田みつを) said it best: "If you're going to do it, then try doing it with real commitment—it's less tiring that way and a whole lot more fun." The original Japanese is 「同じゃるなら本腰を入れてやってごらん。その方が疲れないで楽しいから」

Evaluation

- Class Participation 15%
   Students are expected to attend all class sessions, and be prepared to discuss the material for that session.
- Worksheets: 25%

There are five worksheets due over the course of the term. Three of them are opportunities to build your conceptual "toolbox" for doing and thinking about translation. One is a comparison of different translations of a classic text, and the final one is an exploration of machine translation for song lyrics. The first three of these worksheets are each worth 5 pts. The final two are worth 10 pts. each.

- Translation Exercises: 35%
  - Students will complete eight translation exercises. They vary a bit in terms of difficulty and time needed, and so will be graded as follows: the language of everyday life: 5 pts. / iPhone manual: 10 pts. / Idioms & Proverbs: 5 pts. / Poem (1): 10 pts. / Poem (2): 10 pts. / Song: 10 pts. / Graphic novel: 10 pts. / Humor: 10 pts. Students are encouraged to begin thinking early on of texts for the poetry, song, graphic novel, and final project translations. Every translation exercise will include a student's commentary on the challenges faced and the strategies deployed. In some ways this commentary is as important as the translation itself.
- Final Translation Project: 25% Students will decide on a "text" (broadly conceived) for an extended final translation project amounting to approximately 2,000~2,500 words (8~10 pages, double-spaced). This translation should be accompanied by a two-page commentary.

# **Grading Scale**

100∼95%: A	94.9~90%: A-	89.9~87%: B+	86.9~85%: B
84.9~80%: B-	79.9~77%: C+	76.9~75%: C	74.9~70%: C-
69.9~65%: D			

# Required Texts

- Susan Bassnett, *Translation Studies*, 4th edition (New York: Routledge, 2013).
- Zev Handel, Sinography: The Borrowing and Adaptation of the Chinese Script (Brill Academic Publishing, 2019)

# Religious Observances

Dartmouth has a deep commitment to supporting students' religious observances and diverse faith practices. Some students may wish to take part in religious observances that occur during this academic term. If you have a religious observance that conflicts with your participation in the course, please meet with me as soon as possible—before the end of the second week of the term at the latest—to discuss appropriate course adjustments.

# Student Accessibility and Accommodations

Students requesting disability-related accommodations and services for this course are required to register with Student Accessibility Services

(SAS; Apply for Services webpage; student.accessibility.services@dartmouth.edu; 1-603-646-9900) and to request that an accommodation email be sent to me in advance of the need for an accommodation. Then, students should schedule a follow-up meeting with me to determine relevant details such as what role SAS or its Testing Center may play in accommodation implementation. This process works best for everyone when completed as early in the quarter as possible. If students have questions about whether they are eligible for accommodations or have concerns about the implementation of their accommodations, they should contact the SAS office. All inquiries and discussions will remain confidential.

# Mental Health and Wellness

The academic environment is challenging, our terms are intensive, and classes are not the only demanding part of your life. There are a number of resources available to you on campus to support your wellness, including: the <u>Counseling Center</u>, which allows you to book triage appointments online, the <u>Student Wellness Center</u> which offers wellness check-ins, and your <u>undergraduate dean</u>. The student-led <u>Dartmouth Student Mental Health Union</u> and their peer support program may be helpful if you would like to speak to a trained fellow student support listener. If you need immediate assistance, please contact the counselor on-call at (603) 646-9442 at any time. Please make me aware of anything that will hinder your success in this course.

# Academic Honor Principle

The faculty, administration, and students of Dartmouth College acknowledge the responsibility to maintain and perpetuate the principle of academic honor, and recognize that any instance of academic dishonesty is considered a violation of the <u>Academic Honor Principle</u>.

