OCTOBER 2-5, 2014

KEYSTONE, COLORADO, USA

Workshop 1 | Room: Castle Peak | 4:30-6:30pm, October 4, 2014

Translating Poetic & Inspirational Materials

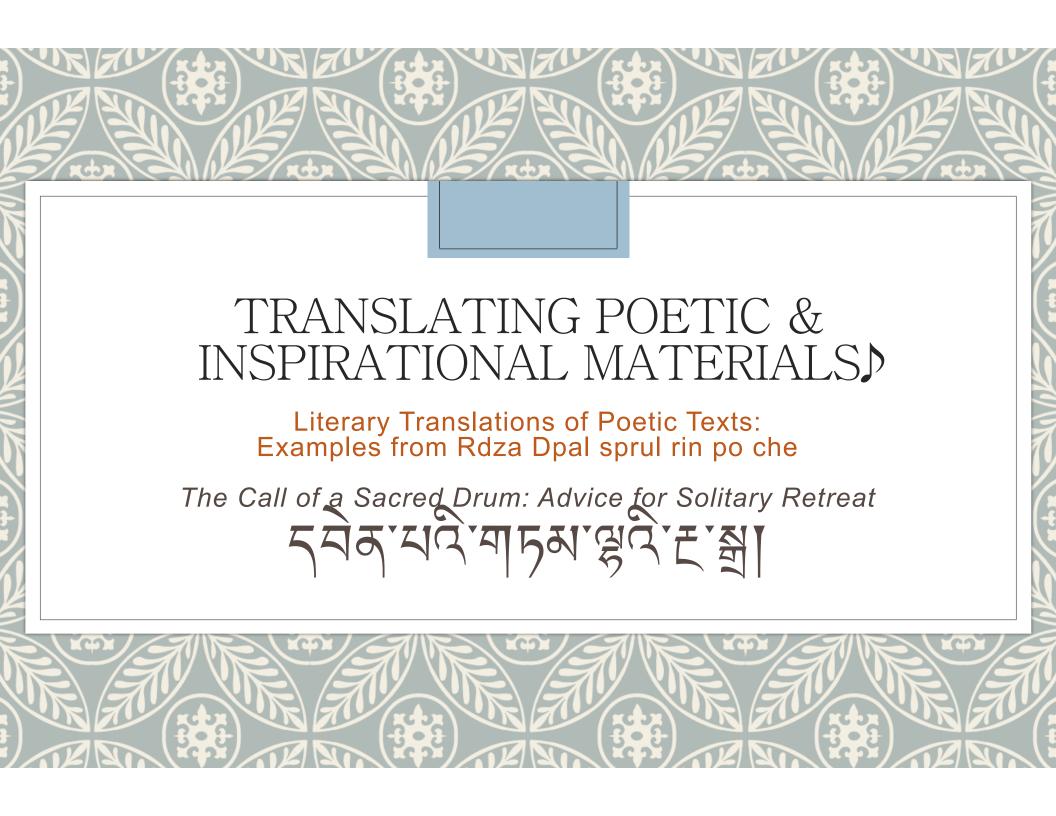
with Holly Gayley, Wulstan Fletcher, Andrew Quintman



Holly Gayley (University of Colorado, Boulder)

Holly Gayley is Assistant Professor of Buddhist Studies at the University of Colorado, Boulder. Her research focuses on the revitalization of Buddhism in the Tibetan region of Golok since the 1980s. She completed her master's degree in Buddhist Studies at Naropa University in 2000 and Ph.D. at Harvard University in Tibetan and Himalayan Studies in 2009. Currently, she is finalizing a manuscript on the life and love letters of the contemporary female tertön, Khandro Tare Lhamo, and her consort Namtrul Rinpoche. As a second project, already well underway, she is translating texts of advice to the laity by Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok and his successors at Larung Buddhist Academy in Serta, including his Heart Advice to Tibetans for the 21st Century (Dus rabs nyer gcig pa'i gangs can pa rnams la phul ba'i snying gdam).

Holly Gayley's Presentation



Literal vs. Literary Translation

I do not mean to imply that literal translation is impossible; what I am saying is that it is not translation. It is a mechanism, a string of words that helps us read the text in its original language. It is a glossary rather than a translation, which is always a literary activity. Without exception, even when the translator's sole intention is to convey meaning, as in the case of scientific texts, translation implies a transformation of the original. That transformation is not—nor can it be—anything but literary.

Octavio Paz, "Translation: Literature and Letters"

Translation Issues:

- Critique of fluency of translation, which masks the translator's intervention (Lawrence Venutti, Theo Hermans). "Preserving foreignness in the very quest for readability" (Anthony Yu) and avoiding at all costs "Buddhist-hybrid English" (Paul Griffiths).
- ❖ Importance of functional equivalence in terms of aesthetic impact on the reader over semantic equivalence, which Umberto Eco argues is not always possible even at the level of individual words.

