

The Translator in the Plot of Cultural Theory: Amitav Ghosh's The Hungry Tide

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Abstract

Recent shifts of focus within media studies, literary and cultural studies are promising, finally, to give translation a significant role in the analysis of cultural objects and to confirm translation studies as an area of inquiry whose explorations *at the intersection* are uniquely productive. My aim in this paper is to examine the translator's plot as it is enacted in fiction (in the novel, *The Hungry Tide* by Amitav Ghosh, 2004), but also to show in what timid ways the translator plot is now also emerging in the area of cultural theory in relation to the idea of *circulation*. In contrast to other contexts, like Canada or India, American cultural and literary theory has traditionally been indifferent to questions of language, and so the new visibility of translation within these fields is a development whose implications merit attention. To pair up developments in American theory with a novel focusing on the Indian context is to conjugate two modes of visibility, which share significant commonalities.