# Generative Artificial Intelligence

The course includes a section in which we explore the potentials of generative artificial intelligence for translation. In all other units of the course students are not permitted to use it. The course is designed to develop critical thinking skills in the participants; the translations and writing assignments are but tools to achieve that end.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

#### WEEK ONE

A unit in which we get oriented to the field/discipline of translation studies, considering its potentials and pitfalls for cross-cultural understanding. Here the concepts and vocabulary are primarily rooted in the translation of Western languages; in the weeks ahead we will consider how the issues are addressed in the Asian context.

## Class 1

Course introduction, syllabus review.

# Class 2

- Susan Bassnett, "Preface," "Introduction," and "Central Issues," chpt 1 in *Translation Studies* (4<sup>th</sup> edition, 2014). Pgs 1~49.
- Richard A. Shweder, "Introduction," in *Thinking Through Cultures: Expeditions in Cultural Psychology* (1991). Pgs 1~23.

## Class 3

- Susan Bassnett, "History of Translation Theory," chpt 2 in *Translation Studies* (4<sup>th</sup> edition, 2014). Pgs 50~86.
- Eugene Nida, "Principles of Correspondence" (1964) in Lawrence Venuti, ed., *Translation Studies Reader* (2012). Pgs 126~140.

## ASSIGNMENTS

Translation exercise due by Saturday, 5 p.m.: the language of everyday life.

Languages are full of formulaic utterances. Think, for example, of English's "God bless you," "Have a nice day," or "Sweet dreams!" List three or four of these that seem unique

to your Asian language, explain the usage, and compare it to the English used in similar circumstances.

Worksheet due by Saturday, 5 p.m.: "Toolbox" (part 1)

Gather words, expressions, and concepts that seem to be useful for discussing translation issues (from Bassnett and Niida).

# WEEK TWO

A unit in which we get oriented in the "Sinosphere," the broad range of Asian cultures that were deeply influenced in pre-modern times by the culture of China, the "middle kingdom." We take the *Tao Te Ching* (道德経; ca 400 BCE), a classic of Chinese philosophy, as a case study of the way China's influence was "translated" into various areas of the Sinosphere.

#### Class 1

- Zev Handel, "Introduction" and "Chinese Writing" (chpt 2), in *Sinography: The Borrowing and Adaptation of the Chinese Script* (2019). Pgs 1~61.
- Lao Tzu, excerpts from *Tao Te Ching* (ca. 400 BCE), translated by D. C. Lau (1963).

## Class 2

- Zev Handel, "Korean" (chpt 3), in *Sinography: The Borrowing and Adaptation of the Chinese Script* (2019). Pgs 62~123.
- Heejung Seo-Reich, "Four Approaches to Daodejing Translations and Their Characteristics in Korean after Liberation from Japan," in *Religions* 13:10 (2022). Pgs 1~21.

#### Class 3

- Zev Handel, "Japanese" (chpt 5), in *Sinography: The Borrowing and Adaptation of the Chinese Script* (2019). Pgs 166~209.
- Joshua Fogel, "Sinology in Japan and the Translation of Chinese Texts," in *Crossing Borderrs:* Sinology in Translation Studies (2022). Pgs 457~473.
- Takuan Sōhō, "A Way That Can Be Spoken" (section 1), "The Way is Empty" (section 4), "There is Something, An Undifferentiated Whole" (section 25), "Those Who Would Want to Take the World" (section 29), "The Way Produces One" (section 42), and "What is At Rest is Easy to Hold" (section 64), in *Zen Teachings on the Taoist Classic Tao Te Ching* (ca. 1640), translated by Thomas Cleary (2010).

# ASSIGNMENTS

Worksheet due by Friday, 5 p.m.: "Toolbox" (part 2)

From this week's readings, add to the translation-related words, expressions, and concepts in your "toolbox" from last week. Focus on the linguistic features of your Asian language, but feel free to include material from elsewhere, too.

Translation exercise due by Friday, 5 p.m.

Locate online a user manual for an iPhone. Translate a section of it.

