

# The Place of Translation in Higher Education

## French 131 Translation and Debate

### Course Description

The discipline known as ‘translation studies’ is a relatively new field and yet it has much to offer the practicing translator. This course brings together aspects of translation theory and translation methodology in order to develop our skills as translators. During the course we will translate both from French into English and from English into French, paying particular attention to the linguistic differences between the two languages that pose problems for translators. One of the main theoretical and methodological questions addressed by the course is how the practice of translation varies according to genre: from the translation of poetry, through scientific translation to subtitles and dubbing in film.

### Reading

- Hervey, H. and I. Higgins (2004) *Thinking French Translation*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn, London-New York: Routledge.

### Assignments

Three homework assignments	45%
Two midterm exams in class	30%
One final project	25%

### Assignment 4

#### About this book

A Brief History of Time, published in 1988, was a landmark volume in science writing and in world-wide acclaim and popularity, with more than 9 million copies in print globally. The original edition was on the cutting edge of what was then known about the origins and nature of the universe. But the ensuing years have seen extraordinary advances in the technology of observing both the micro—and the macrocosmic world—observations that have confirmed many of Hawking’s theoretical predictions in the first edition of his book.

Now a decade later, this edition updates the chapters throughout to document those advances, and also includes an entirely new chapter on Wormholes and Time Travel and a new introduction. It makes vividly clear why A Brief History of Time has transformed our view of the universe.

#### Chapter 1 : Our Picture of the Universe

A well-known scientist (some say it was Bertrand Russell) once gave a public lecture on astronomy. He described how the earth orbits around the sun and how the sun, in turn, orbits around the center of a vast collection of stars called our galaxy. At the end of the lecture, a little old lady at the back of the room got up and said: ‘What you have told us is rubbish. The world is really a flat plate supported on the back of a giant tortoise.’ The scientist gave a superior smile before replying, ‘What is the tortoise standing on?’ ‘You’re very clever, young man, very clever,’ said the old lady. ‘But it’s turtles all the way down!’

Most people would find the picture of our universe as an infinite tower of tortoises rather ridiculous, but why do we think we know better? What do we know about the universe, and how do we know it? Where did the universe come from, and where is it going? Did the universe have a beginning, and if so, what happened *before* then? What is the nature of time? Will it ever come to an end? Recent breakthroughs in physics, made possible in part by the fantastic new technologies, suggest answers to some of these longstanding questions. Someday these answers may seem as obvious to us as the earth orbiting the sun – or perhaps as ridiculous as a tower of tortoises. Only time (whatever that may be) will tell.

## French 205: Translation Theory and Practice

### Course description

In this course, we will explore the theory and practice of translation, with particular emphasis on French. The theoretical component involves charting the evolution of the discipline that is known today as translation studies. Since it is a relatively young field, we will be focusing on the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The practical component, on the other hand, is historical: we will trace the history of translation practice in France, from the medieval period to today. We will not restrict our work to literary translation but also consider the role it plays in various domains such as journalism, religion and the screen media. For each historical period, we will consider the context in which translation was practiced, the linguistic aspects of the act of translation itself and the impact that it had on literature, the language and culture. This course will let us read some of the most important theorists (Benjamin, Nida, Venuti and Toury) as well some of the great French translators (Oresme, Du Bellay, D'Ablancourt, Baudelaire and Bonnefoy).

### Coursebooks

- Pym, A. (2010) *Exploring Translation Theories*, London – New York: Routledge
- Venuti, L. (2000) *The Translation Studies Reader*, London – New York: Routledge (available through UC ebrary)

### Translations

Oresme, N. (1370-72/1940) *Le Livre de Ethiques d'Aristote*, ed. by A. D. Menut, New York: Stechert & Co.

Odenkirchen, Carl J. (1978) *The Life of Saint Alexius: In the Old French Version of the Hildesheim Manuscript*, Brookline MA - Leiden, Classical Folia Editions.

Machiavelli, Niccolò (1532/1571) *Le Prince*, traduit par Jean Gohory.

Machiavelli, Niccolò (1532/1682, 1692) *Le Prince*, traduit par Amelot de la Houssaie.

Virgil (1541) *Deux Livres de l'Eneide de Vergile*, tr. J. du Bellay, Paris: F. Morel.

Virgile (1560) *L'Eneide de Virgile*, tr. L. Des Masures, Lion: I. De Tournes. Reprinted (1972), ed. and introduction by R. Thomas, Mouton: Johnson Reprint Corporation.

Carey, Peter (2000/2003) *Véritable Histoire du gang Kelly*, traduit de l'anglais (Australie) par Elisabeth Peelaert, Paris: Plon.

Hemingway, Ernest (1948) *L'adieu aux armes*, traduit de l'anglais par Maurice-E. Coindreau, Paris: Gallimard.

McEwan, Ian (1998/2001) *Amsterdam*, traduit de l'anglais par Suzanne V. Mayoux, Paris: Gallimard.

Baudelaire, Ch. (1865) *Histoires grotesques et sérieuses d'Edgar Allan Poe*, Paris: M. Lévy.

Gide. A. (1944) *Hamlet*, Paris: Gallimard.

Bonnefoy, Y. (1962) *Hamlet*, Paris: Mercure de France.

### **Position**

“As a rule, histories of literatures mention translations when there is no way to avoid them, when dealing with the Middle Ages or the Renaissance, for instance. One might of course find sporadic references to individual literary translations in various other periods, but they are seldom incorporated into the historical account in any coherent way. As a consequence, one hardly gets any idea whatsoever of the function of translated literature for a literature as a whole or of its position within that literature. Moreover, there is no awareness of the possible existence of translated literature as a particular literary system. The prevailing concept is rather that of ‘translation’ or just ‘translated works’ treated on an individual basis. Is there any basis for a different assumption, that is for considering translated literature as a system? Is there the same sort of cultural and verbal network of relations within what seems to be an arbitrary group of translated texts as the one we willingly hypothesize for original literature? What kind of relations might there be among translated works, which are presented as completed factors, imported from other literatures, detached from their home contexts and consequently neutralized from the point of view of center-and-periphery struggles?” (Even-Zohar 1978 in Venuti 2000)