

HINDI AND

ENGLISH

TRANSLATION AND MEANING

FALL 2014

Tuesdays & Thursdays 5:00-6:30

HIN 330 : 32345 & HIN 384 : 32370

PAR 302

Rupert Snell

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

HINDI AND ENGLISH: TRANSLATION AND MEANING

HIN 330 | 32345 and 384 | 32370 — Fall 2014

PAR 302 — TTh 5:00 – 6:30

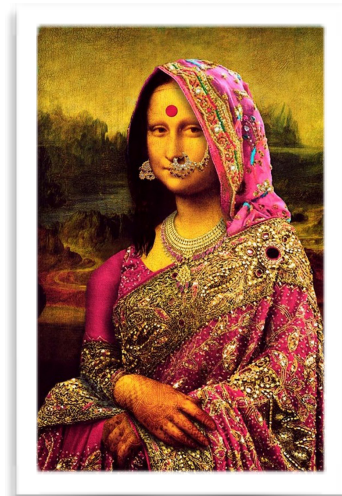
Rupert Snell

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The process of translating a text leads us to the deepest possible contemplation of its meanings; and it helps us appreciate the expressive capabilities of both 'source' and 'target' languages. This course explores the issues involved in translating literary texts from Hindi to English and *vice versa*. Our selected texts represent a range of literary genres from modern prose fiction to pre-modern poetry. By comparing existing translations, writing our own versions, assessing different styles and techniques, and seeing what the theorists have to say, we will gradually deepen our understanding of the stylistics of Hindi: what makes the language work, how it expresses sentiment and meaning in a variety of contexts and registers, in what ways the written language differs from colloquial speech, and what factors connect or divide the two worlds of Hindi and English.



The class will operate on the seminar model, reading translations against their originals in order to analyze the ways in which meaning is lost (or preserved, or enhanced) when a text is 'taken across' from one language to another. Although the syllabus is text-based, there will be plentiful opportunities for exercising all four language skills — listening and speaking as well as reading and writing.

Learning outcomes for this class will include an improved appreciation of the stylistics of Hindi and of the various kinds of rhetoric that come into play in the articulation of argument and feelings; we will take time to focus on specific Hindi expressions in order to augment students' growing mastery of Hindi and help them to appreciate the articulate genius of the language.

The graduate mode (HIN 384) of this course requires an ability to bring sophisticated critical perspectives to the practical process of translation and to the secondary scholarship analyzing it; the writing requirement for graduates is double that of undergraduates.

Students registering for this class need a good reading knowledge of modern standard Hindi, an appetite for cultural adventure, and a willingness to lead the class by offering lively presentations.

SCHEDULE — पाठ्यक्रम

1. Thursday 28th August — Course intro: aims & outcomes, texts, translation issues
2. 2nd & 4th September — **Ramchandra Guha, *India after Nehru***
Merrill, 'Translations from South Asia'; Rabassa, 'No two snowflakes are alike'
3. 9th & 11th September — हरिशंकर परसाई, "दस दिन का अनशन"
Parsai, trans. Naim, *Inspector Matadeen on the moon*
4. 16th September — मो०क० गांधी, सत्य के प्रयोग
18th September — attend SAI seminars by Ramya Sreenivasan & Allison Busch, 3:30–5:30
Suhруд, 'Reading Gandhi in two tongues'; Junghare, 'Problems of translation'
5. **23rd & 25th September — Lincoln's Gettysburg Address**
http://www.abrahamlincoln200.org/lincolns-life-template_ektid360.aspx
<http://flawlesswalrus.tumblr.com/post/3368192848/gettysburg-address-modern-translation> [available?]
6. **30th September & 2nd October — R.K. Narayan, *The sweet-vendor***
Prasad, 'Writing translation: the strange case of the Indian English novel'
7. **7th & 9th October — बनारसीदास, अर्धकथानक**
Snell, 'English voices'; Pollock, 'Philology, literature, translation'
8. **14th & 16th October — The Bible: *The Song of Songs, The Psalms***
Alter, *The book of psalms*; Carman, 'Protestant Bible translations'
9. **21st & 23rd October — कुँवर नारायण, कविताएँ**
Selby, 'On the translatability of intention...'
10. **28th & 30th October — Suketu Mehta, *Maximum City***
Mukherjee, 'Translation as patriotism'
11. **4th & 6th November — प्रेमचंद, निर्मला तथा कहानियाँ**
Shinghavi, 'Premchand on language'; Snell, *Nirmalā* review
12. **11th & 13th November — Students' Projects**
Trivedi, 'Translating together'; Weissbort, 'Should a white boy sing the blues?'
13. **18th & 20th November — Students' Projects**
Zutshi, 'Satyajit Ray's Deliverance'; Pritchett, 'The Chess Players', Stam, 'Introduction'
14. **25th November — E.M. Forster, *A Passage to India***
Featherstone, 'Passages to India'; Forster, *The hill of Devi*
15. **2nd & 4th December — Vikram Seth, *A Suitable Boy***
Cowaloosur, 'Gopal Gandhi's Bollywoodised...'; Trivedi, 'Translation as recovery'

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gadyakosh.org

kavitakosh.org

<http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/OOfwp/#fwp>

ASSESSMENT

HIN 330

Participation & discussion	25%
Weekly response papers	25%
Annotated translation project	25%
Term paper, 2000 words	25%

HIN 384

Participation & discussion	25%
Weekly response papers	25%
Annotated translation project	25%
Term paper, 4000 words	25%

Full attendance is expected; the grade element for 'participation and discussion' requires your active presence. The 'plus and minus' grade system is used for this course.

