The Interpreters' Newsletter
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The Interpreters' Newsletter

Interpreting and interpreters throughout history

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Editorial

Issue 21 of *The Interpreters' Newsletter* is dedicated to the history of interpreting, a field of Interpreting Studies gaining increasing attention in recent years, testifying, therefore, to a renewed interest in how interpreting developed, in the role it played in the past and in particular the contribution interpreters gave to the evolution of intercultural encounters and exchanges. The positive and sometimes negative role interpreters played in historic circumstances may induce a more comprehensive reflection on the role interpreters may play nowadays.

Jesús Baigorri-Jalón's contribution opens this collection of papers on interpreting history and centers on Georges Rabinovitch, UN chief interpreter from 1947. His research is based on conventional historical records (digital or physical), personal interviews and photographic image-analysis. In giving his personal interpretation of the sources, the author focuses at the same time on methodological aspects to show the importance of private archives for historical research on interpreting. Less conventional materials, such as photographs, oral testimonies, interviews and photo elicitation can contribute effectively to this kind of research, as records of interpreters at work are sparse and difficult to retrieve. In reconstructing the Rabinovitch family of interpreters' saga, the author adds elements to the character's life-story, hence expanding the socio-biography of the early stages of conference interpreting.

Karin Sibul's paper examines the use of conference interpreting in Estonia at the time of the Soviet occupation (1944-1991). Her aim is to investigate whether interpreting was used to facilitate communication between Russian and Estonian communities and whether the introduction of Russian as a language

of international communication in Estonia could be seen as a tool to enhance socio-political cohesion in Soviet society. Her research is based on film footage from film archives, photos from the National Archives of Estonia and Tartu University Photo Collection and a Digitised Photo Database, as well as interviews with interpreters and people who worked with interpreters. The evolution of conference interpreting not only from and into Russian and Estonian, but also from Estonian or Russian and a foreign language other than Russian, is traced thanks to the sources consulted. Furthermore, the author has discovered some very interesting findings such as the earliest evidence of simultaneous interpretation from Estonian into Russian in 1940 and 1944 and also what interviewees labelled as a 'soapbox', an early example of listener headset, part of simultaneous interpreting equipment designed and made at Tartu University and previously mistakenly identified as a 'wire-tapping device' and not as an early example of headset.

Charlotte Kieslich's contribution is a microhistory case study investigating the assignment and working conditions of professional interpreters at the Eleventh International Penal and Penitentiary Congress held in Berlin in August 1935. The study is based on historical material from the Reich's Ministry of Justice collected at the Federal Archives in Berlin, thanks to which it was possible to reconstruct in detail how recruitment, preparation and the general organisation of interpreter assignments was dealt with. The historical background of National Socialist Germany gives readers the opportunity to better understand how the Nazi leadership used such events to promote parts of their political agenda at international level, for example their compulsory sterilisation agenda. Furthermore, it also demonstrates the existence of professional full-time freelance conference interpreters in the Third Reich and how professional their approach was as early as in the 1930s.

The paper by Garry Mullender deals with interpreters and interpreting during the Portuguese voyages of discovery and in Portuguese India. His sources are royal chronicles, coeval histories of the Portuguese presence during the sixteenth century, but also seafarer first-hand accounts of encounters between the Portuguese crews and native peoples. Mullender's contribution shows how two very diversified groups of interpreters were used for linguistic mediation at the time under investigation. The first group consisted in either convicts or slaves forced into the interpreter role for dangerous tasks, who had to develop survival skills and often were looked upon with suspicion. Besides linguistic mediation, they would provide additional services such as commercial brokerage and intelligence. The other group of interpreters was composed of people sought out by missionaries to aid them in their conversion efforts. Missionaries were more demanding of the technical dimension and would therefore train their own mediators who were "Christians of good moral standing who were willing to forego personal gain or interests" (p. 54).

The roles of interpreters regarding the relations among Indians and English-speaking European-Americans in the nineteenth century, with special reference to interpreting during negotiations with the Sioux Indian tribe, is the topic of Emanuele Brambilla's contribution. It is based on selected essays and papers on the history of North American Indians. The importance assigned to interpreters in Indian-white relations is proven by the increasing number of white interpreters employed in land transactions and treaty negotiations compared to the early

colonial period, when Indians dominated the scene. The interpreter became a figure in high demand playing an important role as agent of government. It was a role that has often been misused, a prestigious job but also "a cover for business and corruption" (p. 69) as Brambilla illustrates with the help of two prominent personalities. One is Charles Picotte, who worked as an interpreter during the treaty negotiations and is often quoted in historical reports of Indian-white relations, while the other interpreter is Reverend Samuel Hinman. Both characters proved not always trustworthy, cheating Indians during the negotiations for their own or the government's sake and contributing to the bad reputation of the interpreting profession at the time.

Anne Leahy's contribution centers on signed language interpreting in a legal setting. The author analyses the proceedings of the so-called "Ruston's case" which took place in the London Central Criminal Court in 1786. The focus is placed on the procedural hurdles concerning the possibility for John Ruston, a young deaf man, to testify in a larceny trial thanks to his sister's interpreting between English and signed language. Martha Ruston's determination in letting her brother contribute to the unfolding of the trial and the support of the sitting justice, stemmed the aggressive flow of the defense counsel. This case study gives a very interesting insight into the first steps towards a full-fledged recognition and participation of deaf people in the social community (at legal level) and the fact that the case is known through the witness' name instead of that of the defendant's, proves the pivotal nature of Ruston's case.

Sign language interpreting is also the subject of Cynthia Kellett's paper. The author outlines the relationship between signed language and education, highlighting the beginning of the use of signed language in the education of deaf pupils, placing the focus on the hurdles deaf people had to overcome after the adoption of oralism and the rejection of signs after 1880. Poorer education and the subsequent economic and social marginalisation of deaf people were the unavoidable consequences of such a decision. Sign language interpreting had no better destiny. It began to be recognised as a profession only in the 1960s and when research helped raise awareness about deaf people's rights. The historical framework depicted represents a unifying overview of a presently widespread and manifold research field of Interpreting Studies.

The seven contributions making up this issue of *The Interpreters' Newsletter* are followed by some concluding notes on interpreters in ancient Egypt. A leap backwards in the advancing time line of history which seems to strengthen a twofold remark: an interdisciplinary approach is the appropriate one in research on the history of interpreting and interpreters; every interpretation of historical facts is temporary and relatively subjective because new research on historical documentation may modify our knowledge of past events in the history of interpreting and interpreters.

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Alessandra Riccardi

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Interpreters, photography and memory: Rabinovitch's private archive

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I sometimes wonder whether advancing age does not increase our susceptibility to the speechless plea of the dead; the older one grows, the more he is bound to realize that his future is the future of the past – history. (Kracauer 1969: 6)

Abstract

The aim of this paper is to reflect briefly on newly found sources which contribute to rebuild the history of the Rabinovitch family of interpreters, focusing mostly on Georges, who became United Nations (UN) chief interpreter in 1947. The subject fits into the Italian tradition of microhistory, as part of a chapter in the narrative of a story which unfolds in the realm of a family but connects with larger-scale events. The geopolitical and social consequences of those events, particularly the two World Wars, shaped the lives of the characters and institutions I am approaching here. My inquiry protocols include conventional history records – in physical or digital format; personal interviews – a blend of oral history and memory – with Joana Rabinovitch, G. Rabinovitch's daughter; and photographic image analysis, where my positioning as a present observer of past images is unavoidably distant in time and place, far from neutral, and in need of guidance from the holder of the photographs. The essay shows a sample of the sources as interpreted by the author. Additionally, the paper touches on the importance of private archives for historical research.

Keywords

Simultaneous interpreting, history of interpreting, photographic analysis, Georges Rabinovitch, memory, private archives.

1. The context of this inquiry

When scholars try to approach past phenomena, events or characters, they need records to weave their historical account. It has been said many times that the history of interpreting, a predominantly oral activity, faces the challenge of the lack of written records. In this paper I wish to present an example of how less conventional materials, such as photographs and oral testimonies, can be useful pieces of evidence in our field of study.

The story about the Rabinovitch saga of interpreters should be seen in the context of a microhistory research (Ginzburg 1976),[1] in the sense that it has a limited scope due to its object of analysis, its timeframe and its fragmentary sources, but also because it aims at conclusions which may transcend the case study and reach wider historical phenomena and methodological proposals. Oral interviews have been used as sources to rebuild the history of interpreting, among others, by Baigorri-Jalón (2000, 2004) and by Torikai (2009), and photographs have been recently the object of attention in our field of research (Fernández-Ocampo/Wolf 2014, Baigorri-Jalón 2016, for this specific topic and period).

In my outline of George Rabinovitch's biography (Baigorri-Jalón 2004: 69 *et seq.*), I related his story to a classic model of migration of an assimilated Jewish well-off Russian family to the West at the time of the outbreak of WWI and to their incardination in the new international settings shaped along the fault-lines created by the seismic events of the first half of the 20th century. In this paper I will use only a sample of newly found sources, focusing on how they can be explored to add a few elements, "additive heuristic" in the definition offered by Abbott (2004: 249), to my main character's life story, which is also the socio-biography of the early stages of the interpreting profession as we know it. Aware that many of the pieces are still missing – all stories remain unfinished, as "not everything can be explained in spite of how passionately one tries" (Malena 2011: 94) – I invite others to delve in further research.

This piece of research was prompted by the finding of new historical sources in the family *archive* kept by Joana Rabinovitch, the daughter of Georges Rabinovitch, who was head of the UN interpreting division in New York at the end of the 1940s. In the spring of 2014 I received an e-mail from Joana where she said that, while surfing the Internet, she had seen her father's name and story mentioned in my book on the history of the UN interpreters (Baigorri-Jalón 2004). She also said that she kept some of her father's papers and photos, and that she lived in Lisbon. Her e-mail awakened my memory about the role played by Georges Rabinovitch as a consensus figure appointed by the UN administration to solve the

1 See Adamo (2006) for the specific application of microhistory to translation history.

dispute between the consecutive and the simultaneous teams of interpreters at the UN in 1947, indeed one of the most significant transitions in the interpreting profession's history, and prompted my immediate enquiry about the nature of the records she kept. Electronic exchanges and a few telephone calls followed, which finally materialized in a visit to Lisbon in August 2014.

My personal contact with Joana Rabinovitch at her apartment in Lisbon – a consented intrusion of the researcher into the family's domestic space – was an interesting experience of discovery and exploration, as well as a sobering call of attention on the limited scope of direct memory. In my first visit to her apartment, she produced a few boxes with some of her father's personal belongings. They contained papers, press cuttings, memorabilia and, above all, albums with photos, mostly of family members but also of fellow interpreters. The second exploratory undertaking led us to Joana Rabinovitch's farmhouse in the area of Coimbra, built by her mother's father, a former Portuguese Minister of Justice. It has retained all the objects one can find in an old, big country house, including a large library with books that belonged to her grandfather, her father and other family members.

The point regarding the (limited) role played by memory to rebuild the past is illustrated by the interviews I recorded of my meetings with Joana Rabinovitch. Her memory is obviously circumscribed to her life experience and to the accounts her father made about his more remote past, when she was not born yet, what Hirsch (1997) refers to as "postmemory". She recalls the names of other interpreters, some of whom were close friends of the family, but her knowledge about their professional lives is scarce, since she was only a child when they moved from New York to Rio de Janeiro in 1956, after her father was appointed director of the UN Office in Brazil. For instance, Prince Nikolai Orloff and Irène Landry, both interpreters, were Joana's godparents. Orloff's birthday gift was "a little silver cup which Catherine the Great had given to his ancestor, that I still keep". She addressed interpreter Georges Lambert-Lamond, the father of the actor Christopher Lambert, as "uncle Georges", and she remembers the names of other interpreters, such as Back, Fan, Astroff or Rohen y Gálvez (Interviews with Joana Rabinovitch, August 2014). The interviews also provide information about other members of the Rabinovitch family who were interpreters too. Her father's two sisters, Nina (Rabinovitch) Himly and Lydia (Rabinovitch) Kerr – whose two sons also became interpreters – were also mentioned in my 2004 book as internationally known interpreters. And Joana Rabinovitch's half-brother, Michel Rabinovitch, was a staff interpreter at the UN Office in Vienna.

Now I come to the importance of preserving records in what I have italicized as private *archives*, if we wish to fight against our predecessors' oblivion. Joana Rabinovitch's initiative to keep, among other materials, her father's personal records, is commendable. However, only a proper archive, preferably in the public sphere, has usually the means to meet all the professional requirements, as to indexing, conservation, loan conditions, etc. of the items for research. Keeping modest historical records holdings in good order can become an unbearable burden for the relatives – usually direct successors – of those who generated them, and the temptation of disposing of them after a period of time may be too strong

not to succumb to it. Unfortunately, "accidental" private records' holders are not always aware of the value their collections of materials, unique by definition, may have for scholars devoted to rebuild a historical event or character, whose traces may perhaps be found only in those records.

2. Photographs as pieces of a historical mosaic

Photos can be viewed from many historical approaches (Fernández-Ocampo/Wolf 2014), even non-conventional ones, depending on who the viewer is and on when and in which context pictures are observed (Edwards 2001: 236). An image belongs to a moment, but it represents something which goes beyond its time: the photographer, the instant when it was shot, the moment when it was developed and when it is seen, the photographed object/subject, etc. A photograph is "a mediated representation of reality" based on decisions that aim at conveying "a message to an audience" (Schwartz 1995: 55).

A collection of photos, in this case those which coincidentally happen to be among the photographic pieces gathered and collected through our life – and the lives of others whose legacy we receive – without a rigorous archival method, allows to establish links among them and different events or characters. Photos found in a private family archive are like frames of a film that shows the family's life, so an "album [is] not simply [...] a housing for the images, but [...] a document in its own right" (Schwartz 2002: 157). Rabinovitch's albums have been built as a fortuitous result of "a series of micro-intentions" (Edwards 2001: 7): there are photos that go together and others that represent various approaches to, or even opposite views of the same event. That is why their scope becomes much wider when they are placed in the context of other collections held in larger archives.[2] The albums in this collection contain only black and white photos, where time has left an indelible mark and the shroud of nostalgia. Irrespective of other considerations, the researcher who finds a family photo collection expects those photos were taken and collected for private consumption and were not manipulated, except perhaps in the sense that some of the missing pictures – the empty spaces in albums – may have been disposed of along the years for various reasons.

Joana Rabinovitch's collection includes photographs spanning a period of some seventy years, and they have been digitized by her from print copies at a professional printing shop, so strictly speaking they belong to the analogue era.[3]

2 Many of the archives where the author has based his previous research on the history of interpreting hold private records of different types. I refer, among others, to the archives of the League of Nations (Geneva), the International Labor Organization (Geneva), the United Nations (New York), and several Spanish national archives (National Historical Archive in Madrid, Ministry of Defense Archive in Ávila, National Archive of the Administration in Alcalá, National Center for the Historical Memory in Salamanca).

3 For the distinction between "digitized photographs" and photographs "born digital" see Schwartz (2002: 166); and for the differences between analogue and digital photography and the evidentiary value of the latter, see Biro (2012: 366).

These photographs, like any other historical record, provide information that can be considered a truthful piece of evidence of the past only after being scrutinized by the researcher and put into context by those who are in a position to do so. In this case, I observed the photos for the first time while I was interviewing Joana Rabinovitch, by using what Harper (2002: 13) calls photo elicitation, which "is based on the simple idea of inserting a photograph into a research interview", and that was a key factor to decipher the images. That is, only when my informant provided me with the necessary oral captions resulting from her memory, was I able to understand the pictures (Kuhn 2007: 283).

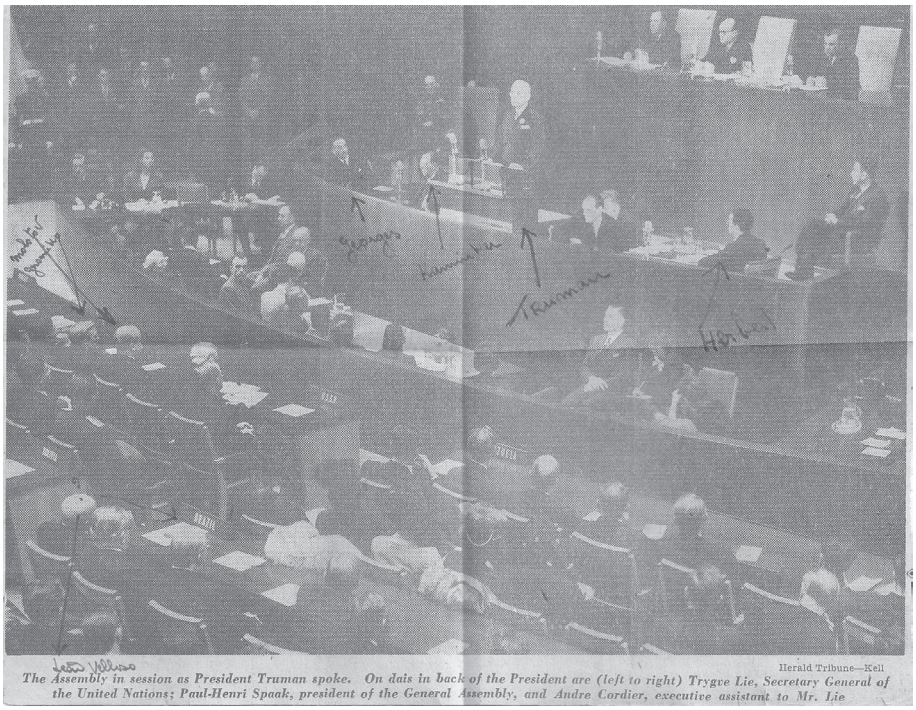
Photos – even those personal pictures that seem to represent routine everyday life – have a complex history behind them, which "is constructed by their content but also by their archiving and display as well as the stories told around and with them" (Van House 2011: 126). This collection of Georges Rabinovitch's family photos – from which I am showing here only a very small sample – allows us to see a partial view of the family's geographical image:

> By combining visual theory and memory studies with cultural geographies I am emphasizing the relationship between photography and place, and the role of associative and immanent memories as forming families' imaginative geographies. Such geographies begin with family photography. (Roberts 2012: 95)

They also provide us with a few fragments of the interpreters' profession as represented by the characters that appear *photographed* in them, of whom we can highlight, apart from Georges and Nina (Himly) Rabinovitch, André Kaminker, Georges Mathieu and Jean Herbert, key figures in contemporary interpreting history.

I will begin by presenting one of the press cuttings I found in my informant's archive, which contains a newspaper photograph, folded in four, with the following original caption from the *Herald Tribune*: "The Assembly in session as President Truman spoke. On dais in back of the President are (left to right) Trygve Lie, Secretary General of the United Nations; Paul-Henri Spaak, president of the General Assembly, and André Cordier, executive assistant to Mr. Lie".

The picture appears annotated in handwriting by my informant's mother with several names signaled with arrows: at the podium, Georges [Rabinovitch], [André] Kaminker, [President] Truman, and [Jean] Herbert; in the first row of delegates, Soviet leaders Molotov and Gromyko; and at the bottom left of the photo an interrogation mark appears on the head of Mr. Velloso, the highest-rank representative from Brazil, the country where the Rabinovitch couple had met and lived for some time immediately before Georges's employment with the UN. The value of the item stems from its uniqueness and from the fact that it was kept by the family as a proof of the interpreters' high visibility at the side of top political leaders.



Press cutting 1: From the Rabinovitch Archive.

Attempts to obtain the original photo from the *Herald Tribune* have not been successful so far. However, my search in the UN photographic archive yielded another picture from the same event, with an oblique view from the left side of the General Assembly Hall and a narrower focus on the speakers' podium. In photographic analysis, even images which are almost repetitive can help the researcher to give different perspectives of the same event.

When looking at this photograph in high resolution, we can see President Truman is reading his speech from a binder containing a number of sheets with very-large-typed characters. The three other men who can be seen at the speaker's podium from left to right are Georges Rabinovitch – with his right hand under his chin –, André Kaminker – looking away from the camera – and Jean Herbert – with a moustache and glasses –, three interpreters from the French section. Their presence in such a prominent place would symbolize the indispensable role of interpreting in that international forum and the weight of French as the other UN working language together with English. However, it is not clear why they were all needed at the General Assembly speakers' stand on the occasion of President Truman's visit. Since, as Burke (2001: 13) has said, "images allow us to 'imagine' the past more vividly", we can speculate that, although the simultaneous interpreting system had been tested at the UN two months earlier, the speech was going to be interpreted in consecutive (microphones were available at the podium for all three interpreters) after its original delivery. However, it seems quite peculiar to find the three potential interpreters looking at the public

Photo 1: President of the United States, Harry S. Truman, speaking at the United Nations General Assembly. 11 December 1946, United Nations (Flushing Meadows), New York. UN Photo # 123672.

rather than at the speaker, at their notepads, supposing they would take notes – and André Kaminker was famous for being able to render a one-hour speech in consecutive without notes –, or checking the text of the speech if it had been provided . André Kaminker has some papers on his desk and Georges Rabinovitch has a notepad, but they are not even looking at them, and Herbert's table cannot be seen in this picture. A plausible explanation would be that the interpreters had been provided with a pre-translated version of the President's text: after Truman finished his speech, one of them – in all likelihood, André Kaminker, who has a document in front of him – would have stood up and delivered the speech in French. The other two interpreters at the podium might perhaps have been needed for the following speeches.

We have no reference about the place or date of the next photograph, but the characters we can identify lead us to think it was shot around 1947 or 1948. The landscape shows no special features: a fence between a road section, possibly where their car is parked, and a small river bank, where tall trees grow. The picture is just a frame of a potential temporal and geographical sequence, whose plot we cannot rebuild from this single photograph.

The characters pretend not to be posing, but in fact they are in a frontal though slightly oblique pose. They are placed diagonally to the camera plane, asymmetrically divided in a group of three (the two women and Georges Mathieu) and at a lit-

Photo 2: Georges Rabinovitch, his sister Nina Himly (Rabinovitch), an unidentified woman (probably another interpreter) and Georges Mathieu (Rabinovitch Archive).

tle distance Georges Rabinovitch. None of them is looking at the camera and Nina Himly appears with her eyes shut. Their demeanor reflects friendly interpersonal relations in a space of leisure. The two men are dressed in stylish suits – Mathieu's seems to be more sporty though transpiring an air of an elegant dandy with his typical bow tie[4] – and that is also the case with the ladies' dresses. Their classy clothing suggests their professional status, a non-negligible point at a time when the interpreting profession was in its characterization stage. A strap with a leather case containing a pair of binoculars – or perhaps the camera that is being operated by an unseen fifth member of the group, most likely an amateur photographer – hangs from Mathieu's neck. The four characters on the photo seem amused with their chat, probably in the context of a trip, perhaps linked to a conference.

The value of the photo as a historical record derives from the presence of at least three interpreters, two of them also administrators, who had perhaps intercrossed in the 1920s or the 1930s in the context of the two Geneva organizations: the League of Nations, where Mathieu worked as a free-lance interpreter, and the International Labor Office, where G. Rabinovitch worked in the field of labor affairs as a lawyer and economist.[5] After the transfer of competences from

4 Mathieu appears with bow tie in UN official photos 160504 (24 May 1945) at the San Francisco Conference, and 56054 (on his retirement from the UN Secretariat, July 1957).

5 The concept of *histoires croisées* would be valid here only as "a mere configuration of events that is more or less structured by the crossing metaphor" (Werner / Zimmermann 2006: 31). For an application of the *histoires croisées* approach to translation history see Wolf 2015.

the League to the UN in 1946, Mathieu became head of the UN language division, at the moment when the transition between consecutive and simultaneous interpreting was taking place, a move he strongly disapproved since he considered simultaneous degraded the interpreting profession as practiced at the League (Baigorri-Jalón 2004: 51 *et seq.*). Georges Rabinovitch was the compromise solution found by the UN administration to mediate between the extreme positions represented by Jean Herbert (against simultaneous) and Léon Dostert (in favor of it) (ibid: 55 *et seq.*). Quite significantly, they were all French-speaking characters.

The presence on the photo of a woman interpreter – the second woman was probably an interpreter too – shows the emergence of professionally active women, many of them marked by the experience of war and forced migration. That emerging trend would later lead to the increasing feminization of the conference interpreting profession that we have known nowadays. When asked about her father's sisters, who were also interpreters, Joana Rabinovitch replies:

> There was Lydia, who was the oldest after my father, and Nina. Lydia married a British gentleman, Cyril, a Scot. And Nina married Jacques Himly, who was from Alsace. […] Jacques spoke very good German, because when he was born Alsace belonged to Germany and he fought in WWI on the German side. They have a nice story, my aunt Nina and Jacques. Nina, of course, was Jewish, and when she got married she changed her name to Nina Himly, but the concierge in Paris knew she was Jewish and he gave her in. So Nina had to leave Paris. She went to the *France Libre*. She went back about a year after. I don't know how she contacted my uncle to tell him she was back, but they never spoke during two years maybe. They agreed they would meet at Champs Elysées. So she would go up Champs Elysées, he would go down, that went on for several times but they never spoke, just to see that they were ok. And then my aunt Nina went to the Gestapo headquarters and volunteered as a secretary. She spoke German perfectly, so they took her as a secretary but they didn't know she was from the *résistance*. So she would pass all the information. She would type things and the copy would go to the wastepaper basket and the *femme de ménage*, who was from the *résistance*, would take everything. They only discovered she was working for the *résistance* on Liberation Day. […] She never spoke about that. I found out from my father. (Interviews with Joana Rabinovitch, August 2014)[6]

The story of Nina Himly Rabinovitch (1905-1977) before her career as interpreter attests to the valuable role that German language proficiency could play as an effective weapon against the Gestapo during the occupation.

6 This information is confirmed by the Zürich Claims Resolution Tribunal 17 December 2010. In re. Holocaust Victim Assets Litigation Case No. CV96-4849, available at http://www.crt-ii.org/__awards/__apdfs/Himly__Francois.pdf

Photo 3: From left to right: Georges Rabinovitch, an unidentified woman (perhaps an interpreter?), and Jean Herbert at a reception (Rabinovitch Archive).

One can interpret this photo as an image of a "suspended conversation" (Langford 2001). The two characters on the right are looking at Rabinovitch, who seems to be about to talk or having just finished talking. The setting seems to be an apparently relaxed situation where the characters are drinking and eating snacks at a reception. Non-verbal language seems to suggest a hierarchical distance, associated with the generation and probably also the professional gap, between the young woman's smile, that would show an acquiescent reaction to what Rabinovitch has just said, and Herbert's and Rabinovitch's more solemn faces and a slightly hieratic pose.

Rabinovitch's administrative post as chief interpreter coincided with the transition period in which simultaneous interpreting consolidated as the routine mode at the United Nations, not without a fierce opposition by the consecutive interpreters, previously led by Jean Herbert, the dominant group in the profession until then. As I have said elsewhere, the creation around 1950 of interpreting schools by former consecutive interpreters allowed them to preserve part of their power by controlling the schools' curricula, which materialized in the prominent role consecutive interpreting has kept to this day in numerous schools and institutions (Baigorri-Jalón 2015: 22).

3. Georges Rabinovitch (1901-1972): additional elements for a biography

My Dad was born on the 24th of October of 1901 in Wiesbaden, Germany. He was born in Wiesbaden because my grandmother did not trust the health system in Russia and so she chose to have her children in Germany. I think that, except for my aunt Lydia, who was born in Russia, all the other three were born in Wiesbaden. (Interviews with Joana Rabinovitch, August 2014)

GEBURTSURKUNDE

(Standesamt Wiesbaden - - - - - - - - - Nr. 1960/1901)

Georg Rabinowitsch - - - - - - - -

- -

ist am 24. Oktober 1901 - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

in Wiesbaden - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - geboren.

Eltern: Simon Rabinowitsch und Regine geb. Ettlinger,

beide irealitisch und wohnhaft in Wiesbaden - - -

Änderungen des Geburtseintrags:

Wiesbaden, den 8. September 1961

Gebühr: -,50

(Siegel)

DER STANDESBEAMTE IN WIESBADEN 2

Der Standesbeamte

I.V. Pöllmann Br.

Kb. Nr.: 11300

5000 5. 61 H. W.

Document 1: Georges Rabinovitch's birth certificate (Rabinovitch Archive).

Joana Rabinovitch provided me with her father's birth certificate (Document 1), where at least two elements can be highlighted, apart from the spelling of the name and surname. There is a weird mistake in the spelling of the word which represents the Jewish condition of the family (the certificate was issued well after the Nazi regime had been removed): *irealitisch* resembles as much to *irealistisch* (which evokes something "unrealistic") as to *iraelitisch* or *israelitisch* (Jewish), the correct meaning. Besides, the source is misleading in the sense that Georges Rabinovitch's family did not live in Wiesbaden when he was born, but in Russia (present-day Ukraine). His mother (but not his father) went to Wiesbaden just to have her children, so she was physically at the place at the time of giving birth to Georges and two of her other three children but the two parents did not reside in that city, which is what *Wohnhaft* implies.

> He spent his childhood, until he was thirteen, in Russia, and then at the age of thirteen they left Russia. They had left Russia on a vacation to visit one of his aunts in Amsterdam. She had married a Dutch Jew, and my grandfather passed away suddenly, when he was forty or forty-one, of a heart attack. So my grandmother travelled back to Russia for the burial, of course, while my father and sisters stayed with their aunt in Amsterdam. The First World War broke out and so my grandmother had to make a decision on what to do, because with the situation, the pogroms, she decided to settle in a country which was neutral, so she opted for Switzerland. They went to Lausanne. […] [He followed his secondary school years at the Lausanne] Yeshiva, the Jewish school. And one of his classmates was Billy Wilder. […] He studied Law in Lausanne. He had his PhD when he was 22 or 23 [*Contribution à l'étude du chômage et son indemnisation*, 1922], and he also took a degree in Economics in Heidelberg, and to pay his studies he was a mountain guide. (Interviews with Joana Rabinovitch, August 2014)

Photo 4: Georges Rabinovitch as a child with his family at Kharkiv, then Russia, around 1910. From right to left: Nina Rabinovitch (blurred face), Lydia Rabinovitch, Georges Rabinovitch, their father (behind Georges) and their mother at the top of the table (Rabinovitch Archive).

> My father was a wealthy businessman in Russia. I was born in Germany, grew up in Russia and Switzerland and lived in Austria, France and Italy. With my mother I spoke Russian, German, French and English; with my father I spoke Russian, and with various governesses I spoke German, French and English. Languages were no problem for me. (Georges Rabinovitch interviewed for the *Sunday Evening Post*, August 12, 1950: 112).

Rabinovitch worked for years at the ILO in Geneva as a lawyer, but when the Second World War broke out he thought Brazil would be a safer place. "So he became a lawyer with the American Rubber Development Company, and then he was offered the post in 1946 at the UN" (Interviews with Joana Rabinovitch, August 2014). So Georges Rabinovitch became an interpreter when he was in his forties, without specific training for the job. He met the requisites usually expected in those days: 1) a solid academic background, which included studies in Law and Economics, with a PhD at the age of 21; 2) a profound knowledge of several languages at native or near native level, acquired "naturally" from childhood in the context of a pre-Soviet Revolution well-off Russian family and strengthened throughout his cosmopolitan life; and 3) a professional background in the international arena (the ILO in Geneva and private international companies in Brazil). With that exposure to languages, disciplines and jobs, he arrived in the interpreting section by happenstance. His daughter Joana says:

> He had worked at the ILO in Geneva as a lawyer and then he was offered the post, I don't know the circumstances – I never asked him – to go to Lake Success and to be an interpreter. (Interviews with the author, August 2014)

He stayed for a decade or so in the interpretation service, where he acted more as an administrator than as an interpreter, and then moved to a different post within the UN management.