# WEEK THREE

A unit in which we re-think the act of translation, using East Asian languages and traditions. Not surprisingly, the configurations of languages we considered in the previous unit lead to some very different goals, methods, and priorities in traversing linguistic boundaries.

## Class 1

- Martha P. Y. Cheung, "To Translate' Means 'To Exchange'?: A New Interpretation of Earliest Chinese Attempts to Define Translation," in *Target: International Journal of Translation Studies* 17:1 (2005). Pgs 27~47.
- Andre Lefevere, "Chinese and Western Thinking on Translation," in Bassnett & Lefevere, eds. *Constructing Cultures: Essays on Literary Translation* (1998). Pgs 12~24.
- Martha P. Y. Cheung, "From 'Theory' to 'Discourse': The Making of a Translation Anthology," in *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, vol. 66, no 3 (2005). Pgs 290~401.
- Leo Tak-hung Chan, "The Traditional Approach: Impressionistic Theories," "Modern' Theories of the 1920s and 30s," "Theories from a Postcolonial Perspective," and "End of the Century: The Impact of 'New Theories'" (chpts 1~4) in *Twentieth-Century Chinese Translation Theory:*Modes, Issues and Debates (2004). Pgs 1~59.

#### Class 2

- Wong-Dong Kim, "Two Korean Translations of *Xiaoxue*," chpt 1 in *Translations in Korea: Theory & Practice* (2019). Pgs 1~38.
- Jieun Kiaer, "Language Matters" and "Translating Matters," chpts 1 & 2 in *The Routledge Course in Korean Translation* (2018). Pgs 1~39.
- Hyang Lee & Seong Woo Yun, "Philosophical and Conceptual Research on Translation in Korea," chpt 12 in Kang & Wakabayashi, eds., *Translating and Interpreting in Korean Contexts: Engaging with Asian and Western Others* (2019). Pgs 203~218.

## Class 3

- Michael Emmerich, "Beyond Between: Translations, Ghosts, Metaphors," chpt 4 in Allen & Bernofsky, eds., *In Translation: Translators on Their Work and What It Means* (2013). Pgs 44~57.
- Judy Wakabayashi, "An Etymological Exploration of 'Translation' in Japan," in Wakabayashi & Kothari, eds., *Decentering Translation Studies: India and Beyond* (2014). Pgs 175~194.
- Rebekah Clements, "Translation of Western Languages," chpt 4 in *A Cultural History of Translation in Early Modern Japan* (2015). Pgs 141~176.

## ASSIGNMENTS

Worksheet due by Friday, 5 p.m.: "Toolbox" (part 3)

From this week's readings, add to the translation-related words, expressions, and concepts in your "toolbox" from last week. Focus on the linguistic features of your Asian language, but feel free to include material from elsewhere, too.

Translation exercise due by Friday, 5 p.m.: Idioms and Proverbs

List and explain three or four idioms from your Asian language that seem to be deeply rooted in their cultural context or unique in the sentiment expressed. What are the closest English equivalents?

## WEEK FOUR

A unit in which we trace the reception and translation histories of various classics of East Asian prose narrative in the English-speaking world. With an eye to social norms and the historical moment, translators and editors deploy different strategies for the presentation of texts and paratext.

Class 1

- Lawrence Venuti, "How to Read a Translation" (2004), from "Words Without Borders" (<a href="https://wordswithoutborders.org/read/article/2004-07/how-to-read-a-translation/">https://wordswithoutborders.org/read/article/2004-07/how-to-read-a-translation/</a>). Approximately 7 pgs.
- Lawrence Venuti, "Invisibility," chpt 1 in *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 2008). Pgs 1~34.
- Walter Benjamin, "The Task of the Translator" (1923), in Lawrence Venuti, ed., *The Translation Studies Reader* (2012). Pgs 75~83.
- Antoine Berman, et al, excerpts from *The Age of Translation: A Commentary on Walter Benjamin's "The Task of the Translator"* (2018).

