

MULOSIGE Modules:

Colonialism, a multilingual local and its significant geographies

Course Description

In historical accounts of colonialism and world literature, the literary “colonial encounter” is usually viewed in terms of diffusion, influence, assimilation into world literature and global capitalism, epistemic violence, or mimicry. English is the ideological battleground and local languages and literature are reshaped in its image. But if we take the case of India, the persistent multilingualism, the polyphony of old and new forms of literary production, the varied and sometimes occluded avenues of circulation, and the strikingly different modes of translation suggest a conception closer to geographer Doreen Massey’s idea of space “as the sphere of the possibility of the existence of multiplicity in the sense of contemporaneous plurality; as the sphere in which distinct trajectories coexist.” By taking multilingualism seriously and considering a range of genres and tastes that moved or failed to move across languages and along different “significant geographies”, this course traces the distinct trajectories of literature under colonialism and challenges simple models of world literature

Course Leader:

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This course was taught by Prof Orsini at the Institute of World Literature (Harvard University) in their Summer School which took place at the University of Copenhagen on 3-26 July, 2017.

Week 1. Introduction: Multilingual locals and significant geographies in lieu of world literature

- i. Doreen Massey, *For Space*, Sage: London (2005), 'Setting the scene' and 'opening propositions', pp. 1-15
- ii. J-K Gibson-Graham, 'Beyond Global vs Local: Economic politics outside the binary frame', *Geographies of Power: Placing Scale* (2000), 25-53

Week 2. How to become multilingual? Education, cultivation and literary tastes

- i. Bhanupratap Tiwari, *Autobiography* (1895), tr. F. Orsini, ms.10 pp.

Week 3. Fort William College, Orientalism and the currency of language

- i. Bernard Cohn, 'The Command of Language and the Language of Command', *Orientalism and its Forms of Knowledge*, Princeton UP (1986), pp. 16-56
- ii. Aamir Mufti, 'Orientalism and the institution of world literature', *Critical Inquiry* / Spring 2010, 448-493
- iii. Mir Amman, Introduction to *Bagh-o Bahar* (2 pages), available at http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00urdu/baghobahar/intro_mir_amman.html

Week 4. Travelling tales

- i. First page of *Baital Pachisi* (Hindi, Urdu, and English), available from <http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00urdu/baghobahar/baital/index.html>
- ii. *The Nasr-i-Benazir, or the incomparable prose of Mir Hasan*, literally translated into English by Henry Court (1871?)

Week 5: Present absence: Hindi and Urdu literature in London

- i. Trübner's *American and Oriental Literary Record* (1865), overview of year 1865; available from Google Free Books and Internet Archive

- ii. John Macy, *The Story of World Literature*. London, Bombay, Sidney: George Harap & Co. (1927), ch. 2, 26-38

Week 6: Travelling theatre: Indra's court in Malay

- i. Kathryn Hansen, 'The migration of a text: Indarsabha in print and performance', *Sangeet Natak* (1998), 3-34
- ii. Vladimir Braginsky and Anna Suvorova, 'A New wave of Indian inspiration: Translations from Urdu in Malay, traditional literature and theatre', *Indonesia and the Malay World*, (2008), 115-153

Week 7: Colonial translation and formal equivalence

- i. Goldsmith, 'The deserted village', pp. 1-2, available from <https://archive.org/details/gemsgoldsmithtr00goldgoog>
- i. Barrett, *The Traveller & The Deserted Village*, London: Macmillan (1888), Introduction XV-XX
- ii. S. Pathak, 'Ujar gram', Allahabad (1906), Introduction (pp. 1-3), *Nivedan/Entreaty* (to Hindi readers), 1, text: 1-2
- iii. Valerie Ritter, *Kāma's Flowers: nature in Hindi poetry and criticism, 1885-1925*, Albany: SUNY (2011), 65-90

Week 8: Both East and West: translation, the radio, and world literature

- i. Miraji, 'Des des ke gīt', *Adabī duniyā* (1938), in *Bāqiyat-e Mīrājī*, ed. Shima Majid, Lahore: Pakistan Books and Literary Sounds (1990), 159-176, tr. F. Orsini.
- ii. Supriya Chaudhuri, "Translation and World Literature." *Literature Compass* 9.9 (2012): 593-598.

(All texts in Hindi and Urdu will be provided in the original and in translation.)

*MULOSIGE Modules seeks to foster research and pedagogy that highlights comparison across and between languages and that is attentive to the 'significant geographies' of each context. Readers can create and submit syllabi based on their own collaborations with other scholars at [LINK](#).