> […] he stayed [at the UN Headquarters] from 1946 till 1956, ten years, and then he was promoted and we went to live in Rio de Janeiro. He was given the choice between Rio and Trieste, and for obvious reasons – my grandparents were living in Rio – the choice was Rio, and my grandmother found us an apartment in the building next to hers so we were really close, and my father became the Director of the UN Centre in Rio. […] Until 1960, when he had to retire due to illness. (Interviews with Joana Rabinovitch, August 2014)

His late arrival in the profession and his relative brief period as a staff interpreter did not prevent him from going back to interpreting as a free-lancer after his official retirement and almost until his death in 1972.

4. Conclusion

This paper has tried to illustrate how private photographs, among other historical sources, are just another way to state the past. The iconic genealogy of interpreters is neither monochrome nor one-dimensional and cannot thus be delineated as if it had a fixed contour, but rather as a mixture of living itineraries

made up with partial and often patchy images which should be subject to fresh exploration and critical analysis by new researchers.

The pictures I have shown should be considered as small beacons in a microhistory narrative. Through the use of elicitation of photos into my interviews I have added a sort of third dimension, that of the voice of the informant, to an otherwise mute bidimensional optical image, allowing for a sort of stereoscopic perception of the photograph. This contribution adds new geographical and institutional elements to our mapping of the sociological development of conference interpreting, including its incipient feminization, in the first half of the 20th century, an extended chapter of a larger history, the evolution of the interpreting profession microcosm.

The oral nature of subaltern cultures, in the sense expressed by Ginzburg in his microhistory study on the 16th century miller, could be parallelled in this case study by the fact that the role played in their professional pursuits by interpreters, often seen as subalterns of their principals, is mainly performed orally. However, many of those on the early UN teams belonged to a social class which can be assimilated to dominant elites rather than to subaltern groupings, a factor which may have contributed to consolidate a high-level status for the profession of interpreter.

Georges Rabinovitch's newly found sources include photographs and other records which could not be accessed or interpreted without the assistance of one of his descendants. This necessary cooperation underscores the role played by interpreters themselves or by their relatives to understand the historical context. It also highlights the importance of memory and postmemory as tools for historical research. Collective memory (another way to call postmemory), far from being a contradiction in terms – many argue that memory can only be individual – would be a pleonasm: our memory is crafted in the context of our social life, our ideas and, last but not least, our mentality, which is collective by nature.

While recognizing the thin line that defines privacy, the truth is that private *archives* – still a minefield for researching the history of interpreting – may deteriorate or disappear in a short time if their holders are not aware of the overall value their collections have for research, no matter how disorganized or fragmentary they may seem. This paper should be considered as a call of attention to the importance of preserving that heritage in professionally-managed archival institutions.

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Interpreting in Estonia in a geopolitically changed Europe (1944-1991)

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Abstract

This article aims to provide insight into interpreting in Estonia from 1944 to 1991, during the years when it was part of the Soviet Union. The author worked with Estonian archival film and photo collections in order to establish the use of interpreting in Estonia after World War II. The earliest footage of simultaneous interpretation discovered is from an Estonia-related event in Moscow in August 1940. The visual proof collected and interviews with interpreters allow the author to conclude that interpretation was used to facilitate communication between Russian- and Estonian-speaking communities.

Keywords

Simultaneous interpreting, history of interpreting in Estonia, photographic analysis, film footage analysis, Estonian archives.

Introduction

The objective of the author's study, in addition to mapping the evolution of conference interpretation in Estonia, is to help preserve the fast disappearing oral heritage of that interpretation. To paraphrase the UNESCO concept of intangible cultural heritage, living heritage is very fragile, and this part of our cultural history could disappear unless it is researched and preserved. Preparations for

Estonia's accession to the European Union (2004) carried with it a renewed interest in interpreting as a profession. Before that, the first surge of knowledgeable interest in interpreting in Estonia appeared in the late 1970s during the preparations for the Tallinn Olympic Yachting Regatta, which was held as part of the 1980 Summer Olympics in Moscow. That being said, the history of interpretation in Estonia dates much further back. Similar to the history of the country itself, it can be divided into three periods: the Republic of Estonia (1918-1940), Soviet-occupied Estonia (1944-1991) and regained independence (since 1991). As a conference and diplomatic interpreter herself, the author has undertaken pioneering research into the history of interpretation in Estonia. She has analysed the period from 1918 to 1940 in several articles (Sibul 2012), with a stress on diplomatic interpreting (Sibul 2014a, 2014b, 2015b).

The novelty of the article lies in finding and examining factual material (film footage and photos) to establish whether interpretation between Estonian and Russian was used in Soviet Estonia, when the country was under the Soviet occupation. After presenting the linguistic and demographic context of the period under review, the author moves on to discuss interpreting and interpreters from 1944 to 1991. Interpretation in post-war Soviet Estonia is examined from two angles: interpreting from and into Estonian and Russian, and interpreting from and into Estonian and other foreign languages. Apart from covering the different uses of interpretation, the author's aim was also to identify interpreters in order to determine the approximate size of the interpreter community during this period, filling a gap in the history of interpreting between Estonian and Russian. The author's starting hypothesis was that interpretation was introduced to facilitate communication between Russian- and Estonian-speaking communities. This was a direct result of the fact that when Russian was introduced as the language of international communication in Estonia in 1944, there was an *immediate* influx of Russian-speaking Soviet party and government officials.

1. Demographic context

After World War II not only the political order but also the linguistic environment changed in Estonia, and Russian was introduced as a language of international communication (Kasekamp 2010; Lagerspetz 1996; Lauristin *et al*. 1997; Mole 2012). The share of Estonian-speakers dropped from 94% in 1945 to 76% in 1950 (Raun 1991: 182). Between the two World Wars Estonia was considered the most homogeneous of the three Baltic countries (Zetterberg 2011: 400), with Estonians making up about 90% of the country's population in the 1930s (Raun 1991); this shrank to 61.5% by 1989 (Vare 1999). The conservative estimate of population loss from 1940 to 1945 is a minimum of 200,000 people (Raun 1991: 181). The influx of Russian-speakers (about 180,000 from 1945 to 1953) meant that about every fifth person was an immigrant in Estonia (Raun 1991: 182). According to Rein Taagepera (2008: 80), the total loss of population while Estonia was a Soviet republic was the largest since the Great Northern War in the early 18th century. Unlike Central European countries (Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovenia,

Hungary), Estonia lost its monoethnicity, as industrialisation was carried out by importing a Russian-speaking working class and collectivisation was preceded by mass deportation (Aarelaid 2008: 73). The share of Russians in Estonia leaped from 8.2% in 1934 to 20% by 1959 according to that year's census, and to 30.3% by the time of the 1989 census (Vare 1999).

2. Linguistic context

When Estonia was occupied by the Soviet Union, the spread of Russian began to permeate the entire country. Immigrants to Estonia had no reason to learn the local language, as Russian was used as an ideological tool to enhance the socio-political cohesion of Soviet society. Regardless of their mother tongue, immigrant children usually attended schools in which Russian was the language of instruction, whereas Estonian children attended Estonian-speaking schools. The 1989 census revealed that 78% of Jews, 63% of Poles and 56% of Germans living in Estonia considered Russian their mother tongue (Vare 1999: 77). Mandatory Russian classes were introduced not only in primary school but also at Tartu University. Despite the steps taken to introduce a changeover to Russian, in the 1960s "the Estonian intelligentsia began to reassert itself" and a kind of "renaissance [took] place in cultural life" (Raun 1991: 189). Although the party governance style was foreign to them, locals learned to live with Soviet peculiarities (Aarelaid 2008: 74). Culture, however, remained a field in which Russian dominance had difficulty asserting itself (Taagepera 1993: 85).

Political history is often the history of occupation, with changes "imposed on a speech community by the occupying power in order to secure the position of the new regime by inflicting a new (loyal) way of thinking on the oppressed population" (Raag 2010: 106). Language can be used both to persuade and manipulate. A newspaper article from that period, for example, condemned the popular Estonian attitude of considering Russian a foreign language: "Russian is closer to us than any foreign language. We cannot consider Russian a foreign language, as this is a language of communication between all nations in the Soviet Union; it is the language of the world's first socialist state. […] Estonians have to know it as well as their mother tongue" (Feldbach 1948).

In the Estonian Communist Party many of the top positions were reserved for monolingual Russians, who could not participate in events held in Estonian without interpretation. In one article its author regretted that "the Estonian language does not have such rich vocabulary as the great Russian language" (Simberg 1950) and stated that instead of using English or German names, companies should have translated their names into Estonian the way Lenin translated them into Russian (ibid.). There were also articles, however, that stressed that the Estonian language was rich enough "to express the finest emotional nuances" (Peegel 1952).

Language has always been a mark of national prestige, and to curb this prestige, the USSR Council of Ministers passed a secret decree in 1978 on learning and teaching Russian in Soviet republics, with its primary aims to limit the use of Estonian in public settings and to enforce the Russian language on Estonians.

The 1982 Education Act of Estonia stipulated in §24 that the Soviet people had *voluntarily* accepted Russian as the language of international communication (Education Act 1982). The usage of the Estonian language survived, however, as did Estonian culture (Taagepera 2008).

3. Methods and materials

The sources used for this article primarily comprised non-textual artefacts (photos and newsreels) and to a limited extent textual sources (interviews, memoirs and newspaper articles). Written data about the use of interpreting is extremely fragmented; thus, written sources were mostly uninformative, occasionally indicating the use of interpretation with a single word.

Although Franz Pöchhacker (2006: 64) states that "basic techniques for data collection might be summarised as watch, ask and record", he mentions that documentary material is also used when researching interpretation. In his words, this "can be viewed as an indirect and unobtrusive observational technique and is of obvious relevance to the product-oriented study of interpreting". David Silverman (2006: 68) agrees: "ethnographers today do not always 'observe', at least directly. They may work with cultural artefacts like written texts".

The author conducted 65 open semi-structured interviews for her research: 33 with interpreters and 32 with people who recruited interpreters or occasionally used interpreters from the 1950s to the 1990s. None of the 33 interviewed interpreters were professionals if the criterion for professionalism was training or full-time employment as an interpreter, except for two, who worked full time at two drama theatres and interpreted performances from Estonian into Russian. The pool of interpreters included speakers of various foreign languages – English, Finnish, French, German, Polish, Russian, Spanish and Swedish – who were all fluent in Estonian. They represent two different target and source language groups: Russian (20) and other (13).

The author searched the National Archives of Estonia and the Tartu University Photo Collection for historic facts and data to confirm or refute recollections that came from interviews. To the author's knowledge these sources have not previously been examined from the point of view of interpreting. The aim was to find images depicting either the audience using headphones to confirm simultaneous interpretation or an interpreter providing consecutive interpretation, the objective being to also find potential early events for which simultaneous interpretation was used. The author or other interpreters recognized several interpreters standing next to the speaker, treating this as conclusive evidence of consecutive interpretation being performed. In translation studies the visual "is only just beginning to attract detailed attention" (Wolf/Fernández-Ocampo 2014: 2), but it offers a lead since factual material about interpreting is scarce.

Parts of the National Archives' collections are accessible electronically. Research into those collections was confused somewhat by the fact that in Estonian the verbs *to translate* and *to interpret* are expressed using the same word, *tõlkima*. Indeed, the words *tõlk* and *tõlkija* were used both for interpreters and translators

until the late 1980s. Recently a clearer distinction has been introduced in the terminology: *tõlk* is becoming the established word for *interpreter* and *tõlkija* that for *translator*. Nevertheless, this distinction has not yet become common in the everyday use of the words. As both *tõlk* and *tõlkija* have long been used interchangeably, it is not possible to distinguish between the terms when reading memoirs and archive materials, which also makes electronic searches more complicated.

The author searched the Film Archive Online Database to find relevant newsreels from its Movie and Sound Collection. Each entry in the database comes with a brief description of the footage, allowing researchers to carry out an electronic search by using key words (such as anniversary, jubilee, revolution, conference, congress, etc.). Searching for the term *synchronised* (meaning that the image and sound are synchronised) helped the author discover newsreels with authentic sound (651), which, in addition to footage relevant for this specific research, also included footage of interviews, concerts, etc. The author watched all relevant footage from 1944 to 1991. Searching for *interpreter/translator* yielded 26 results, seven of which portrayed an interpreter. In all, the author analysed 114 clips of footage, finding 87 instances of interpretation from and into Russian and 27 instances of interpretation from and into languages other than Russian.

The Digitised Photo Database was also searched for photos depicting the use of interpreting. Searching for *Estonian SSR Supreme Council* yielded 6,160 digitised photos, of which 189 depicted simultaneous interpretation. This turned out to be the most useful word combination to search for, as it yielded not only photographs of parliamentary sessions, but also of various other events the Chairman of the Supreme Council (i.e., the Soviet-era president) attended or participated in. Several clips of footage and photos led to inconclusive conclusions, portraying only standing audiences in the midst of applauding, or only speakers, or were of poor quality (too dark or slightly blurred).

The author also searched for photos depicting the use of interpreting in the Tartu University Photo Collection, which contains a comprehensive collection of negatives (1948-1998) from the university photo laboratory. The outcome of this research was fascinating; the author discovered what are presumably the only existing images of simultaneous interpreters at work and of a rare headset, the so-called 'soapbox'.

The Bibliography Department of the Archival Library at the Estonian Literary Museum has compiled a database, *Tartu University (since 1940)*. Each bibliography file card in the database features a brief summary of an article published in Estonian newspapers. Going through these yielded several rare pieces of information, helping to locate two articles from 1961 and 1964. The author has not discovered any documents referring to interpretation in the Soviet-era parliament.

4. Interpreting, 1944-1991

4.1 Russian

When designing her research, the author decided to focus on interpreting from and into Estonian and Russian at the Supreme Council of the Estonian Soviet So-

cialist Republic (ESSR), the Soviet-era parliament, hereinafter referred to as the parliament, as this was one of the potential venues where interpreting might have been used.

In the collections of the National Archives the author discovered 87 clips of footage covering the period from 1944 to 1991, which depict simultaneous interpretation from and into Estonian and Russian. Specifically, these clips came from 36 of those 47 years. The three years with the most clips were 1957 (7), 1955 (6) and 1960 (6), although no special events took place. Looking at this by decade, the 1950s lead with 39 clips covering a diverse range of interpreted events. For the six Soviet years in the 1940s, 14 such instances were found, and another 14 were found for the 1960s. In the 1970s and 1980s there were fewer instances, with eleven and eight cases respectively; those clips portrayed interpreting either at parliamentary sessions or party congresses. Only one interpreted event was shown in the 1990s, with the Republic of Estonia having regained its independence in 1991.

The 1950s witnessed a change in the linguistic-demographic situation in Estonia: the inflow of Russian-speaking Soviets from all parts of the Soviet Union continued (Raun 1991). As the years from 1951 to 1960 are those with the most depictions of interpreting in newsreel clips, the need for simultaneous interpretation between Estonian and Russian during those years was examined. The 39 clips from the 1950s displayed events organised by: the communist party (13), the parliament (11), creative associations (6), the young communist league (4), and others (5). If we break this down by subject matter there are seven categories: the communist party (10), parliamentary sessions (9), agriculture (7), peace and friendship (4), jubilees (4), specific professions (4) and sport (1). By type of convention, there are four groups: conferences/meetings (16), anniversaries/jubilees/ceremonies (11), parliamentary sessions (9) and congresses (3). The conventions were aimed at diverse target groups, such as rural doctors, teachers, firemen, composers, women, rural youth and chairmen of collective farms.

The 87 clips of footage allow us to conclude that the majority of events (68) were conferences, congresses and meetings, primarily organised either by the parliament or the communist party. Addressed to a wider public, they usually involved both Estonian- and Russian-speaking audiences with interpretation provided into the respective language. Nineteen clips covered events targeting a more specific, mostly Estonian audience (teachers, doctors, composers, writers); as a rule, the guest speakers at these events were from elsewhere in the Soviet Union or were monolingual Russian-speaking high-level party officials whose speeches were interpreted into Estonian and for whom speeches in Estonian were interpreted into Russian.

An analysis of the footage reveals the direct impact of the 1978 decree to limit the use of Estonian. For the period from 1979 to 1988, clips from only two years (1986 and 1988) were found in which headphones were used. By the 1980s overall knowledge of Russian had increased as well, which could also explain the decreased use of interpretation.

One of the most remarkable discoveries unearthed was a newsreel from 1972, dedicated to the 50th anniversary of the Soviet Union. It contained footage from Moscow in 1940 and covered Estonia's incorporation into the Soviet Union. The

entire audience in Moscow used headphones to listen to the speech by Estonia's representative; he must therefore have spoken Estonian. Similar footage is dated 1944, and shows the chairman of Soviet Estonia's parliament delivering a speech at a session of the parliament of the Soviet Union in Moscow; in it, the audience is again using headphones. This was a breakthrough in the author's research, as she thus unearthed the earliest evidence of simultaneous interpretation from Estonian being used.

The author was able to draw up a list of a large variety of interpreted events, based on interviews with twenty interpreters who worked from Estonian into Russian and from Russian into Estonian. These events can be grouped as follows: events organised by parliament, government and the party; events organised by youth organisations; and events organised by creative associations (of composers, writers, etc.). Looking at this breakdown by topic reveals a yearly cycle of significant dates (the anniversary of the October Revolution, Lenin's birthday, etc.); other topics included agriculture, peace and friendship. Two interviewees mentioned that Russian-Estonian interpreting was sometimes used at party congresses, parliamentary sessions and collective farmers' conventions in Moscow. The only conclusive archival evidence the author was able to discover were two clips from 1940 and 1944, showing parliamentary interpreting in Moscow.

An electronic search of the Digitised Photo Database resulted in 10,535 relevant digitised photos, though only 343 depicted headphones. 134 show headphones in use at parliamentary sessions, 20 at other parliament-related events, and 189 at various congresses and conventions. The author thus gathered overwhelmingly convincing visual evidence that interpretation from and into Estonian and Russian was used during the Soviet years. This outcome, however, was still slightly discouraging since a mere 3% of the total photos depicted headphones.

By far the largest category covered by film footage is that of parliamentary interpretation. Twenty-eight video clips and 134 photos from 59 sessions (out of 103) held by twelve sitting parliaments (1944-1991) include shots of headphones, confirming that simultaneous interpretation was extensively used – specifically, in 57% of sessions in total. In the period under review in this article, Estonia was no longer independent. It was, however, one of the three Soviet republics that employed parliamentary interpreting, allowing speakers to use their mother tongue. The interpreters, by ensuring the official use of Estonian in the Soviet-era parliament, could unintentionally be associated with the so-called resistance to the total domination of Russian. Interpreters assume a responsibility to interpret unambiguously, and use their linguistic capabilities, thesaurus and professionalism to do so. The author has discussed parliamentary interpreting in greater detail in another article (Sibul 2015a).

In the interviews carried out by the author, it emerged that there was an active team of 6-7 interpreters in the 1970s and 1980s who worked together and promoted each other, competing with one another in a friendly manner and occasionally even giving awards to the best interpreter of the team. Indeed, colleagues' praise was highly valued. Descriptions of interpreting attitudes in the interviews led to the author dividing interpreters into two groups: interpreter-philosophers and interpreter-officials, as several interviewees referred to them. The philosophers

were willing to spend hours discussing minute details of terminology in search of the best possible option; they would have made excellent translators. While interpreting they lagged far behind the speaker. Those who used interpreters often preferred interpreter-officials, who were able to keep up with the speakers even if they sometimes had to cut corners. They never stumbled and successfully jumped hurdles. In analysing what was said during the interviews, the author divided up the types of interpreters in another way, as well: those who aimed at a maximum of preciseness, interpreting word for word and providing translation into Russian at breakneck speed, and those who focused on the quality of performance and kept a regular pace. Inexperienced interpreters unable to keep up in simultaneous mode and who attempted to switch to consecutive interpretation while on mic were deemed to fail, as the trailing echo of their interpretation after the speaker had finished was easily heard in the audience.

Thus far the author has discovered two books of memoirs that briefly mention interpreting. In the first, a budding actor was asked to interpret between a Russian film director and Estonian actors at the filming of the first Estonian feature film in 1955 (Tammer 2004). In the second, an Estonian conscript to the Soviet army was sent to serve on an Estonian island to facilitate communication between locals and Russian border guards. The conscript was thought to be fluent in Russian, as he had been deported to Siberia as a child (Männiksoo 2013).

Film footage (87 clips) and photos (323) provide sufficient evidence to confirm that interpretation, both simultaneous and consecutive, was extensively used when Estonia was part of the Soviet Union. The parliament was by far the most active user of simultaneous interpretation, as shown in 30 clips of footage and 134 photos that depict the use of headphones. Party conventions and meetings follow: 38 clips and 87 photos. Communist party and young communist league events are shown exclusively in film, while eight photos also depict the founding of three other parties. The remaining 19 clips and 102 photos demonstrate that interpretation was used at congresses organised by creative associations, by trade unions and by specific professions (teachers, farmers, inventors, lifeguards, etc.). All creative associations are represented (writers, artists, composers, architects, journalists and filmmakers), as are the choral and performing arts associations.

4.2 Foreign languages

During the period under review, Estonian society was politically imprisoned, the links to the free world having been severed. Visits by foreign guests were extremely rare. The author's research in the Film Archives yielded 27 newsreels portraying interpretation between Estonian or Russian and a foreign language other than Russian. Five of these were of simultaneous interpretation, from 1957, 1958 and 1979. The largest number of clips found from any one year was from 1956, in which five events that made use of consecutive interpretation were portrayed. 1957 and 1983 followed, with three cases of simultaneous and three cases of consecutive interpretation respectively. For 1966, 1989, 1990 and 1991, two clips from each year were found that show consecutive interpretation, and

footage from 1958 portrayed both simultaneous and consecutive interpretation. Twenty-seven clips of footage can be broken down into eight groups by field: friendship (6), culture (6), politics (5), sport (5), foreign relations (2), trade unions (2), and church (1).

By language, German is represented in six clips; Swedish in four; Finnish, Hungarian and English in three each; and Chinese, French, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese and Spanish in one each. In one case it was not possible to determine the language. Searching for *interpreter/translator* yielded 409 photos, 32 of which showed interpreters working consecutively with foreign languages other than Russian. The interpreters were mostly from Estonia (19), whereas 13 were from other countries: Russia (7), Finland (2), France and Germany (1 each) and travelled with the delegation; in two cases the name of the interpreter was not mentioned. If we look at the source and target languages the picture is more diverse. Out of a total of eleven languages, English leads with seven cases, followed by Finnish and German (5 each), Hungarian and Swedish (3), French (2), and Czech, Italian, Japanese, Slovak and Spanish (one each). In two cases the language was not mentioned. The newsreels and photos both portray interpretation using eleven languages, eight of which overlap; this therefore leaves a total of 14 languages that were used. As for Estonian, it was used when interpreting from and into seven languages (English, Finnish, French, German, Hungarian, Italian and Swedish).

The Tartu University photo collection yielded another 27 photos of foreign delegations visiting the university accompanied by interpreters, all of whom were Estonian and either students or faculty staff at the university; this adds Arabic to the above list of languages.

In conclusion, the author's research yielded few images of interpretation with foreign languages (86): just 27 clips of footage and 59 photos. Those discovered were mostly of consecutive interpreting. The more frequently represented languages were English as a conference language (17 cases), German and Finnish (16 each) as languages of an Eastern bloc country and of a close neighbour, respectively.

4.3 Interpreters

The early post-war years also marked a period of isolation from the rest of the world. Russian thus emerged as the prevailing source and target language of interpreting in Estonia. Twenty out of 33 interviewed interpreters had Estonian and Russian as their A-B language pair. Ten of them had been deported to Siberia as children. The remaining 13 interviewees had English, Finnish, French, German, Polish, Russian, Spanish and Swedish as their B language. All interpreters had an undergraduate degree, except for three Russian-Estonian interpreters who had only received secondary education. Those with degrees included twelve who had studied other languages and one who had studied history; they worked from and into foreign languages. Eleven had degrees in Russian, four in history, one in mathematics and one in English; they all had Russian as their A or B language. Twenty-five had Estonian as their mother tongue, seven had Russian and one had Polish.

Three interviewees with German and English B languages who occasionally interpreted in the 1960s and 1970s mentioned that their continuing education took them to advanced English courses in Leningrad (now Saint Petersburg) or Moscow University, as well as at the Maurice Thorez Institute of Foreign Languages in Moscow. There they saw for the first time how simultaneous interpreters were trained. (The leading professor of interpreting studies at the Institute was Ghelly Chernov.) Two interpreters with Russian as their A and B languages, respectively, had been to the Institute in the late 1970s. This was a one-off experience, however, that did not lead to any training in simultaneous interpreting. A Russian-Estonian-Russian interpreter who had a degree in history and who also learned Arabic and Turkish at Moscow University (but never interpreted from or into either) had received some training, but primarily in consecutive interpretation. Just 0.18% of the interviewees had had some slight contact with simultaneous interpretation, therefore, but still no training. The other interviewees had never received any interpreter training or even seen simultaneous interpretation being used. These facts demonstrate that interpreters in Estonia during the years under review were not professionals.

One of the questions asked of the interviewees was why they had started interpreting. A typical answer was that Estonian students majoring in Russian were simply asked to come and "help out" with their knowledge of Russian. This was also the case with students learning Finnish (Raig 2012: 18) and other languages. Upon graduation there was no such profession as interpreter that students studying languages could go into. Almost everybody became a teacher. Until the early 1990s, interpreting was a "side-job" or hobby, usually for university lecturers or teachers. The first interpreters had no special preparation and were multi-professionals.

Interpreters from Moscow or Leningrad accompanied the majority of foreign delegations visiting Estonia. Quite often the host institution or company in Estonia would recruit a local interpreter to interpret from or into Estonian (instead of the Russian the accompanying interpreters would have used). Most of these local interpreters were from Intourist, the leading travel agency in the Soviet Union. The Tallinn branch of Intourist had about 50 guide-interpreters on its payroll and also employed about 150-160 freelance guide-interpreters, a figure confirmed by former Intourist employees who were interviewed. Being a guide-interpreter involved leading sightseeing tours in Tallinn and Estonia for foreign tour groups as well as interpreting during field trips and visits (to collective and state farms, factories, kindergartens, schools, Pioneer Palaces, etc.). They also interpreted sightseeing tours for Estonian tourist groups abroad. The 50 guide-interpreters included about 25 people who spoke Finnish, about ten who spoke English, and another ten who spoke German. There were also one or two who spoke French, Norwegian, Polish and Swedish.

Six out of the 59 images of interpreters discovered in the archives were of full-time Intourist guide-interpreters; considering the socio-political circumstances, however, that number is not that small. Twenty-seven pictures portray interpreters accompanying delegations to Tartu University; the university was located in a town to which restricted access to foreigners was granted by the Soviets. Out

of 32 images showing interpreted events in Tallinn, the capital, 19 were of local Estonian interpreters and a third of those 19 (6) were Intourist employees.

Interpreters at the time were clearly lay or natural interpreters; that is, "bilinguals without special training for the task" (Pöchhacker 2006: 22). The Intourist guide-interpreters were an exception. Their diverse work experience, combined with exposure to actually listening and speaking to native-speaking foreigners, gradually made them good professionals. Indeed, they were regarded as such, thus validating Pöchhacker's (2006: 22) observation that "historically, it is of course difficult to clearly separate professional interpreting from what we might call lay interpreting or natural interpreting".

Although the author had thus far discovered photographic evidence of the audience listening to simultaneous interpreting, no images of the interpreters themselves had been found. Research in the Tartu University photo collection, however, led to an intriguing discovery: two photos taken in 1978 were found that portrayed simultaneous interpreters at work (see figure 1). This outcome was slightly discouraging. It did suggest, however, that interpreting was (and often still is) considered a trivial activity and that photos of interpreters were (and are) not taken. Nonetheless, the photos represented a breakthrough, for they show the listener's headset. The simultaneous interpreting equipment portrayed was an example of the university engineers' craftsmanship, having been designed and made at Tartu University. Several interviewees had referred to the listener's device, which functioned as a radio receiver, as 'a soapbox'. Not a single device was thought to have survived. It turns out, however, that the University of Tartu's History Museum contained a damaged 'soapbox', which was on display as "a wire-tapping device" (see figure 2). It had not been associated with simultane-

Figure 1: An interpreter 1978, Tartu University Museum Photo Collection.

Figure 2: Soapbox-headset 1978, Tartu University Museum Photo Collection.

ous interpreting and had therefore not been identified as an early example of a headset. As a result of the author's research, this headset has since been relabelled correctly. It is the only 'soapbox' known to have survived.

The research carried out by the author in the Digitised Photo Database yielded just one photograph of a parliament interpreter from 1990. It is the only photo that portrays an interpreter who worked between Estonian and Russian. In the photo the interpreter is not actually interpreting, however, but rather is acting as a reporter and airing a radio broadcast, with a caption that notes his profession. Interpreting was the reporter's side job, as the interpreter confirmed during the interview.

The only two newspaper articles found that mention interpreting during the period under review both focused on interpreters. The Tartu University newspaper (Sakslannadest 1961) interviewed a fifth-year student studying German who acted as an interpreter for an East German basketball team, although the interview was rather uninformative. The second article was from a regional daily (Va-

jakas 1964), and mentions difficulties an interpreter had when translating from Finnish into Estonian: "The young interpreter was at a loss for words, unable to quickly find suitable words".

5. Conclusion

Searching for factual documentary evidence to prove the use of interpretation from 1944 to 1991, the author worked with Estonian archival film and photo collections in order to establish an interpreting narrative in Estonia after World War II; this was a time when Europe had undergone geopolitical changes and a new political order was enforced in what had been the independent Republic of Estonia before World War II. The earliest footage discovered depicting the use of simultaneous interpretation is from August 1940 and March 1944, albeit in Moscow.

Interpretation in Estonia during this time period falls into two groups of target and source languages: Russian and other foreign languages. Although Russian is a foreign language like any other to Estonians, it is expedient to discuss the two groups separately as Russian was enforced in Estonia as a language of international communication, with the covert aim of limiting the use of Estonian (as per the 1978 decree).

The author's research has helped to make the fragmented narrative of interpretation in Estonia more complete. In all, she conducted 65 interviews and uncovered 114 clips of footage, as well as 402 photos. The visual proof collected, in contrast to the extremely scarce written evidence, allowed the author to confirm her hypothesis. The author established that the interpreter community was comprised of two groups: interpreters interpreting from and into Russian and those working from and into other languages. She interviewed twenty interpreters who worked with Russian. This represents quite a sizable community, thus demonstrating the need for interpretation during the Soviet years. Interpretation between Estonian and other foreign languages was more sporadic. The Intourist guide-interpreters did most of the work and they could be considered semi-professionals: although they had no training they had extensive daily practice.

The fact that Soviet authorities allowed interpretation while covertly enforcing Russian as the language of international communication, may have been an indirect indication of a camouflaged Soviet attempt to demonstrate support for small nations, as well as adherence to the international practice of providing interpretation at multilingual events. The use of simultaneous interpreting from Estonian into Russian allowed Estonian to be used at public events at a time when Russian was enforced. Indeed, interpretation can be seen as a contributing factor to maintaining the use of Estonian in an environment in which a foreign language dominated. Interpreting as an activity was inseparable from the efficient functioning of the parliament, helping to invisibly negotiate boundaries for the use of Estonian in other public spaces under Soviet control.

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Conference interpreting in the Third Reich

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Abstract

The present study examines the actual working conditions of professional interpreters in National Socialist Germany. By using authentic historical material, the recruitment, preparation and general organisation of interpreter assignments at the Eleventh International Penal and Penitentiary Congress (IPPC) in Berlin in August 1935 will be reconstructed. The study sheds light on how strongly the regime influenced the actual work of conference interpreters. To the Nazi leadership, the IPPC was a welcome propaganda opportunity to promote parts of their political agenda. The IPPC's language staff also became a means to this end. At the same time, the study shows how professional the approach to conference interpreter assignments was in Germany as early as the 1930s.

Keywords

Conference interpreting, interpreting in the Third Reich, legal interpreting.

