“Negative Paradise: Rethinking Anglophone and World Literature as Literary Dubbing”

A talk by Ben Tran, followed by a conversation with Viet Thanh Nguyen

November 14
Doheny Memorial Library

4 – 6PM | DML 240

“Negative Paradise” examines “literary dubbing”

“Literary dubbing”: translation performed by an author who renders characters’ thoughts and speech from one language to another. To explore how Anglophone literature’s dubbing negotiates linguistic and cultural differences, Ben Tran analyzes the Rattawut Lapcharoensap’s *Sightseeing*, a 2005 collection of short stories.

Rattawut’s short stories self-consciously reflect upon the practices of literary dubbing by dramatizing the potential travails of representing Southeast Asian characters in English. The widely accepted, though understudied practice of literary dubbing compels us to rethink the parameters of both Anglophone and world literature—to include works such as Rattawut’s *Sightseeing* so as to go beyond Anglophone literature’s boundaries of the former British Empire and beyond world literature’s interlingual translation.

Ben Tran is an Assistant Professor of Asian Studies and English at Vanderbilt University. His research and teaching focus on modern Vietnamese literature and culture, twentieth-century Southeast Asian literature, postcolonial studies, colonial modernity, and translation studies.


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