

TRAN 6476S-90: SEMINAR ON LITERARY AND CULTURAL TOPICS
Landers, Rabassa, Felstiner (Neruda), and Murillo Fort (McCarthy)



Professor: Dr. Michael Scott Doyle (<http://languages.uncc.edu/spanish-full/83-michael-doyle.html>)

Semester: Spring 2012

Location: COED 402

Meeting times: W 5:00-7:45

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Office Hours: TR 2:00-2:45, W 4-4:45 and by appointment

CONTEXT AND DESCRIPTION.

If this myth is tragic, that is because its hero is conscious (. . .) The struggle itself toward the heights is enough to fill a man's heart. One must imagine Sisyphus happy.

“The Myth of Sisyphus,” Albert Camus

The good utopian promises himself to be, primarily, an inexorable realist. Only when he is certain of not having acceded to the least illusion, thus having gained the total view of a reality stripped stark naked, may he, fully arrayed, turn against that reality and strive to reform it, yet acknowledging the impossibility of the task, which is the only sensible approach (. . .) To declare its impossibility is not an argument against the possible splendor of the translator's task.

“The Misery and Splendor of Translation,” José Ortega y Gasset

Can a translation ever communicate to its readers the understanding of the foreign text that the foreign readers have?

“Translation, Community, Utopia,” Lawrence Venuti

What will he do with the rebellious text? Isn't it too much to ask that he also be rebellious, particularly since the text is someone else's?

“The Misery and Splendor of Translation,” José Ortega y Gasset

The task of the translator is surely to work out a strategy that allows the most insistent and decisive effects of that performance to resurface in the translated text and to assume an importance sufficient to suggest the vital status of stratified or contrapuntal writing in the original.

“The Measure of Translation Effects,” Philip E. Lewis

This Workshop on Literary and Cultural Topics will begin with the Doyle Binghamton University doctoral class lecture for Marilyn Gaddis Rose (3/11/09) and a discussion of two articles on issues in translation studies and literary translation. It is only fair that you know where I am coming from when it comes to literary translation. We will then read and discuss Clifford Landers' *Literary Translation: a Practical Guide*, foundational material on theory, method, and peculiarities/challenges of literary translation. Next, we will proceed to Gregory Rabassa's *If this Be Treason. Translation and Its Dyscontents. A Memoir*, "a true patriot's view of the land of *los traductores*, those rare creatures who live between literary worlds, building the strongest bridges they can between them" (Margaret Sayers Peden on book jacket). Following, we will read and discuss John Felstiner's important book *Translating Neruda: the Way to Macchu Picchu*, which "recounts the genesis of a verse translation" and demonstrates how translation itself is "an essential act and art of literary criticism" (1). It is the translator's story about how this particular translation of Neruda's *Alturas de Macchu Picchu* "got made" (1). Finally, we will examine a translation of American icon Cormac McCarthy's *The Sunset Limited: a Novel in Dramatic Form*, completed in November 2011 by my friend and excellent translator Luis Murillo Fort (Barcelona). I recently (11/21/11) submitted a lengthy article on this new at-the-time book-in-progress, titled "Cormac McCarthy's *The Sunset Limited* in the Spanish of Luis Murillo Fort: Shadowing the Translation Process." During the course, we will also try our hand at some short translations of Neruda's verse (translating against or competing with Felstiner) and McCarthy's prose (translating against or competing with Murillo Fort), which will give us the opportunity to work bi-directionally, English ↔ Spanish. These translations will be accompanied by intensely focused self-critical process papers that highlight translation challenges encountered and solutions proposed. The course will also include several other foundational articles on literary translation (see syllabus below and consult Graduate Reading List for TTS Track at <http://languages.uncc.edu/graduate-reading-lists.html>).

Formally, there will be quizzes (* indicates dates) on each of the foundational readings: Landers, Rabassa, and Felstiner. Also required are two short translations (2-3 pp. each) accompanied by the focused self-critical process papers mentioned above (3-4 pp. each), for a total of 5-7 pp. each (** indicates dates). A final translation project (translation of 4-5 pp.) accompanied by a self-critical process commentary (of 6-7 pp.), for a total of 10-12 pp. will be due at the end of the semester (April 25) (***) indicates dates). Each translation must include the source language text (SLT) in an Appendix. For the final exam (Wednesday, May 9, from 5-7:30 p.m.), each of you will make a formal, polished 15-minute presentation on your final translation project and self-critical process commentary, as if presenting at a professional conference such as ALTA, ATA, ATISA, CATI or the AATSP.