Introduction

Historical research on the interpreting profession under the National Socialist regime has experienced an upward trend in recent years, most prominently illustrated recently by the impressive range of research projects presented at the Conference "Translation and the Third Reich" in Berlin in December 2014 (Andres *et*

al. 2016). Early publications touching upon interpreting in the Third Reich, such as Ruth Roland's historical overview (1999), focus either on interpreters working for the government or the diplomatic service and are based on autobiographical accounts such as those of Paul Schmidt (1949/1984), "Hitler's interpreter", or SS interpreter Eugen Dollmann (1963). The important work of Jesus Baigorri-Jalón (2004a, 2004b) also includes a portrait of what he established to be an interpreter type *sui generis*, the interpreters of the dictators (2004a), thereby also focusing on the political realm. As of 2010, some articles have been published on interpreting within the context of the Holocaust (Tryuk 2010; Wolf 2014) as well as studies focusing on aspects of control and ideological indoctrination of interpreters (Andres 2016; Werner 2014; Winter 2012).

Winter and Andres inform us, among other things, about the existence of an interpreter and translator association which went by the name of *Reichsfachschaft für das Dolmetscherwesen* (RfD, in English *Reich Association of Interpreters*) and the work of a department at the Ministry of Propaganda in charge of organising every international gathering in National Socialist Germany, the *Deutsche Kongress-Zentrale* (DKZ, in English *German Congress Centre*). These institutions were but little cogs in the Nazi leadership's greater organisational machinery intended to register – and control – every member of their propagated new 'national community' (*Volksgemeinschaft*). For the National Socialists, 'national community' "was conceived as the collective body of 'valuable Aryan' Germans who would live and work in harmony together under the leadership of the Nazi Party" (Stephenson 2008: 99) and were ready "to sacrifice 'selfish' individual desires for the common good" (ibid.: 100).[1] The creation of this 'national community' was at the centre of Nazi propaganda and policy. In the course of their 'policy of coordination' (*Gleichschaltung*), political parties and organisations opposed to the new regime were outlawed, while the leadership of those groups "that were not inherently objectionable" (Stephenson 2008: 107) was replaced by 'politically reliable' people or the organisations in question were dissolved and then re-established as National Socialist organisations. *Gleichschaltung* applied to all political, social, cultural and organisational levels and, thus, "to all kinds of organizations, from occupational and professional associations to tennis clubs and music societies" (Stephenson 2008: 107). Therefore, the actions of the RfD and DKZ can be assumed to have had profound influence on the interpreting profession and every day work of interpreters.

The present study examines the actual working conditions of professional interpreters at the Eleventh International Penal and Penitentiary Congress (IPPC) in Berlin in August 1935. By using authentic historical material from the Reich's

1 Their concept was one of racial unity based on ethnic and biological criteria and held the promises of overcoming class divisions, creating social and political unity as well as national glory for those Germans the regime sought to include. However, at the core of this rhetoric of equality were also the creation of inequality and the increasingly radical exclusion of those not wanted by the Nazis for racist and anti-Semitic reasons (but also including groups such as political opponents and people deemed social outcasts by the Nazis such as criminals, homosexuals or alcoholics). For further details, see e.g. Bajohr/Wildt (2012), Stephenson (2008), Wachsmann (2008).

Ministry of Justice (RJM) collected at the Federal Archives (BArch) in Berlin, the recruitment, preparation and general organisation of interpreter assignments will be reconstructed. Although the present historical investigation is limited to only one international conference, the study is the first of its kind and its close-up perspective provides valuable information on how professional the interpreting was (or was not) at the time. Moreover, it can shed light on how strongly the regime influenced the actual work of conference interpreters.

1. The International Penal and Penitentiary Congress (IPPC)

1.1 General historical background

The International Penal and Penitentiary Commission was an international organisation founded in the late 19th century to promote the exchange between its member states on important issues in the fields of criminal law and penitentiary systems. The initial idea of creating an international forum like this came from no one less than U.S. President Ulysses S. Grant who appointed an American representative in 1870 to bring the project forward (BArch R 901/32436, p. 127). The first Congress took place in 1872[2] and a permanent Committee (the Commission's forerunner) was founded, with subsequent conferences held every five years in major cities such as Stockholm, Rome, Paris and St. Petersburg. The Commission's activities were temporarily interrupted after the last Congress in 1910 due to the outbreak of the First World War. The first post-war IPPC, attended by over 40 states, was held in London in 1925, which was also the year Germany joined the Commission as an official member (cf. BArch R 901/32434, p. 53, p. 173, p. 194; BArch R 901/32435, p. 99; BArch R 901/32436, p. 127). The other members, besides the U.S.A., the U.K. and Germany, included not only European states such as Spain, France, Austria, Bulgaria, Greece or Hungary, but also countries such as Argentina, Chile, Egypt, British India, Japan and the Union of South Africa, which made the IPPC an organisation of truly international nature (cf. BArch R 901/32434, p. 173).

The Commission's main office was in Bern, where General Secretary Simon van der Aa, a Dutch university professor of criminal law, was in charge of overseeing the Commission's activities (cf. BArch R 901/32434, p. 173). The organisation's main objective was to promote the fight against high crime rates in the individual member states by means of striving for more approximation of laws, debates on current issues in criminal law as well as discussing individual experience with different penal measures. Against this backdrop the General Assembly was able to adopt resolutions in the hope of having more effective tools to exercise influence on domestic legislation. However, this instrument was legally non-binding in order to respect the member states' sovereignty (cf. BArch R 3001/20955, p. 154-155).

2 In 1846, an international prison congress convened in Frankfurt am Main, but this seems to have been a different conference (Federal Archives, BArch R 3001/20955, p. 151).

1.2 The 1935 IPPC in Berlin

The IPPC was traditionally a conference held upon invitation of the given country's government. Germany, still a democratic state in the form of the Weimar Republic at this point, officially announced its invitation at the 1930 IPPC in Prague. Preceding the announcement there had been long, protracted discussions between the ministries involved on whether Germany would be able to afford and organise such an event. Moreover, Germany wanted an assurance that an absolute majority of the members would vote for Berlin (BArch R 901/32434, p. 2-26). They did so and the Italian government drew the short straw and cancelled its invitation. It was Erwin Bumke, the President of the German Reich's Supreme Court, who urged the RJM to invite the IPPC to Berlin in 1935. As a consequence, its presidency fell to Germany and thereby to Bumke after the invitation had been accepted by vote.

After Hitler came to power in Germany in January 1933, the question arose of whether the new regime should hold on to hosting the 1935 IPPC (BArch R 901/32434, p. 42, 48-51). In the end the RJM and the Reich's Foreign Office (*Auswärtiges Amt*, AA) agreed that the political advantages clearly outweighed worries about uncomfortable situations for the German delegation, should their foreign guests address issues such as the Nazi's aggressive 'protective custody' scheme (*Schutzhaft*)[3]. One of the winning arguments was that the IPPC could be used as an opportunity to invite as many foreign guests as possible in order to show them the "real New Germany" and dispel any concerns or prejudices against the Nazi regime. The ministries feared that cancelling the IPPC might present the Reich in an unfavourable light, so that critics might argue Germany was denying experts insights into its ways (BArch R 901/32434, p. 50, 116). In order to cultivate the image the Nazis were trying to project of themselves, the Ministry of Propaganda was now also involved in the IPPC's organisation, notably so with respect to advertising the congress in Germany and abroad (BArch R 901/32434, p. 56). How highly the event was valued by the Nazi leadership is also shown by the fact that the Minister of Propaganda himself, Joseph Goebbels, seized the opportunity to give a speech. However, many critics were not fooled, neither before nor after the congress, so that the 1935 IPPC received largely negative press.

Another matter of great importance was the IPPC's official languages. As German was not one of them, President Bumke would have had to open this public congress in French, which, according to National Socialist reasoning, was unacceptable. Bumke's mission was thus to push the Commission into accepting German as the third official working language for the 1935 IPPC, which he succeeded in doing at a preliminary meeting in Bern, where the IPPC's rules of procedure were changed accordingly (BArch R 901/32434, p. 49-51, 92). The use of other lan-

3 The euphemistic term 'protective custody' meant that the police arrested political opponents and other 'community aliens', who, according to Nazi ideology, did not belong to the 'national community' (see footnote 1) without any judicial proceedings whatsoever. This practice formed part of the basis on which the Nazis were to persecute hundreds of thousands of people during their reign and hold their victims in prisons and concentration camps (Wachsmann 2008: 124, 126).

guages was also possible but the delegation concerned had to provide their own interpreter.

As regards the IPPC's programme, the conference proceedings were divided into General Assembly meetings and four different expert "Sections" (Section I: Legislation, Section II: Administration, Section III: Prevention, Section IV: Juvenile crime). Each Section dealt with two particular questions and for each of the questions there was one leading expert who prepared an opinion in writing on the given topic as a basis for discussions. The results from the four Sections were then reported back during the plenary meetings. One of the conference days was reserved for visits to different German prisons in order to show state-of-the-art German penitentiary facilities to the delegations. After the IPPC had officially ended on August 24th, selected guests were invited to a trip through Germany to visit some tourist attractions.

2. Interpreting at the Eleventh IPPC

Since the Ministry of Justice was primarily responsible for organising the IPPC, it was Dr. Lehmann, one of the Ministry's Deputy Assistant Under-Secretaries (*Ministerialrat*, MR), who was in charge of all interpreting and translation matters. In this capacity, he was supported by the Foreign Office (AA) regarding questions of general organisation, recruitment, payment and also preparatory material, first and foremost by Paul Gautier[4], Head of the AA's interpreting and translation department.

Given the fact that Germany had officially extended its invitation to host the 1935 IPPC as early as 1930 and had successfully pushed the Commission into accepting German as an official working language, it seems rather surprising that the issue of interpreting was apparently not addressed until April 1935. In a letter to the AA, the RJM first enquired about the possible use of the "Siemens transmission system" (BArch R 3001/20955, p. 12, author's translation[5]) which would allow for direct, i.e. simultaneous, interpretation into all needed languages via earphones. In a preparatory meeting, however, Gautier and another *Ministerialrat* by the name of Gaus highlighted the particular and unique difficulty that comes with legal interpreting and, therefore, ventured that the traditional consecutive mode would be much more impressive in this particular context. The protocol of this meeting states:

> The question of whether the so called Siemens transmission system (earphones at every seat, immediate speech translation into the other two conference languages

4 It was Gautier who, more than ten years before the Nazis seized power, had written a memorandum on setting up a proper language unit within the Foreign Ministry. The latter heeded his advice and, in 1921, made Gautier the first Head of the newly established language department (*Sprachendienst*) (Wilss 2005/1999: 62).

5 As the organisers were not familiar with the system, they simply called it "Siemens transmission system" (*Siemensübertragungsanlage*) without noting down the official name in the protocol.

> sentence by sentence) should be used has been discussed in detail with Mr. Ministerialrat Gaus as well as Mr. Gautier. Both gentlemen have warned against using this system, especially so Mr. Gaus. [They said] the system had certain advantages where it is essential to conclude one's business under any circumstances within a very limited period of time. However, the system also has considerable disadvantages. Translating legal analyses sentence by sentence or word by word is exceptionally difficult. If really good interpreters such as Mr. Krauss or Mr. Graham are available, interpretation delivered as a whole speech is much more impressive. Under these circumstances, the idea of using the Siemens transmission system will not be further pursued.
> (BArch R 3001/20955, p. 12, author's translation)

Though time saving was a factor, the organisers were clearly in favour of what they deemed the more prestigious mode of delivery, i.e. consecutive interpreting. Unfortunately, the protocol does neither reveal why consecutive was considered to be more impressive nor what made legal interpreting so difficult in the eyes of Mr. Gautier and Mr. Gaus. It can only be speculated that since the inter-war period of the 1920s and 1930s marked the heyday of consecutive interpreting, the organisers did not want to engage in anything experimental due to the propagandistic effect they hoped to achieve (see above), perhaps also because the League of Nations had rejected the simultaneous mode after having tested it in 1931 for different reasons, among them the reservation of many of the seasoned consecutive interpreters (Baigorri-Jalòn 2004a: 106-108, 154-167).

2.1 Recruitment

Regarding the question of recruiting capable interpreters, the RJM was again supported by Paul Gautier, Head of the language department at the Reich's Foreign Office. Interestingly enough, the RJM was looking for one very gifted interpreter for both English and French respectively and other additional, presumably "average" interpreters. (BArch R 3001/20955, p. 11). Unfortunately, the material consulted does not provide any information as to what characterised an especially skilled interpreter. It only states that the two highly skilled ones were to be assigned to the General Assembly and Sections on very important issues, the rest were to interpret during the other Section sessions. It can only be assumed that the organisers wanted to make sure that the most qualified interpreters were assigned the speeches they considered most important. However, this plan was dropped later on and the interpreters were assigned to the various General Assembly meetings according to the subject matter (see below 2.2).

In early July, Gautier recommended interpreters with sufficient professional experience who were personally known to him and submitted a list of twelve interpreters, six for English and six for French[6]. The RJM files unfortunately do not

6 Assigned to the English team were Mr. Graham, Mr. Schumacher, Mr. Büchner, Mr. Horstmann, Mr. Wallau and Mr. Meckel, to the French team Mr. Burckhardt, Mr. Gropp, Mr. Koch, Mr. Dürselen, Mr. Vermassen and Mr. Krauss who was later replaced by Mr. Koch for the conference and Mr. Thiele for the prison visit (BArch R 3001/20955, p. 19-20, 25, 68).

provide information on the hired interpreters' backgrounds[7], with the exception that some were lawyers or had studied economics.

Additionally, the RJM received several applications from freelance interpreters who offered their services to the IPPC but did not get hired. One of them was J. E. Franksen from Bremen, the son of a German consul general in New York who had been raised in the United States and Canada (BArch R 3001/20955, p. 32-36). He worked as a freelance private teacher, interpreter and translator in Bremen, was certified to do court interpreting and legal translations and was a member of the RfD. Prior assignments included, inter alia, interpreting and translations for the prosecution in trials and the British and U.S. consulates. In addition, he had interpreted at the Seventh International Congress on Road Construction (*VII Internationaler Staßenbaukongress*) in 1934 in Munich for which he had received letters of recommendation from a Northern Irish government delegate. Another interpreter, J. Hein from Berlin, had worked as "microphone interpreter", i.e. simultaneous interpreter (Winter 2012: 43), at the International Film Congress (*Internationaler Filmkongress*) in April 1935 as well as the 1934 Road Construction Congress (BArch R 3001/20955, p. 45-47). Moreover, his letters of recommendation included one from the U.S. embassy confirming that he had acted as legal adviser for patent and trademark law until 1933. It seems rather striking that the RJM rejected these and other applications from, to all appearances, professional and competent interpreters, especially since one of the IPPC-interpreters, Mr. Dürselen, had a permanent position at the Nazi organisation *German Labour Front* (DAF). The Ministry of Justice, accordingly, had to ask the DAF to release this interpreter from work for the IPPC[8] (BArch R 3001/20955, p. 37, 56). The Ministry insisted on hiring this particular interpreter and did not choose Mr. Franksen or Mr. Hein instead because all positions had already been filled by interpreters recommended and recruited by the interpreting and translation department of the Foreign Office, Mr. Dürselen being one of them.

7 Hans R. Burckhardt was a full-time freelance interpreter and translator and a member of the RfD (BArch R 3001/20955, p. 232). Moreover, his fate as a victim of denunciation is well documented in Andres (2016). When he gave translation assignments to a French colleague in 1937, his loyalty to National Socialism was called into question. As a consequence, the Reich's Ministry of Propaganda forbade him to continue his work at international conferences and informed all other Ministries and departments of the incident, which led the organisers of the XII International Homoeopathic Congress to withdraw his assignment as an interpreter. In order to justify the Propaganda Ministry's harsh actions, it started to collect incriminatory material on Burckhardt, reaching from his political opinions to homosexual conduct of which he was accused by a fellow interpreting colleague. Although it does not seem as though he was arrested at any point, the Propaganda Ministry continued its efforts to prevent him from working at least until 1942.

8 The DAF replied that the interpreter in question had handed in his notice effective as of July 31st 1935. Nonetheless this fact had been unknown to the organisers before.

The interpreters were able to get a first and general idea of their potential assignment through the letters asking them whether they were interested in working at the 1935 IPPC as these contained information on the date, duration, location, general setting (congress upon invitation of the Reich's government), working languages, the conference's division into General Assembly and Sections and payment (according to the AA's standards[9]) (BArch R 3001/20955, p. 26). Furthermore, the letters informed the interpreters that the IPPC would revolve around issues from the entire field of criminal law.

As regards the preparation for the IPPC, Gautier and Lehmann had already agreed during a preparatory meeting that, prior to their assignment, the interpreters were to receive all available manuscripts and reports by IPPC-speakers, English books on correctional systems as well as the English translation of the *Law for the Prevention of Hereditarily Diseased Offspring* (*Gesetz zur Verhütung erbkranken Nachwuchses*), i.e. the Reich's legislation on compulsory sterilisation (BArch R 3001/20955, p. 12). The RJM kept its promise when it assumed responsibility for collecting relevant preparatory material, the first comprehensive batch of which was made available to the interpreters on July 19th, exactly one month before their assignment. The material was deposited at the AA's language unit which was in charge of distributing the documents and books to the interpreters as well as ensuring a timely exchange of the limited number of copies (BArch R 3001/20955, p. 27). At this point, the interpreters received relevant English books and final versions of French speeches were soon to follow, whereas the English texts were still in the possession of the Commission's main office in Bern. The RJM had already requested in writing that the documents be made temporarily available to the interpreters. General Secretary van der Aa reacted within two days and had the British and American delegates' manuscripts delivered to Berlin as express items (BArch R 3001/20955, p. 24-27, p. 58). Where matters of great importance to the German delegation were concerned, the interpreters were supplied with additional material, as was the case with the French interpreters for Section III who were given copies of a special issue of *Recueil de documents en matière pénale et pénitentiaire* (in English *Compilation of documents in criminal and prison law*, author's translation) featuring a paper on the German compulsory sterilisation law that the organisers considered recommendable (BArch R 3001/20955, p. 82). As commendable as these efforts were even from today's point of view, without regard to the content of the material, the German organisers had difficulties with providing the complete set of written manuscripts (BArch R 3001/20955, p. 56, 72). Still, as regards content, the IPPC-interpreters received a quite remarkable amount of preparatory material to provide them with background knowledge and enable them to familiarise themselves with the relevant legal terminology – a challenge requiring a lot of time and effort in pre-digital days.

9 Unfortunately, the material does not provide any information on what these standards looked like. Other sources such as the 1941 guidelines on interpreter assignments by the DKZ do not contain information on payment either (for further details see Winter 2012: 41-47).

As the copies of the written manuscripts were limited in number, the organisers had worked out an efficient system of temporary distribution and then passing the documents on: first, the interpreters were sent half of the documents in order to work on them for ten days and send them back before receiving the second half. In the case of the French interpreters, this procedure took place between two to three weeks prior to the IPPC (BArch R 3001/20955, p. 70). The English interpreters were handed out their texts during the preliminary meeting on July 25th (see below) and had to return them to the RJM within one week (BArch R 3001/20955, p. 72). Reliability was essential insofar as the interpreters were divided into teams of two, interpreter A working on the first half of the documents while interpreter B was working on the second half. If either of them failed to finish their preparation on time, the other would also be affected.

Roughly one month prior to their IPPC-assignment, on July 25th 1935, the interpreters were invited to attend a preliminary meeting at the RJM (BArch R 3001/20955, p. 72). Almost the entire team was present and received information on the general course of the congress, including a printed programme and estimates on which Sections were expected to be the best attended. Moreover, organisers and interpreters developed a detailed working schedule covering all sessions (BArch R 3001/20955, p. 41, 71). Contrary to the initial plan (to assign the two highly skilled interpreters to the IPPC plenary meetings, see above), the team members whose Section subjects were at the centre of a General Assembly meeting interpreted during this General Assembly meeting. In addition to this congress-related information, the interpreters also had the opportunity to go on an excursion to the prisons prior to the conference. After the meeting, the interpreters were sent summaries of the main aspects discussed, overviews, lists and schedules of all the assignments (BArch R 3001/20955, p. 64-68).

On August 14th 1935, five days prior to the official opening of the IPPC, a final meeting took place of the interpreters, stenographers, the RJM's employees in charge, Gautier and General Secretary van der Aa (BArch R 3001/20955, p. 71, 118-119). It was held to resolve final questions that had been left open, such as who would be in charge of translating the daily congress bulletin, as well as to make some final adjustments regarding the interpreting schedule. In addition, the interpreters received their congress badges and invitations to the reception on Monday evening. Finally, one day prior to the official IPPC launch, the interpreters were provided with a list of all participants and a specific information sheet for interpreters and stenographers on the time schedule, rooms, overall organisation, special responsibilities etc. (BArch R 3001/20955, p. 161).

An entirely different, yet very effective opportunity to prepare the 1935 IPPC was the fact that the interpreters also had to translate all the speeches to be delivered by the Reich's ministers attending the conference, the essential contents of the remaining speeches and the welcoming speech by the director of Brandenburg prison (BArch R 3001/20955, p. 41, 132-137).

2.3 Working conditions and challenges during the IPPC

The interpreters' assignment at the IPPC began on August 19th 1935 at 9:45 a.m.. The interpreters had their own common room, where they were to meet every morning and every afternoon before the beginning of each session (BArch R 3001/20955, p. 118, 161). During sessions of the IPPC's General Assembly all interpreters had to be present irrespective of whether they were interpreting or not.

The welcoming speech was given by Erwin Bumke. It had been partly translated beforehand and was then read out loud by the French and English interpreters respectively (BArch R 3001/20955, p. 119). It remains unclear why the translation of this major speech had been limited to selected passages only, whereas other speeches by the Reich's ministers had been translated entirely (see above). The speeches of "normal" participants had been translated partly in order to leave enough time for the German original rendition (BArch R 3002/21296, p. 131). However, it remains unclear whether the foreign guests who gave speeches were treated with the same courtesy. In principle, translating entire speeches beforehand was not that uncommon at the time. Paul Schmidt and Hans Jacob, for instance, both tell their readers about how their interpreting team would translate speeches given by German delegates to the League of Nations in their entirety and revise them for hours on end (Jacob 1962: 124-126; Schmidt 1949/1984: 113-114). These translations were then used as a basis for their interpreting performances.

As thorough as the interpreters' preparation for their assignment might have been, it could not compensate for the enormous strain of reality, as the following retrospective assessment clearly shows:

> Right at the outset of the Congress, it became clear that the number of interpreters assigned to plenary and Section sessions was insufficient. The difficulty of the subject matter and the very long duration of some of the Section sessions required the immediate assignment of additional interpreters. Moreover, French was used much more frequently than anticipated, so that Section sessions needed more than one interpreter. (BArch R 3001/20955, p. 186, author's translation)

Besides the fact that interpreters were supposed to work alone during Section sessions, the overall situation described in this quote is rather unfortunate. Additional workload generated by the required translation of any number of motions, resolutions, statements etc. aggravated the interpreters' situation. Translations, of course, had to be done parallel to the Section sessions and produced as fast as possible (BArch R 3001/20955, p. 186). Furthermore, the interpreters were to assist Sections with formulating suggestions or proposed resolutions, a task which also required additional personnel. Finally, the translation and revision of the daily IPPC bulletin constantly required three to four people as opposed to two in the organiser's initial plan. Only by doing repeated night shifts were the interpreters able to compensate for this shortage of staff and ensure the daily availability of the bulletin in three languages. Yet, the IPPC organisers did in fact try to exercise damage control by hiring two additional interpreters – one for French and one for English – who were sent by the Foreign Office. As this did

clearly not suffice, trainee lawyers with language skills were used as well. Given the conference's subject, this solution could probably have been implemented without much further ado, particularly as the National Socialist association of lawyers had informed the organisers that some young members had excellent language skills and could be used if need be (BArch R 3001/20955, p. 13). Interestingly enough, it seems that the organisers did not contact those interpreters who had submitted speculative applications, which is difficult to understand, particularly with regard to Mr. Hein who not only lived in Berlin where the IPPC took place, but also seemed to be a qualified interpreter judging from his letters of recommendation and prior assignments (see above).

After the official closing of the IPPC and the subsequent trip through Germany, the interpreters received letters of recommendation upon request. As the conference interpreting profession was still in its infancy at the time, it can be assumed that such letters were essential for professional success as they testified to the proficiency of the interpreters in writing. If the interpreter's overall performance had been satisfactory, these letters did indeed reflect gratitude and appreciation:

> During his assignment as an English interpreter, Mr. Schumacher fulfilled all his tasks with great skill. It has to be emphasised that he was extremely capable when it came to grasping the very difficult and lively discussions of Section II of the conference. His performance in plenary meetings and during the excursion also demonstrated that he is more than qualified to handle the difficult task of being an interpreter at a major international conference. Furthermore, I would like to mention that his outstanding performance was also greatly appreciated by the members of the English delegation. (BArch R3001/20955, p. 146, author's translation)

A comparison with other letters of recommendation shows that although there were standard phrases, the authors of such letters did indeed distinguish between different levels of quality. One of the trainee lawyers hired as an emergency solution was merely "fairly capable" (BArch R 3001/20955, p. 201, author's translation) of fulfilling his tasks. Although he had also demonstrated great skill as regards the subject matter of Section II, there was no mention of any appreciation by congress participants. Likewise, the poor lawyer read for superlatives in vain.

3. Discussion and conclusion

The Eleventh International Penal and Penitentiary Congress (IPPC) was an international forum with some tradition, the first of its kind being held in 1872. Germany had already invited the 1935 IPPC to Berlin in 1930. After the National Socialists seized power in January 1933, the IPPC became a welcome propaganda opportunity in the eyes of the Nazi leadership to promote parts of their political agenda. Therefore, the IPPC's language staff also became a means to this end by enabling the Nazis to communicate their agenda to an international audience. This foreshadows the way in which the Nazis sought to monopolise the congress industry by using the *Deutsche Kongress-Zentrale* (DKZ) which was still in

the process of being developed in 1935, by putting the DKZ, which was part of the Propaganda Ministry, in charge of every aspect of every single conference held in Germany (for further details see Andres 2016).

With respect to the interpreting profession, the present study first of all demonstrates that professional full-time freelance conference interpreters did exist in the Third Reich. It can be assumed that in order to earn their livelihood they also had to work as translators and/or court interpreters/translators. What remains unclear is in which capacity the interpreters worked most and on how many occasions they were able to do actual conference interpreting. The material consulted for the present examination names four events which took place in the years 1934/35, whereas the annual report of the DKZ names 32 international congresses in 1937 (DKZ 1937). Only if one were to assume that the IPPC interpreters were hired for each of these events – which they were not – would conference assignments, including preparation, have been the rule for them rather than the exception.

Neither of the interpreting-related Nazi organisations, the *Reichsfachschaft für das Dolmetscherwesen* (RfD) and the DKZ, were involved in planning the congress and the interpreter assignments. Some of the interpreters were RfD members, but the association had zero influence on the proceedings, although it had been founded in 1933 and was initially focused on certified legal interpreters[10]. The DKZ was not mentioned once, but it had only been established with semi-official status in December 1934. Moreover, it focused at the outset on medical conferences and only shifted its focus to other kinds of conferences later (Andres 2016, Winter 2012: 41, 47). Therefore, one possible explanation is that these institutions were simply not sufficiently developed at the time. Another reason might be the fact that the congress was such a high-profile event that any control to be exercised by the RfD or the DKZ was superfluous: all the interpreters had been hand-picked by the Head of the language unit of the Foreign Office and the entire preparatory material had been provided by the Reich's Ministry of Justice. What could be of interest to future research is whether the RfD's grip on the interpreting community tightened as much as the DKZ's did in the course of the Third Reich (Andres 2016).

Lastly, the interpreters' preparation for the 1935 IPPC needs to be highlighted. The amount, organisation and comprehensiveness of the material, as well as various preparatory meetings and prior visits to the prisons, allow a twofold conclusion to be drawn. On the one hand, this is evidence of how professional the approach to conference interpreter assignments was in Germany as early as in the 1930s, even though the actual working conditions could be, as the study also shows, chaotic and extremely taxing to say the least. On the other hand, the re-

10 The RfD was one of the Nazi organisations which was established during the regime's policy of coordination (*Gleichschaltung*, see above 1.) after prior existing court interpreter associations, the names of which remain unknown so far, had been dissolved. The RfD's primary task was to register and control all 'Aryan' court interpreters, and then interpreters in general. Later on, its focus shifted to the training of military interpreters (for further details see Winter 2012: 47-54). As to the certified legal interpreters, it is only known *that* they existed but not how they were trained, certified etc.

gime's perfidious exploitation of international conferences comes to light. To the Nazi leadership, the IPPC became a tool to promote the Reich's policies and secure the semblance of international consensus on their compulsory sterilisation agenda. The interpreters, who were indispensable to the smooth functioning of the proceedings, played their part. Accordingly, the preparatory material on compulsory sterilisation was more detailed than that on other aspects and their renditions of German speeches certainly had to be delivered in a way that would cast a favourable light on the "New Germany". Although the material conducted for this study does not entail any instructions as to the pragmatic effect the Nazis wished to achieve, interpreting was deemed a highly political profession under National Socialism. The regime demanded unconditional loyalty from its interpreters and expected them to not only represent but also actively advocate Nazi ideology (Andres 2016; Winter 2012: 55).

The present study only examines one international conference, so it certainly cannot be claimed that its findings are representative. Nevertheless, it provides detailed information on one conference in Nazi Germany. It shows how the professionalism with which the interpreters were treated, if one were inclined to attribute such credit to the IPPC organisers, was dominated by National Socialist ideology and agenda.

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Differing skills of interpreters in Portuguese India

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Abstract

By piecing together the many but scattered references to linguistic and cultural mediation in contemporary sources, some of which were first-hand accounts, we can build a picture of interpreters and interpreting during the Portuguese voyages of discovery and their early quests in India and the East. Linguistic and cultural mediators were not held in high regard, with convicts or slaves, regardless of whether or not they possessed the requisite language skills, often being forced into this role when it involved dangerous tasks such as gathering intelligence and making the very first contact with new peoples. They thus developed survival skills, in particular, to tread a fine line between the two camps, which in turn aroused suspicions about their loyalty, a prime consideration for the Portuguese. Subsequently, with the increase of missionary activity, another group of interpreters developed with quite different characteristics: they had to be Christian and of good moral standing, have a good grasp of Portuguese and be eloquent speakers of their native languages, in which they had to express novel religious concepts. Even though the Jesuits paid attention to their technical abilities and provided training, like the Portuguese administration, they also judged their interpreters' effectiveness on the extent to which their substantive goals were achieved.

Keywords

Interpreting in Portuguese India, historic, linguistic and cultural mediation.

Introduction

Vasco da Gama's discovery of the sea route to India in 1498 was a defining moment in Portuguese history and the culmination of almost a century[1] of maritime exploration that had brought the Portuguese navigators into contact with a plethora of hitherto unknown peoples and lands. The goals of the Portuguese venture had been clearly set out by the mastermind of the Discoveries, Prince Henry the Navigator, and were faithfully recorded by the royal chronicler, Gomes Eanes de Zurara (1841: 44-47) in his *Crónica da Guiné*, written in the mid-1450s, as the following: to gather knowledge of the lands beyond the Canaries and Cape Bojador; to bring back merchandise; to know the strength of the Moors; to find Christian kingdoms which would make allies in the war against the Moors, and to bring more souls into the Christian faith.

These aims would dictate the areas of intervention of linguistic and cultural mediators, as Portuguese expeditions gradually progressed further down the West coast of the African continent. They contributed to overcoming geographical and psychological barriers[2] and obtaining valuable knowledge of their surroundings. Initially, the Portuguese had adopted a belligerant stance towards the people they encountered, seeking to capture slaves by force; thus their verbal interaction and negotiation were limited, although they generally had Arabic speakers on board with a view to facilitating communication, but whose effectiveness soon became minimal along the coast of Guinea.

