

9:30am – 10:00am Welcome / Opening remarks by Dr. Brad Stewart, Vice President Provost – TP/SS

10:00am – 11:00am SESSION 1

Antidote and Access: Literary Translation in the Blogosphere

Presenters: Catherine Sommer and Elly Sullivan

Montgomery College student and Potomac Review intern, Elly Sullivan, will interview Switzerland-based professional translator Catherine Sommer about her 30-year labor of love translating the poems of the 1966 Nobel Prize winning German poet, Nelly Sachs. Sachs, born into a well-off Jewish family in Berlin, narrowly escaped Nazi Germany in 1940 and emigrated with her mother to Sweden. Her escape hinged on her literary connection with Selma Lagerlof, herself the first woman to win the Nobel Prize in literature in 1909. In Sweden Sachs supported herself as a translator. She struggled with mental illness but persevered. She died of cancer four years after receiving the Nobel Prize in literature.

11:00am – 11:20am BREAK

11:20am – 12:20pm **Keynote Speaker: Zaki Daryabi**

12:20pm – 1:00pm LUNCH BREAK

1:00pm – 2:00pm SESSION 2

Yokwe! Welcoming Others Through Folk Stories

Presenter: Nancy Arbuthnot

Yokwe means “welcome” in Marshallese, the language of the people of the Marshall Islands, a double string of low-lying islands and atolls in the central Pacific just north of the equator. During World War II, the islands were liberated from Japanese control, and later became a US Trust Territory, and since then thousands of Marshallese have moved to the U.S. Although seriously compromised by attitudes of exclusion and extermination, the welcoming of others has also been a central component of the American character, and throughout the world America has been and still is recognized as a place of refuge for refugees, migrants and other displaced people. In our majority English-speaking country, translators are necessary to bridge the divide between older and newer inhabitants. As translators, the question that comes to the forefront of our work is, how can we help welcome the stranger? In this presentation, Nancy Arbuthnot will present an overview of her work with the folk stories, including issues of ownership and “translating” from a language that she does not know, and questions of bringing ancient stories to a contemporary audience.

2:00pm – 2:20pm BREAK

2:20pm – 3:20pm SESSION 3

Challenges in Communication through Language and Culture in Welcoming the Stranger

Presenter: Farah Arjang

As the world is experiencing the highest number of displacement and refugees due to the wars and regional instabilities, translators and interpreters are in the front line of this process from evacuation to resettlement in the final destination. Translation and interpretation of words and concepts are the easier parts of the linguists’ job; while the challenging responsibilities of the linguists in this process remain to be the cultural interpretation for the new comers’ adaptation to the communities unfamiliar to them. In this presentation, Farah Arjang will explore the challenges of an interpreter when playing the role of a peace broker in Welcoming the Stranger.

3:30pm – 4:00pm CLOSING REMARKS / FINAL WORDS

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