The self-critical process commentaries (12 point Times New Roman font, 1" margins) may be written in either English or Spanish (your choice) and will be graded based upon the following criteria, all of which point to analytical "sophistication":

- Organization and structure
- Style and clarity of expression
- Depth and rigor
- Originality of analysis and insights

NOTE. The University has enacted "The UNC Charlotte Code of Student Academic Integrity," presented in the "University Regulation of Student Conduct" section of the *UNC Charlotte Catalog*. Cheating, plagiarism, fabrication and falsification are expressly forbidden, i.e., one may not intentionally or knowingly present the work of another as his or her own, and one may not invent or alter information for use in any academic exercise. If you are using the ideas and words of another person, you **must** cite the source. Be especially careful when using internet sources—I will check these! All students are required to read and abide by the "Code of Student Academic Integrity." Any violation of this Code will result in disciplinary action as provided in the Code. ***This is serious business with very serious consequences!*** You may also access the Code online at <http://catalog.uncc.edu/undergraduate-catalogs/current/student-conduct>.

LEARNING DISABILITIES. Students with documented disabilities who require accommodations in this class must consult with and formally access services as soon as possible through the UNC Charlotte Office of Disability Services (<http://www.ds.uncc.edu/>). Students must follow the instructions of that office, located in 230 Fretwell Building, for securing appropriate accommodations.

GUIDELINES. Come to every class **very well prepared**. Your active, high-quality participation is expected. Should extenuating circumstances require that you miss a class, you are expected to notify me in advance.

GRADE DISTRIBUTION.

10% = Class Participation (attendance, quality and quantity of informed discussion and contributions, leadership of discussion on assigned topics, improvement)

25% = *Quizzes on foundational readings

20% = **Two short translations (1-3 pp. each) accompanied by self-critical process papers (3-4 pp. each), for total of 4-7 pp. each

- 30% = ***Final translation project (4-5 pp.) accompanied by a self-critical process commentary (6-7 pp.), for a total of 10-12 pp.
 15% = Conference paper presentation (final)

GRADING SCALE

- A = 90-100 POINTS
 B = 80-89
 C = 70-79
 D = 60-69
 F = BELOW 60

REQUIRED TEXTS

1. Landers, Clifford E. *Literary Translation: A Practical Guide*. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters LTD, 2001. ISBN: 1-85359-519-5.
2. Rabassa, Gregory. *If This Be Treason. Translation and Its Dyscontents: A Memoir*. New York: New Directions Publishing Corporation, 2005. ISBN: 0-8112-1619-5.
3. Felstiner, John. *Translating Neruda: the Way to Macchu Picchu*. Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 1980. ISBN: 0-8047-1327-8.
4. McCarthy, Cormac. *The Sunset Limited*. New York: Vintage International, 2006. ISBN: 0-679-72875-9.
5. Murillo Fort, Luis, trans. *El Sunset Limited*. By Cormac McCarthy. Barcelona: Editorial Mondadori, forthcoming.

RECOMMENDED READING (not required but very useful!)

1. Bingham, Hiram. *Lost City of the Incas*. London: Phoenix, 2003. (Together with being a fascinating read, this provides context for Felstiner and Neruda.)
2. Dryden, John. "Three Kinds of Translation." DELOS 2, 1968.
3. Levine, Suzanne Jill. *The Subversive Scribe: Translating Latin American Fiction*. Saint Paul, MN: Graywolf Press, 1991.
4. Nabokov, Vladimir. "The Servile Path." Brower, Reuben A., ed. *On Translation*. (1959/1966), New York: OUP.
5. Ortega y Gasset, José. "The Misery and the Splendor of Translation", in Schulte, Rainer and John Biguenet, (editors), *Theories of Translation*, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1992.
6. Paz, Octavio. *Traducción: Literatura y literalidad*. Barcelona: Tusquets Editores, S.A., 1971.
7. ---. "Translation: Literature and Letters", Schulte, Rainer and John Biguenet, (editors), *Theories of Translation*, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1992.
8. Schleiermacher, Friedrich. "On the Different Methods of Translating." Trans. Waltraud Bartscht. *Theories of Translation*. Ed. Rainer Schulte and John Biguenet, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1992, 36-54. Or same essay in *The Translation Studies Reader* ed. by Lawrence Venuti. London and New York: Routledge, 2000.

NOTE: SYLLABUS IS SUBJECT TO MODIFICATION DURING THE COURSE OF THE SEMESTER.

Week 1

- January 11 Introduction to the course. Issues of theory and method in translation: the Doyle Binghamton University doctoral class. Issues in translation studies and literary translation.
- Doyle, Michael Scott. "Translation and the Space Between: Operative Parameters of an Enterprise." *Translation: Theory and Practice, Tension and Interdependence* ed. Mildred L. Larson. Binghamton: State University of New York Press, 1991, 13-26.
 - ---. "The Place of Literary Translation in American Higher Education." *Translation Review* 36-37 (1991): 16-21.
 - ---. "Translation and Translation Studies in the United States: The Struggle for Credibility and Legitimacy." *In Other Words: Journal of the Translators Association*. London: Society of Authors, No. 4 (November 1994): 23-27.