The Portuguese strategy underwent substantial change from the mid-1440s onwards, when Prince Henry issued an order to the explorers to pursue commercial aims above all and to refrain from killing the Africans they encountered along the coast[3]. This shift occurred shortly after Antão Gonçalves' 1441 expedition had captured 13 natives and brought them back to Portugal. At least two historians (cf. Newitt 2005; Roland 1999) have claimed that the purpose of this exercise was to train the captives as interpreters, but through earlier research, I have attempted to demonstrate that this was not Gonçalves' intention nor were deliberate attempts made to teach the captives how to speak Portuguese, let alone train them as interpreters[4]. They were enslaved, learned some Portuguese

1 There is wide agreement among historians that the Conquest of Ceuta in 1415 marks the beginning of the Portuguese Discoveries, although maritime voyages of exploration had been undertaken in previous decades.

2 In particular, Cape Bojador.

3 "Seguidamente, o senhor Infante, no seu conselho, dizia que daí em diante não travassem luta com a gente daquelas partes, mas fizessem aliança e trocassem mercadorias e assentassem paz com eles, pois a sua intenção era fazê-los cristãos. E mandou que as caravelas fossem de paz e não de guerra" Gomes de Sintra (2002: 63). Our translation: "Then on his advice, the Prince said that henceforth, we should not fight with the people from those parts, but make alliances and exchange merchandise and make peace with them, since his intention was to make them Christians. And he ordered the caravels to go in peace and not in war."

4 My argument was based on there having been a misconception that the word *língua* has always been a synonym of *interpreter*, whereas early textual references in the fifteenth century suggest that it was actually used in the sense of *informant* or *information*.

through immersion in the language, with the authorities' interest in them being limited to extracting whatever information they could from them about the (human and material) resources in their lands. Some subsequently re-embarked and played a useful role as guides and informants contrasting greatly with Portuguese contempt for their safety and well-being. Linguistic mediation, in the sense of facilitating a dialogue between two linguistically diverse groups, was only a subsidiary task and considered by many as just another method of securing the Portuguese goals: information or mercantile goals.

Interpretation was, therefore, characterised by improvisation, both in terms of: its performer, someone who was drafted into the role without any specific preparation, guidance or appropriate selection procedure; and the way in which it was performed, with there being frequent references to the *línguas* (see footnote 6) claiming that they did not understand the African languages encountered, as described in first-hand accounts such as Cadamosto's (a slave-trader of Italian origin, who left us an account of his voyages to the River Senegal area in 1455 and 1456, under Pero de Sintra's command):

> I, wanting to know more of these people, had them speak to my interpreters: (but) none of them could understand what was being said to them, neither could those in the other caravels, something which greatly annoyed us. We eventually left without being able to understand them. On seeing, hence, that we were in a new country, and that we could not be understood, we concluded that it was useless to go any further, because we assumed that we would find ever newer languages and that if we could not understand them, we would not be able to do anything[5].

When such difficulties occurred, sign language and mimickry could be employed in an attempt to achieve at least some rudimentary communication, but such initiatives were only partially successful:

> Os cristãos faziam-lhes sinais de paz, mas eles não entenderam. Mandaram-lhes os cristãos mercadorias que tinham trazido com eles a terra, mas eles receberam-na sem se disporem a falar (Gomes de Sintra 2002: 63)[6].

Even with decades of experience, little appears to have changed by the time Da Gama embarked: he did of course have what he considered to be linguists on board. Hein (1993) makes the exaggerated claim there were seventeen of them, but many of them were convicted criminals, being sent into exile to gather information as commutation of a death sentence. Da Gama and other explorers sought people who were easily dispensible, as they would be charged with the dangerous tasks of fighting in the front line if necessary, disembarking to reconnoitre the area and establishing initial contact with the native peoples, which was indeed a moment of high tension.

5 Our translation from the Portuguese version in Peres (1988: 172).

6 Our translation: "The Christians made signs of peace to them, but they did not understand. The Christians sent them wares they had brought ashore with them, but they took them without wishing to talk."

Once Da Gama's fleet rounded the Cape and sailed northwards along the Indian Ocean coast of Africa subsequently reaching Calicut in 1498, such encounters became even more fraught with danger, for in many cases, these lands had Muslim rulers, who the Portuguese considered to be their mortal enemies. Moreover, the lack of interpreters for Asian languages forced him to rely on Muslim linguists (with Arabic being used as the pivotal language), a situation which he was far from at ease with. In fact, we can posit that an interpreter's religion was a primary consideration and would underpin his relationship with his Portuguese masters, a subject we shall return to hereunder.

1.2 Building a picture of interpreting in Portuguese India

The history of the Portuguese Discoveries in general is well-documented by virtue of the painstaking efforts of royal chroniclers, but there are also a number of valuable documents which were produced by seafarers themselves, who provide us with first-hand accounts of some significant encounters between the Portuguese crews and native peoples. Neither are directly concerned with recounting the history of interpreting and thus references to linguistic mediation are somewhat scarce. Yet, from Zurara's warning not to trust *turgimães*[7], following an interpreter's betrayal of Gonçalo de Sintra which led to his death in an ambush, and to Álvaro Velho's log of Da Gama's voyage to India[8] in which he furnishes us with vivid descriptions of how communication was attempted on stop-off points, we can follow the progression of linguistic mediation through the voyages of exploration, the position or consideration given to interpreters, and the varying degrees of success of their endeavours. Some sources were clearly more aware of, or sensitive to, the issues of language and communication and thus supply us with more information in this regard, notable examples being those of Cadamosto, who was not a native speaker of Portuguese, and Álvaro Velho, who concluded his diary with a Portuguese-Konkani[9] glossary and could have acted as an interpreter himself.

We encounter the same pattern of sources concerning linguistic mediation in India itself, following Da Gama's inaugural voyage. There are three major coeval histories of the Portuguese presence during the sixteenth century: Fernão de Castanheda's *Historia dos Descobrimentos e da Conquista da Índia pelos Portugueses;* Gaspar Correia's *Lendas da Índia;* and João de Barros' *Décadas.* All of them are monumental works with several weighty volumes. Rocha built a corpus of references to interpreters by name in the *Décadas* (Rocha 2011), which above all were significant for their paucity in comparison to the magnitude of the work, and one would expect parallel exercises to yield similar quantitative results. Fortunately, those serving in India were prolific letter-writers, in particular to their

7 *Turgimão* an old Portuguese term no longer in use, meaning interpreter or *língua*, derived from the Arabic *tarjuman.* cf. Dalgado (1919: 393) for examples of it use and different spellings.

8 cf. Fontoura da Costa, A. (ed.), (1960).

9 Konkani is a language spoken along the West coast of India, especially in the area of Goa.

superiors back in Europe, namely the Portuguese kings and religious authorities, with large quantities of their missives having been conserved in archives and expertly transcribed. Their authors include employers and users of interpreters, such as Afonso de Albuquerque, Captain of the Fleet of the Arabian Coast and subsequently governor of India from 1509 to 1515. He was criticised by some for being influenced by his own interpreters of Jewish origin, but who voiced his suspicion of those in the employ of local potentates, Saint Francis Xavier and other Jesuit priests, who frequently bemoaned poor linguistic skills and thematic knowledge among their linguists.

Yet, the significance of the absence of references to interpreters, whom we know to have been present, and the documents not intended for our information (cf. Alonso 2008) should not be underestimated. Whilst it is frustrating that Luis de Fróis', Jesuit priest and one of the first European Portuguese-Japanese interpreters[10] should have barely mentioned his activities in his History of Japan (Fróis 1976), that no record of interpreting at the first European embassy to Siam led by Duarte Fernandes should have survived, or that the anonymous interpreter who authored a diary of an expedition to the Irrawaddy delta in 1521 should have omitted almost all of his linguistic mediation activities from his account (cf. Bouchon/Thomaz 1988), these silences certainly indicate that interpreting did not figure among the prime concerns of the Portuguese in the Orient. Interpreting was no more than a means to other ends and interpreters did not enjoy any glory, but rather were stigmatised by many of their contemporaries.

2. Interpreting in the East

As already mentioned in the introduction, the fields in which interpreters worked for the Portuguese in India were determined by the main objectives of the Age of Discoveries and largely correspond to those mapped out by Bowen *et al.* (1995). Prior to the Discoveries, Portuguese experience of linguistic mediation had primarily occurred in contacts with Arabic-speaking Moors, whom they fought to expel from the Iberian peninsula after several centuries of occupation and then to conquer their territories in North Africa. Prolonged contact between these two peoples had enabled a pool of potential interpreters to develop, ranging from members of the Mudejar communities living in the re-conquered territories to Portuguese soldiers who had fought and possibly been taken prisoner in North Africa. Not only could they act as envoys or messengers and participate in peace negotiations, but also broker the release of prisoners from enemy territory, as *alfaqueques* by royal appointment, and be provided with guarantees of safe passage to perform their task.

Those who served on the voyages did not enjoy any such security and that is why valued compatriots were spared from the dangerous mission of establishing first contact with a new people. Instead, returning native Africans, convicts, Jews

10 Notably, he interpreted for the head of Mission, Cabral and the visitor Alessandro Valignano in meetings with the warlord, Hideyoshi.

or new Christians could be *lançados* (a term meaning *thrown ashore*) and would thus have had to develop survival skills, notably through cultural assimilation, adopting local dress and customs, hiding their religious affiliation or apostasising and providing intelligence to local rulers, which in turn frequently led to their being accused of treachery by the Portuguese. Similar skills were also required during the initial stages of Portuguese presence in India, with the significant difference being that the Portuguese could not always rely on the interpreters they had brought with them, for they did not possess the necessary language skills, with even Arabic of the North African dialectal variety, being of little use.

The Portuguese explorers were particularly suspicious of foreign interpreters and intermediaries, and thus the latter had to strive to overcome this distrust, particularly if they were Muslim and thus identified with Portugal's traditional enemy. One can certainly draw the conclusion that interpreters faced similar hostility from other parties too, and some of the best-known figures, such as Alexandre d'Ataíde, Francisco de Albuquerque, Gaspar da Gama and João Machado apostasised more than once as they changed employers and also adopted new identities in a bid to assuage misgivings about divided loyalties. This pattern of behaviour was reproduced in Senegambia, both among the *tangomaus* (mulatto offspring of *lançados*), who were commercial and linguistic intermediaries for local leaders, and among Africans who learned Portuguese and dressed in Western style to facilitate their dealings with Portuguese traders.

Influencial figures would have been the godfathers of Christian converts who passed on their family names, thereby creating a new Christian identity such as Afonso de Albuquerque who was the Portuguese governor of India and employer-godfather of Francisco. Likewise Vasco da Gama had Gaspar christened in the Azores on the return voyage to Lisbon so that his interpreter could safely disembark in Lisbon (from where Jews had been banished) and be presented to King Manuel, whom he then entertained with tales (tall tales in fact) of fabulous riches awaiting the Portuguese in India. Machado, the only native Portuguese among the examples given, whose death sentence for murder was commuted into exile and to be *lançado* onto the shores of Mozambique, took the Muslim name Çufo when in the service of the Sultans of Bijapur. Incidentally this was also one of the pseudonyms by which Ataíde (of Jewish origin but captured from an Arab trading vessel) was known to the Portuguese prior to his christening. Meanwhile, a rather mysterious character called João Ferreira married into a West African royal family (the Gran-Fulo empire) and became known as *Ganagoga*, the master of all languages[11].

11 "Este lançado português se foi ao Reino do Gran-Fulo … e na corte de Gran-Fulo se casou com huma filha sua, daqual teve huma filha… E chama-se João Ferreira, da nação, e chamado pelos negros o Ganagoga, que quer dizer, na língua dos Beafares, homem que falla todas as línguas, como de feito falla a dos negros" (Kopke 1844: 15). Our translation: "This Portuguese *lançado* went to the Gran-Fulo kingdom… and in the Court of the Gran-Fulo married one of his daughters, with whom he had a daughter… And his name is João Ferreira, from Portugal, and called Ganagoga by the blacks, which in the Beafar language means the man who speaks all languages, as he indeed speaks the language of the blacks."

The level of suspicion tended to be most acute between Christians and Muslims, which in fact served to enhance linguistic mediators' survival skills, in particular through the provision of additional, connected services, such as commercial brokerage and intelligence, at the same time, bringing them extra income. The irascible Afonso de Albuquerque, who had Francisco put in chains at one point lest he desert (with valuable information) to the enemy, on more than one occasion complained bitterly to King Manuel about the devious Cidi Ali, yet also rewarded him for his services as informant about the intentions of his official employer, the King of Cambay (cf. *Cartas de Afonso de Albuquerque* 1903: 332-334). The Jesuits complained of the treachery of an interpreter called Dadagi. Following an audience with King Manuel, in which he promised to adopt Christianity, he was given a lifetime appointment as the Governor's interpreter, but failed on his religious promise and was considered the biggest thorn in the Missionaries' sides[12]. Thus, linguistic mediators were constantly treading a fine line as they sought to avoid alienating either of the parties they were in contact with. Frequently, they were unable to provide the unwavering loyalty desired by their employers and thus moved along several peripheries, inhabiting an inter-cultural space or no man's land. In fact, in some cases they even created their own meta-culture woven with strands of various influences, such as the *tangomaus* who would come to live apart from the rest of the village and the Luso-Asian community of Christian Siamese subjects concentrated in the Portuguese village in the imperial capital, Ayutthaya, a distinct group that monopolised interpretation between the Siamese and Europeans until the first half of the nineteenth century.

In the early days of the Estado da Índia, foreign and Portuguese interpreters participated in the attempts to gain special protection or royal patronage, alongside many working for the Crown. Locally, their position was precarious on several levels. Leading figures such as Gama and Albuquerque greatly doubted their loyalty in view of their access to intelligence on both sides, leading to a striking discrepancy between the circles they moved in and their social status. They were in all essence prisoners or even slaves and their employers wilfully mantained them in this condition. Others in the Portuguese administration begrudged them their ready access to viceroys and governors (they accused the

12 cf. Wicki (1948: 69) Letter from Miguel Vaz to Dom João III, late 1545: "O bramene mais prejudicial e contrairo há christandade de Goa hé Dadagi, filho de Crisnaa, que quá veyo a este Reino e recebeo muitas mercês e omrras d'el-Rey dom Manuel, voso padre, que sancta gloria aja, e lhe prometeo de ser christão tamto que tornase há India, com toda sua familia, por cujo respeito lhe foy feito mercê do oficio de tanadar-moor e limgoa do Governador em sua vida, e elle nunqua se fez christão, antes elle e o filho sam os mores adversarios da nosa sancta fee que há em Goa". Our translation: "The main Brahmin opponent who does most damage to Christianity in Goa is Dadagi, Crisna's son, who came here to this kingdom and received many rewards and honours from your father, King Manuel, may he rest in holy glory, and promised him that he and all his family would become Christians as soon as he returned to India, out of respect for whom he was rewarded with the post of chief tax-collector and *limgoa* to the Governor for the rest of his life, and he never became a Christian, rather he and his son are the greatest adversaries of our holy faith in Goa". See also Wicki (1948: 744-745) Letter from Pedro Fernandes Sardinha to Dom João III, late 1549, with a similar complaint.

latter of too willingly heeding their advice), never forgetting their non-Christian non-Portuguese origins, as they reviled them for performing spying missions and denouncing petty corruption and clandestine trading which defrauded the authorities of tax revenue. Interpreters reacted by addressing their complaints, including about death threats, low pay and prolonged compulsory service, directly to King Manuel and at least three of them travelled to Portugal and enjoyed audiences with him. In fact, certain extensive letters to the sovereign were conserved and subsequently published, providing us with an invaluable albeit partisan insight into the work and abilities of these linguistic and cultural mediators from the first half of the sixteenth century, a topic which we shall return to in the next section.

Let us now turn our attention to the other significant group of interpreters working in India at this time, namely those that were sought out by missionaries to aid them in their conversion efforts. Although priests accompanied the voyages to the East right from the outset, their prime concern was the spiritual well--being of the crew and nascent settler communities, with only limited attempts at the conversion of locals. The main missionary activity began with the arrival of the Jesuits, in particular, Saint Francis Xavier, in 1543. He and his fellow brethren were painfully aware of their reliance on interpreters to convey their message to the population and hence, through the education of boys and young men at the seminaries, they strived to train their own mediators, with a number of references in the correspondence between them being made to the fact that those who did not make it into the clergy could at least assist them as *topazes*[13]. This system held advantages for them in that it avoided the need for them to pay for interpreting services and also allowed them to vet their interpreters' character. Whereas those working with the explorers were prized for their quick-thinking and self-reliance, with scant regard being paid to their morality, the religious orders were restricted in their scope for recruitment, since they required Christians of good moral standing, who were willing to forego personal gain or interests.

We shall see below that it was not only in these qualities that we can perceive a stark contrast between the two sets of interpreters, but that the same is also true of the tasks they performed and their use of language. Whilst working for one employer did not automatically preclude an interpreter from working for another, such transfers were only possible when the mediator's particular qualities and skills became relevant, the most obvious example being the state's use of members of the clergy to act as interpreter-envoys to local courts, in the knowledge that men of the cloth were recognised for their integrity and also for their superior eloquence (and could work towards economic and political goals and religious aims at the same time).

13 According to Dalgado (1919: 381), the term *topaz* originated in Southern India from the Dravidian etimon, *tuppasi*, which in turn was derived from the Sanskrit, *dvibhasya*, literally "two languages" meaning bilingual or interpreter, but also used to describe those who dressed in Portuguese fashion, spoke Portuguese and identified themselves culturally with the Portuguese. It was used in India, Ceylon and Malaysia until the 18th century.

Considering that the Discoveries were in essence a first meeting of peoples, cultures and languages, it was quite impossible for adequately prepared interpreters to have been present, leading to the imperious need to improvise a communication solution. As a result, the mariners' logs which we referred to above, vividly describe gestures and mimicry being used to try and engage the other party in addition to curtailed attempts to overcome the language barrier by virtue of cognates and common languages. Such situations were reproduced throughout the fifteenth century as the progression of Portugal's sea-voyages brought mariners into contact with new peoples and tongues.

Given this experience, it should come as no surprise that the explorers and subsequently the Portuguese authorities in India should not have been overly demanding with regard to interpreters' fluency and accuracy. What was important to them was to gain information (or intelligence) and to achieve strategic and economic goals: linguistic mediation was merely a means to an end. One of the most striking examples of such improvisation concerns the deportee whom Vasco da Gama sent ashore in Calicut upon his arrival at the end of his maiden voyage to India. He was given instructions by the captain to walk around town to gather as much information as possible using his eyes and ears, but not to utter a word, for his understanding of Arabic was extremely limited and he could not speak it at all. Dressed as a Muslim, he was taken to the house of Bontaibo, originally from Tunis, whose grasp of Spanish (learned some twenty years previously) caused much rejoicing amongst Gama's crew: Castanheda describes their wonderment that someone so far away should speak *their* language (cf. Castanheda 1833: 40). Gaspar da Gama, mentioned above, has frequently been given the accolade of the finest interpreter the Portuguese had during their early days in India, yet when they encountered him, he did not know any Portuguese, but made himself understood using a Genoese or Venetian dialect. Even stilted Arabic as a bridge to get from Malayalam and other Indian languages through relay interpreting was used.

We can therefore conclude that for functional purposes, the Portuguese were inclined to accept interpretation into any language they could reasonably understand and at the same time considered that their linguistic mediators could interpret from any language they could grasp the gist of. Modern-day concepts such as a fixed language combination or a distinction between active and passive languages simply did not apply as we understand them. Interpreters were viewed as having a function, which was either one-way communication, that is to say, obtaining and relaying information back to their masters, signifying that their knowledge of a given language need only be passive, or two-way communication, mediating a dialogue. How they managed it was of secondary importance to the achievement of other goals. This same approach to languages was actually replicated by some of the interpreters, who were equally more concerned with achieving their personal goals through taking on the role of mediator rather than showing any scruples concerning accuracy. Thus, some made extraordinary claims to being able to interpret from a large number of languages or even having

learned a language within a matter of weeks. Of course, their linguistic knowledge needed only to satisfy the direct and limited needs of their clients, with a small lexical coverage relating to a handful of topics (of which the interpreters had the necessary thematic knowledge). Yet, many general historians have taken such boasts at face value and attributed extraordinary talents to these interpreters, thereby creating a somewhat undeserved reputation.

Meanwhile, the attitude towards language amongst the religious orders active in India was wholly different, for their linguistic mediation needs were far removed from those of the administrative and merchant communities. To begin with, the missionaries were keenly aware of the need for competent linguists, either from among their own ranks or by recruiting locally, particularly from amongst seminarists. Some priests with the greatest gift for learning languages became quite fluent in Persian, Indian or Oriental languages and could perform some of their more routine tasks such as christenings unaided, with the Jesuits notably bringing over young novices who they felt would be more successful in this endeavour. Yet they encountered greater difficulties in preaching in local languages and thus were far more reliant on interpreters and took a deep interest in ensuring their message was conveyed accurately and eloquently, frequently discussing this issue in their letters and its impact on conversion. There could be no approximation in the language used. The priests had to speak Portuguese rather than any other European language for that was the only language that their student-interpreters could readily understand. Indeed, whilst the Jesuits, like the sailors, hailed from various European countries (not least St. Francis Xavier, who was from Navarre), their correspondence warns against sending brethren to India who could not speak Portuguese[14]. Furthermore, they had to ensure interpretation into every language of their listeners and that their interpreters were familiar with the concepts of the Christian faith and could express them in their native languages.

With much more rigourous requirements, however, there was more room for failure in the essential objective of the exercise. Not all priests were as fluent as they would have wished in Portuguese and even St. Francis Xavier bemoaned his difficulties. The scarcity of interpreters of sound character and the necessary linguistic skills resulted in complicated improvisation, whereby relay interpreting could be resorted to in order to convey the message to all the linguistic groups present[15]. In addition, there was a testing paradox of adjusting the com-

14 "Si de nosa Compañnia vieren algunos estrangeros que não saben falar portugues, hé necesario que aprendan a falar, porque de outro jeto não haberá topaz que os entenda" (Silva Rego 1950: 167), Letter from Francis Xavier in S. Tomé, 8.5.1545. Our translation: "If some foreigners, who do not know how to speak Portuguese, come from our Society, they will have to learn it otherwise no interpreter will understand them".

15 "Isto tudo se lhes dis polo mais fácil modo que se pode, para que elles possão entender, falando-lhes por enterpetres de que há sempre muyta falta polas muytas e diverssas naçõis que aquy concorrem, porque de quasi toda a nação destas partes vem caticuminos; algumas vezes se acontesse que em huma mesma pratica se fala por tres e quatro enterpetres de diverssas linguoas a diverssos" (Wicki 1948: 168), Letter from Brother Emmanuel Teixeira to the Portuguese Company of Jesus, 25.12.1558. Our

plexity of language used to ensure comprehension on the one hand by the interpreters and on the other, by the very simple congregations (see footnote 17), whilst at the same time, finding suitable words to express ideas that were alien to the listeners. In fact, the problem of creating Christian terminology in local languages was, in the eyes of the Jesuits, a major impediment to the successful conversion of the masses.

This contrast in approaches between the secular and religious authorities is most revealing. The Jesuits were often fiercely critical of the technical ability of their interpreters, lamenting that their shortcomings in both their expression in their native languages and in their understanding of Portuguese were the root cause of their "poor harvests"[16]. Yet they had learned Portuguese formally in the seminaries, with the Jesuits having eventually established seminaries in four different areas in order to train *topazes* with four distinct Indian languages, which they expressly asserted were not mutually comprehensible (cf. Wicki 1948: 112). The mediators working for the state, meanwhile, boasted of being able to work from and into a very broad range of languages, but it was certainly not their linguistic prowess that underpinned the assessments made of them by their employers, as we shall discover below.

2.2 Tasks

The tasks performed by linguistic mediators working for the Portuguese in sixteenth century India were far broader than those undertaken by the modern interpreter, since a *língua* was not defined by the acts he performed but rather the function, still essentially understood in sixteenth century India to be to provide information, not necessarily entailing the translation of face-to-face dialogues. Such information could be gathered and conveyed in a variety of modalities, including informally, by spying or eavesdropping, even by repeating privileged information or confidences to which interpreters were privy given their unique position. The King of Hormuz used Alexandre d'Ataíde, for example, to transmit an important message to Afonso de Albuquerque:

> E logo ao outro dia, falando el rey com Alexandre dataide em cousas que lhe ho governador mandava requerer, lhe disse aa poridade que Raix hamet que hi estava ho tinha preso, & fora de todo seu poder que ho dissesse assi a seu pay ho governador (que assi lhe chamava por lhe ele chamar filho) (Castanheda 1833: 338)[17]

translation: "This is all said to them in the simplest possible form, so that they can understand it, speaking to them through interpreters, which we are always lacking because of the many and diverse peoples that seek us here, as catechumens come from almost all parts of this nation; in some sermons we end up speaking through three or four interpreters of different languages to different people".

16 In their correspondence, the Jesuits often used this term to refer to their success or otherwise in converting locals.

17 Our translation: "And on the very next day, when the King was talking to Alexandre d'Ataíde about things that the governor had sent him to ask for, he secretly told him that Rex Hamet who was there had taken him prisoner and that he should do

For his part, João Machado offered crucial and dissenting advice on military strategy to Afonso de Albuquerque on the Benasteri siege (Goa) in 1512, since it appears that having previously been in the employ of the enemy, the Sultans of Bijapur, he was better informed about their fighting capacity (cf. *Cartas de Afonso de Albuquerque* 1903: 17). Moreover, the Portuguese were acutely aware of the fact that interpreters did not only use their ears but also their eyes to gather information, hence Da Gama's instructions to the deportee (cf. Correia 1858-1863: 78) and conversely Afonso de Albuquerque did not want to meet João Machado, then acting as negotiator for the Sultan's captain in the city of Goa, so that he would not witness the precarious state the Portuguese defences were in and report back on it to the enemy (cf. Castanheda 1833: 53).

Furthermore, this case also points towards another essential difference in the way diplomatic interpreters worked, in that the dialogues they mediated were habitually remote and asychronous, since the leaders of the opposing camps would not meet but provide detailed instructions to the interpreter-envoy, who would travel back and forth, relaying these messages. Such a method placed much greater pressure on the interpreter's ability to gauge the interests and intentions of his interlocutor and couch his remit in appropriate linguistic formulae, essential not only for enhancing the likelihood of achieving the desired outcome, but also for protecting his own physcial integrity. Greater agency could also be attained by performing some of the numerous corollary functions to which we have already referred. In his account of the expedition he guided to Chittagong and Gaur in 1521, the anonymous interpreter acted as spokesperson (or indeed cultural and linguistic mediator) for the group to the Sultan, when the latter was planning to have them beheaded. Rather than merely translate the words of the expedition leader, he produced a statement of his own initiative, for his knowledge offered him an advantage in framing the message appropriately.

Similarly, state interpreters would be entrusted with brokering business deals, their performance being judged on their ability to seal a good price, rather than on their linguistic abilities or faithful rendition of their master's words; that is, their negotiating skills were valued more highly than their interpreting techniques. Indeed, as a result, they could venture to mediate between languages in which they were not fully proficient, especially since only limited lexical and syntactical ranges were required and their clients had few if any linguistic expectations. In other circumstances, the Portuguese and indeed their interlocutors, sought to constrain interpreters' latitude, by preferring to set down their messages in writing. This exercise was performed by a secretary or interpreter (sometimes the same person performed both roles), under the watchful eyes of another. The message was often written in the original language with the sight translation being performed at the destination, again under surveillance, or directly in the target language to seemingly reduce still further the possibility of mistakes[18].

everything in his power to tell this to his father the governor (as he called him since the latter called him son)".

18 For example, see the letter from the so-called *King of Pepper (Rei da Pimenta)* to Governor Dom João de Castro, dated 28.9.1547: "E porque pode ser que não saberão decrarar a Vosa Senhoria o que lhe scprevo em hua ola pareceo me bem mamdar scprever esta em

This custom indicates that little distinction was drawn between written and oral linguistic mediation, although the former could only be performed by the literate, such as the Portuguese secretaries appointed to various Ceylonese rulers and the *topazes* educated in seminaries. The latter would assist with the translation of prayers and scriptures into their mother tongue, sometimes working in tandem, with one producing an oral translation and another writing it down. Not only could texts be produced for the purposes of standardisation, but they could also be learned by rote by the European priests, so that they could recite them at gatherings, for they believed, as mentioned above, that they would be more successful if they could avoid interpreters and avail themselves of their oratorical skills. Here too, we see a contrast between interpreting in the administrative and religious fields, for the prosetylsers urged the *topazes* to improve their public speaking[19], whilst this was of no concern to those engaged in commerce, for interpretation was undertaken for a small group of people at close quarters.

Skilful interpreters were capable of working in different arenas: the religious orders were aware of the difficulty in retaining theirs, when they knew that their language skills could be put to more profitable use by working for merchants. Not only were members of the clergy requested to act as ambassador-linguists by the State as mentioned above, but they also came to play a unique and vital role during the second half of the sixteenth century in Japan, by combining their evangelising activities with mediating business arrangements between Portuguese traders (who enjoyed a monopoly) and leading Japanese figures, including warlords. João Rodrigues, sent out to India as a young boy by the Jesuits and a product of their rigorous language-learning regime, became a trusted confidante and commercial agent for Hideyoshi a position which ensured that the latter did not enforce his expulsion edict of foreign missionaries on the Jesuit order. When finally removed from that powerful position by Hideyoshi's successor, the Portuguese also lost their commercial dominance.

portuges pera milhor decraração do que scprevo na ola". Our translation: "And because they may not know how to declare what I write on a palm-leaf to your Excellency, I thought it wise to write this one in Portuguese so that they state better what I am writing on the palm-leaf" (Colecção de São Lourenço 1973-1975: 412).

19 See the letter from Francis Xavier to Francisco Manilhas in Punicale, sent from Manapar, 20.3.1544 (*Obras Completas de São Francisco Xavier* 2006: 154). Our translation: "Tell Mateus to be a good son and I will be a good father to him. Take good care of him and tell him to say out loud what you tell him on Sundays: let everyone hear him, including those in Manapar! This last part was a jest as Manapar was a good twenty miles away".

3. Conclusion

Interpreters working for the Portuguese *Estado da Índia* like their predecessors on the voyages of discovery acquired their skills informally, with intepreting techniques being just one of a range of abilities required to mediate between often hostile groups and simultaneously ensure one's own survival. A satisfactory system for recruiting, training and developing interpreters was never put in place by the administration, for it was so concerned with military, territorial and economic goals, that efficiency of communication was not given any real consideration. Furthermore, an inherent distrust of those living on the edge of or between several cultures, who were not unmistakeably Portuguese and Christian, induced contempt towards linguistic mediators and the underrating of their activities.

In a sense, religious orders operating in India and the East were more reliant on interpreters, not because the language skills of their own members were inferior, but rather because the spoken word was vital for achieving their substantive goals. They devoted much attention, as reflected in their internal correspondence, to the training and development of their linguists (of both European and Asian origin), going beyond mere foreign language-learning and creating specialised seminaries with a view to producing bilingual brethren and future interpreters. They had different parameters for assessing the quality of interpreter performance, which included public speaking skills, proficiency in both the output in the mother tongue and understanding of the source language, and the ability to grasp and convey specific concepts. In short, they were more demanding on the technical dimensions than the administration and thus entertained considerations that are closer to those expected of modern interpreters.

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Cowboys, Indians and Interpreters. On the controversial role of interpreters in the conquest of the American West

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Abstract

During the nineteenth century, the United States Government engaged in frenetic negotiations with Native American tribes to persuade them to relinquish their sacred homelands by signing treaties. At these treaty negotiations, resulting in either the ethnic cleansing or the relocation of Indian tribes, interpreters were regularly present to enable communication between Native Americans and English-speaking government officials. The analysis of selected essays on the history of American Indians has provided insights into the role of interpreters in nineteenth-century America, revealing that they exerted considerable political power by acting as diplomats for the U.S. Government. After outlining the nature of interpreting in Indian-white relations, the paper focuses on land treaty negotiations between the U.S. Government and the Sioux tribes, depicting the two emblematic characters of 'interpreters' Charles Picotte and Samuel Hinman, who played an active role in the bloody conquest of the American West.

