

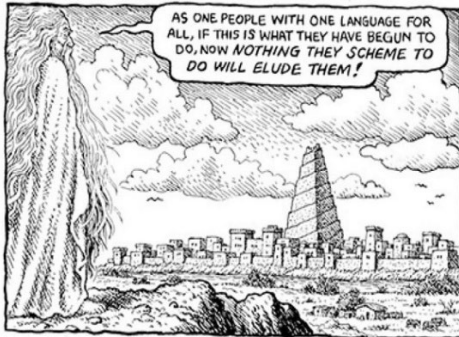
**Advanced Topics in Diaspora and Transnationalism**  
**Translation and Migration**  
DTS405H1F

Day and Time: Mondays, 10-12 pm Location: IN 209

**Instructor:**

Professor Naomi Seidman  
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Office hours: Wednesdays 10-12 and online by appointment  
Address: Jackman Humanities Building 302, 170 St. George Street



**Course Description:**

The discourse of and very term *translation*, like *metaphor*, borrow from the language of travel and migration, not surprisingly: moving between languages and crossing geographical borders are parallel and often simultaneous activities. This course will explore the intersection between the circulation of texts and languages and the movements of people, using translation to illuminate the experience of migration and migration to understand the trajectories of translation. Topics of the course include: the Bible in its worldwide dispersion; the metaphors of movement in the translation theories of Schleiermacher, Steiner and Derrida; the transnational/translational effects of imperialism, colonialism, and globalization; and the deeply individual linguistic terrain of the immigrant, in the psychological and affective dimensions of movement from one language to another.

**Learning Outcomes:**

1. Students will become acquainted with basic concepts and methods in translation studies, particularly as they relate to movement and displacement
2. Students will acquire the skills to understand geographical movement through the lens of translation studies
3. Students will acquire the skills to analyze autobiographical works by immigrants, using the methodological skills developed early in the semester
4. Students will become aware of the workings of translation in their everyday lives

## Hybrid Course Delivery:

The first two weeks of the course will be online. Please join with this link: <https://zoom.us/j/93896863009>

If students are amenable, we will then move to a hybrid class, with students watching a one-hour lecture, and then meeting in the classroom for a discussion for the second hour of each class. I will post the lecture no later than Friday before our class meeting. We may also something occasionally schedule a Zoom discussion, for instance on October 18<sup>th</sup>, when we will have a guest lecturer, Christina Pasqua.

## Required Texts:

All course material will be available on Quercus, with the exception of Eva Hoffman, *Lost in Translation*, available at the University of Toronto Bookstore (and online, too, in inexpensive editions).

## Course requirements (details below)

1	Participation	Weekly	10 %
2	Responses to three readings	Any three sessions between September 20-December 2	30%
3	Translation Workshop	October 25	15%
4	Final paper proposal	Due November 10	10%
5	Final Paper	Due December 12	35%

**Participation:** Regular attendance, keeping up with the readings, and active and collegial participation in class discussions (10%).

**Responses to three readings:** Students will write a brief comment, question, response or reflection (200-250 words) to any one (or more) of the week's readings, due by Sunday at 5 p.m. the day before the relevant class (30%). You may choose a theoretical reading, a video, or a short story or other literary work on the syllabus; you may also respond to the lecture I post.

**Translation Workshop:** Students will submit one of the following three assignments: 1. A translation of a brief poem or passage, with a reflection on their choices 2. An analysis of a translation or comparison of a few translations 3. A reflection on a "translation site," for instance a multilingual street or storefront. You may also choose a different topic—but please check with me before doing that. Please read the essay by Sherry Simon, in session eight, to understand what is meant by a "site of translation."

**Final paper proposal:** A final paper proposal, including title, brief description (200-250 words), and bibliography of no fewer than three sources, is due on November 10 (10%)

**Final Paper:** A final paper of 6-8 pages (2000-2500 words, not including bibliography) on an issue related to the course topic is due on December 12. It should include at least three sources on the bibliography (35%).

## Plagiarism:

For the purposes of what I expect is mere formality, I remind you that plagiarism—representing someone else’s words as your own or submitting work that you have previously submitted for marks in another class or program—is a serious offence that can result in sanctions. Trust your own ability to think and write, and make use of the various resources available at U of T that can help you do so, for instance the writing centres [www.utoronto.ca/writing](http://www.utoronto.ca/writing). Please also come to office hours for personal consultation.

**Format:**

For citations, please use one of the Chicago Manual of Style’s methods. Much of their material is online; for instance, here is the brief guide to citation format:  
[https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools\\_citationguide.html](https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html)

**Religious Holidays and Observances**

According to U of T regulations: “It is important that no University member be seriously disadvantaged because of her or his religious observation. Students have an obligation to alert members of the teaching staff in a timely fashion to upcoming religious observances and anticipated absences. Every effort will be made avoid scheduling tests, examinations or other compulsory activities at these times.”

**Accessibility**

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me as soon as possible, and (more importantly) contact the [Accessibility Services](#).

**Late work**

If you have legitimate and documented reasons for not being able to complete an assignment on time please ask for an extension as early as possible. Unexcused late assignments will be marked down 10% for each day of lateness.

