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Translating across Culture: Challenges and Chances

Tuesday, January 26, 2016
4:30pm
Callaway Center S-319
Emory University

Literary translation is an act of creation that expands the horizons of both cultures — the one from which we translate and the one into which we translate. A great poem is more than one poem. A translator from another culture sees in the poem a hidden one of which native readers are not aware. Once a translation is made of this poem into another language—bridging code, space and time—the original is transformed for the native readers who discover, to their surprise, a new poem in their original; at the same time, the cultural world into which translation is made is reorganized by the entry of the translated poem into its literary system.

This talk explores the challenges and chances we had in our joint effort to translate a 16th century Telugu poem Parijatapaharanamu by Nandi Timmana into modern English.