Keywords

Interpreting in 19th century America, interpreting in Indian-white relations, Charles Picotte, Samuel Hinman.

The nineteenth-century history of European-American expansion to the West can be said to be briefly, but vividly, summarised in a sentence by Sitting Bull, reported by Dee Brown in *Bury my Heart at Wounded Knee* (1970: 489):

> "I want you to go and tell the Great Father [the President of the United States of America]," Sitting Bull responded, "that I do not want to sell any land to the government." He picked up a pinch of dust and added: "Not even as much as this."

This is how the great Sioux leader answered to a messenger, sent by President Ulysses Grant, who invited him to a council for discussing Indian relinquishment of the Black Hills. *Paha Sapa*, or the Black Hills, was a sacred Indian place, considered "the center of the world, the place of gods and holy mountains, where warriors went to speak with the Great Spirit and await visions" (Brown 1970: 483). Indian ownership of the Black Hills was guaranteed by the Treaty of Fort Laramie, signed in 1868 by the United States Government and the Sioux tribes to end Red Cloud's War[1] and guarantee peace between white men and red men. However, the treaty was soon violated when General Custer reported that the hills were filled with gold (Brown 1970: 485); whereupon, the Great Father Ulysses Grant understood that his considering the Black Hills worthless had been at the least reckless and simply resumed implementing the Indian assimilation policy launched by President George Washington soon after the creation of the United States of America and persistently pursued by each President ever since. Assimilation merely consisted in the cultural 'transformation' or 'conversion' of Native Americans. Miller (1993) and Wallace (1999: 168) report that it was precisely the first U.S. President who, despite the good intention to civilise Native Americans, realised, together with Secretary of War Henry Knox, that "it has been conceived to be impracticable to civilize the Indians of North America". Few history books (Miller 1993; Grizzard 2005) specify that Washington was also named *Caunotaucarius*, meaning "town taker" or "devourer of villages" (Grizzard 2005: 53)[2]. The term itself is indicative of Washington's attitude towards Indian tribes and suggests what the assimilation policy (consistent through American administrations) was actually about. In 1830, the U.S. Congress passed the Indian Removal Act, aiming at removing the Native American tribes from their original lands, either forcefully or by means of exchange of territory through treaties. Land treaty

1 Red Cloud's War was an armed conflict between the United States and the Lakota, Northern Cheyenne and Northern Arapaho tribes; the war, fought between 1866 and 1868 in Wyoming and Montana territories, was named after Red Cloud, the great Oglala Sioux chief who led his warriors against the U.S. army. The war was fought over control of the Powder River Country, in Wyoming, where the U.S. Government had blazed the Bozeman Trail through Indian territories to enable a short and safe route to the Montana gold fields.

2 The nickname was given to George Washington by Seneca leader Tanacharison (the "Half-King") in 1753 and the president used it when writing to the Half-King and other *sachems* (Grizzard 2005: 53).

negotiations between the U.S. Government and Native Americans became frenetic in the nineteenth century but, as history teaches, diplomacy is often the harbinger of war. The progressive implementation of the Indian removal policy resulted in the ethnic cleansing of a number of tribes and the "Trail of Tears" (Brown 1970: 31), a series of forced relocations of Native American tribes to lands west of the Mississippi river. This mass migration was followed by others and most tribes were relocated to Indian reservations managed by the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs.

The thirty years between 1860 and 1890 were the years of the 'final solution' to the Indian problem, culminating in the Wounded Knee Massacre, the Sioux Holocaust, that marks "the symbolic end of Indian freedom" (Brown 1970: 40). These were also the years in which the great myths of the American West emerged: the myths of cowboys, goldseekers, gamblers, gunmen, cavalrymen and homesteaders (Brown 1970: 13); the myth of General Custer and other brave generals putting their lives at risk to protect the newly-born United States; and the negative myths of Indians, "stereotyped [...] as ruthless savages" (Brown 1970: 16) preventing the blessed expansion of America to the West.

These myths were later put in perspective by the work of historians, who restored the reputation of Indian tribes by exposing the bloodshed perpetrated by the U.S. Government. By analysing government documents and reports and working on records of treaty councils and formal meetings between Indian tribe members and U.S. Government representatives, historians have gradually enabled the silenced voices of Indians to be read and heard. Essays and history books have reconstructed the detailed history of the 'opening' of the American West, shedding light on the role of Indians and the U.S. Government during negotiations and exposing the systematically controversial nature of treaty signing. In so doing, not only have they exposed the genocide of American Indian tribes to a world audience, but they have also answered crucial, albeit simple, questions: how did Native and non-Native Americans communicate? How were the terms and conditions of treaties explained to the Indians? How could English-speaking government officials understand the innumerable dialects spoken by the various Indian tribes populating North America? In this regard, most essays on the history of nineteenth-century America read like riveting tales of cowboys and Indians enriched by the presence of similarly brave, influential and cruel characters referred to as 'interpreters'. Unlike 'cowboys' and Indians, these controversial figures did not give rise to myths but were rapidly concealed by history. Their impact on the rise of the United States was, however, considerable (Kawashima 1989: 12).

The disinterested reading of *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*, strewn with references to purported 'interpreters', has provided the opportunity to write the present paper. Widening the bibliographical scope and analysing other selected essays on the history of American Indians, meaningful insights have been gained about the role of interpreters in Indian-white relations. The findings of this research are outlined in the following paragraphs.

1. The role of interpreters in Indian-white land treaty negotiations

Interpreters played an instrumental role in Indian-white relations throughout the entire colonial period (Kawashima 1989: 1), as they enabled communication between English-speaking European-Americans[3] and the various Native American tribes in different situations, from political negotiations to more ordinary daily functions such as trade and business (Kawashima 1989: 2). Indian-white communication and, hence, interpreting were extremely problematic owing to "the fundamental structural differences between English and the Indian languages, the highly symbolic and allusive character of Indian diplomatic discourse, and the radical disparateness of White and Indian cultures" (Kawashima 1988: 252-253). The demanding transposition tasks interpreters were called upon to perform are also described by Brown (1970: 15):

> Like most oral peoples [...] the Indians depended upon imagery to express their thoughts, so that the English translations were filled with graphic similes and metaphors of the natural world. If an eloquent Indian had a poor interpreter, his words might be transformed to flat prose, but a good interpreter could make a poor speaker sound poetic.

The deeply spiritual nature and evocative language of Indians, therefore, had repercussions on interlinguistic communication with English-speaking settlers, as regards the connotative meaning of lexical items and the ethotic dimension of discourse alike:

> There were many problems in direct, literal translation of Indian languages into English. We cannot be confident that interpreters always translated such Indian words as "son", "brother" and "father" in the true Indian sense of the terms. The imaginative symbolism which Indian orators revealed on great occasions and which creates "atmosphere" in a single happy phrase is lacking in the reports of Indian speeches in the official colonial records. It was usually impossible for interpreters, with the best intentions, to render the dignified and thoughtful speech of the Indians into adequate English, and thus they gravely prejudiced the reputation of the natives' mental capacity (Kawashima 1989: 5).

Interlinguistic communication problems were further compounded by "a shortage of skilled interpreters" (Kawashima 1989: 4); poor interpreting was, therefore, not unusual at that time in North America, as suggested by the following excerpt drawn from *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*:

> The parley began coldly, with two interpreters attempting to translate the exchange of conversation. Realizing the interpreters knew fewer words of Kiowa than he knew of

3 The present paper focuses on the role of interpreters in the relations among Indians and English-speaking European-Americans in the nineteenth century, with particular reference to interpreting during the negotiations with the Sioux. For a more detailed insight into the interlinguistic problems engendered by the presence of English and French settlers on the whole of North America in the early colonial period, see Kawashima (1989).

> English, Satanta [a Kiowa war chief] called up one of his warriors, Walking Bird, who had acquired a considerable vocabulary from white teamsters (Brown 1970: 430).

As reported by Kawashima (1988: 253), "only those who were thoroughly familiar with the customs and traditions, as well as languages, of both cultures were able to translate accurately and effectively". A question arises naturally: who mastered such cultural and linguistic knowledge and took on the highly demanding task of enabling communication between such extremely different ethnic groups? Brown (1970: 15) reports that "interpreters quite often were half-bloods who knew spoken languages but seldom could read or write". The fact is reiterated by Prucha (1994: 214), who states that "a great many were mixed bloods, and a considerable number who witnessed treaties were illiterate and signed their names on the treaty documents with a mark". Prucha (1994: 213-214) adds that "some interpreters were traders who knew Indian languages and customs", while "others were whites (men and women) who had taken up life among the Indians, sometimes originally as captives"; which is confirmed by Kawashima (1989: 4), who claims that white interpreters included agents and missionaries who were familiar with one or more Indian languages and/or dialects and others who learnt Indian languages largely out of necessity as fur traders, mixed-bloods or captives. Kawashima (1989: 3) also clarifies that the interpreting profession was not a prerogative of the whites or half-bloods; some interpreters were Indians who had learnt the English language and it was precisely this 'class' of interpreters that first dominated the scene in the early colonial period for a rather simple reason:

> Most of the interpreters employed in Indian-white relations in the seventeenth century were Indians; only a small number of whites served in this capacity. From the beginning, however, the colonists had made efforts to learn the native languages, considering the learning of the Indians' languages to be crucial for winning their mind and soul. […] Yet for the settlers in general, Indian languages were extremely difficult to learn. The number of colonists who endeavored to learn native tongues, most of them missionaries, did not increase with the passage of time. More Indians learned English than settlers voluntarily tried to learn their languages (Kawashima 1989: 3).

Learning English, thus, appears to have been less demanding than learning an Indian language; or, Indians were more skilled language-learners than white settlers, at least at the beginning. Indeed, the eighteenth century saw a rapid increase in the number of white interpreters, who eventually outnumbered those of Indian origin (Kawashima 1989: 3): "It was, however, the whites who dominated the activities of the interpreters during the eighteenth century". Though this figure might simply be considered a consequence of the increasing white occupation of North American territory, the increasing importance of the interpreting profession in Indian-white relations cannot be neglected. In particular, land transactions, "which were usually done formally through conferences and treaties with the full aid of interpreters" (Kawashima 1989: 4), became ordinary in the nineteenth century and "treaties became primary instruments for carrying out federal Indian policy" (Prucha 1994: 103):

> Between the beginning of Thomas Jefferson's administration and the end of the 1860s the United States engaged in six decades of active, and in some cases almost frenetic, treaty making with the Indians (Prucha 1994: 103).

In the essay *American Indian Treaties: The History of a Political Anomaly*, Prucha (1994: 213) highlights that interpreters were regularly present during treaty negotiations, as were treaty commissioners and Indian negotiators:

> Their [the interpreters'] importance [...] was tremendous, for if the treaties were to make much sense as contracts, the two parties needed to understand what each was saying. The importance was amplified by the fact that the English version of the treaties alone was the standard (Prucha 1994: 213).

Therefore, the increase in the number of white interpreters is likely to have been determined by acknowledgment of the crucial role of *the treaty* as a political instrument on the part of American administrations and white settlers. In a broader sense, the fact that the monopoly of language and communication during negotiations for Indian lands provided competitive advantage soon became evident. Considering the shortage of skilled interpreters on the whole of the American territory and the paramountcy of treaty making, *the interpreter* rapidly became a highly-demanded professional profile in the newly-formed United States of America:

> In diplomatic negotiations, effective translating was essential, especially in the colonies that dealt with strong Indian tribes. Consequently, the importance of Indian interpreters expanded and was gradually institutionalized. Although the office of the interpreter was not a full-time job nor did it command high prestige, the position often involved much more responsibility than its title implied. The interpreters were actually the field representatives of the colonies in their dealings with the Indians. They were required not only to translate one language to another but simultaneously to serve as messengers and diplomatic agents to the Indian country, often for extended periods of time (Kawashima 1989: 7).

Interpreters started playing a valuable role as agents of government (Kawashima 1988: 254) in a specific *interpreting setting*, that of formal negotiations regarding the exchange of Indian territories through treaties. These agency interpreters authorised by law (Prucha 1994: 213) did not, however, work in safe and shiny institutional settings but performed their tasks outdoors, scattered all over the vast and uncontaminated American territory. Considering their governmental role and influence on the successful completion of negotiations, they actually worked as "forest diplomats" (Kawashima 1989: 12) or "diplomats in the wilderness" (Kawashima 1989: 8), whose essential qualities were "mastery of languages and full understanding of both the white and Indian traditions and cultures" (Kawashima 1989: 8). As government officials, they were charged with huge political responsibility and the word 'interpreter' soon became a title (Kawashima 1988: 253):

> Among numerous interpreters (who were usually selected from among those traders and mixed bloods who had good reputations) actively engaged in white-tribal rela-

> tions, there emerged a small number of highly capable persons who began to assume political roles. It was these interpreters with political ability that came to dominate the scene in […] Indian relations (Kawashima 1989: 7-8).

Having understood the importance of having the upper hand in interlinguistic communication and having institutionalised the interpreting profession, the federal government now started at a considerable advantage in the relations with Indian tribes. Though abuses of power by the whites may not have been as prevalent as expected (Kawashima 1989: 4), as a number of American commissioners often sought earnestly to convey the treaties' terms to the Indians (Prucha 1994: 215), the Indian treaty soon became "a major device through which the colonists acquired land from the tribes, […] a means to deceive and cheat the Indians" (Kawashima 1989: 4) through the connivance of interpreters. Thus, interpreting soon became not only a prestigious job but also a cover for business and corruption:

> Interpreters were scarce […], for few trustworthy men could be found to perform this service. Competent interpreters carried on a lucrative business, being employed first by one official, then by another. Sometimes an interpreter would serve two masters simultaneously. Occasionally, some corrupt persons strictly sought the opportunity as interpreters to enrich themselves (Kawashima 1989: 6).

Reading through the pages of *Bury my Heart at Wounded Knee*, coming across stories of interpreters cheating Indians is not infrequent. Where detailed stories are missing, the systematically controversial nature of treaty signing can be inferred from Brown's narrative. A sentence like "Grey Beard understood a few words of English and could not be so easily deceived by interpreters" (Brown 1970: 285) presupposes that interpreters were notorious for deceiving Indians. Having understood that treaty commissioners and interpreters were not always trustworthy, Indian chiefs and tribe members, traditionally viewed as "sweet […] gentle […] decorous and praiseworthy" (Brown 1970: 20), opened their eyes and started reshaping interpreter-mediated meetings by hiring their own interpreters:

> The interpreters at the treaty councils, to a large extent, came from a pool of agency interpreters authorized by law. And Indians often brought "their" interpreters to meetings, individuals of long acquaintance with the tribes and highly respected by the Indians they represented (Prucha 1994: 213).

The frequent presence of two interpreters, one appointed by the U.S. Government and the other chosen by Indians for his/her reputation, is corroborated by both Brown and Kawashima, as attested by the following excerpts:

> Most Indian leaders spoke freely and candidly in councils with white officials, and as they became more sophisticated in such matters during the 1870's and 1880's, they demanded the right to choose their own interpreters (Brown 1970: 15).

> Indian chiefs […] seldom trusted or relied solely on interpreters representing the colonists. Both sides were usually aided by their own independent interpreters. […] Gener-

> ally, Indians had a negative attitude toward white interpreters and viewed them with suspicion. […] The Indians who served as interpreters for the Indian tribes were capable and thoroughly trusted members who understood sufficient English and therefore were able to detect deliberate fraud by white interpreters. Indians were usually very careful in approving the interpreters appointed by the whites in their negotiations (Kawashima 1989: 4-5).

As proof that it was generally white interpreters who cheated the Indians rather than Indian interpreters cheating settlers or government officials, Kawashima (1989: 5) highlights that official records are strewn with references to cases "in which Indians either violently objected to particular interpreters appointed by the whites (whether they were white or Indians) or questioned the way translations were made" but reveal very few cases "in which the colonists challenged particular Indian interpreters or objected to what they had translated". Apparently, European-Americans did not even refrain from corrupting the interpreters appointed by the Indians (Kawashima 1989: 5). As a consequence, interpreter-mediated interactions soon turned into peculiar communicative situations in which two partisan interpreters were present and acted for the exclusive interests of their respective clients. Or, when cherished, impartiality was more a prerogative of Indian interpreters who, apparently, were not used to cheating the whites by means of imperfect translation.

In the light of the above, land treaty negotiations between Indians and U.S. Government officials were characterised by an atmosphere of sheer mistrust that, coupled with language- and culture-driven incomprehension and the frequent partisanship or incompetence of interpreters, constituted fertile ground for trickery and were the precursors of bloodshed.

2. Charles Picotte

Despite their crucial role in land treaty negotiations, interpreters in nineteenth-century America were, for the most part, "faceless individuals, neglected by historians" (Prucha 1994: 213); this comes as no surprise, considering that they lived at a frenetic juncture together with mythic figures such as the first Presidents of the United States and great Indian warriors like Crazy Horse and Sitting Bull. However, reading through the pages of essays on the history of the conquest of the West, traces of a few prominent 'interpreters' can be found.

Charles Picotte (1830-1896) is one of the few who have passed the test of history, as he is almost regularly quoted in reports on the history of Indian-white relations. He was a half-blood, the son of French fur trader Honoré Picotte and Eagle-Woman-That-All-Look-At, or simply Eagle Woman. His mother was the sister of Struck-by-the-Ree, the chief of the Yankton Sioux tribe (Maroukis 2004: 38), and a friend of Sitting Bull, for whom Charles Picotte worked as an interpreter on a few occasions:

> The younger Picotte had already done some interpreting for Sitting Bull, although not in the capacity of official post interpreter. Sitting Bull knew that he could trust the […] son of Eagle Woman to interpret his words and wishes correctly (Pope 2010).

Picotte was trusted among the Sioux tribes and "he also had a reputation for good character among the whites" (Chaky 2012: 93), which enabled him to work as an interpreter in meetings between his tribe of origin, the Yankton Sioux, and the U.S. Government. A famous photograph, available on the website of the *SIRIS*, the Smithsonian Institution Research Information System[4], shows him in maturity, dressed in city clothes and sporting a mustache, together with *Matosabitoiye* or Smutty Bear, a Yankton Sioux chief. The picture was taken in 1858, the year in which Picotte's activity as an interpreter was at its highest, as he worked during the negotiations for the Yankton Treaty, concerning prospective Yankton relinquishment of a considerable portion of land to the U.S. Government:

> Because he spoke both languages - English and the dialect of the Yankton Sioux - Picotte was the logical choice to serve as the liaison between the chiefs and the government (Karolevitz 1994).

> A close advisor to his uncle, the head chief, and fluent in several languages, Picotte was the key interpreter during the negotiations (Maroukis 2004: 38).

As a result of profound disagreement among some of the Yanktons, the negotiations took almost four months (Maroukis 2004: 38); yet the Yankton treaty was finally signed on 19 April 1858. Most of eastern South Dakota was ceded to the United States, opening the floodgates to white settlers; in particular, the Yanktons ceded more than eleven million acres of land to the United States, being guaranteed four hundred and thirty-one thousand acres on the western side of their homeland along the Missouri river, which became the Yankton Sioux Reservation. In other words, the Yanktons ceded ninety-six percent of their land and the remaining four percent was not the best land (Maroukis 2004: 39). Besides the Reservation, the Yanktons were also guaranteed compensation:

> In return for ceding this large tract of land, the government would pay the Yanktons $1,600,000 in annual installments ($32,000 per year) for the next fifty years. […] The $1,600,000 in annuities over a fifty-year period figures out to be […] $16 per capita per year for 2,000 Yanktons. Even by nineteenth-century standards this is an insubstantial amount of money (Maroukis 2004: 39).

Worse still, article 11 of the Yankton Treaty stated that "The Yancton acknowledge their dependence upon the Government of the United States" (Maroukis 2004: 39). In other words, in April 1858 the Yankton Sioux tribe suddenly lost its land and its freedom. Yet, someone benefited from the successful signing of the treaty besides the U.S. Government, i.e. Charles Picotte. The 'interpreter' was rewarded with six hundred and forty acres of land from the government for his "valuable

4 The photograph is available at <http://sirismm.si.edu/naa/baegn/gn__03633.jpg>. A number of other pictures of Charles Picotte can be found, as attested by Chaky (2012: 93).

services" (Maroukis 2004: 39), which arouses a few doubts on the alleged impartiality of his 'mediation' service. Indeed, Maroukis (2004: 39) and Karolevitz (1994) outline that there were sixteen Yankton signatories to the treaty, namely fifteen among chiefs and representatives of the various Yankton bands (including Struck-by-the-Ree and Smutty Bear) and Charles Picotte, the interpreter. However, three chiefs representing the upper Yankton bands and strongly opposing the deal (White Medicine Cow, Little White Swan and Pretty Boy) did not actually sign the treaty:

> Their names are on the treaty, but they did not personally put their mark on the document. Their mark was made by their "duly authorized delegate and representative, Chas. F. Picotte". Did these three band chiefs give this authority to Picotte because they could not attend the signing? Did they return home in protest? Did Picotte, whose self-interest was tied to the treaty, simply usurp the right to sign for them in their absence? The answer is unclear (Maroukis 2004: 39).

Maroukis's questions will probably find no answers and Charles Picotte is destined to remain an enigmatic character. What is certain is that the 1858 treaty created controversy among the Yanktons, many of whom "blamed and were angered at both Struck by the Ree and his nephew, Charles Picotte" (Maroukis 2004: 40). Maroukis (2004: 40) also reports the words of Henry Hare, a descendant of Mad Bull, who claimed that when the treaty was signed, most tribe members had gone hunting buffalo and did not have the chance to vote on the treaty.

The mysterious nature of the life of interpreter Charles Picotte is also addressed in an article by Bob Karolevitz (1994), entitled "Charles Picotte is a mystery, but his role in Yankton's history is clear"[5]. The article mainly deals with the role of Picotte in the development of Yankton, South Dakota, located on those acres of land granted to the interpreter by the U.S. Government as a reward for his services. Karolevitz (1994) specifies that in its early years Yankton was famous as "Charlie's town", which is itself evidence of Picotte's active role in the development of the future territorial capital. The doubts concerning Picotte's influence on the negotiations for the Yankton Treaty are raised in Karolevitz's article, as well:

> Did he sell out his tribespeople for his own gain, or did he [...] do what he could to facilitate the inevitable? [...] Picotte was not just a pawn in the history-making event. He may have been honestly working for the best interests of his people, but he was also an official member [...] of the Upper Missouri Land Company certain to benefit from the treaty (Karolevitz 1994).

Having been granted the land, Picotte bought additional property from the government providing him with access to the Missouri river and "he wisely chose his property at what would eventually be the site of the territorial capital" (Karolevitz 1994). Then, he embarked on various enterprises together with Captain John

5 The author wishes to thank the editorial staff of *Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan* for providing details regarding Bob Karolevitz, the late author of the article.

Blair Smith Todd (a U.S. Government Delegate involved in the Yankton Treaty); in particular, he committed to the development of his town by acquiring lumber for construction purposes, working for the Dakota Southern Railroad Company and striving for the selection of Yankton as the territorial capital[6]. Therefore, after his career as an interpreter, culminating in the crucial work during the Yankton Treaty negotiations, Picotte appears to have 'retired' and devoted his time to speculation and business ventures. His active contribution to the displacement of his own tribe has yet to be ascertained, but entrepreneurship was certainly not a typically Indian activity: "The white men were as thick and numerous and aimless as grasshoppers, moving always in a hurry but never seeming to get to whatever place it was they were going to" (Brown 1970: 325).

For unknown reasons, he finally returned to his mother's people at the Yankton Reservation, where he died in 1896. Whether he repented or not, his association with white society and his active involvement in the Yankton Treaty aroused the disdain of his people, while his apparent lack of impartiality and his excessively influential role as an interpreter bestowed on him a questionable reputation of speculator and a rightful place in the history of interpreting.

3. The Reverend Samuel D. Hinman

A less mysterious and even more influential character in treaty making with the Sioux was the Reverend Samuel Dutton Hinman (1839-1890), probably the most famous interpreter in nineteenth-century America. A Protestant Episcopal missionary, Hinman had lived among the Sioux since his youth and "believed that what the Indians needed was less land and more Christianity" (Brown 1970: 724). He was the founder and long-time head of the Episcopal Church's mission to the Santee Sioux at Niobrara (Allen 2009: 115). Since the foundation of the mission, he had been "determined to learn the Dakota language, so that he would not be dependent on interpreters to help him preach the Gospel" (Allen 2009: 117). Living among the Indians, he soon became "fluent in the Sioux language [...] familiar with Sioux ways [...] an astute observer of Indian affairs" (Anderson 1979: 520-524). Throughout the 1870s, Hinman's mission prospered and grew with many new converts, though several bands remained hostile and refused to be converted (Anderson 1979: 542).

At that time, rumours persisted that the Black Hills were filled with gold; when General Custer requested Hinman's assistance to explore the area in 1874 (Anderson 1979: 524), the provisions of the 1868 Treaty of Fort Laramie were suddenly violated and the Indians' certainties about their lands started to waver. The turbulent 1870s were the prelude to the Wounded Knee Massacre, the years in which "control of the Western Dakota Territory was being wrested from the Sioux" (Anderson 1979: 520) and those in which Hinman's career as explorer, missionary, treaty maker and interpreter thrived.

6 Details regarding Picotte's efforts to turn his land into a fully-fledged town are provided by Karolevitz (1994).

Those years were characterised by continuous negotiations between the U.S. Government and the Sioux regarding the opening of the Black Hills to white settlers, in spite of the 1868 provisions reserving the region for the Indians. Hinman accompanied Indian chiefs on numerous visits to the Interior Department, relentlessly working to enable communication between the whites and the Sioux. Numerous commissions were appointed to deal with the issue; however, the situation soon deteriorated. Goldseekers started entering the Black Hills at their own risk and *The Great Sioux War* broke out, as the followers of chiefs Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse left their reservations to defend the sacred *Paha Sapa* territory. When General Custer was killed during the battle of Little Bighorn in 1876, a new commission was appointed to bring the Sioux problem to a rapid conclusion: "Rather than negotiate, this commission would issue an ultimatum to the Indians – no more rations until they relinquished their claim to the Black Hills" (Anderson 1979: 535). The commission was headed by Dakota Governor Newton Edmunds, "an expert at negotiating lands away from Indians" (Brown 1970: 723), and the Reverend Samuel D. Hinman was named the chief interpreter (Anderson 1979: 536). Edmunds, "who knew the value of a good interpreter" (Anderson 1979: 538), was determined to have Hinman accept the job:

> Another matter that Governor Edmunds regarded as extremely important was that the commission should have its own Sioux interpreter, loyal to the commission alone. The agency interpreters – all mixed-blood Sioux – would not do. They all had some loyalty to their own people. Edmunds was determined to have as interpreter the Reverend Samuel D. Hinman, who had been a missionary among the Sioux since his youth, who spoke better Sioux than most Sioux did, and who understood these Indians better perhaps than any other white man (Hyde 1956: 113).

The excerpt shows that, unlike today, partisanship was considered a virtue when looking for an interpreter; Edmunds knew that the reverend could be trusted, as far as both his partisanship and communicative abilities were concerned. As a "special interpreter" (Brown 1970: 536), Hinman was fully aware of his status, leeway and power:

> Hinman knew his value to any commission seeking to induce Sioux chiefs to sign away their lands. Hinman was being offered one hundred dollars (equivalent to about five hundred at present day) a month and all expenses paid; but he demanded ten dollars a day, the same remuneration that Chairman Edmunds was to receive (Hyde 1956: 114).

As the commission travelled from one agency to another to collect the signatures of at least three-fourths of all adult male Sioux (Brown 1970: 725), Edmunds, Hinman and the other commissioners encountered tribes whose members immediately signed the paper, as they had suffered terrible losses and embraced Christianity to escape murder; yet, they also came across prouder and more determined tribes who opposed signing the treaty regarding Indian relinquishment of the Black Hills. In these cases, Hinman is reported to have harnessed all the freedom and power his position bestowed on him. In an attempt to collect the required number of signatures, he told the chiefs that he was there to lay out different

parts of the reservation with a view to breaking it up into smaller areas (Brown 1970: 723). This was, he said, a necessary activity, so that the different Sioux tribes could claim the areas as their own and have them as long as they lived; he also promised the chiefs that they would receive cows and bulls from the Great Father as a reward for their cooperation (Brown 1970: 724). The chiefs, unaware of the fraud perpetrated by the "special interpreter", signed the papers the commissioners had brought along in order to obtain the livestock. Brown (1970: 724) explains what happened as follows: "As none of the Sioux chiefs could read, they did not know that they were signing away 14,000 square miles of land in exchange for the promised cows and bulls".

In the cases in which the Indians refused to cooperate, Hinman resorted to either flattery or threat to force them to sign the treaty:

> At agencies where the Sioux were reluctant to sign anything, Hinman alternately wheedled and bullied them. In order to obtain an abundance of signatures, he persuaded boys as young as seven years old to sign the papers. […] In a meeting at Wounded Knee Creek on Pine Ridge reservation, Hinman told the Indians that if they did not sign they would not receive any more rations or annuities, and furthermore they would be sent to Indian Territory. Many of the older Sioux, who had seen the limits of their land shrink after "touching the pen" to similar documents, suspected that Hinman was trying to steal their reservation. Yellow Hair, a minor chief at Pine Ridge, stood strong against signing but then was frightened into doing so by Hinman's threats (Brown 1970: 724-725).

The threatening methods of Hinman's 'mediation' service are also described by Hyde (1956: 118-119):

> The Sioux were brave enough; but ever since they had come to the reservation they had been like wild creatures in a cage, ill at ease, watchful, and subject to sudden fits of panic. Men like Edmunds and Hinman knew how to play on their fears by sly talk about sending the Sioux to Indian Territory where most of them would die, about cutting off rations and letting them starve. They talked until the Sioux were dizzy, confused, and frightened, then led them like sheep and affixed their names to the new agreement. This was an approved frontier method for dealing with Indians, and it was about as ethical as confusing and frightening small children and then robbing them of their little treasures (Hyde 1956: 118-119).

Together with Governor Edmunds, Hinman appears to have been a leader in frightening the Sioux tribes into giving up their lands. Indeed, the two have not become famous for their honest work but have been included in that "group of crusaders […] at work in North Dakota Territory with plans for attracting a flood of white settlers into the Sioux lands" (Hyde 1956: 107). Despite their strenuous efforts to "push the Indians into a corner, take the best of their lands, and settle white families on them" (Hyde 1956: 107), their mission to make the Sioux cede about half of their lands to the United States failed; they managed to get a bill introduced in Congress, but it was questioned as they still had not obtained the signatures of the required three-fourths of all adult male Sioux. The chicanery of the Reverend Hinman was later discovered by another commission thanks to the confessions of different Sioux tribe members, including Red Cloud, who said:

"Mr. Hinman fools you big men […] He told you a lot of stuff, and you have to come out here and ask us about it" (Brown 1970: 726).

The new commission's discovery and the continuous accusations[7] brought Hinman's career to an end, as "the government never used him as interpreter again" (Allen 2009: 126). However, his career had already been far too influential: by flaunting the prestigious title of 'interpreter', he actively contributed to the 'opening' of the Black Hills, to use another euphemism. In Anderson's terms (1979: 540), he merely "worked toward what he felt were important goals – converting the Sioux to Christianity and revising their way of life", which makes labelling him 'interpreter' at least questionable. Actually, working relentlessly for the exclusive benefit of white settlers and the U.S. Government during the Great Sioux War (1876-1877), he just appears to have been another crucial figure in the leadup to the Wounded Knee Massacre, the peak of the 'final solution' to the Indian problem.

