

HUMA 5360 History and Theory of Comparative Literature Spring 2022

Time: Friday 9:00 - 11:50 pm
Venue: 5360
Instructor: Xiaolu Ma Rm.3377; hmxlma@ust.hk
Office hours: By appointment

Course Description

This course introduces students to the field of Comparative Literature through a variety of readings. It examines the development of the discipline by looking into the major theories and methodologies. Through readings and in-class discussions, we explore the significance of reading literature from comparative perspectives, crossing geographical, temporal, and linguistic boundaries. We also encourage students to examine the key concepts, themes, and debates that have shaped the evolving field of comparative literature. For this semester, a special attention is given to translation study.

Intended Learning Outcomes:

On successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. have a clear idea of the emergence and development of Comparative Literature as a discipline
2. analyze critically the issues of comparative literature related to issues such as translation, identity, intertextually, and globalization
3. formulate their own comparative perspective in a research project on literary texts from different cultural traditions
4. read and talk about dense theoretical texts
5. write about a range of cultural texts using the theories examined in this course

Week 1 Introduction (Feb 4)

Comparative Literature

Week 2 (Feb 11)

Domínguez, César. *Introducing Comparative Literature: New Trends and Applications*. (Chapter 1,2)

Week 3 (Feb 18)

Domínguez, César. *Introducing Comparative Literature: New Trends and Applications*. (Chapter 5)

René Wellek, "The Crisis of Comparative Literature."

Damrosch, David. "Rebirth of a Discipline: The Global Origins of Comparative Studies."

Week 4 (Feb 25)

Apter, Emily. "Global Translatio: The "Invention" of Comparative Literature, Istanbul, 1933."

Martin Heidegger, "The Origin of the Work of Art"

Translation Study

Week 5 (Mar 4)

Friedrich Nietzsche "On the Problem of Translation"

Walter Benjamin "The Task of the Translator"

Ezra Pound "Guido's Relations"

Case study:

Pound, Ezra. *Cathay*. The centennial edition. ed. New York: New Directions Publishing Corporation, 2015.

<https://www.gutenberg.org/files/50155/50155-h/50155-h.htm>

Week 6 (Mar 11)

Roman Jakobson "On Linguistic Aspects of Translation"

Henry Schogt "Semantic Theory and Translation Theory"

Case study:

曹雪芹 紅樓夢

Cao, Xueqin. *A Dream of Red Mansions*. Translated by Yang Hsien-yi and Gladys Yang. Edited by E. Kao. Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1978.

———. *The Story of the Stone: A Chinese Novel in Five Volumes*. Translated by David Hawkes. Edited by David Hawkes, E. Gao and John Minford. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973.

Week 7 (Mar 18)

Michael Riffaterre "Transposing Presuppositions on the Semiotics of Literary"

Gideon Toury "The Nature and Role of Norms in Translation"

Case study:

Tolstoy, Leo. *Luosha Yinguo Lu*. Translated by Shu Lin and Jialin Chen. Shanghai: Shangwu yinshu guan, 2012.

———. "The Two Old Men." Translated by Leo Wiener. In *The Complete Works of Count Tolstoy*, 409-44. Boston: D. Estes & company, 1904

<https://www.marxists.org/archive/tolstoy/1904/fables/part-6-section-7.html>

Week 8 (Mar 25)

Goerge Steiner "The Hermeneutic Motion"

Itamar Even-Zohar "The Position of Translated Literature within the Literary Polysystem"

Case study:

Thomas Henry Huxley, *Evolution and Ethics: And Other Essays*

https://books.google.com.hk/books/about/Evolution_and_Ethics.html?id=1Z8CAAAAMAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=kp_read_button&hl=en&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false

嚴復 天演論

<https://zh.m.wikisource.org/zh-hant/%E5%A4%A9%E6%BC%94%E8%AB%96>

Week 9 (Apr 1)

André Lefevere, "Mother Courage's Cucumbers: Text, System and Refraction in a Theory of Literature"

Philip E. Lewis "The Measure of Translation Effects"

Case study:

馬禮遜 神天聖書

<https://bible.fhl.net/new/ob.php?book=179&version=&page=1>

Week 10 (Apr 8)

Jacques Derrida "From Des Tours de Babel"

Jacques Derrida "What is a "Relevant" Translation?"

Case study:

張愛玲 金鎖記

<https://www.b111.net/xiandai/zal-wx/005.htm>

Zhang, Ailing. *The Rouge of the North*. 1st California paperback ed.. ed. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.

Week 11 (Apr 22)

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak "The Politics of Translation"

Lawrence Venuti "Translation, Community, Utopia"

Case study:

Your own choice

Week 12 (Apr 29)

Case study (cross-medium translation):

Letter from an Unknown Woman (Dir: Xu Jinglei 2005)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZC3mDrQXs8I>

Stefan Zweig, "Letter From an Unknown Woman" (1922)

<https://www.prosperosisle.org/spip.php?article958>

Week 13 Discussion (May 6)

Course Assessment

Class Participation	20%
In-class Presentation	40%
Final Paper (May 30)	40%

Course Requirements

Class participation

This is a seminar course. You are expected to attend all classes and stay for the entire class. You are allowed one absence without penalty. Each additional absence lowers your final grade by 2%. However, you can make up your absences by submitting a one-page analysis of the readings of that week. Any student with 4 absences or more will fail this course. There will be close reading of selected passages and thorough analysis of critical issues related to the texts. Students should read the assigned materials before class. I measure class participation based on the following criteria: arriving to class on time, completing required reading, engaging in class discussion, and respectfully listening when your classmates speak.

In-class Presentation

Prepare a 20-min presentation focusing on the case study of the week. Then prepare around 5-10 discussion questions for your classmates. You will also serve as the chair for the one-hour class discussion after your presentation. Please think carefully about how to engage the theory we have worked on. Questions should be sent to the instructor one week before the lecture.

Final paper

7 pp in length (10 pp for Mphil students). Times New Roman size 12 font, double line spacing, 1-inch margins, and half-inch indentations at the beginning of each paragraph. If you are a native Chinese speaker and write in Chinese, please use single line spacing instead. Your paper should make a complex, well-defined argument in which you carefully use the theoretical material we have covered in exploring the cultural object or phenomenon of your choosing. Please submit it by 8pm of the due date. Please submit it in Word format and make sure that the file is readable. Unreadable files will not be counted as successful submission. Late submission will be accepted as late as two days after the due date but will receive half credit unless permission from the instructor is obtained before the due date.

Incomplete policy

Should you need to apply for “incomplete,” please contact the instructor before the final paper’s deadline. Otherwise, such extension application will not be considered. Any student that fails to turn in the final paper with no notification in advance will fail this course. No class withdrawal will be granted after the final paper’s deadline.

Academic Honesty

Acts of academic dishonesty are prohibited. Please go to our university webpage on academic dishonesty policy (<http://ugadmin.ust.hk/integrity/index.html>), and read definitions of plagiarism and acts of dishonesty. Acts of dishonesty will lead to a failing grade in this course.