

Prof. Ming-Bao Yue
EALL - College of LLL
Moore Hall 201
Ph: 956-7047

Fall 2017
Tuesdays 2:30 – 5 pm
Room: Moore 207

EALL 665 (CRN 79573)
Cross-listed ASAN 665 (CRN 79788):

**SPECIAL TOPICS IN EAST ASIAN LITERARY CULTURE & SOCIETY -
TRANSLATION & MODERNITY**

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This seminar seeks to engage students in an interdisciplinary and inter-regional understanding of translation and its impact on modernity in the context of East Asia. Through a critical reading of narrative fiction, films (pending availability), and scholarly articles, this course will critically examine concepts such as “translated modernity,” “cultural translation” and “trans-lingual practice,” all of which posit modernity in East Asia as a form of translation. Therefore, this is not so much a course on practical translation but rather on how translation ought to be understood as a “structure of feeling” that embodies the historical complexity of modern East Asian cultures and societies. In that sense, this course aims to explore not only diverse theories of translation but also alternative understandings of modernity. Beginning with Walter Benjamin, whose work is central to rethinking translation as a form of historical mediation, the course material will then proceed chronologically to other theoretical writings that conceptualize, critique, or clamor for translation as a way to think about “East Asian” differences. As such, focusing on translation as a problematic of modernity will contribute to our understanding of recent historiography in the field of East Asian Studies, and challenge us to re-examine our own ways of mediating cultural translation in the contemporary world.

COURSE PREREQUISITES:

A knowledge in East Asian Studies, along with any other cultural, literary, or historical background, would be helpful to students taking this course, but previous study of Japanese, Chinese, or Korean language is not required for the course, as the course materials will be in English (films are subtitled). However, reading a text in the original language, pending availability, is always an option and highly encouraged.

COURSE OBJECTIVES/STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

At the end of this course, students will have acquired skills for close analytic reading of cultural and academic materials as well as gained a clear understanding and mastered a critical engagement with cultural studies methods within the field of East Asia. Students will be expected to write an analytical essay so as to reinforce their ability to concisely and clearly express interpretive arguments and

demonstrate their understanding of situating the material within its social and intellectual context. Students will also have an opportunity to hone their research skills, as they will be expected to undertake independent, original research on which they will base their final essay. Further, to foster effective oral communication and critical listening, students will prepare and deliver an in-class presentation based on their research and provide constructive criticism for their classmates' presentations, i.e. evaluating purposes, approaches, designs and analyses of research material.

EVALUATION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE:

Students will be evaluated on the basis of their overall performance, which includes mandatory class attendance and regular participation, in-class presentation, and final research paper.

REQUIREMENTS:

Students are expected to be properly prepared for class meetings, which means reading the assigned reading material carefully, be prepared to ask questions and participate in class discussions. Each student is further required to facilitate one or two class meetings (depending on enrollment) by presenting her/his take on the readings and the discussion topic for the week. Emphasis here should be on linking the readings to the theme of week (see syllabus), rather than providing a detailed summary of each assigned text, and focusing on issues that further class discussion. No midterm. One final take-home paper (15 pages maximum) that can be either original research employing any of the translation theories surveyed in this course or a critical discussion/reflection paper focusing on one of the weekly seminar topics listed on the syllabus.

GRADING:

Attendance: 10%
Participation: 20%
Presentation: 20%
Final paper: 50%

TEXTBOOKS:

This is a "green course" because it supports sustainability, so there are no expensive textbooks or Course Readers to purchase. Instead, all reading material will be available as pdf copy placed on our Laulima course website or as electronic reserves on UH Voyager. Hard copies of all the below books can be purchased via Amazon or other online booksellers.

Chow, Rey. *Not Like a Native Speaker: On Language as a Postcolonial Experience*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2014. (Available electronically through UH Library)

- Ricoeur, Paul. *On Translation*. Trs. Eileen Brennan. NY & London: Routledge Press, 2006. (Not available at UH Library/a pdf copy of the book is placed on Laulima)
- Suh, Serk-Bae. *Treacherous Translation: Culture, Nationalism, and Colonialism in Korea and Japan from the 1910s to the 1960s*. Seoul-California Series in Korean Studies. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013. (Book copy on reserve at UH Library/pdf copies of select chapters placed on Laulima)
- Liu, Lydia He. *Translingual Practice: Literature, National Culture, and the Translated Modernity, China, 1900-193*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995. (Book copy on reserve at UH Library/ a pdf copy is placed on Laulima)
- Sakai, Naoki. *Translation & Subjectivity: On "Japan" and Cultural Nationalism*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997. (A pdf. copy is placed on Laulima)
- Tanizaki, Jun'ichirō. *Naomi: A Novel*. Translated by Anthony H. Chambers. Vintage, 2001. (Book copy on reserve at UH Library)
- Vernuti, Lawrence ed. *The Translation Studies Reader*. NY & London: Routledge Press, 2000, 2nd edition. (A pdf copy is placed on Laulima)
- Zhang, Hen-Shui. *Shanghai Express: A Thirties Novel*. Translated by William Lyell. Honolulu: U of Hawaii Press, 1997. (Available electronically through UH Library)

Films on reserve at Wong AV, Sinclair Library:

- Ba Jin 巴金, *The Family* (家jia), Shanghai 1959, 124 ms, [videotape 2084]
 Youtube: <https://youtu.be/mk56JlzMdUQ> (has English subtitles)
- Mao Dun 矛盾, *Spring Silkworm* (春蚕Chuncan), Nan Hai Co distributor 1989, 60 ms, [videotape 6524]