4. Conclusions

The analysis of selected essays and papers on the history of American Indians has provided insights into the nature of interpreting and the role of interpreters in Indian-white relations. During the nineteenth century, interpreters were especially required and hired to enable communication between U.S. Government officials and representatives of Indian tribes during formal negotiations regarding the exchange of Indian territory through treaties; formal land treaty negotiations, therefore, provided the main *interpreting setting* at that time. The severe interlinguistic communication problems, the shortage of skilled interpreters and the prevailing atmosphere of mistrust shaped a peculiar *interpreting situation*, in which two partisan interpreters worked for the exclusive benefits of their respective clients. Besides proficiency in at least one Indian language or dialect, partiality and loyalty towards the client were the added value of an interpreter. Owing to the crucial contribution they could provide to the newly-formed U.S. Government, interpreters began to acquire political power to such an extent that they actually turned into agents of government or diplomats. As such, they benefited from considerable freedom and leeway in performing their professional activity.

In such a daunting atmosphere, unscrupulous businessmen built a thriving career on the frenetic life of multilingual nineteenth-century America. The Reverend Samuel D. Hinman is the emblem of the abuses perpetrated by the whites towards Indian tribes through the connivance of excessively powerful and influential interpreters. Working as a "special interpreter" in the midst of the years of the 'final solution' to the Indian problem, he oppressed the Sioux to obtain their signatures and steal their sacred lands on behalf of the Government of the United States. As a half-blood and respected member of the Yankton Sioux tribe, Charles Picotte worked as an interpreter during the Yankton treaty negotiations,

7 Besides being blamed for threatening Indians and inducing boys to sign the treaty documents, Hinman was also heavily criticised by his superior, Bishop William Henry Hare, who accused him of being a lascivious man of "cool calculating evil" (Allen 2009: 115) and tried to dismiss him without success.

but reports suggest that he provided a non-impartial service eventually leading the Yanktons to lose their lands and his own reputation to be tarnished. However, his life and career are still characterised by numerous doubts, as is the role of interpreters in nineteenth-century America. Though leading back to an inglorious past, research on interpreting during land treaty negotiations between the U.S. Government and the various Indian tribes is a fascinating sub-field of Interpreting Studies, which could help retrace the path of the interpreting profession and corroborate today's tenets on its ethical standards. Paraphrasing Brown's words on the nature of his book[8] by simply replacing the words *book* and *American Indian*, this is not a cheerful *paper*, but history has a way of intruding upon the present, and perhaps those who read it will have a clearer understanding of what the *interpreter* is, by knowing what he was.

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8 Brown (1970: 16) specifies that *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee* "is not a cheerful book, but history has a way of intruding upon the present, and perhaps those who read it will have a clearer understanding of what the American Indian is, by knowing what he was".

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Ruston: the foundational case for interpreting with deaf parties in Anglo-American courtrooms*

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Abstract

Though not the first legal matter to admit a sworn signed language interpreter, this precedent-setting case that codified early protocols of courtroom interpreting for deaf parties under common law in Great Britain and the United States was heard in the London Central Criminal Court in 1786. During a larceny trial, a woman endured such an adversarial voir dire *process, that it cleared the procedural hurdles of that day to admit her deaf brother as a witness for the prosecution, and she was permitted to act as his interpreter. Supported by the sitting justice, her insightful answers to a belligerent defense counsel, and nuanced interpreting of witness testimony elevated the citation into the Anglo-American legal lexicon as "Ruston's Case." Named as such for the deaf witness and not the defendant, it has influenced centuries of legal signed language interpreting case law and practice.*

Keywords

Ruston's Case, historical interpreting for deaf parties, 18th century legal signed language interpreting.

* This article is based on sections of Anne M. Leahy's master's thesis *Interpreted Communication with Deaf Parties under Anglo-American Common Law to 1880*, defended July 2015 at Southern Utah University.

Though by far not the first legal matter to admit a sworn signed language interpreter, arguably the foremost precedent occurred on 11 January 1786, at the Trial of William Bartlet and codified the protocols of courtroom interpreting for deaf parties under Anglo-American common law. Martha Ruston accompanied her deaf brother John to the London Central Criminal Court to facilitate his witness testimony in a larceny case. She endured an adversarial *voir dire* process to such a degree, it cleared the procedural hurdles of that day to admit the deaf witness, provided John was credible and the Rustons proved they could indeed communicate effectively with each other.

Since first appearing in Leach (1789), the unique instance was digested and reprinted in legal reference texts in the UK and US for centuries, and persists in scores of written opinions, headnotes and other academic sources. More recently, the exchanges have been examined from the point of view of the barrister and the witness (Beattie 1991; Hostettler/Braby 2010), were included in the rough taxonomies of Old Bailey cases with deaf parties in Stone and Woll (2008), and developed briefly in Woll and Stone (2013).

It bears explanation that the following analysis refers to Martha and John with the surname spelled "Ruston" instead of "Rasten" as shown in the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online*. Since publication by the first prothonotary to report it (Leach 1789), the case entered the legal lexicon as "Ruston" and has been universally cited as such. This study adopts the preferred spelling from contemporaneous official sources. The unofficial Old Bailey transcripts were drafted by journalists with entertainment and commercial interests, but because of their documentary importance, in "the 1770s the City began to exercise more scrutiny, and in 1778 it required that the publisher should provide a 'true, fair and perfect narrative' of the trials" (Emsley *et al*. 2015). According to Shoemaker (2008: 563), publishers composed "copy from one or more note takers and shorthand writers who attended the trials". By the 1780s, the "sessions papers achieved their greatest detail," but it was operationally impossible to include a verbatim transcript (Langbein 2003: 185). Therefore, the *Proceedings* of this period tend toward a more reliable record, with an acceptable margin of inaccuracy and omission.

The Rustons' testimony and interpretation displayed a nuanced understanding of language and the examination process, both in John's ability to offer precise responses, and Martha's careful explanations to subtle points of fact. The Ruston citation created both the text for an interpreter oath "well and truly to interpret…the questions and demands made by the Court to the said John Ruston, and his answers made to them" (Leach 1789: 348), and the legal protocol to permit such an accommodation in future matters.

The first legal tests parsed below are the witness oath and interpreter's preliminary *voir dire* examination; the first barrier was the defense counsel. William Garrow was "clearly one of the lawyers carrying defense advocacy to a new level in the 1780s" (Beattie 1991: 245). As the rise of legal representation flooded courtrooms with defense lawyers, Garrow distinguished himself as "a pioneer in using cross-examination as a means to comment on the evidence,

refute or discredit the prosecution case and aggressively battle for the accused" (Hostettler/Braby 2010: 53). Though in popular history he is credited with coining the presumption of innocence with a version of the maxim, "innocent till proved guilty," there is evidence in the *Proceedings* that a prosecuting attorney used the phrase in Garrow's presence three years before he is purported to have used it ("Trial of William Wilkins and Richard Gwilt" 1788). Garrow did likely promote the phrase, and certainly crafted his tactics to fix the burden of proof upon the prosecution.

To that end, Garrow's performance against the Rustons exhibited his characteristic showmanship, "in his insistent and pressing and revealing cross-examinations of prosecution witnesses, in his challenges to the rulings of the bench, [and] his dominating presence in the courtroom" (Beattie 1991: 247). An expert defense lawyer, Garrow attempted to strike John's damning testimony, either by way of the witness himself or via the interpreter. An exploration of the transcript ("Trial of William Bartlett" 1786) reveals how Martha, with a vexed Justice John Heath, neutralized Garrow's attack.

1. Round I

The first rhetorical target was deaf parties (DPs) in general, and specifically John Ruston, the second witness called for the prosecution:

Garrow:	my Objection is that there is no way in which you can possibly communicate with a deaf and dumb man.
Court:	You assume that.
Garrow:	I assume it on the authority of my Lord Hale who lays it down that a man who is Surdus et Mutus &c. is in presumption & Ideot.
Court:	upon what Authority
Garrow:	Upon the Authority of my Ld. Hale
Court:	Every body knows that there are certain signs.
Garrow:	the Argument is this that you have no way of communicating with a deaf & dumb man but by signs which convey total Ideas.
Court:	You must not interrupt your objection is premature.

In this preliminary skirmish, Garrow quotes the seventeenth-century legal authority Sir Matthew Hale, and conveniently omits the second half, which clarified:

> …but if it can appear, that he hath the use of understanding, which many of that condition discover by signs to a very great measure, then he may be tried, and suffer judgment and execution, tho great caution is to be used therein (Hale 1778: 34).

Justice Heath at once recognized and completed the Hale reference, alluding to long-established practice of using signed communication to adjudicate the fitness of a DP to participate at trial. Heath's reputation on the bench was for being fair, but severe with offenders; in personal interactions, he was just as well-known for his kindness and generosity (Foss 1864). The citations for the balance of this article ("Trial of William Bartlett" 1786) demonstrate these complimenta-

ry aspects of his character. John Ruston was ultimately permitted to enter testimony with "certain signs" and corroborate the victim's earlier statement, while Garrow challenged the ruling, and was nearly ejected and committed to prison himself for impertinence.

2. Round II

After silencing Garrow, Heath reverted to judicial prerogative under common law prior to the eighteenth century to conduct direct and cross-examination (Beattie, 1991) and personally resumed the *voir dire* process for Martha Ruston:

Court:	Now how is it that you wod. communicate the question you wod. ask to your brother are they signs that you make or are they expressive of any particular words or are they expressive of letters or Syllables?
Martha:	Not letters or Syllables but by motion of words

The first brief point Justice Heath inserted is one familiar to all signed language interpreters: how do the features of signed language compare with the letters and words of spoken language? Countless interpreting assignments have been interrupted by this legitimate curiosity, especially when there is a risk of semantics and precision operating at cross-purposes. Martha delivered an armchair linguistics response nearly two centuries before the research community came to a similar conclusion (Stokoe 1960). She understood that what the parlance of her day termed *motions*, or the conventionalized gestures John used with her, did not equate to English words, and were not analogous to the component letters of a written language.

After setting forth the medium of communication, Heath undertook a careful dissection of the DP's mental, spiritual and ethical competence to comprehend and swear to an oath:

Court:	can you express this Idea to your brother? whether or no he knows the nature of an Oath?
Martha:	So far as a short motion he has been taught that by others not by me.
Court:	can you make him sensible of the meaning of this question?
Martha:	Yes he has a very great sence of Scripture, tho' he cannot express it.
Court:	Is he acquainted with the principles of the Christian Religion?
Martha:	He is very well Acquainted with them.
Court:	Has proper pains been taken to Instruct him in it?
Martha:	they have.
Court:	Have you any doubt at all whether you can convey the meaning of this question whether he has any Idea of the Nature of an Oath?
Martha:	I have no doubt but he understands it.

Mathers (2006: 76) instructs today's working interpreters that they are technically "officers of the court", which position Macy (1948: 945) clarified is founded in "an independent trust toward the parties, the court, and the jury". As such they are subject to the process of qualifying their credentials and abilities. The line of

questioning above, however, exceeds the contemporary boundaries of vetting an interpreter as a recognized specialist, and thrust Martha into the role of expert witness regarding the character and faculties of the DP himself, rather than commenting merely on her own facilitation.

One of the main hallmarks of Bartlett is the firm administration of an oath to both interpreter and DP, in order to safeguard courtroom protocol. Swearing to the oath is the fulcrum of the entire legal project, laying the intersection between foundational ecclesiastical authority, and the ethical principles of secular law. Both Church and Court require the same test of an agent, e.g., knowledge of right vs. wrong, truth vs. lie, and past actions vs. future punishment for a breach. If the DP cannot demonstrate understanding and consent via the oath, the testimony to follow would be null and void. The judiciary of the Ruston's era sought proof of Christian fear, and Martha vouched that she believed John had sufficient respect for that higher law.

The second point from this passage is Martha's assertion that John moves between multiple social worlds, belongs to a community of signers apart from the family, and has developed his sense of self as a member of both groups, defined by interactive patterns, and use of language (Gumperz 1962). Nonetheless, no hearing persons from that other social world appeared prepared to interpret. John's first exposure to communication was probably with his immediate household, coined in "so-called home signs to communicate at least on a rudimentary level" (Edwards 2012: 12). However, once one deaf idiolect comes into linguistic contact with other similarly situated individuals, pockets of signers, and eventually the full-fledged Deaf community, a world "wider than home" (ibid.) opens to their experience. If John did not access the newly-emerging educational opportunities for deaf people in Britain, he certainly was not isolated. Whether Martha's signing was informed by her brother, but influenced heavily by spoken English, "from the point of view of social function", there is no significant "distinction between bilingualism and bidialectalism" (Gumperz 1962: 31). This is vital to Martha's testimony that she is not the DPs sole source of language and information about the machinations of the world, and clarifies her boundary as an interpreter, and not co-author of the testimony.

3. Round III

The Court was satisfied as to the fitness of the DP and the qualifications of the interpreter, so Garrow was released from temporary silence, on the condition that he "behave with decency", and was permitted to stand and resume the examination. Not to be outdone, he carried on with Heath's line of questioning and raised the tension with dramatic imagery:

Garrow:	you have no doubt but you can Communicate to him the nature of an Oath?
Martha:	I have not.
Garrow:	Could you venture to say you are sure that he understands you?
Martha:	I cannot pretend to swear to his thoughts but as far as motion.

Garrow: How shall you be able to communicate to him that if he was to tell a falsity upon his Oath he will be put in the Pillory for Perjury?
Martha: Oh Sir he is very well convinced of that.

Doubtless John had seen public pillorying of offenders in London, and humiliation aside, no threat of punishment would likely haunt a deaf man more than having his hands restrained for hours or possibly days. From this exchange, it seems likely that after years of imitation and collaboration, the Rustons shared some grammatical or discourse-level marker for causal and hypothetical constructions, and perhaps even the subjunctive mood. In many other cases (Leahy 2014), deficits in vocabulary and grammar for the DP or interpreter proved a barrier to the oath, and could derail due process, regardless of fitness to comprehend questioning or stand trial.

Martha rejected a free indirect rendition, and deftly deflected Garrow's prodding into John's receptive ability onto her own – the only half of the conversation to which she could attest. She swore to interpret only what she saw, and not what the witness might be thinking. Garrow continued to press her in the hope he might expose the limits of her abilities:

Garrow: Suppose you was to tell him that Mr Lunardi had arisen into the Air in a Balloon, how sho'd you communicate that Idea?
Martha: Oh very well.
Garrow: Do you think he would understand that without seeing it?
Martha: I am sure by his motion in return.

The above refers to several hot-air balloon flights throughout Britain during the previous two years, which overtook the public consciousness and "was all that anyone was talking about" (Keen 2006: 507). Even if spoken conversation and printed advertisements were inaccessible, John Ruston along with the whole of London would have seen the "endless paraphernalia" (ibid.: 508) commenting on the spectacle. In his attempt to be cunning, Garrow handed Martha the one ubiquitous image from current events that was the simplest to render into iconic and unambiguous gestures. Of course she could communicate such familiar and compelling moving pictures to her brother.

The latter point is one of the best-parried maneuvers of Martha's mounting victory. Again, Garrow challenged John's reception of the fantastic message, which she spun around to her own perceptions, and the only available information that validated her experience. Once she had transmitted the interpretation, she could not purport to read John's mind. However, she could assess the appropriateness of his responses through mentally pivoting to his perspective, and using nuanced linguistic feedback to gauge whether or not the exchange was successful.

Aware of other precedents in which DPs opt to or are limited by the Court's pleasure to direct communication in writing, Garrow tested to see whether Martha's services were even necessary:

Garrow: Does he read?
Martha: He does not understand reading but he will look over & we explain to him.

Garrow: can he write?
Martha: Not to correspond.

Combining these facts with her earlier testimony that she translated in signs and "Not letters or Syllables", it is unlikely that John used fingerspelling (distinct signs for each letter of the Roman alphabet). By 1786, fingerspelling was an established literacy tool for deaf pupils, as well as augmentative communication for hearing people who could not speak for medical or religious reasons (Padden/Gunsauls 2003). From Martha's specificity, she implied John could technically *write*, or make meaningful marks on paper. Perhaps he held a pen correctly, wrote his name, or the numerals from one to ten. Even if John handled written material and requested sight translations at home, correspondence on paper was ineffective, as "he does not understand reading".

Goffman (1981) defines Martha's strategy as a *response*, in which the unstated implication from the question is embedded in return, instead of a mere *reply* to a prima facie statement (35, 43). She had the instinct to "break frame and reflexively address" (ibid.) what Garrow's question was truly understood to be, namely, if direct two-way communication in writing was an option, and whether he could overpower the witness without a mediator. She effectively re-imagined the conversation from Garrow's position, and re-formulated a different question through her answer. Charon (1998: 121) claims these role shifts regularly assumed by all interpreters are "the most important" of the "skills for success in interaction situations", and allows one to "control the interaction situation through knowing how to manipulate, direct, or control others" (ibid.: 118). Discerning and preserving the speaker's meaning and intent despite the source text is central to any effective interpretation, and Martha managed her expert testimony with equal mastery. With this, counsel made one last attempt to discredit her:

Garrow: Then you guess that he understands you *&* you guess at the responses he gives you?
Martha: Yes.

Instead of becoming entrapped, Martha sealed her credibility with this final candid response, ending the *voir dire* process. To claim unimpeachable certainty would not only have risked perjury, but also inserting, omitting, or fundamentally altering the message to save face. A lack of transparency and overconfidence in her interpretation may not have allowed for dysfluency, equivocations, or inconsistencies from the DP, and the listener could have misclassified the source of any confusion. With the slightest contradiction or unfinished thought, defense counsel could have pursued her, instead of respecting the process, which might have included a convoluted source message, or the flaws inherent in translation.

4. Round IV

Perhaps sensing defeat, Garrow launched into a rant of some fifteen to twenty minutes (delivered with the requisite oratorial flair), in which he put innumerable points

on trial: John Ruston's mental competence, Christianity, the Ruston's language, his own reverence for common law and the English judiciary, and so on. The Court allowed him to expend his energy, and promptly overruled every objection. Again, Heath dispensed with the advocates and personally directed the conversation:

Court:	Can you interpret the oath to him, you have sworn well and truly to interpret to John Rasten, a witness here produced on behalf of the King against William Bartlett, now a prisoner at the bar, the questions and demands made by the Court, and also well and truly interpret the answers made to them?
Martha:	There may be some things I do not understand.
Court:	You cannot interpret farther than you know. I remember a deaf and dumb man being sworn in the Common Pleas to suffer a fine?[1]
Martha:	I have interpreted the oath to him and he understands it.

By this exchange, Martha seems to have won the trust, and an atmosphere of collaboration with the Court as the interpreter of record. Woll and Stone (2013) astutely observe that while "Garrow appears to deliberately avoid using the term *interpret*, instead using terms such as *convey, express,* and *communicate*, Mr. Justice Heath uses the term *interpret*, to reinforce the legitimacy" (564) of the mediated testimony. He also did not extemporaneously draft the interpreter oath from the bench for the purposes of this trial alone. The language was derived from the formula already in use for "Cases, where the Prisoner doth not understand the British Language" for which "an Interpreter must be procured and sworn thus by the Clerk" (Forbes 1730: 281), further validating the role. One version of the original oath for a spoken language interpreter reads:

> [Y]ou shall well and truly interpret unto A. B. now Prisoner at the Bar, the [crime] whereof he stands here indicted, as the Court shall direct you, and also the Questions and Demands which shall be made by this Court, concerning the same [crime]; and also shall well and truly interpret to this Court, the answers which the said A.B. the Prisoner shall thereunto give, so help you God (Forbes 1730: 281).

Court personnel obviously consulted a legal reference text similar to the above to swear Martha. The strength of a successful *voir dire*, combined with the choice to adopt a frozen form specifically intended for interpreters and not merely Crown witnesses, sealed a precedent to be repeated for centuries (Leahy 2014). For example, Chitty (1816: 329) transcribed and labeled the "Oath of interpreter to a deaf and dumb witness" from Bartlett, which codified it with the unnecessary constraint to apply to deaf witnesses for the prosecution only:

> You shall well and truly interpret to E.F., a witness here produced on behalf of the king against C.D., now a prisoner at the bar, the questions and demands made by the court to the said E.F., and his answers made to them.

1 Demonstrating further familiarity with the legal landscape, Heath may be citing a 1720 case wherein a deaf party swore through the interpreter's proxy oath, which had been improvised for the occasion (see Leahy 2017).

Everyone present was compelled to recognize Martha's conclusive authority as an official channel of communication at the trial. Once again, she demonstrated a command of her position, and reasserted the caveat Justice Heath gave earlier to preserve the boundaries and limitations of her role:

Unnamed:	Are you sworn?
Martha:	Yes.
Unnamed:	To interpret?
Martha:	Yes, as far as my knowledge.

With the reminder that her work would serve the Court only insofar as her ability could ensure, she was at once accepted as an expert witness and interpreter. As such, she remained exposed to further enquiry into her process:

Unnamed:	Swear her to all such questions as shall be asked of him.
Garrow:	What sign have you to put these questions to him, what is the nature of an oath, by what sign would you ask him that question?
Martha:	We look up to heaven and shew him that he is to answer seriously.

In keeping with previous lines of examination directed to her, Martha was expected to decode the finer points of her translation choices to counsel's satisfaction. Garrow could not abandon the foundational importance of a valid oath, and made a final volley to impeach or at least prejudice it. In the absence of a second interpreter in the courtroom, the plural "we" as transcribed reinforces earlier testimony that the Rustons held prior discussions on the gravity of religious observance, and John had been "well Acquainted" with the topic. Within his family, he had internalized the group's expectations of piety and fidelity, and co-developed symbolic representations of those abstract concepts.

The partial description of the interpreted oath paints a rich image of John's socialization through significant symbols – in this case, combining church and country to invoke a secular justice overseen by a godly one. Charon (1998: 62) calls this evidence of shared "rules, ideas, and values of the group as well as coming to learn…roles in relation to everyone else". The case of a DP produces layered minded and embodied communicative actions. Like the prior confirmation, John understood the absent referent of the pillory symbolizing punishment, he also had the mental construct of a higher power adopted from Western thought and Anglophone religious discourse, proving he was a member of those social worlds. The Rustons' depiction of God indexed the top of the signers' articulatory space; this area near or above the head (also the location of religious vocabulary and pronominal references in British Sign Language and American Sign Language) made sense to court personnel, who understood the metaphor invoked in the back-transliteration.

Though Linell (1991) describes only the examination phase of a trial as strictly dialogical, these preliminary exchanges far outpaced the witness testimony that followed. If "dialogue is by definition accommodative in character" (ibid.: 125), then Martha's strategy is to manage both sides of her interaction – first with the professionals, and then with the witness. Analysis of this second and much briefer precedent set in Bartlett will concentrate on Martha's actual interpreting work. As with the preceding excerpts, the transcriptions to follow should be received with scrutiny. Experienced interpreters will immediately identify the dynamics at issue – a consistency with contemporary practice makes the record credible and authentic to those familiar with the task. As Justice Heath examined John Ruston through Martha, questioning began with the familiar identification of the defendant seated in the courtroom, and quickly transitioned to the facts of the case:

Court:	Ask him if he has seen the prisoner before?
Martha:	He shews me that he is positive to the prisoner.
Court:	Ask him if he knows any thing of the offence which is charged against him; what he saw the prisoner do?
Martha:	He shews me that he saw the prisoner get the watch behind him.
Court:	Ask him if he knows how the prisoner came by the watch?
Martha:	He shewed me he did not see it taken out of the pocket, only given behind.

Several features of this interpretation stand out to the modern reader. Firstly, Martha's English rendition used the third person, "leaving one of the ground rules of court interpreting" (Elsrud 2014: 45) or indeed any interpreting situation. Today, first-person speech not only guarantees that "a translation should be as close to its source as possible", but it is also seen as a tool to preserve neutrality, as "it prevents the interpreter from becoming an independent party in the conversation" (ibid.). Martha was untrained, and so fell naturally into a reporting mode; it likely never occurred to her to adopt her brother's perspective in her speech. To the listeners, it may have created more distance between the interpreter and the DP, not less, ensuring she remained safely outside of John's account, so as not to invite a challenge from Garrow during cross-examination. Though not standard practice today, Neumann Solow (1988: 21) recommended conveying dysfluent DPs in the third person, "so that the interpreter can interject comments" in first person, with real-time guidance on the content of the testimony to the Court, such as the historical expert witness role once entailed.

Martha situated herself as John's orientational other and interlocutor, e.g., "He shews me…" and not a conduit for John to address the Court directly. This implies the signed portion of her interpretation adhered to first/second person, and likely simplified the grammatical work of pronominal references. According to Prinz and Prinz (1985: 2), learning to hold a conversation "involves the integration of cognitive, linguistic, and social interactional abilities". Surely John had mastered these, and had an adequate communicative competence to glean which person in the room was actually initiating the questions to him. Unlike

the culturally- and linguistically-unaffiliated deaf subjects in McKinney (1983), he appears conversant with the interrogatory process of answering questions in an interview format. Still, Martha's translation posture is to maintain a direct "state of talk" (Goffman 1981: 130) with her brother, in the manner most familiar to him. Wadensjö (1998) confirms that interpreter-mediated encounters display features of both triads and dyads, depending upon the direction of interactive priority in the task. In this case, there is very little evidence Heath and John were experiencing even an approximated direct conversation, or were intentionally accommodating one another through the interpreter. Combined with the bulk of Martha's participation during *voir dire*, she pivoted relaying and reporting between two dyads: herself and the Court, and herself and John.

Both the DP and the interpreter demonstrated a high degree of reliability in the above section. To the open-ended question whether "he knows any thing" about the crime, and the more specific follow-ups regarding "what he saw" and "if he knows" how Bartlett got the watch, Martha's translation revealed precise, consistent responses. Twice, John specifically testified to seeing Bartlett hand the watch off, or secrete it behind his back. Afterward, the Court pursued the antecedent event, or the actual picking the victim's pocket, which John repeated he had never seen. This episode could be easily mimed by even the most amateur signer during a parlor game, but John and Martha used a more specific system unavailable to the hearing viewers, wherein they could linguistically recreate the scene: identify the actors, name the objects, and also narrate, order, negate, and affirm the events. These features, with an added richness of spatial understanding, are exemplified again in the final testimony excerpt:

Court:	Ask him if he knows the person that lost the watch?
Martha:	He shewed me he never saw him before.
Court:	But did he know him now?
Martha:	Yes, he points to him
Court:	Ask him how near he stood to Williamson when he saw the watch in the prisoner's hand?
Martha:	I understand him he was near, but I cannot answer how near, he shews me by the length of a yard but I cannot pretend to say to the space.
Court:	Ask him if he knows any more of the matter?
Martha:	No more than the taking him to the constable.
Court:	Ask your brother how far off he was when he saw him give the watch to another?
Martha:	He shews me a very little way, but I cannot take upon me to say how near.

The above substantiates a nuanced command of referential space in the Rustons' signing, and in Martha's ability to find an equivalent English reflection of John's statements. After confirming that John saw the victim previously unknown to him, the examination sought to gauge his proximity to the alleged theft. To describe how near he stood, John extended his arm as a measurement, and seems to have added a cue to indicate close pedestrian space, but perhaps not breaching personal space. Martha read both signals, and paired a transliteration of the literal sign, "the length of a yard," with the mediation that this meant "near" enough for a sightline to the defendant's actions and possession of the watch, but not to

be strictly understood as thirty-six inches. With this, Martha's work makes the theoretical leap toward cross-cultural interpretation, as she transfers socialized and habituated viewpoints from one modality – and one reality – to another.

Justice Heath left nothing to doubt regarding John's relative position to the transaction, and corroborated this detail by referring to earlier testimony recalling the moment of a hand-off. John repeated his assertion that he was only "a very little way" away, but did not offer anything more specific that the interpreter, who was not present at the scene, could use with confidence. John testified he was known, if not among the parties who apprehended and conveyed Bartlett to the constable, where he was likely recruited as a witness, and found a way to communicate his identity to local authorities for later subpoena.

With that insight, the story comes full circle. The summons that eventually reached John could not have anticipated the impact of his participation. Bartlett is universally cited not with the defendant, but as "Ruston's Case," presumably for him. Leach (1789: 347) distilled the rule: "A witness, though *deaf* and *dumb*, may be sworn and give his testimony for felony, if intelligence can be conveyed to, and received from him by means of signs and tokens". Highmore (1822: 84) rehabilitates the last phrase to read "through the medium of an interpreter", who in this instance will be remembered as the named figure behind "Ruston's Case".

6. Dénouement

In 1824, eighteen-year-old Silvia Penny was granted leave from her position in service to be reunited with her deaf mother, who was called as a complaining witness in a burglary trial. They were joined by a sister, two years younger and living at home during the robbery some months previous, who would also testify. Their hearing father had died as a result of the incident. The newspaper account yields two important details; the first is an excellent transcription of Silvia's interpretation of her mother's responses to the witness oath:

> The girl having been sworn to interpret between the Court and her mother, was directed to put to her some preliminary questions, in order to ascertain that she had the due sense of the obligation of an oath. On the question whither the soul went after death, the girl interpreted her mother's answer – 'To the place of eternity;' and on the question, what reward awaited the good, she answered, 'They go to happiness' ("Oxford Circuit" 1824).

Certainly Mrs. Penny, who with her daughters, "dressed in a very decent mourning," were still in the throes of grief, and this question likely was as painfully raw to deliver, as it was to answer.

The *voir dire* was dispatched without objection, and the examination proper began. The interview was not recorded in official sources, but the journalist summarized by noting:

> The communication by gestures between the old woman and the girl was the most expressive pantomime… answers were given distinctly, and with a rapidity which sur-

prised the Court; and were delivered by the daughter with a touching simplicity of manner, adroitness, and intelligence ("Oxford Circuit" 1824).

The article's author further hinted the Penny daughters possessed an attractive appearance and bearing for the children of a laborer, "and would have been taken as of much higher station than they were". After the verdict was pronounced, the impact of tragic circumstances, combined with both form and content in Silvia's presentation and interpretation moved the sitting justice to act outside of protocol. With cinematic dash, "he called to Silvia Penny, and thanked her for the very intelligent and modest manner in which she had interpreted the evidence of her mother. The old woman and the girl curtsied, and retired together" ("Oxford Circuit" 1824).

This postscript inserts the second and perhaps more notable revelation. What so invested the Court in the testimony of a deaf witness, and why was he moved to praise the young woman who interpreted it? Because this was *Baron* William Garrow, now advanced thirty-eight years in his career to a comfortable post as a country judge. Garrow does not appear to have overseen sessions immediately previous to or following the Penny matter (Assizes: Oxford Circuit 1819-1825), and it is tempting to infer he was apprised of the docket, and made special arrangements to attend.

It is fitting to end with Silvia Penny, who, before the legendary judge, embodied the resolution of his defeat as a young advocate against the clever and nimble work of Martha Ruston a generation earlier, supported by her own benefactor on the bench. Edwards (1832: 180) allowed that local custom could prove inconsistent throughout common law realms, where some "courts of law and equity do not always keep pace and mingle with modern circumstances". The time for barring the DP from appearing was past, "for he might do it through a sworn interpreter", difficulties notwithstanding, "namely: as to the sufficiency of understanding and memory, and the risking of an answer through the interpreter" (ibid.: 181). Ultimately, in any "matter of serious moment," there was no question that the interpreter "is required and admitted" in such cases (ibid.: 181). Upheld by the force of case law and sustained by respected voices in contemporary authoritative texts, nineteenth-century Deaf communities in Great Britain and the United States that thrived after Ruston, encountered a legal system better prepared to accommodate them through a sworn interpreter.

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Sign language and interpreting: a diachronic symbiosis

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Abstract

In the past when deaf people had no opportunity to learn to read, write or even speak, the aid of ad hoc 'interpreters' was the only means available to communicate with the hearing. This paper seeks to inform practitioners and researchers of spoken language interpreting a little about the historical evolution of interpreting for deaf individuals, about deafness, sign language use, historical developments in deaf education and the emergence of professional sign language interpreting.

Keywords

Sign language interpreting, deafness.