Week 2

- 18 Begin with: Doyle, Michael Scott. "Anthony Kerrigan: The Attainment of Excellence in Translation." *Translation Excellence: Assessment, Achievement, Maintenance* ed. Marilyn Gaddis Rose. Binghamton: University Center at Binghamton (State University of New York Press - SUNY), 1987, 135-141.

Continue with Clifford Landers' *Literary Translation: A Practical Guide*, pp. ix-71.

Week 3

*25 Quiz on Landers. Continue Landers, *Literary Translation: A Practical Guide*, pp. 72-139.

Week 4

*February 1 Quiz on Landers. Continue Landers, *Literary Translation: A Practical Guide*, pp. 140-199.

- Doyle, Michael Scott. "Contemporary Spanish and Spanish American Fiction in English: Tropes of Fidelity in the Translation of Titles." *Translation Review* 30-31 (1989): 41-46.

Week 5

8 Begin a literary translator's translator on a life in translation: Rabassa, *If This Be Treason. Translation and Its Dyscontents: A Memoir*, pp. 3-62.

- Rabassa, Gregory. "If This Be Treason: Translation and Its Possibilities." *Translation: Literary, Linguistic and Philosophical Perspectives*. Frawley, William, ed. London and Toronto: U. of Delaware Press, 1984.

Week 6

*15 Quiz on Rabassa. Continue Rabassa, *If This Be Treason. Translation and Its Dyscontents: A Memoir*, pp. 63-125.

- Rabassa, Gregory. "The Silk Purse Business: A Translator's Conflicting Responsibilities." Frawley, William, ed. London and Toronto: U. of Delaware Press, 1984.

Week 7

*22 Quiz on Rabassa. Continue Rabassa, *If This Be Treason. Translation and Its Dyscontents: A Memoir*, pp. 126-189.

- Rabassa, Gregory. "No Two Snowflakes Are Alike: Translation as Metaphor", 1-12, *The Craft of Translation*. Biguenet, John and Rainer Schulte, eds. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1989.

Week 8

29 Begin Felstiner, *Translating Neruda: the Way to Macchu Picchu*, pp. 1-69.

Week 9

March 7 SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS. Felstiner, *Translating Neruda: the Way to Macchu Picchu*, pp. 70-150.

Week 10

*14 Quiz on Felstiner. Continue Felstiner, *Translating Neruda: the Way to Macchu Picchu*, pp. 151-239.

Week 11

* **21 Quiz on Felstiner. *Translating Neruda: the Way to Macchu Picchu*: Student translation examples vs. Felstiner.

Hand in short translation (2-3 pp.) accompanied by focused self-critical process paper (3-4 pp.), for a total of 5-7 pp.

Week 12

28 McCarthy, *The Sunset Limited*, pp. 3-143.

Week 13

April 4 McCarthy, *The Sunset Limited*, HBO movie. Intersemiotic translation.

- Kirkland, Will. “¿Se es o no se es?”: The *Canaima* That Cannot Be Translated.” *Canaima: Venezuela's Poetic Saga of the Jungle*, tran. Will Kirkland. Pittsburgh, Pa: U. Pittsburgh Press, 1996: xix-xxix.

Week 14

11 Murillo Fort's translation, *El Sunset Limited*, pp. 1-50?

- Doyle, Michael Scott. “Cormac McCarthy's *The Sunset Limited* in the Spanish of Luis Murillo Fort: Shadowing the Translation Process of Difference in Sameness/Sameness in Difference.” Submitted to *Revista Sendebarr*, a translation studies journal published by the University of Granada, Spain on 11/21/11.
- ---. “An Interview with Luis Murillo Fort: A Translator's Translator in Barcelona.” *Translation Review* 73 (2007): 3-13.
- ---. “Una entrevista con Luis Murillo Fort, traductor de Cormac McCarthy.” *TRANS. Revista de Traductología* 14 (2010): 175-186.

Week 15

**18 Murillo Fort's translation, *El Sunset Limited*, pp. 51-end? Student translation examples vs. Murillo Fort.

Hand in short translation (2-3 pp.) accompanied by focused self-critical process paper (3-4 pp.), for a total of 5-7 pp.

Week 16

***25 Murillo Fort's translation, *The Sunset Limited*: Student translation examples vs. Murillo Fort, cont.

Hand in final translation project (4-5 pp.) accompanied by a self-critical process commentary (6-7 pp.), for a total of 10-12 pp.

Student evaluations.

NOTE: We will meet in COED 402 during the scheduled final exam period on Wednesday, May 9, from 5-7:30 p.m., so that I can return your graded final essays in literary translation criticism to you. At this final meeting, each of you will have 15 minutes to present your final work (as if at a professional conference).