**Grading**

Percentage	Letter	Definition
90-100	A+	<b>Exceptional Performance</b> - Strong evidence of original thinking; good organization; capacity to analyze and synthesize; superior grasp of subject matter with sound critical evaluations; evidence of extensive knowledge base.
85-89.5	A	
80-84.5	A-	
77-79.5	B+	<b>Good Performance</b> - Evidence of a grasp of the subject matter; some evidence of capacity and analytic ability; reasonable understanding of relevant issues; evidence of familiarity with literature
73-76.5	B	
70-72.5	B-	
67-69.5	C+	<b>Intellectually adequate performance</b> - Student who is profiting from the university experience; understanding of the subject matter and ability to develop solutions to simple problems in the material
63-66.5	C	
60-62.5	C-	
57-59.5	D+	
53-56.5	D	

50-52.5	D-	<b>Minimally acceptable performance</b> -Some evidence of familiarity with the subject matter and some evidence that critical and analytic skills have developed
0-49.5	F	<b>Inadequate</b>

## CALENDAR OF READINGS

### Session One (September 13)

#### Introductions and review of the syllabus; translation and migration in the Tower of Babel story

Genesis 1:1-3; 11: 1-9; comparison of translations on Genesis

### Session Two (September 20)

#### Babel and Beyond

George Steiner, from *After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation*, 51-76

Jacques Derrida, from *Des Tours de Babel*, in *Theories of Translation*, 218-227

Doris Bachmann-Medick, "Introduction: The translational turn," *Translation Studies* (2009), 2:1, 2-16.

<https://www.queens.ox.ac.uk/translating-covid-19> (31 minutes)

### Session Three (September 27)

#### Translation, Foreignization, Assimilation

Friedrich Schleiermacher, "On the Different Methods of Translating," in *Theories of Translation*, 36-54

Junot Díaz, "Negocios," in *Drown*, 163-208

### Session Four (October 4)

#### Race, Tradition, Translation, Melancholy

Rey Chow, "Translator, Traitor: Translator, Mourner (Or, Dreaming of Intercultural Equivalence)," in *Not Like a Native Speaker: On Languageing as a Postcolonial Experience*, 61-77

Dipesh Chakrabarty, "Two Models of Translation," in *Provincializing Europe*, 83-90

### Session Five (October 18) (guest lecturer: Christina Pasqua)

#### Contexts, Purposes, Interpretations, Adaptations

Matthew Reynolds, "Words, Contexts, Purposes," and "Forms, Identities, and Interpretations," in *Translation: A Very Short Introduction*, 27-63

R. Crumb, *The Book of Genesis, Illustrated*

### Session Six (October 25)

#### Translation Workshop

Students will submit one of the following three assignments in advance: 1. A translation (or adaptation) of a brief poem or passage, with a reflection on their choices 2. An analysis of a translation or comparison of a few translations 3. A reflection on a "translation site," for instance a multilingual street or storefront. You may also choose a different topic, though please consult with me in advance if you do that. Class time will be devoted to student presentations and group discussion of this work.

**Session Seven (November 1) Borders, Politics, Power**

Mary-Louise Pratt, "Arts of the Contact Zone," in *Profession* 91 (1991), 171-186

Gloria Anzaldúa, "How to Tame a Wild Tongue," *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* 75-86

Emily Apter, "Translation after 9/11" *Transit* 2: 1, 1-11

Sharon May, "The Wizard of Khao-I-Dang," in *Crossing Borders: Stories and Essays about Translation*, 105-124

**November 8: NO CLASS—READING WEEK**

**Session Eight (November 15) Indigeneity, Ecology**

Richard Bringhurst, "The Future of the Past: Translating Native American Literature into Colonial Tongues," in *The Tree of Meaning*

Sherry Simon, "The Museum: Displaying Indigenous Languages: The National Gallery of Canada," in *Translation Sites: A Field Guide*

Michael Cronin, Translation, Ecology, and the Politics of the Anthropocene

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XWB9hbulmv0>

**Session Nine (November 22) Translating Sex**

Guy Deutscher, "Sex and Syntax," in *Through the Looking Glass: Why the World Looks Different in Other Languages*, 194-216

Adriana X. Jacobs, "Translating Cats and Cowards," *Contemporary French and Francophone Studies*, 21:5 (2017), 533-537

Brian Baer, "Beyond Either/Or: Confronting the Fact of Translation in Global Sexuality Studies," in *Queering Translation, Translating the Queer: Theory, Practice, Activism*, ed. Brian James Baer and Klaus Kaindl, 38-56

**Session Ten (November 29) Translating God**

James Clifford, "The Translation of Cultures: Maurice Leenhardt's Evangelism, New Caledonia, 1902-1926," in *Contemporary Literary Theory*, 627-641

Yasmin Moll, "Subtitling Islam: Translation, Mediation, Critique," *Public Culture* 29:2 (2017), 333-361

**Session Eleven (December 6)**

Eva Hoffman, *Lost in Translation*

**Session Twelve (December 9, "make-up day")**

Student Presentations