## Class 2

- Murasaki Shikibu, excerpts from Tale of Genji (源氏物語, ca. 1000).
  - Chpt 1 "Kiritsubo" in translations by Suematsu Kenchō (1882), Arthur Waley (1925~1933), Edward Seidensticker (1976).
  - Chpt 4 "Yugao" in translations by Suematsu Kenchō (1882), Arthur Waley (1925~1933), Dennis Washburn (2015).
- Wu Ch'eng-en, excerpts from *Journey to the West* (西遊記, ca 1550).
  - o In Arthur Waley's translation, *Monkey* (1943).
  - o In Anthony Yu's translation, *The Monkey and the Monk: An Abridgement of* The Journey to the West (1977).

## Class 3

- Kim Mangjung, excerpts from *The Nine Cloud Dream* (ca. 1670).
  - o In James Scarth Gale's translation, Cloud Dream of the Nine (1922).
  - o In Richard Rutt's translation, A Nine Cloud Dream (1974).
  - o In Heinz Insu Fenkl's translation, *The Nine Cloud Dream* (2019).

#### ASSIGNMENT

Worksheet due by Friday, 5 p.m.: "Symptomatic Reading" (ala Venuti) of an Asian classic. Venuti advocates a "symptomatic reading" that "locates discontinuities at the level of diction, syntax or discourse that reveals the translation to be a violent rewriting of the foreign text." Through a comparison of the various translations of a single text, locate and explain some of the "discontinuities."

# WEEK FIVE

A unit in which we consider the unique challenges presented by the translation of poetry from Asian languages to English. Robert Frost once said, "Poetry is what gets lost in translation." That may be true, but we will seek to discover also what can be gained.

#### Class 1

- Margaret Sayers Peden, "Building a Translation, the Reconstruction Business: Poem 145 of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz" (14 pgs) from *The Craft of Translation* (1989). Pgs 13~27.
- Korean, Japanese, and Chinese translations of Amanda Gorman, "The Hill We Climb" (2021).
   (\*Note: the author and title of this poem will *not* be revealed to students until after the assignment is completed.\*)
- Matsuo Basho, "The Ancient Pond" (haiku, 1686). 1 page.
- Wang Wei, "Deer Enclosure" (classical Chinese poem, 8<sup>th</sup> century). 1 page.

## ASSIGNMENT

Translation exercise due by 5 p.m.: translate the poem read for class 1.

## Class 2

- Amanda Gorman, "The Hill We Climb" (2021).
- Alex Marshall, "Amanda Gorman's Poetry United Critics. It's Dividing Translators," in *The New York Times* 3/26/2021. 7 pages.
- Eliot Weinberger, *Nineteen Ways of Looking at Wang Wei* (1987). Pgs 1~52.
- Hiroaki Sato, "One Hundred Frogs," chpt 7 in *One Hundred Frogs: From Renga to Haiku to English* (1983). Pgs 147~175.

## Class 3

- Jieun Kiaer, "Introduction," in Jieun Kiaer, ed., On Translating Modern Korean Poetry (2022). Pgs 1~17.
- Baek Seok, "Me, Natasha, and the White Donkey," chpt 1 in Jieun Kiaer, ed., *On Translating Modern Korean Poetry* (2022). With translation and commentary by Jieun Kiaer. Pgs 18~24.
- Choi Jeongrye, "Zebra Lines," chpt 3 in Jieun Kiaer, ed., *On Translating Modern Korean Poetry* (2022). With translation and commentary by Mattho Mandersloot. Pgs 35~42.
- Choi Seung-ja, "My Earlier Self," chpt 4 in Jieun Kiaer, ed., *On Translating Modern Korean Poetry* (2022). With translation and commentary by Mattho Mandersloot. Pgs 43~50.

#### ASSIGNMENTS

Translation exercise due by 5 p.m.: Poetry translation

Taking your lead from Weinberger's book on Chinese poet Wang Wei, offer *two* different translations of a single, short-ish poem from your Asian language. Do your best to avoid poems for which there are existing translations.