Introduction

Since antiquity deafness has accompanied man's evolutionary progress. Deafness from birth or caused by disease or trauma at any stage of one's life may range from slight hearing impairment to total hearing deficiency. Profound deafness affects about 0.4% of the population in Italy of whom 90% are born of hearing parents, 5% of one hearing parent and 5% are CODAs (Children of Deaf Adults) born of two deaf parents (Paoli 2000: 420). Finding data on the number of deaf people worldwide is complex, as deafness varies in its severity and definition. To

most hearing people it means anyone who has poor hearing (generally elderly relatives), but deafness is more complicated than that with different categories and subgroups according to WHO guidelines established in 2001. According to ISTAT (2001)[1], the Italian statistics agency, there were estimated to be approximately 877,000 Italians between 1999-2000 with some form of hearing impairment from partial to total (15.2 per 1,000), of whom 92,000 were pre-lingual deaf individuals (1.6 per 1,000 Italians). More recent data is unavailable to my knowledge.

It is impossible to calculate whether deafness has increased through the centuries or remained within fixed limits over time; nonetheless, whenever severe or total deafness struck in the past, it left individuals, until not long ago, as outcasts of society, at the mercy of their destiny and with little hope of escaping ridicule, neglect and misery. Even today, in societies with meagre welfare programmes and inadequate or lack of legal provisions for the handicapped, life for a deaf person can imply a constant uphill battle to communicate and be understood, to work and live in dignity like everyone else.

The plight of being unable to hear, and thus emit comprehensible sounds, leads to a complete breakdown of communication and in former times, as often as not, it led the hearing majority to consider the profoundly deaf as mentally retarded, stupid, incapable of logical thought, and lacking any culture or language of their own. This is exemplified by the case of a Scottish woman, reported in the Glasgow Herald of 26th September 1817 (mentioned in Kyle/Woll 1985). Deaf and dumb from birth, she was accused of drowning her child by throwing him into a river from a bridge. Her solicitor put up a defence by declaring that because she could not speak and hence communicate, she could not be tried. Unable to speak, she could not possibly distinguish between right and wrong, nor grasp the gravity of the deed. Circumstances changed when an interpreter of sign language was found (the principal of the Edinburgh School for the Deaf) who led the court to pass a verdict of accidental drowning.

1. Early signed language use

The evolution of signed language is ancient indeed and some hypothesise that it may predate spoken language as a form of communication (Armstrong *et al.* 1995; Stokoe 1997). They believe that the human species must have passed through a rudimentary stage of communicating gesturally more than a million years ago. This was before real language began (signed or spoken), before the human brain evolved and became larger and more complex. Both signed and spoken languages are semiotic systems because both gesture and sound can be recognised to represent something else. All around us there are living creatures that use and depend on signs of different nature to communicate with others of their kind; scent to leave a trail, movement to show aggression, sexual attraction, location of food and so on. Primates make signs to each other and it is likely that the first homi-

1 Data available at http://www3.istat.it/dati/catalogo/20020313__01/salute.pdf p. 70 (in Italian).

nids would have done so too. The advantage of walking with an upright posture left them free to possibly make and learn more and more signs with their hands.

There is strong evidence that all infants too use gesture before using language, spoken or signed. Children, whether they can hear or not, make referential imitative gestures to stand for things and actions and it is through gestural communication that a child experiences contact with the world before a real spoken or signed language with its rules of syntax is adopted (Capirci *et al*. 1996).

Despite the likely dominance of signs during the early evolution of mankind and the presence of subtle non-verbal forms of communication and gesticulation which constantly accompany our everyday spoken utterances, today's modern western societies have long suppressed evident or emphatic forms of gestural communication among the general hearing population. Yet numerous contemporary, indigenous, hearing groups have maintained signing systems from the ancient past to use signed language together with spoken, such as the Australian Aborigines and North American Plains Indians:

> Since evolutionary theory fostered a perception of sign languages as inferior to spoken languages, "Aborigines" and "Indians" came to share with deaf persons an assumed pathology based on a resort to gestures *instead* of speech (Farnell 2001: 402, original italics).

Plains Sign Talk became a *lingua franca* among all the North American Indian tribes during the eighteen hundreds presumably after centuries of intertribal communication through numerous signed languages. It remains active still today, but is becoming largely confined to elders as English has become the dominant language of the U.S.A. and there is the danger of its possible drastic decline (McKay-Cody 1997: 22). It is used alone or in combination with speech. Farnell (2001) has analysed how the two modalities function together rather than as two separate systems. Kendon (1988) working among hearing Australian Aborigines, found elaborate alternatives to spoken language used for intertribal communication or in particular circumstances, e.g. the case of widowed women who are forced to remain silent for the rest of their lives.

2. Sign language and education

Past ignorance of the hearing majority often led to the belief that because most deaf people were incapable of possessing 'normal' language, they could not possibly communicate any intelligent discourse through signs, even if an interpreter were present (see Leahy this issue). An example, recounted by Lane/Battison (1978, cited from Goodrich 1857: 128), describes a scene in 1817 when President Munroe visited a New England school for the Deaf founded by Thomas Gallaudet and a French deaf teacher Laurent Clerc. Gallaudet had met Clerc at the famous Parisian school for the Deaf founded in 1755 by Charles Michel Abbé de l'Épée and where Clerc had taught. Clerc was an educated man, well-mannered with knowledge of English despite his deafness. Gallaudet and Clerc sat near the President on the podium and Gallaudet asked the President to put any question he

pleased to Clerc as he would have willingly interpreted in sign language. Gallaudet secretly hoped to convince the President that sign language was a true language for communication. Everyone waited for the question to arrive, but as the seconds passed, Gallaudet repeated his request to question Professor Clerc on any matter that teased Monroe's curiosity. Again silence reigned. The President meditated, shuffled in his chair, and regained a pensive expression, as if lost in profound philosophical considerations to solicit some deeply meaningful question. Time passed by and he seemed on the verge of dozing, when suddenly he said, "Ask him… ask him…, how old he is!"

In Europe, signed languages began to be adopted in special classes or schools for deaf children after Charles Michel Abbé de l'Épée discovered how to exploit the natural signs used among his deaf pupils in order to teach them French. The Paris School he founded started with two deaf sisters and grew to 68 pupils at the time of his death in 1783 (Lane/Battison 1978: 71, cited from Peet 1857: 295). His methodology was introduced across the Atlantic by Laurent Clerc, where French Sign Language (FSL) merged with the existing signed languages of American deaf communities to form what is now called ASL (American Sign Language).

Several Italian historical references have been written on sign language, with an emphasis on deaf education and educators (cf. Corazza 1991, 1993; Dallasta 1997; Porcari Li Destri/Volterra 1995; Pigliacampo 2001; Radutzky 1995, 2000a, 2000b; Volterra 1992). Italian educators like the French also became interested in the use of sign language in deaf education and Abbot Tommaso Silvestri was sent to France to study the famous French method. He returned to open a school at Casa di Pietro in Rome in 1784 but later abandoned signs in favour of oralism (Boggi Bosi 1939; Pierini 1902, cited in Radutzky 1983: 153). Padre Ottavio Assarotti established a teaching method in Genoa in the early 19th century that was based on mime and caught on in several Italian cities (Grimandi 1960; Picanyol 1941, cited in Radutzky 1983: 153). A debate emerged between educators and ear specialists in the Italic peninsula in the 1800s as oralist methods began to gain the upper hand (Facchini/Rismondini 1983) in tandem with what was happening in other parts of Europe at the time. There remained relatively few schools for deaf children in Europe that continued to use sign language, as oral teaching methods took a firm hold. Even Charles Michel Abbé de l'Épée declared that there were no insurmountable obstacles to teaching sound articulation and lip reading to the deaf but he preferred the use of sign language. A few schools followed in his steps including the school founded by Gallaudet in the United States. However, after 1843, when two American teachers visited deaf schools in Germany and returned enthusing over oral methodology in their education, even Gallaudet's school partially succumbed to oral instruction (Lane/Battison 1978: 75-76).

In 1870 Alexander Graham Bell (the inventor of the telephone) added a new voice to the oralist movement as a firm opponent of sign language and even marriage between deaf people. He firmly believed that deaf Americans should learn only English (Mitchel 1971, cited in Lane/Battison 1978: 76). At the time, American opposition to the oralist method was led by Edward Gallaudet, son of Thomas, who was later to become Rector of Gallaudet College for the Deaf in Washington D.C. from 1857 to 1910 (Lane/Battison 1978: 76). Oralist methodol-

ogy began to take a firm hold in Europe and because deaf children were forced to learn the language of the hearing majority, there was 'theoretically' no real need for interpreters.

As described by Lane/Battison (1978: 76-77), at the 1878 universal exhibition in France oralists held the *First International Conference for the Deaf*, a meeting of instructors for the Deaf, at which they declared that only oralism could lead to the integration of deaf people within society, and that signed language was to be simply considered an auxiliary teaching aid. They formed a commission of 12 to prepare for the *Second International Conference* in Milan, or *International Congress*, as this historic event is now referred to, which took place in 1880. Milan was chosen as the venue because in that city there already existed two renowned schools for deaf children that had converted from signing to oralism. During the event 'international' delegates, seven-eighths of whom were from Italy and France, on visiting the two Milanese schools were struck by what they saw and learned, even though some critics later claimed that the visits had been expertly 'prepared' to favour the oralist method. A resolution was voted almost unanimously by the 164 delegates in favour of the use of spoken language in deaf education. Superiority of the voice over sign was declared, affirming the oral method as the best one (Kyle/Woll 1985: 42). From then on, for almost a century, the teaching of signed languages was hindered and most schools for the Deaf in America and Europe became oralist, effectively banning the use of signs in the classroom (cf. Dotter/Kellett Bidoli 2017, on Austria and Italy).

The adoption of oralism drastically changed the deaf school system. For example, in the United States in 1867 there were 26 schools for the Deaf (with ASL as the language of instruction). By 1907, the number had risen to 139 but ASL was no longer used (Lane/Battison 1978: 75). In general, in the period between the two World Wars, European states adopted a policy of marginalisation of minority languages, including signed languages, in favour of those languages spoken by the majority of the population at school. For example, in 1918 there were 147 Lithuanian schools in Poland but by 1941 only two. Thus, the Deaf as well as hearing minorities suffered the social, economic and political consequences of an inferior education, as they had to learn through a foreign spoken language, difficult for them to comprehend (*ibid.*).

Just as sign language was rejected, so Sign Language Interpreting (SLI) was continually ignored and discouraged, there being no need for it. Of course, 'self-instructed interpreters' continued to offer sporadic aid when requested in the secrecy of the home, but they continued to be the hearing offspring of deaf parents, hearing relatives, clergy who seized the role of 'saviours of the Deaf' or social assistants and charity workers (Dominigue/Ingram 1978: 81).

3. The development of 'interpreting' for deaf people

Interpreting into and from a signed language must have existed from ancient times, but was 'invisible' and largely hidden from the public domain until only very recently. The only help profoundly deaf and severely hard of hearing people could find in order to communicate with the hostile outside world was sought, as mentioned, through close relatives who learnt to use signs developed and understood at home, or also with the aid of rare charitable individuals and religious workers who found the compassion to help the less fortunate in society. Signing tended to be confined to the home or within small isolated groups and communities, which led to the development of home-based sign systems, signed idiolects and dialects. Even today, signing varies considerably from one country to another, from one geographical area to another, and in some cases, from region to region, from city to city, and even within neighbourhoods or between generations. Italy is a case in point. The richness and variety of Italian signs is so great and widespread, it is little wonder that although Roman Sign Language varieties (derived mainly from signs adopted in different deaf residential schools) have become the basis for LIS (*Lingua di Segni Italiana*), the national Italian standard form (which is being promoted through research, conferences, interpreter services, LIS courses and workshops), it may still cause occasional perplexity among non-Roman deaf individuals. My own experience has taught me how difficult it is for hearers to learn to follow Italian deaf signers. To the inexperienced beginner the gesture appears to be very fast, one's eyes concentrate on only part of the movement and miss whole word- or sentence-signs, one's visual concentration is insufficient to capture slight nuances and the 'pronunciation' can vary enormously from person to person. I began to learn sign language with a deaf teacher from the north-eastern city of Trieste where the sign language, for historical reasons, has more in common with neighbouring Austrian, Slovene or central European signed languages rather than central or southern Italian forms[2]. The following year my new teacher came from Padua and it was like having to switch from French to Greek; I had to start all over again, because so many signs were completely different (for example, months of the year or colours). My third instructor, although from the north, tried to keep to standard LIS and therefore, I had to adapt yet again.

2 For over 500 years Trieste was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire comprising Germanic, Slavic and Italian speaking citizens. In 1382 it came under the protection of Leopold III of Habsburg and through time absorbed varied cultural and linguistic traits from the vast outlying territories to become a prosperous city and main port of the Empire by the eve of World War I. In 1915 the UK, France and Russia signed an agreement to cede the city to Italy and it was occupied by Italian troops on November 4th 1918 (cf. Dotter/Kellett 2017).

4. Sign language interpreting as a profession

It was in the 1960s that interpreting for deaf people began to gain recognition as a profession; first in the U.S.A. and later elsewhere. Professional SLI is a relatively recent addition to the various spoken interpreting modes that developed in the 20th century; *chuchotage*, consecutive, simultaneous, *liaison*, dialogue, etc. Its evolution was lengthy, 'silent', and almost imperceptible, contrasting substantially with the more diversified, better documented evolution of spoken interpreting modes which evolved naturally and 'openly' over time (cf. Kellett Bidoli 1999).

Different forms of spoken language 'interpreting' have existed since the dawn of time (Delisle/Woodsworth 1995), but interpreting, as intended in the modern sense of the word, is relatively young as a profession in the long history of mankind. Although 'interpreting' with signed languages existed in parallel to spoken language interpreting, it is even younger as a recognised professional skill. Documentation referring to past 'interpreters' of signed language in Italy, as elsewhere, is scarce. French, German, Italian and English documents from the 18th and 19th centuries testify to how sign language usage evolved from those times to the present, especially in reports, articles, and books written by educators of the deaf in Europe and North America. Signed languages in those times were ill-tolerated; it emerges that there was a systematic attempt to try and banish signing altogether. Signed languages were not considered languages as such and, therefore, as the Deaf were forced to learn to use 'proper' language, there was no need for interpreters.

Professional SLI gained a foothold in the U.S.A. and U.K. in the 1960s. Through linguistic research (Stokoe 1960, 1972; Stokoe *et al.* 1965; Bellugi/Klima 1972; Stokoe 1972; Battison 1974; Friedman 1976), the extent of the problem of communication between the deaf and hearing worlds became more apparent and it was realised finally how essential interpreting is for mediation between these two different realities, in the same way interpreters have always bridged the gap between spoken languages and cultures. Furthermore, research in the 1970s showed that deaf children who used a signed language from birth obtained better results at school and had fewer psychological and social problems compared to those who used an oral method or learned to sign later on in life. Moreover, no negative effects were found in their various stages of linguistic development (Mindel/Vernon 1971; Schlesinger/Meadow 1972, cited in Murphy 1978).

The advancement of sign language research proceeded at varying rates throughout the world. In Italy, the first studies were conducted in the 1980s at the CNR (Italian National Research Council) in Rome (Volterra 1981; Attili/Ricci Bitti 1983; Volterra 1987). Though numerous signed 'dialects' abound in the country, as explained, it was natural for Rome-based researchers to start investigation into Roman varieties. They began gathering signs which are recognisable in other parts of Italy, to form a corpus which has increasingly become recognised as the 'official' Italian Sign Language (LIS). Although to this day there is no legal recognition, LIS is the most frequently encountered form of signing on Italian television or in dictionaries of Italian signs (cf. Angelini *et al.* 1991; Magarotto 1995; Romeo 1991, 1997).

Worldwide, research into deafness and signed languages has raised awareness within deaf minority groups and among hearers of the importance of learning signed languages and of the needs of people with varying degrees of hearing deficit who are taking a more active role in asserting their rights in society. Ladd (2003) contrasted the medical concept of 'deafness' with the novel and innovative concept of 'Deafhood', which is essentially self identification with deafness by each and every deaf individual. He drew parallels between deaf cultures and the cultures of other linguistic minority groups in their struggle for recognition.

As research proceeded in the U.S.A. and signing became widely accepted as the natural language of deaf people there, interpreting services began to develop. The United States Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) was founded in 1964 to determine the professional interpreter's role and functions, as well as set guidelines for the profession. Since then, steps have been taken in improving training methodologies and establishing evaluation procedures for confidential interpreter certification in all American states (e.g. Solow 1981; Roy 2005; Swabey/Malcom 2012). Regular conferences are organised and publications offered by the RID on all aspects of SLI[3]. Unfortunately, worldwide there are still too few national registers of professional interpreters. In Italy, despite the growing demand for SLI over the past 20 years, there is no official register.

At the NATO Symposium *Language, Interpretation and Communication*, held in Venice in September 1977, leading experts on deaf issues and SLI were invited along with the numerous experts on mainstream spoken language interpreting to illustrate the pioneering American experience that was already well under way (cf. Gerver/Sinaiko 1978). On that occasion Lane/Battison (1978: 77-78) appealed to:

> Let us undo in Venice what was done in Milan. Let us set right in 1977 what was set wrong in 1880. Let us, in this international symposium on language interpretation, affirm that no language is incontestably superior to any other, that every language is the priceless heritage of all mankind, that we particularly cherish the free use and development of minority languages precisely because they are subject to repression at the hands of the majority.

Just as FSL had crossed the Atlantic in the 1800s from Europe, the newly emerging SLI profession was to cross back a hundred years later to spread throughout the world. By the 1990s interpreter services for the Deaf were developing and expanding, catering principally to community related needs, some now well-established, others still at early stages of development or planning. Unfortunately, though, in many parts of the globe interpreting services were and still are inadequate or struggling for recognition because of official disregard or lack of funds (Erasmus 1999; Napier 2009).

In Italy SLI has finally evolved into a true profession despite no official parliamentary recognition of LIS as a minority language. Gone are the days when the only 'interpreters' available were family members or charity workers who at-

3 A comprehensive collection of citations from 1966 to 1997 on sign language interpreting, mainly in the U.S.A., is provided by Patrie/Mertz (1997).

tempted to mediate, often adding personal opinions or omitting a good portion of the original message (Girardi 2000). After research began in Rome at the CNR in the 1980s, the first courses and workshops for LIS interpreters were offered, mainly with CNR collaboration or that of the Italian National Deaf Association (Bonomo/Celo 2014/2010: 124). 'Second generation' interpreters were thus born and not necessarily people in previous close contact with the Deaf. The Italian general public finally became aware of the existence of SLI for the first time when news bulletins in LIS appeared regularly at 11.30 on a private television channel (Rete4) in 1993, and a year later on the RAI 1 channel early each morning (Franchi/Maragna 2013: 167).

5. Closing remarks

This paper has attempted to briefly explain the general lack of any evident historical evolution of professional SLI in its various forms (standard or dialect) in North America and Europe until relatively recent times. In the U.S.A., SLI as a profession is now over fifty years old, elsewhere it is much younger and even in its infancy (e.g. Kosovo, cf. Hoti/Emerson 2009; or Fiji, cf. Nelson *et al.* 2009). It consists of the simultaneous translation from source language to target language across visual-gestual and vocal modes of communication. Professional spoken language interpreters have long been required to know more than one foreign language. In some circles, such as the European Institutions (European Parliament or Commission), the more languages mastered by interpreters the better. However, SLI has traditionally only catered for bi-directionality between voice and sign.

The emergence of English as the dominant form of oral communication in the world since the Second World War for trade, diplomacy and the dissemination of scientific knowledge has made it inevitable that non-English speaking deaf communities of practice are ever more frequently exposed to it (cf. Kellett Bidoli 2014). Contact with spoken English, be it at school or university (conferences and lectures), or encountered abroad for business or travel, poses a major obstacle to deaf people from non-English-speaking countries who have had a hard-enough struggle to master their own national standard spoken language. Thus, a new challenge for sign language interpreters is emerging: signing with English as a third language (cf. Ochse/Kellett Bidoli 2008; Crasborn/van Dijken 2009). For example, Italian sign language interpreters are now finding they have to interpret occasionally from spoken American or British English directly into LIS, or in relay through a second interpreter from English to spoken Italian to LIS. They may even be required to interpret from ASL or BSL (British Sign Language) at conferences now that contact with international deaf researchers is becoming commonplace through cheaper travel facilities and more frequent teaching/research staff exchanges.

Great progress has been made from the distant past when 'interpreters' for deaf people could offer only partial or sporadic aid to communication in the hearing world. Today, not only are sign language interpreters trained in various institutions to interpret to and from sign with their spoken mother tongue, but

many are beginning to acquire interpreting skills in a third spoken language. This, together with the training of deaf interpreters between different signed languages, certainly promises new horizons and challenges for the future history of SLI.

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Going back to Ancient Egypt: were the Princes of Elephantine really 'overseers of dragomans'?

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Abstract

Among the different titles the Princes of Elephantine had, that of "overseers of dragomans" has drawn the attention of researchers in the history of interpretation. This title has always appeared as a recognition of the status and importance interpreters enjoyed in Ancient Egypt. The denomination "overseer of dragomans" is the translation that Sir Alan Gardiner proposed of inscriptions found in different regions of Ancient Egypt, among which the island of Elephantine. In 1960, Goedicke criticised Gardiner's translation on the basis of historical and linguistic reasons. His objections, unknown to the Interpreting Studies community until today, seem to deny the role of the Princes of Elephantine as "overseers of dragomans".

Keywords

Interpreters in Ancient Egypt, Princes of Elephantine, overseers of dragomans.

After the advent of conference interpreting in the first half of the 20th century, scholars started to include in their articles mention of the presence of interpreters throughout history (e.g. Herbert 1952; Paneth 1962; Haensch 1956; Cary 1956; Van Hoof 1962), or indeed dedicate entire studies to the matter (e.g. Thieme *et al.*)[1]. Amongst the best-known works in the area are the ones published by Kurz (1985, 1986a, 1986b), which served as a basis for further investigations by au-

1 For further reading see Falbo (2004).

thors such as Delisle/Woodsworth (1995, 2012) and Kellett (1999) over the following 30 years. One of the most famous historical accounts of interpreting may be the one regarding the Elephantine Princes, one of the "earliest references to interpretation in Pharaonic Egypt", as phrased in the subtitle of Kurz's article (1985). In the collective imaginary of interpretation scholars and/or practitioners, the fact that even princes worked as interpreters and, above all, 'overseers of dragomans' is tantamount to recognising the utmost importance of the essential and high-profile position interpreters and interpretation held. A prestigious role that throughout history witnessed a number of vicissitudes. Indeed, the stereotypical use of the word "translator" as a synonym of "traitor" does not apply only to written translation but to its oral counterpart as well, as the emblematic case of Malinche teaches us. Nevertheless, the Elephantine Princes have undoubtedly represented the prestige of interpretation in the history of humankind so far.

However, there are details regarding this "glorious debut" of interpreting that still cause some perplexity, as Kurz herself admits in her article (1985: 218), by observing the following:

> It might be argued that with the exception of the title 'overseer of dragomans' there is no reference to interpreting in any of those inscriptions. This is not surprising since, after all, the princes of Elephantine were foreign affairs experts who were entrusted with highly important and often difficult political, economic and occasionally military missions. It is only natural, therefore, that the tomb-wall inscriptions should relate the tomb-owner's economic and diplomatic achievements. In view of what has been said about the Egyptians's lack of interest in alien languages it is quite remarkable that the princes' interpretation skills in dealings with peoples speaking a foreign tongue were deemed sufficiently important to merit special mention and inclusion in the enumeration of their many other titles and epithets (such as seal-bearer, unique friend, lector-priest, confidant of royal commands, etc.).

When reading these lines one cannot help but wonder whether the epithet 'overseer of dragomans' referring to the Princes of Elephantine was indeed "quite remarkable" or simply very unusual. This perplexity led to the following question: what if the Princes of Elephantine were never overseers of dragomans?

The question gave rise to a research endeavour aimed at discovering the origins of the said epithet and the causes leading to its attribution to the Princes of Elephantine. The investigation started with the examination of the sources mentioned in Kurz's article. Along with Hermann's essay (1956), the author largely draws on Gardiner's article (1953) regarding the inscriptions found in the tomb of general Haremhab in Memphys, Egypt. In his description of the scenes painted in the tomb and their accompanying inscriptions, Gardiner (*ib.*: 5-6) mentions the duplicated depiction of Haremhab, which is facing the Pharaoh with one half and "a smaller personage whose figure is similarly duplicated" with the other. According to Gardiner, the "smaller personage" is an interpreter: "[t]he huddled group of foreigners to whom this man turns proclaims him to be an interpreter". Clearly, this personage is an intermediary between the foreigners standing before the Pharaoh and Haremhab, who subsequently refers to the Pharaoh the words of the supposed interpreter. According to Bresciani (in Reggiani 2013: 128-

129), the available documents bear witness to the presence of "a class of bilingual foreigners ('interpreters') – foreigners by birth or born of mixed marriages? – accepted in Egyptian society and used as professionals, [...] in the Ancient Kingdom"[2]. Indeed, it is reasonable to assume that interpreting, just like language, was present since the dawn of time, and that encounters between different language speakers entailed the necessity of cross-linguistic communication. The presence of interpreters in Ancient Egypt, therefore, is not surprising. However, it should be underlined that none of the preserved fragments containing the inscriptions examined by Gardiner contains the word "interpreter". This word and its existence in the lexicon of Ancient Egypt are central to Goedicke's essay from 1960, in which the author refutes Gardiner's thesis from 1915. In his article, Gardiner puts forward an interpretation of the meaning of a set of words, including  . Motivating his stance, Gardiner (1915: 125) states:

> It will be noted that I render the Old Kingdom word  by 'interpreter' or 'dragoman', whereas the New Kingdom predicate  is translated 'foreigner'. The reason is that the former is clearly a *title*[3] while the latter equally clearly is not. It would be more literal to substitute 'speaker of a foreign language' in each case, this being... the true etymological meaning.

Goedicke (1960: 60) quotes these self-same words at the beginning of his essay, observing that "This conclusion of Gardiner's seems to me rather strange and I wish to discuss the matter again as far as the Old Kingdom inscriptions are concerned". Goedicke investigates the meaning of  taking into consideration the various contexts in which it is found, and observes that 'foreigner' rather than 'interpreter' must be its real meaning, which is closer to Gardiner's "etymological meaning" of "speaker of a foreign language". Goedicke (*ib.*: 62-64) distinguishes between at least three inscription groups containing the above-mentioned word as an honorific title.

The first group is made of inscriptions found outside Egypian borders, and, more specifically, in the Sinai Peninsula and Southern Nubian territories. All inscriptions in this group concern expeditions. Gardiner considers this sufficient evidence to prove the need for interpreters. Goedicke, however, believes that the presence of 'overseers of dragomans' would have required "an administrative institution, such as a 'bureau for foreign languages'", which he deems "highly unlikely". Indeed, according to Goedicke, Tomâs' inscription mentions no less than eight 'overseers of dragomans', which could not possibly indicate the simultaneous presence of so many representatives of the self-same administration. It is likelier that such a title traditionally referred to 'overseers of foreigners'. After all, according to Goedicke, Gardiner[4] himself identifies  as an equivalent of the Greek word βάρβαρος, namely 'foreigner'.

2 Original quotation: "una classe di stranieri bilingui ('interpreti') – stranieri di nascita o figli di matrimoni misti? –, inseriti nella società egiziana e utilizzati professionalmente, [...] nell'Antico Regno".

3 Italics in the original.

4 Goedicke does not name his sources. For further reference see Gardiner (1915: 121).

The second group is closely related to the island of Elephantine, on the border with Nubia, and therefore, a strategic Egyptian outpost for trade and military purposes: "activity, both military and economic, against Nubia lay in the hands of officials residing there" (Goedicke 1960: 63).

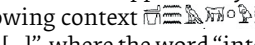
The third group concerns the region of Memphis and, in that context, it seems clear that the 'overseer of  ' refers to individuals responsible for foreigners belonging to military groups. All these inscriptions were found in border areas, where Egypt used to line up its military forces and carry out its trade operations, both of which would likely involve the presence of soldiers. Egyptian troops frequently included mercenaries[5] from foreign regions, which would explain the need for 'overseers of foreigners'.

As regards the Princes of Elephantine, Goedicke (*ib.*: 64) maintains that "[t]he bearing of the title by the governors[6] of Elephantine resulted from their general military commission to screen the southern frontier of Egypt against Nubia". The author bases his assumptions on verified historical documents that confirm the presence of foreign troops. This does not rule out the possibility that in those circumstances interpreters were needed, but according to Goedicke's conclusions their role seemed to be quite marginal. Furthermore, Goedicke (*ib.*: footnote 2, 61) points out that "The problem of foreign languages, particularly in relation to the south, was hardly of any great importance. Thus, today at Aswan, the majority of the population is bilingual, speaking Arabic and Nubian". Such a statement holds true even today and would therefore cast a shadow on the hypothesis of a dire need of interpreters in the region.

Goedicke's study seems to erase any doubt regarding the meaning of  , which, at least in the above-mentioned texts[7], is 'foreigner' and not 'interpreter' or 'dragoman'. Goedicke's arguments seem a critique of Gardiner's hasty attitude: indeed, even when considering foreigners as 'speakers of a foreign language', they cannot be automatically identified as interpreters based on this sole assumption. After all, even today, besides the interpreting profession itself, there are numerous professions for which a knowledge of foreign languages is an essential requirement. Before the Paris Peace Conference (1919), which conventionally marks the birth of modern conference interpreting, the interpreting profession was performed by individuals specialising in other areas, and whose profession required the knowledge of foreign language(s) (Delisle/Woodsworth 2012). Moreover, Goedicke's essay indirectly answers questions emerging from Kurz's conclusive remarks, as it explains why tomb inscriptions do not mention any interpreting task carried out by the so-called 'overseer of dragomans'.

5 Goedicke (*ib.*: 64) confirms that the presence of "mercenary troops […] in the Old Kingdom is well attested from other sources".

6 It is worth noting that Goedicke always speaks of the 'governors' of Elephantine and not of 'princes'.

7 The word  is still wrapped in mystery. According to Jones (2000, entry 1309), when in the following context  , it means "interpreter of the liquids hidden within the […]", where the word "interpreter" is used in its hermeneutic sense, namely "the one who knows", in German "der die (verborgenen) Flüssigkeiten in der […] kennt".

Both Gardiner and Goedicke's observations seem to bear evidence of the fact that words are neither harmless nor neutral. Their (non) existence and/or meaning have a direct impact on making and re-making history. Words – interpreters and translators know it well – are invaluable, treacherous, or simply mirror life and society. A rigorous philological analysis of their evolution in time may shatter dreams and hopes, but is nonetheless essential to describe reality in its most objective – albeit uncertain – dimension.

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Book reviews

Tayoko Takeda / Jesús Baigorri-Jalon (eds) (2016) *New Insights in the History of Interpreting*, Amsterdam/Philadelphia, John Benjamins, 278 pp. ISBN 9789027258670.

Reviewed by Caterina Falbo and Alessandra Riccardi

This volume on new research on the history of interpreting is a selection of papers from the *First International Symposium on the History of Interpreting* held in Tokyo in May 2014 and integrated by two complementary contributions. The aim of the volume, as stated by the editors, Tayoko Takeda and Jesús Baigorri-Jalon, is to contribute to the development of historical knowledge and research in Interpreting Studies and beyond. In our opinion, the aim has been achieved because all the contributors to the volume have engaged in meticulous research to offer new items of knowledge about interpreting and interpreters in the past (with the exception of Antony Pym's contribution dealing with a contemporary historical event). The ten chapters offer stimulating reading in the growing area of the 'History of Interpreting'. Central issues of interpreting practice such as loyalty, neutrality, invisibility, ethics and training were already relevant in the past and learning how they were addressed provides us with valuable information to better understand and reflect on how the interpreter's role developed. There are common features that can be recognised, regardless of place or time, for example, in the first five chapters. Here, a recurrent theme is that bilingual, or even trilin-

gual skills, were often a means to acquire a higher social status, either as officials in administration or diplomacy, or even in independent posts as trade brokers or intercultural mediators enjoying privileges and autonomy in their choices and decisions: their title often became hereditary in many cultures of the past.

