Nineteenth-Century Poetry and (in, as, of) Translation
English 635.001 / Comparative Literature 720
Fall 2015 Graduate Seminar
Tues 3-6pm, Tisch 2021C
Professor Yopie Prins

This seminar explores an active culture of translation that emerged through translating poetry into (and out of) English during the “long” nineteenth century. Considering various histories, theories, and practices of poetic translation, we will ask how English verse developed by interacting with diverse languages. We will analyze the circulation of particular poems, poets, and translators in different modes of translation, through a series of case studies selected by students according to their areas of interest. In tracing this “traffic in poems” as a transatlantic, transnational and increasingly global phenomenon, our goal will be to diversify our reading of nineteenth-century Anglophone poetry and to develop a longer perspective on the history of translation studies and comparative poetics.

Knowledge of another language is welcome, but not required. The seminar is open to graduate students at all levels in English and Comparative Literature and related departments, and to MFA students curious about the historical range and creative possibilities of reading and writing poetry in translation. Students will have a chance to meet with the Nineteenth-Century Historical Poetics Group, a group of distinguished Americanists and Victorianists who will visit campus for an informal symposium about nineteenth-century poetics of translation on December 5.