Proposal for a final translation project due by 5 p.m.

# WEEK SIX

Following up on and related to our consideration of poetry—a unit in which we consider the routes and conditions under which song lyrics are translated. They seem not to differ much from poetry, but what happens when a singer wants a *singable* translation?

#### Class 1

- E. Taylor Atkins, "The Dual Career of 'Arirang': The Korean Resistance Anthem that Became a Japanese Pop Hit," in *The Journal of Asian Studies* vol. 66, no. 3 (August 2007). Pgs 645~687.
- James Dorsey, "Like the Birds Soaring Above the Waters: A Benjaminian Interpretation of the Translation History of the North Korean Song 'The Imjin River'" (draft of an article in progress).

#### Class 2

- Listen to Bob Dylan, "All I Really Want to Do" and consider the lyrics (<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WYDfjV2B5Gk&list=RDWYDfjV2B5Gk&start\_radio=1">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WYDfjV2B5Gk&start\_radio=1</a>).
- Listen to Bob Dylan, "Rainy Day Women #12 & 35" and consider the lyrics (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fm-po\_FUmvM)
- Katagiri Yuzuru, "Translator's Afterword: The Language of Dylan," in *The Complete Collection of Lyrics by Bob Dylan* (Japanese translations of Dylan's lyrics, 1974).
- Nakayama Yo, "The Language of Song: Thoughts on Japanese Language Translations," in *Uta, Uta, Uta: Folk Report* (June 1969). 6 pages.

## **ASSIGNMENT**

Translation worksheet due by 5 p.m. the day before our next class: "Machine Translation"

Bob Dylan won a Nobel Prize for literature. His lyrics are *deep*. Locate a translation of a Dylan song in your Asian language. Then, run the song lyrics through one of the online machine translation apps. Compare the two.

# Class 3

• Workshop. Students locate Bob Dylan songs *sung* in an Asian language and analyze the translation strategies used. Short presentations to the class.

#### **ASSIGNMENT**

Translation exercise due by Friday, 5 p.m.: Song translation.

Pick a song from your Asian language and translate it into English *twice*. In one translation prioritize the literary aspects of the lyrics. Make the second translation "singable" to the original melody.

## WEEK SEVEN

A unit in which we consider the issues of translation in the context of works combining visual images with text. Here orthography, formatting and page layout becomes an issue—how are these things to be "translated"?

## Class 1

- Wesley C. Robertson, "He's More Katakana than Kanji: Indexing Identity and Self Presentation Through Script Selection in Manga (Comics)," in *Journal of Sociolinguistics* vol. 21, no. 4 (2017). Pgs 497~520.
- Cathy Sell, "Manga Translation and Interculture," in *Mechademia: Second Arc*, vol. 6 (2011). Pgs 93~108.
- Enrico Goncalves de Assis, "The Concept of Fidelity in Comics Translation," in *Transcultural* vol. 8, no. 2 (2016). Pgs 8~23.

## Class 2

- Manga "translations" of the *Tale of Genji*:
  - Yamato Waki, "Kiritsubo," vol. 1 of Genji Monogatari (Asaki yumemishi; 1980~1993).
     Pgs 1~36.
  - o Egawa Tatsuya, "Kiritsubo," vol. 1 of Genji Monogatari (2000~2005). Pgs 1~34.
  - o Koizumi Yoshihiro, "Kiritsubo" and "Yugao," chpts 1 & 4 in *Maro, n? Oodzukami Genji Monogatari* (2002). Pgs 10~25 & 36~41.
- Guest lecture, via Zoom: Caleb Cook, Dartmouth Class of 2011, professional manga translator. His credits include: *My Hero Academia*, *Dr. Stone*, *Dragon Ball Super*, *Hell's Paradise: Jigokuraku*, and *many* others. (Back up lecturer is Alex Smith, Dartmouth Class of 1995. Long history of translating and localizing Japanese video games; currently doing story development and scripting for the same.)