Rachel Lung opens the collection drawing on the earliest data provided herein. Her contribution takes us back to ancient China at the end of the first millennium. Her attention is first directed to the definition of 'interpreter', its use and significance, with special focus on Sillan interpreters. The historical data stem from the diary of the Japanese Monk Ennin during his stay in China in the second half of the first millennium. The thirty-eight references in Ennin's travelogue are a precious historical source for learning about Sillan interpreters and interpreting at that time in China. Using quantitative and qualitative analysis, Lung defines specific categories of interpreters, their identities, roles and concrete tasks in East Asian exchanges. Analysis of the travelogue reveals that Sillan interpreters accomplished multiple tasks: liaising and transferring messages as independent agents; or handling logistics problems; or sometimes also acting as trade brokers. Surprisingly, in the monk's account there is no reference to interpreting: interpreters' tasks were mainly beyond the linguistic sector leading to the question as to whether 'Sillan interpreter' "might have meant something else other than sheer language mediation at the time" (p. 14).

Alonso-Araguás Icíar examines in the second chapter how interpreting practices in early colonial Mexico underwent a rapid evolution "toward the establishment of a series of official positions under specific regulations" (p. 28). Primary sources consulted include chronicles of the Indies, legal documents and historical archives, with the aim of comparing the linguistic strategies employed during the first voyages of discovery and the early colonial administration of the Spanish overseas colonies. The first period was characterised by the use of captives as interpreters – young natives were kidnapped and used on site as guides and language mediators – or instead by forcing local people to learn Spanish, taking them to imperial administrative centres or to the Court in Spain. Both methods were customary solutions already adopted in previous voyages of exploration. New solutions to overcome the language barrier were found in the second period, when the colonial administration was established and required institutionalised contacts between locals and administrators in the fields of justice and law, tax collection, or for activities related to the Catholic Church. At the time, language skills became an asset for improving social status. Intermediaries, often native Indians or mestizos, would eventually become staff interpreters in the Audencias, a new form of administration in New Spain. Alonso-Araguás provides a detailed account of staff interpreters in the colonial administration describing the evolution of language intermediaries and their growing importance, reflected in the inclusion of interpreting practices in fourteen specific ordinances of the *Compilation of Laws of the Indies*.

Chapter three by Marcos Sarmiento-Pérez is dedicated to the role of interpreters in the activities of the Spanish Inquisition. A detailed introduction to the Inquisition lays out its composition and geographical, historical and social areas of activity, as well as the crimes it pursued. The *Archivo Histórico Nacional* or man-

uscripts from the British Library were used as primary sources, while secondary sources have been consulted to illustrate the institution. The Inquisition's activities were multilingual and interpreters were needed at all stages of trials. Sarmiento-Pérez identifies three categories of interpreters working for the Inquisition: occasional interpreters, regular interpreters and official interpreters. The latter had to satisfy specific requirements, were expressly appointed and enjoyed a number of privileges and exemptions.

The importance of historical novels to understand how interpreters are located within a particular historical and social context is discussed by Torikai Kumiko. The chapter illustrates how the novelist Yoshimura Akira has portrayed *Oranda Tsūji* interpreters i.e. Japanese interpreters in Dutch, based in Nagasaki during the end of the Edo Period, in pre-modern Japan. The four novels discussed are based on real characters and the author has conducted in-depth research on their lives with the help of historical accounts and much fieldwork. These interpreters were at the same time translators, accomplishing multiple tasks in trade and diplomacy, but also in academic work and strongly influenced intercultural communication. The author examines the pros and cons of her approach and how historical novels may help us comprehend the life and work of past interpreters. In addition to historical facts, they can help to understand interpreters' personalities and inner feelings.

In the past, interpreting services were often the first step in a diplomatic career, as illustrated in the chapter by David Sawyer devoted to the history of the U.S. Department of State's Corps of Student Interpreters, established in 1902. The aim of the Corps was the professional training of future interpreters to support the United States Consular and Diplomatic Services in China, Japan and Turkey. The author based his investigation on primary sources from Consular and Diplomatic Services documents, Acts of Congress, documents related to appointment and promotion in the Corps, selection and advancement criteria, together with reports and memoirs of the participants. The Corps was first established and implemented in China, which was the most successful part of the Corps and on which the chapter is focused. In their personal accounts, participants describe the difficulties connected with the language acquisition process: interpreting was mainly used to support language learning, while later it was practised in the field. The program was closed in 1924 and, similarly to what happened in other countries after World War II, the training of interpreters in the U.S. was to become independent, separated from the training of diplomats.

In chapter six Sergei Chernov deals with the origin of simultaneous interpreting in the USSR. The analysis of records from Russian archives proves that simultaneous interpretation was concurrently invented and implemented in the USSR and in Western Europe. While Edward Filene had contacts with the Secretary-General of the League of Nations in order to propose his prototype system in 1925, Dr V.Z. Epshtein was proposing "an apparatus for translation from all languages" (p. 141) to the Comintern. Dr Epshtein's system was improved by engineer Isaac Goron and implemented during the 6th Comintern Congress in 1928. The author provides a detailed description of the first version of the system and of the necessary modifications and improvements which allowed its practi-

cal use, as well as an accurate explanation of the three-year observation and evaluation of some aspects linked to simultaneous interpretation, such as quality of interpreters' performance and interpreters' selection and training.

The dawn of simultaneous interpretation constitutes the element of continuity with chapter seven, in which Jesús Baigorri-Jalón discusses the use of photographs as historical sources in general, and in particular, in the introduction of simultaneous interpretation at the UN. Photographs offer to the observer's eyes what historical documents can only describe through words, albeit in a very detailed way. Therefore, they are an essential part of historical research, although sometimes a neglected one. Nevertheless, photographs are neither objective nor truthful images of reality, but the result of a series of choices on the part of the photographer, in other terms, a construction. The author assumes this precise methodological approach, namely, considering photos as artifacts representing other artifacts (events) and pursuing particular goals (e.g. "possibly disseminate the Organisation's wide range of activities and to keep a record of its institutional memory", p. 171). Against this background Baigorri-Jalón devotes the remaining part to the analysis of a number of photos about interpreting and interpreters at the UN. The author aims at showing the impact that such an analysis can have on historical research in interpreting, provided that the researcher takes care to situate photographs "in time and space through a detailed exploration of the context in which they were produced" (p. 188).

Following the last two chapters, focused on the dawn of simultaneous interpretation in two different contexts, the reader has the opportunity to glean deeper insight into the risks and inauspicious destiny of interpreters after World War II. The figure of the interpreter as a neutral person "in the middle" is wiped out in the two contributions from Shi-Chi Mike Lan (chapter eight) and Kayoko Takeda (chapter nine). Shi-Chi Mike Lan provides an accurate framework of the war crimes trials the allied countries conducted against 173 Taiwanese who had served in the Japanese army during World War II. Among the Taiwanese war criminals convicted or even sentenced to death, there were people "officially designated as 'interpreters'" (p. 195) who served under the Japanese military police (*kempeitai*) and Taiwanese who, because of their language knowledge, had *ad hoc* interpreting assignments. The author conducts a rigorous analysis of official documents and trial proceedings which allows him to identify the reasons at the base of the Taiwanese interpreters' conviction. None of the Taiwanese official or *ad hoc* interpreters were brought to trial or convicted because of their interpreting activities, but by virtue of the fact that their status as interpreters "did play a significant role in bringing or forcing a good number of civilian Taiwanese into their involvement in the alleged war crimes" (p. 218). Whether or not Taiwanese interpreters fulfilled their interpreting tasks willingly or unwillingly, they "took the responsibilities of the Japanese military's crime and suffered the consequences" (p. 219).

Depending on time and context language proficiency turns out to be an asset or a burden. This is what Kayoko Takeda describes in a very effective way dealing with the history of Japanese interpreters in the postwar occupation period (1945-1952) compared to the wartime period. If interpreters who served in the

Imperial Japanese Army during the war were brought to trial and convicted by the allied countries in and outside Japan, former Japanese military personnel and Japanese civilians began to work as interpreters during the occupation period for the allied powers. The author examines in depth two emblematic situations of the postwar period: the complex relation between Japanese interpreters and war crimes trials, and interpreting for the foreign military occupiers as a job opportunity to fight against hunger in devastated postwar Japan. It is worth mentioning that at that time interpreting was an unexpected job opportunity for women to improve their status in society. In Takeda's contribution, interpreting is portrayed in its whole and present complexity: interpreting where, when and for whom? These questions seem to come to the surface and impose themselves with all their ethical strength. They remind the reader of the unavoidable human dimension of every interpreting task.

This human dimension is highlighted in Antony Pym's contribution (chapter ten) in which the interpreter is not only understood within her/his professional identity, but first of all and foremost, as a human being embedded in a determined social context. The author scrupulously analyses the components of an interpreter-mediated interaction between a U.S. sergeant and a village inhabitant in a conflict zone such as Afghanistan, and identifies participants' different interests and backgrounds – including those of the interpreter – which largely determine their communicative intention. The analysis of this high-risk case study gives rise to a series of remarks on interpreters' status and the best practices they should follow. Drawing upon the outcomes of the analysis, in his conclusive notes, Antony Pym reflects on the sense that covering a history of interpreters can have: "the writing of the history itself is one way of actually constituting the identity and culture of the profession" (p. 263). In this approach, knowledge of the past and an awareness of the complexity of present-day interpreter-mediated interactions, converge towards a better understanding of interpreting dynamics in different contexts. Therefore, highlighting certain aspects (e.g. status, role, training, pay grade…) could contribute to a re-distribution and a mitigation of the personal risks interpreters face on a daily basis.

In this volume, methodology is a priority issue. Different primary and secondary historical sources, such as records from archives, photographs and personal accounts, are meticulously analysed taking carefully into account the time and space contexts in which they were produced. Thanks to this approach, interpreting practices are studied and analysed against their historical background contributing to greater awareness of the historical nature of every interpreting theory and practice, and of the identity and role of interpreters. The History of Interpreting is the topic pursued by the contributions making up the volume, but it is portrayed as the knowledge necessary to raise awareness on what interpreters were, are and, perhaps, will or would like to be.

Nicodemus Brenda / Cagle Keith (eds) (2015) *Signed Language Interpretation and Translation Research: Selected Papers from the First International Symposium*, (Studies in Interpretation series, edited by Melanie Metzger and Earl Fleetwood), Washington D.C., Gallaudet University Press, xii+250 pp. ISBN 978-156368-649-8.

Reviewed by Graham H. Turner

This eclectic set of papers has been brought together by the editors following the *First International Symposium on Signed Language Interpreting and Translation Research* held at Gallaudet University in Washington D.C., in March 2014 (see http://www.gallaudet.edu/interpretation/department-of-interpretation-research/2014-international-research-symposium.html for a video-summary and other details of the event). The efficient university press at this institution, widely known as a world-leading centre for Deaf and hard-of-hearing students, and the editors are to be congratulated for once again rapidly turning the wheels of the publication process to bring out this volume just a year later. It is the 13th volume in a series which has previously made a contribution to encouraging dialogue between interpreting researchers working with signed and with spoken languages. On this occasion, given the nature of the source conference, the ten selected papers only address interpreting that involves signed languages: between these covers one may find discussion of a range of topics, including the need for Deaf perspectives in interpretation research; discourse strategies and techniques that are unique to video relay call settings; the benefits of using sociology as a lens for examining sign language interpreting work; translating university entrance exams from written Portuguese into Libras (Brazilian Sign Language); the linguistic choices interpreters make when interpreting ASL figurative language into English; the nature of designated interpreting; and grammatical ambiguity in trilingual VRS (Video Relay Service) interpreting.

One of the collection's strengths is that it draws attention to a number of 'hot topics' in the field. Some of these will be familiar to scholars in the wider world of Interpreting Studies, since they are common to other environments and not exclusively of interest within the field of signed language interpreting. Others present a more narrow range of application, and it is one of these – the inclusion of the perspectives of Deaf people in signed language translation and interpreting research – which opens the volume in its first chapter. Eileen Forestal, who introduces herself as a Deaf person, now retired after 36 years as an educator of American Sign Language (ASL)-English interpreters, echoes an exhortation that is currently often evident as she "urge(s) hearing researchers to relinquish their power and work with Deaf researchers, including Deaf participants, and grant the Deaf community ownership, accountability, and shared responsibility" (p. 15). Although the notion of empowering Deaf people within research processes is not a new one (see, for example, Turner/Harrington 2000), it is arguably only with the increasing professionalization of Deaf interpreters and translators (Boudreault 2005; Turner 2006a; Stone 2009) that the real-world experiences of

Deaf people have been systematically allied to theoretical underpinnings which reveal new insights to the wider field.

Whilst the bulk of the volume consists of more traditional empirically-based studies, two other papers align with Forestal's contribution in pursuing different kinds of goals. In a theory-driven piece, Jeremy Brunson revisits his doctoral work ("The Practice and Organization of Sign Language Interpreting: An Institutional Ethnography of Access", Syracuse University 2008) to discuss the relevance of wider sociological theory to signed language interpreting. Elsewhere, Ronice Muller de Quadros, Janine Oliveira, Aline Nunes de Sousa and Roberto Dutra Vargas detail the linguistic and technical issues involved in translating the university entrance examination for the Federal University of Santa Catarina, Brazil, from Portuguese into the national signed language, Libras. This is clearly a matter of immediate practical consequence to Deaf people's educational experiences in this context, and reminds us that interpreting changes lives, for better or worse.

The remaining papers range from those of the more narrowly empirical variety, concentrating primarily on linguistic description, through those which more actively seek to connect language and social consequences, to those with an eye on wider theoretical modelling. Picking up another of the field's most prominent current developments, two papers centre upon the introduction of VRS interpreting using signed languages. Introduced in Sweden in 1997 (Hellström 1998), VRS has grown in significance with the spread of enhanced digital technologies, alongside similar growth in videoconference interpreting between spoken languages following experiments back in the 1970s (Mouzourakis 1996; Braun 2015). In this volume, Annie Marks' paper, deriving from her Gallaudet University Master's dissertation, examines interpreters' management of discourse in VRS settings. Since recording actual VRS interaction is strictly prohibited in the United States, Marks takes her 81 minutes of data from three simulated calls, and returns to the familiar territory of footing shifts marked out by Metzger (1995) to map out the practices she observes. In the same (mock) setting, David Quinto-Pozos, Erica Alley, Kristie Casanova de Canales and Rafael Treviño take a quasi-experimental approach to investigating interpreters' strategies for handling material that the researchers consider ambiguous in the source language. The results are held to show, not unexpectedly, that "lexical choices made by interpreters involve careful consideration of context, interpersonal dynamics between speakers and addressees, and sociocultural norms of communication" (p. 232). In another study emerging from the campus of Gallaudet University, Roberto Santiago, Lisa Barrick and Rebecca Jennings sought to discover whether, under 'laboratory' conditions, interpreters would use figurative language in rendering into English a heavily idiomatic ASL source text. Follow-up interviews – asking whether the six participants used idioms in everyday interactions, and felt this affected their interpreting; what factors influenced their decisions to use idioms; and whether using idioms in their ASL-English work was a risk – explored the relative lack of idiomaticity in the English renditions.

Fieldwork of a different kind underpins two papers which centre particularly on an emerging seam of questions relating to questions of identity management

in relationships between signed language interpreters and those with whom they work. Identity issues abound in sign language studies (see overview in Napier/Leeson 2016) and in interpreting more particularly (Harrington/Turner 2001, Turner 2005), but the papers offered here are indicative of a contemporary shift arising in the context of improved access to employment for Deaf people. The history of 'institutionalised audism' (Turner 2006b) that previously undermined Deaf employees' chances of professional advancement has been steadily overturned in many countries, not least as a consequence of the provision of workplace interpreting (Dickinson/Turner 2008; Hauser *et al.* 2008; Dickinson/Turner 2009; Dickinson 2010). Here, from another master's dissertation (rooted informatively in traditions of linguistic anthropology with much to offer to Interpreting Studies), Stephanie Feyne attends to audience perceptions of Deaf professionals, showing that – in the unusual setting of museum talks delivered by Deaf ASL users – addressees "attributed almost all interpreted utterances to the Deaf originators" (p. 67), not recognising the influence of the interpreter's individuality on the message as conveyed to them. Annette Miner's interview data is taken from a pilot study with two Deaf academics and five interpreters (three of whom worked with those Deaf people). Miner contrasts these perspectives and concludes that whilst Deaf professionals regarded their regular interpreters "as a cook might regard a favourite knife", the interpreters thought of themselves "as a key ingredient in the dish, not just as a tool used in creating it" (p. 208). The difference is revealing, and certainly suggests a need for much deeper exploration of the topic.

The remaining two chapters perhaps reach most explicitly for the nurturing of wider scholarly impact from empirical roots. Campbell McDermid continues, after two decades as an educator and three as a practitioner in the field (notes on contributors would have helped readers by providing such background details), to seek to use insights from ASL-English interpreting to answer bigger questions about how best to model the linguistic, social and cognitive processes enacted and revealed by the quest to optimise the management of meaning in this context. In this study, McDermid asked 12 novice and expert practitioners to interpret an English monologue into ASL: he concludes that they "felt the need to disambiguate approximately 50% of their target text utterances in order to achieve a comprehensible story for a Deaf audience" (p. 125) and argues firmly that this lends credence to cognitive, constructivist models of interpreting. In another window on interpreters as *collaborative* constructors of meaning, Silvia Del Vecchio, Marcello Cardarelli, Fabiana De Simone and Giulia Petitta investigate what happens when interpreters are directly addressed by, and respond to, other participants. Their focus is on "perceptions of the interpreter's role by the interlocutors and the effects on the interpreting effectiveness" (p. 25). This is a welcome contribution to the slow-burning development of post-conduit modelling in Interpreting Studies: the idea of the interpreter as a 'participant' in a 'pas de trois' who 'co-constructs' meaning along with others in interaction have been with us for some time (Roy 1989; Wadensjö 1992 and Turner 1995 respectively), but we have collectively taken our time in developing practices in the field which actively enable all participants to share responsibility for the effectiveness

of interpreted interaction (Turner 2006c, Turner 2007) and in expanding thinking on both describing and theorising the outcomes (Turner/Merrison 2016). As Del Vecchio and the other authors succinctly state, active engagement of primary participants serves to "improve the interpreting process and can be defined as cotranslation because – whether they are asked to or not – participants contribute to the work of the interpreter. However, the actual improvement of the translation process must be further investigated in this perspective, in order to clarify its implications" (p. 41).

Whilst containing certain insights, this volume also underlines some shortcomings in the field. Too often, it continues a familiar lack of connectivity within the relatively small academic community. With notable exceptions, few of the papers here are deeply underpinned by a sense of either the history or the broad geography of scholarship in signed language interpreting studies, and even fewer display substantial attention to the wider disciplinary roots from which they are, in fact, drawing, and – equally importantly – which they should be feeding in turn. The result is that we see claims such as Jeremy Brunson's (p. 145) that "an ontology that situates the everyday of interpreters in a larger context" has been "missing from Interpreting Studies scholarship for some time". In entry after entry, Franz Pöchhacker's 552-page *Routledge Encyclopedia of Interpreting Studies* (2015) is just the latest of innumerable outputs that make a nonsense of such a statement. It is hard to upbraid spoken language researchers for not seeing the value in signed language work if the evidence of volumes like this suggests that the practice is frequently mutual. A stronger editorial hand might have insisted, too, that contributors considered the contribution their ideas might make to the non-signing majority in the Interpreting Studies field: Deaf researchers like Eileen Forestal should not, for example, imagine that they are the only members of minority groups who may have more to offer to the generation of knowledge than has hitherto often been acknowledged, and these connections are there to be made to the benefit of all.

For these reasons and others, readers may find it hard to 'place' this volume on their academic shelves. It is, perhaps, revealing to consider why the organisers of the original conference from which these papers were plucked decided to call it the *First International Symposium on Signed Language Interpreting and Translation Research*. After all, conferences on signed language interpreting have been running in the United States for half a century. And signed language interpreting research has been presented at international academic events for a very long time, too – the first such event I attended was at Durham University in England in 1994, for instance. Should one conclude that the message between the lines is that the American field was largely unaware of what was happening in Europe at that pre-internet time? And that the legacy of a literature that was largely produced by and for practitioners (predominantly disseminated through the US Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, established in 1964) and trainers (US Conference of Interpreter Trainers, from 1979) is evident in this 'first' symposium to put research centre stage?

Part of what this book demonstrates, anyway, is that whilst the broader Interpreting Studies is expanding, it is also inevitably getting to be somewhat 'bag-

gy' (synonyms: loose-fitting, roomy, generously cut, voluminous, billowing). In part, that's a reflection of its dynamism and a welcome diversity of approaches. But it's also a consequence of the approach we collectively take to the circulation of ideas, which tends towards 'letting a thousand flowers bloom': encourage everything, and time will tell what persists. Publications like *The Interpreters' Newsletter*, though, could perhaps be the place to cultivate a slightly more managed form of gardening, one which takes a pro-active approach to the generation of coherence by fostering *continuity* within promising lines of enquiry, and direct *exchange* among groups of researchers engaged in analysing related topics. This might mean promoting intensive *workshops*, for example, which allow at least as much time for interaction and exploration of ideas as for the initial presentations that are the meat-and-drink of most conference programmes (including the event that sparked the present volume). Likewise, academic journals in more venerable fields than our own (philosophy; medicine) sometimes offer scope for *Letters to the Editor*, creating space for response and counter-argument on the scholarly issues of the day. As an historic crossroads for many forms of transaction, where better than Trieste, home city of *The Interpreters' Newsletter*, to look again at such possibilities?

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Bendazzoli Claudio / Monacelli Claudia (eds) (2016) *Addressing Methodological Challenges in Interpreting Studies Research*, Newcastle upon Tyne, Cambridge Scholars Publishing. ISBN (10): 1-4438-9067-7, ISBN (13): 978-1-4438-9067-0

Reviewed by Daniel Gile

This collective volume, dedicated to the memory of Miriam Shlesinger, is based on a 'natural selection' of papers from a conference also organized to honor her memory in 2013 at UNINT University, Rome.

In their introduction, the editors pay tribute to previously published volumes on methodology in research into interpreting, a courteous gesture that is rare enough in the literature to be noteworthy. They go on to explain the mindset with which they see this volume: one of self-reflection conducted by researchers who cannot be totally detached from what they study, especially when most of them are also practitioners (of interpreting) themselves. This important point deserves serious analytical reflection indeed. In particular, such reflection could offer insights into reasons for the behavior and policy of some schools of thought in Interpreting Studies, and one would have liked to see it taken much further in at least one of the chapters of the book.

The editors also state that there is a strong focus on ethnographic methods in the book. The idea is welcome, not only against the background of a need for self-reflection in Interpreting Studies, but also because a good methodological book focusing on ethnographic methods could help fight the temptation to use technology and techniques without reflecting sufficiently on what one is doing and why, at the risk of wasting considerable time and effort. Such a tendency is not infrequent among recent studies, especially in some which use advanced statistical techniques rather pointlessly and when they do happen to produce potentially meaningful results, propose little or no reflection on what they might mean.

The first chapter, by Claudio Bendazzoli, offers an introduction to fieldwork and ethnography and to participant observation before moving on to the specific case of Interpreting Studies. As regards IS, he insists on the advantages of being an interpreter cum researcher as regards the comprehension of the actors' behavior and interactions and access to data. This reviewer believes his research has benefited directly from his being a 'practisearcher' precisely as stated in this chapter and can only approve. The problem, which takes one back to the introduction and which is not really discussed by Bendazzoli, is how to take sufficient distance to be a good observer who does not impose his/her wishes and beliefs on data without the required skepticism which gives scientific investigation an edge over ordinary observation and introspection.

In chapter two, Claudia Monacelli offers a contribution on research into interpreting in confidential settings, in this case mostly for the Italian Ministry of Defense. Central in her chapter and in line with the CDA approach she adopts are the notions of ideology and power. She builds the beginning of her chapter with notions and constructs such as power differentials, context model dimensions,

Goffman's dramaturgy, fields of action and genres, before moving on to a strikingly contrasting practical presentation of a case study and explanations about access problems to informants, saying who had access to what and why and who did what and why, including confidentiality considerations, insider/outsider status and the document production processes. The theory presented in the first part of the chapter would be useful in integrating other research situations within Interpreting Studies and beyond in the same conceptual construct. In this chapter, the juxtaposition of the descriptive and the reflective parts is somewhat odd.

In chapter three, following up on the editors' introduction and on Bendazzoli's chapter, Marta Biagini also refers to ethnography, an approach "focusing on specific patterns in social phenomena, investigating a small number of cases and interpreting cultural meanings and human actions in contexts through verbal descriptions and explanations" (p. 63). She stresses the importance of the interaction between the researcher and the observed subject and says that ethnographic research is fundamentally subjective in nature, but without going deeper into the issues associated with such interaction and subjectiveness. The second part of her chapter is devoted to Dialogue Interpreting Research and mentions difficult access to institutional and public settings as a major methodological challenge, an unrelated issue, before talking about her own experience in a more practical vein.

The next chapters no longer address interaction between the research and the object of research, though most of them do mention methodological challenges. Minhua Liu discusses experiments – taking care to clarify that she adopts the viewpoint of psychology, as opposed to other disciplines which may have other definitions and considerations around experiments. She explains some of the principles as well as criticism formulated against experiments within the IS community, in particular with respect to ecological validity. She defends this paradigm while acknowledging its limitations, associated with the small non-random samples most often found in IS studies, and makes the important point that replication is indispensable if findings from experiments are to be generalized. She also mentions naturalistic research as an alternative under the name "descriptive research".

Tanya Voinova and Noam Ordan's chapter is one of the most interesting in the collection. It combines quantitative and qualitative approaches creatively. As part of an elective community interpreting course set up at Bar Ilan University in Israel by Miriam Shlesinger in 2007, students, who take two classes per week during a whole academic year and volunteer 100 hours of community interpreting work, write short weekly reports and an end-of-year text, which is the analysis of two ethical dilemmas, a fictitious proposal to improve interpreter integration into the system, a list of advantages and disadvantages of learning in multilingual classrooms or a description of their prior knowledge about community interpreting and its evolution over the year. The authors extracted 314 typical words from a corpus composed of these assignments, classified them into themes and compared their frequencies as well as their use in this students' assignment corpus and in a general corpus to draw conclusions about how the students perceived their work. Inter alia, there was a lot of "waiting" in the reports,

as well as "explaining", "helping", "feeling". The authors note that the overall picture that emerges is sometimes at odds with the image of interpreters given in classes and in professional conduct codes.

Chapter six, by Cynthia Kellett Bidoli, on the analysis of consecutive interpreting notes, is practical and informative. She begins with a review of existing empirical research on note-taking and mentions a few techniques used to gain insight into the note-taking process online as opposed to inferences made on the sole basis of the note-taking product. For instance, students can be asked to take notes on transparencies which are projected overhead. She mentions space constraints as the main challenge associated with this method, but does not refer to the extra efforts which may be required when the students are asked to write on an unfamiliar medium, presumably in an usual and perhaps uncomfortable physical position, and in a situation where they know the whole class is looking at what they are doing. She also mentions video recording of the note-taking, used by Dörte Andres among others. In the second part of her chapter, she focuses on the most promising and least invasive technique, namely the use of digital pens and on associated corpus analysis techniques, and illustrates it with examples from a case study.

Sara Bani's chapter analyzes an interpreter-mediated event, a journalism festival with four Latin-American Spanish-speaking foreign speakers and simultaneous interpreting into Italian, from a CDA perspective, "focusing [inter alia] on foreign speakers' strategies to build a shared identity and to convey a polarization between an ingroup and an outgroup" (p.173). Bani considers that the use of the first person plural in their discourse reflects an attempt to build a shared identity, "in opposition to the government" (p. 183). She observes shifts in the interpreted renditions and notes tactics interpreters use to render cultural references.

Michael Boyd also adopts the CDA approach and the conceptual metaphor theory as a framework to analyze the interpretation of U.S. presidential debates between Obama and McCain in 2008. The turns dealing with "Joe the Plumber", a conceptual metaphor, were analyzed with a focus on pronouns, the strategies of the speakers when referring to Joe the Plumber and the use of *lei* (polite and more formal) vs. *tu* (more informal) in the target texts.

There is considerable speculation in the interpretation of the data in these last two chapters. This reviewer would have welcomed some skepticism in the analysis – no doubt a reaction due to his own background in the more canonical view of 'science'.

The ninth and last chapter in the volume, by Anne Martin, discusses research trends and methods under the heading of interpreting and ideology. After listing definitions of ideology, she explains that there are "multiple manifestations of ideological issues in the professional practice of interpreting". Interestingly, she believes that the directionality issue in conference interpreting, with the Western preference for working into one's A language and the Iron Curtain countries' preference for working into one's B language, was an ideological issue rather than a technical one. She also challenges the invisibility and neutrality of the interpreters' role in armed conflict settings, and again looks at the role issue in methodological research approaches. She introduces norms, then CDA, then nar-

rative theory, into the picture, and ends her analysis with the ideological component of de Manuel's ideas on interpreter training and action research.

The mix is rather uneven, and not all chapters address methodological challenges in interpreting studies research as the title suggested. Neither do all of them "lean on strong theoretical platforms" as announced in the introduction. The collection nevertheless offers interesting texts to read, and indeed, some insight into practical methodological challenges that investigators dealing with interpreting often face. This reviewer's hope is that the editors will have an opportunity in the near future to encourage further exploration of the interaction between interpreting researchers and the object of their research, and to edit a new collection which will be dedicated to the topic.

THE INTERPRETERS' NEWSLETTER
NEXT ISSUE: 22 (2017) ON CORPUS-BASED *DIALOGUE* INTERPRETING STUDIES
Guest Editor: *Claudio Bendazzoli*

The corpus-based approach to the study of interpreter-mediated communicative situations has been applied by a growing number of scholars to different types of interpreting. Since Miriam Shlesinger's call for corpus-based interpreting studies (CIS) in 1998 and following the experience gained in Corpus-based Translation Studies, interpreting corpora have become instrumental not only in enhancing more rigorous research methodology but also in creating language resources in the widest sense. Over the last twenty years, considerable progress has been made in this "off-shoot" of Interpreting Research, ranging from small scale corpora only suitable for 'manual' analysis to larger, machine-readable corpora. However, these developments have largely depended on the degree of data accessibility, thus favouring sources such as the European Parliament and public conferences. On the other hand, more confidential settings (e.g. hospitals, courts, police stations) where dialogue interpreting (DI) is generally adopted have lent themselves to CIS research with greater difficulty. Despite this, DI scholars now can count on increasingly larger data sets and the time has come to supplement qualitative, micro-analyses with a more quantitative approach and systematic queries. Issue 22 of the Interpreters' Newsletter aims to redress the balance in CIS and open the way to more DI research benefiting from the use of the corpus-based approach.

Publication: December 2017

THE INTERPRETERS' NEWSLETTER
ISSUE 23 (2018)
Editors: *Cynthia J. Kellett and Alessandra Riccardi*

Issue 23 will be composed of selected papers from the International Conference *Translation and Interpreting: Convergence, Contact, Interaction* held 26th-28th May 2016 at the SSLMIT in the Department of Legal, Language, Interpreting and Translation Studies, University of Trieste. Because translation and interpreting scholars often attend different conferences, or different sessions within the same conference, the Trieste Organising and Scientific Committee decided to offer an opportunity for contact and comparison between specialists in the two disciplines. Furthermore, Translation and Interpreting are ever more frequently found in relations of overlap, hybridity and contiguity, often constituting two interlingual processes performed by the same person in the same communicative act or in different situations. Translation and Interpreting were therefore presented as a binomial (T&I) at the conference, where experts from both disciplines were able to meet to exchange opinions, discuss research and find a common space for reflection. From the various sessions on T&I in law, politics, econom-

ics, medicine, television and more, the editors of issue 23 will select a sample of papers focussing on interpreting to explore several topics such as: required knowledge and competence, linguistic and ethical aspects, research methodologies, professional practice and associated constraints, the use of information technology and training.

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