DUE DATES

Tuesdays 5:00 p.m.	Response paper on the week's reading, via Canvas
2nd October	A practice annotated translation (short!)
9th October	Choice of text for Annotated Translation Project discussed, finalized, and posted on our Canvas site
23rd October	Submission of Annotated Translation Project
6th November	Choice of text for Term Paper discussed, finalized, and posted on our Canvas site
20th November	Submission of Term Paper

SOME IMPORTANT UT REGULATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND FACILITIES

Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 512-471-6259, <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>

You should be aware of the UT Honor Code. In particular, for an explanation of what constitutes **plagiarism** see: <http://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/the-university/#universitycodeofconduct>)

By UT Austin policy, you must notify your instructor of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

Recommendations regarding emergency evacuation are available from the Office of Campus Safety and Security, 512-471-5767, <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/>. Note in particular:

You must exit your UT building, and assemble outside, when a fire alarm is activated.

Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of each classroom and building you may occupy. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering the building.

Students requiring assistance in evacuation shall inform their instructor in writing during the first week of class.

In the event of an evacuation, follow the instruction of faculty or class instructors.

Do not re-enter a building unless given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, The UT Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services office.

Link to information regarding emergency evacuation routes and emergency procedures can be found at: www.utexas.edu/emergency

HOW TO DO WELL IN THIS COURSE

Guidance is available to you at every stage, especially in your translating and writing projects: you are not alone here. Feedback on outlines and drafts of your writing projects may help your achievement — and hence your grade! — considerably.

PARTICIPATION AND DISCUSSION

Each week we will focus on a **text** and its translation, whether Hindi>English or English>Hindi. *It is essential that you read and understand these texts before class, focussing on any differences between the source- and target-language versions. While reading, consider points such as the following:*

- what has been lost (or gained) in translation?
- what can we assume about the translator's intentions, aims, and readership?
- what issues of linguistic register arise?
- do translation issues reflect any distinctiveness of cultural perspective?
- what does the translation process reveal about the lexicon of either language?
- has the translator succeeded in retaining the meaning & sentiment of the original?
- are issues of style, period, and form (rhyme in poetry etc.) relevant here?
- what techniques have you learned from this example? — or learned to avoid?
- how would you improve on the translation?

You must bring to each class a *written list of at least five observations* about the text, addressing points such as the ones suggested here. In each class, two students will be picked to lead the discussion of the week's text, and everybody else will then contribute; so be sure to have your five points ready.

RESPONSE PAPERS

Response papers should be brief — of between 250 and 400 words. Head your paper with the bibliographical details, like this:

Selby, Martha: 'On the translatability of intention in Indian poetry', in *Journal of South Asian Literature*, Vol. 26, No. 1/2 (1991), pp. 111-124.

There is much good advice online for the writing of response papers; in particular the PDF available from Duke University is worth reading before you start your first piece:

<https://twp.duke.edu/uploads/assets/response%20paper.pdf>

Response papers for our class will be shorter than is the norm for most courses you'll see described online, because our main focus is going to be on Hindi-English translation issues and your weekly assignments call for a good amount of time spent on these. The ideal

response paper for this class will include (a) your synopsis of the author's main points, and (b) your individual reaction to what has been said. Your papers are to be written in English and submitted through Canvas, through which I will give you feedback within three days. Don't fall behind in your work, and I won't either!

ANNOTATED TRANSLATION PROJECT — due 21st October

This project gives you the opportunity to work on a text that captures your interest. The length of the piece to be translated (from Hindi to English) will depend on its content and character; for example, it might be a short story of about six or eight pages, or a selection of similar length from a longer work, or a selection of contemporary or pre-modern poetry or songs. The annotations, done as footnotes, will demonstrate your thought-processes as you address the task: you could discuss the options that came to mind, describe any particular difficulties that you had in deciding how to render a certain expression, or mark any particular successes to which you would like to draw attention. If the passage has been translated before, your annotations should compare your translation to the one(s) that came earlier. A short practice assignment will be set on 2nd October.

TERM PAPER — due 18th November

Like the translation project, this assignment should be tailored to your own interests; you should discuss your chosen topic with me by 9th October.

WEEKLY EMAIL

An email each Friday morning will help you focus on the coming week by introducing readings and texts, suggesting approaches, reminding you of upcoming due dates, and so on.



Novelist **VIKRAM SETH** flanked by his Hindi translator **Gopal Gandhi** and by an unknown bystander — at the UK launch of Seth's *A Suitable Boy*, London 1993