What is the "deep sense" of a passage, its core or aesthetic aim? (Umberto Eco)

Example 1: Foreignizing through Metaphor

Kye ho! In the illusory city of saṃsāra, appearing but not existing, the merchandise of karma accumulates in the warehouse of the three sufferings, while ignorant beings swarm around it like bees.

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कमाश्राक्षरः हेमा परिः चमा माणदः स्राधेतः पे दिरः ।। इस्राहेमा राष्ट्रिया परिः समाश्राक्षरा मानेदः चः वदे॥ इस्राहेमा राष्ट्रिया परिः समाश्राक्षरः मानेदः ।। इस्राहेदः से दमाश्राहेदः वहें स्रियं परिः मान्य।।

High up the rocky precipice of lustful and angry thoughts

and in the crooked forest of confused conceptuality, here the king of garuḍas enjoys natural freedom, and the gazelles of empty awareness frolic in play.

Example 2: Wordplay as Stylistic Core of a Verse or Line

ब्रैजिट सैराव नमा मर्था में बर ब्रैट्री ब्रैजिट सेरा उर्गेर हैं ब्रैट सेर से उद्या पर्या। ब्रैजिट सेरा उर्गेर हैं ब्रैट सेर से उद्या पर्या। ब्रैट पर सेरा उर्गेर हैं ब्रैट सेर से उद्या पर्या।

देवायियये भेरा हुँ या प्रमुख्य प्राची। द्वेव प्राचु शे शे दार्य अकेवा यमाय है।। द्वेव प्राचेव या स्थाप व्यवस्य है।। मुद्दि व मावय यह स्वेद हु द्वेव प्रमुख्य Entering the meditation that purifies illusion, the illusory yogin intones a resounding Hūṃ and just revels carefree in illusion's sphere, leaving perceived objects and clinging to them behind.

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Awareness-wisdom, removed from elaborations, is the supreme essence of all solitude.

Fortunate ones who enjoy this kind of solitude, even when staying in town, act as if utterly alone.

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Example 3: Parallelism as Stylistic Core of a Verse

१८-तर्-त्रमाशःश्चित्त्व्यस्त्रण्टः स्ट्रा। १ष्मुयः पर्वे स्ट्राचित्रः स्ट्राचे स्ट्रा। १९-स्ट्राम्थः स्ट्राचित्रः स्ट्राचे स्ट्रा। १८-स्ट्राम्थः श्चित्रः स्ट्राचे स्ट्रा

Whether the nature of appearances is true or false, whether the nature of mind exists or not, whether the nature of confusion is empty or not, why analyze according to your own system?

If you're confused even before logical analysis, with still more analysis, you'll be more confused!

Resting in non-fixation within non-thought, the spontaneously perfect basis has never wavered.

Example 4: Rhetorical Impact of Parallelism/Repetition

द्वेश्वः श्वः माह्रस्य भाग्यदेवः ह्वं योद्या द्वेश्वः दुर्धद्वेशः याभवः योवः योद्या वयशः उदः देः यात्रयः पदेवः वयः योः पदेवः सुदः ॥ मदः पुदः पुदः दुः पुदः हुः सुर्थः श्वः योदः यदः ॥

Now, don't talk. There's no true or false in conversation. Now, don't analyze. There's no "is" and "isn't" to things. Everything has the same taste, whether true or not, it's nothing more than indiscriminate, frivolous chatter.

Example 5: Functional Equivalence: Self-Deprecating Humor

रर प्रविव रे नेश में प्राथमाश है।। गुव्यामेव यान स्वापक्ष प्रमुद्ध प्रमुक्ति। रद्भीयायहेंद्रायारद्भी कुद्वयेद्रा

मार्नेयपदे रूपानेव रामवे न्यूवपारवा। याञ्चेवाञ्चेवायद्याषानुः द्वेदायापदमा। क्रिंगपरि दमा यदी गीम परि सर्देमा यद् है।। इ.सर.यर्भग.कर.रर.यथुव.अह्रग.त.तावी।

Who knows the true nature? Certainly not me. This utterance like an echo, generated by the voice I myself have nothing in mind to say.

> At heart a rogue, I wear the shell of holiness; seeming mature but immature, I am the lazy uncle. The words set forth here, like bright hues of bitter fruit, how lovely they appear when you gaze at them.

Reflections:

- Style and content are equally important to conveying the meaning of a passage and replicating its aesthetic impact.
- ❖ Texts are necessarily domesticated in the translation process, while attempting to preserve a text's foreignness and render it intelligible in the target language.
- ❖ If speech is just "frivolous chatter," what does this say about the project of translation writ large—from inexpressible realization into words and then between languages?
- ❖ Given Rdza Dpal sprul's description of his instructions as a mere echo of past voices in the lineage, is translation then a further echo, carrying its resonance but growing dim?