## Class 3

• Workshop. Students present on their translations of the manga/manhua/manhwa of their choice and the translation issues involved.

#### **ASSIGNMENT**

Translation exercise due by Friday, 5 p.m.: Graphic Novel translation

Pick a manga/manhua/manhwa that you enjoy and translate 8~10 pages of it. Insert your translation into the work, making all formatting changes that are needed and with attention to the visual impact of the page.

## **WEEK EIGHT**

A unit in which we consider the challenges and potentials for the translation of humor. If you have to explain it, is it even funny? If it isn't funny, does that mean it's worthless?

# Class 1

- David Bellos, "Match Me If You Can: Translating Humor" (7 pgs) in *Is That a Fish in Your Ear* (2011).
- Selection of "Salaryman senryu" (humorous haiku) from the Dai-ichi Seimei insurance company's annual competition.
- Dorsey's introduction to the limerick (1 page).

## Class 2

- Barbara Plester & Heesun Kim, "Risky Business: Humour, Hierarch, and Harmony in New Zealand and South Korea Workplaces," in Mayer & Vanderheidan, eds., *The Palgrave Handbook of Humour Research* (2021). Pgs 245~262.
- Ying Cui & Jing Zhao, "Humour in Advertisement Translation, with Special Reference to Translation between Chinese and English," in Carmen Valero-Garces, ed., *Dimensions of Humour: Explorations in Linguistics, Literature, Cultural Studies and Translation* (2010). Pgs 453~471.

## ASSIGNMENT

Translation exercise due by 5 p.m. the day before our next class: Humor Identify some example of humor (stand-up comedy, standard joke, pun, tv/movie scene, etc.) presented in your Asian language and translate it into English. Can you make us laugh . . . or at least giggle?

## Class 3

Workshop. Students present on their translations of humorous texts and the challenges faced.

#### WEEK NINE

A unit in which we consider the "scandals" of modern literary translation. How and why do some foreign readers object to the modes of translation? What are the issues and how might they be resolved?

## Class 1

- Lu Xun, "The Real Story of Ah-Q," in *The Real Story of Ah-Q and Other Stories from* China (1921), transl. Julia Lovell (2009). Pgs 79~123.
- Lydia Liu, "Preface," "Introduction: The Problem of Language in Cross-Cultural Studies," and "Translating National Character: Lu Xun and Arthur Smith," in *Translingual Practice:*Literature, National Culture, and Translated Moderniity—China, 1900~1937 (1995). Pgs xv~xx, 1~42, 45~76.

#### Class 2

• Excerpts from Han Kang's *The Vegetarian* (2016).

- Min Young Godley, "The Feminization of Translation: Gender Politics in the Translation Controversy Over Han Kang's *The Vegetarian*," in *Meridians: Feminism, Race, Transnationalisms* vol. 20 no. 1 (April 2021). Pgs 193~217.
- Jiayang Fan, "Han Kang and the Complexity of Translation," in *The New Yorker* (8 January 2018). 14 pages.

#### Class 3

- Murakami Haruki, "The Elephant Vanishes" (1985) transl by Jay Rubin in *The Elephant Vanishes: Stories by Haruki Murakami* (1993). Pgs. 308~327.
- Mette Holm, "Translating Murakami as a Multilingual Experience," in *Japanese Language and Literature*, vol. 49 no.1 (April 2015). Pgs 123~141.
- David Karashima, "Who We Are Reading When We Are Reading Haruki Murakami: The Role of Various 'ReWriters' in Translating Haruki Murakami for the Anglophone Market," in Interpreting and Translating Studies (2000). Pgs 75~95.

## **ASSIGNMENT**

Final translation project, first draft, due by Friday, 5 p.m.

# WEEK TEN

A unit in which student present on, and workshop, their final translation projects.

#### Class 1

• Student presentations and workshopping.

#### Class 2

• Student presentations and workshopping.

## Class 3

• Student presentations and workshopping.

Last week of classes: Translation Event. We'll read from our translations at a gathering to which we invite faculty and friends.