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Contents

Birth of a discipline?: Soviet Translation Studies in the 1920s

Brian James Baer iD

Kent State University, United States of America

ABSTRACT

This article proposes four characteristics that define a field of study as an academic discipline and then applies them to early Soviet efforts regarding the study of translation, referred to as *perevodovedenie*. The article focuses on the scholarly activity of two Soviet cultural institutions of the 1920s, the State Academy for Artistic Sciences, in Moscow, and the State Institute for the History of the Arts, in Petrograd, then Leningrad. Both institutes created subcommittees on translation, which hosted lectures as well as other scholarly activities, such as the creation of a Translation Studies bibliography. Key figures in the promotion of *perevodovedenie* at this time are also discussed. The article challenges the dominant narrative of the field, as consolidated in the many English-language handbooks and encyclopedias, that situates the emergence of Translation Studies in the post-World War II West and that construes writings from before the war as non-scholarly.

Keywords: *perevodovedenie*, Soviet Translation Studies, disciplinary mapping, State Academy for Artistic Sciences, State Institute for the History of the Arts

Rojstvo stroke? Sovjetsko prevodoslovje od 1920 do 1929

IZVLEČEK

V prispevku so predstavljene štiri značilnosti, ki opredeljujejo raziskovalno področje kot akademsko stroko; te štiri značilnosti so nato aplicirane na zgodnje sovjetske poskuse vzpostavljanja vede o prevajanju, imenovanime *perevodovedenie.* Prispevek se osredotoča na akademsko dejavnost dveh sovjetskih kulturnih inštitucij v obdobju od 1920 do 1929, to sta Državna akademija za umetniške znanosti v Moskvi in Državni inštitut za umetnostno zgodovino v Sankt Peterburgu, ki se je takrat imenoval Leningrad. Na obeh inštitucijah sta bila ustanovljena podkomiteja za prevajanje, v okviru katerih so bila organizirana predavanja in druge akademske dejavnosti, kot npr. priprava bibliografije s področja prevodoslovja. Predstavljene so tudi ključne osebnosti pri promociji *perevodovedenia* v omenjenem obdobju. V prispevku je postavljena pod vprašaj prevladujoča narativa v prevodoslovju, ki se utrjuje v številnih priročnikih in enciklopedijah v angleškem jeziku in ki umešča nastanek prevodoslovja v zahodni svet po drugi svetovni vojni ter vsako pisanje o tej tematiki pred tem obdobjem predstavlja kot neakademsko.

Ključne besede: *perevodovedenie*, sovjetsko prevodoslovje, oris stroke, Državna akademija umetniških znanosti, Državni inštitut za umetnostno zgodovino

1. Introduction

The dominant narrative of Translation Studies as a discipline, consolidated in the countless handbooks, encyclopedias and textbooks that have come out over the last ten to fifteen years, situates the birth of the field in the post-WWII West, essentially writing off earlier discourse as, to use James Holmes's phrase, "incidental and desultory" (Holmes 1988, 173; see Baer 2020).[1] As recently as 2018, Yves Gambier declared, "While the practice of translation and interpreting is much over two thousand years old, and writings about them exist in ancient Greece and Rome to the mid-20th c., it is not, however, until the 1950s that academic and scientific publications tackled translation" (Gambier 2018, 180–81). Although this dominant narrative has been challenged geographically by increasing recognition among Western scholars of the achievements of Soviet Translation Studies (see Pym and Avazyan 2017; Baer 2021),[2] that research too has tended to focus on the post-war period, leaving the first half of the twentieth century largely *terra incognita*.[3]

Certainly a unique confluence of factors contributed to the emergence of Translation Studies as a discipline in the era of internationalism that characterized the post-WWII

1   In late 2023 a conference, organized by Kathryn Batchelor and Iryna Odrekhivska, was held at University College London titled *Nothing Happened: Translation Studies before James Holmes*. According to the Call for Papers: "Frequently rehearsed narratives of Translation Studies typically trace the origins of the discipline to James Holmes's 1972 paper, 'The Name and Nature of Translation Studies', and suggest that little of interest happened prior to that date, or at least prior to the 1950s. Reflections on translation from earlier periods have been characterised as sterile, imprecise, or circular, or as taking place outside the bounds of academic or scientific endeavour. Teleological narratives of disciplinary progress and development have been widely reproduced and are rarely contested" (UCL Nothing Happened 2023).

2   The role of translation in challenging these disciplinary narratives should not be underestimated. Following Baer's 2021 translation of Andrei Fedorov's 1953 *Introduction to Translation Theory*, Fedorov was finally mentioned by Jeremy Munday in his entry on translation theory in the *Cambridge Handbook of Translation Studies*, edited by Kirsten Malmkjer, alongside Western scholars of the same time period (Munday 2022, 25).

3   An exception to this might be Walter Benjamin's much cited and anthologized essay "The Task of the Translator" of 1923, which, I would argue, is the exception that proves the rule in the sense that the essay is never contextualized in its historical moment, presented instead like a voice in the desert. Notable scholarly contributions to our understanding of the pre-WWII period in the Soviet Union include the monograph *Rosyjskie teorie przekładu literackiego* (2011) by the Polish translation scholar Tadeusz Szczerbowski, as well as Russian-language works by Neliubin and Khukhuni (2008), Azov (2013), and Baskina (2021). English-language works on this period include Komissarov (1998) and, more recently, Pym (2023). D'hulst (2021) offers a survey of French thinking on translation in the first half of the twentieth century.

period, such as the many international institutions that were created to prosecute war criminals, to maintain peace and to avoid future global conflicts and that required trained cadres of translators and interpreters, as well as trainers to train them; but also the neo-imperialist soft diplomacy of the two superpowers, which deployed translation as an important tool to win "hearts and minds," as well as advances in machine translation, which contributed to the reframing of translation from an art to a science (see Baer 2022). The post-WWII decades, however, were not the only period in the twentieth century characterized by internationalism. The Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 established an internationalist polity, in which translation played a central role, supported by historically unprecedented rhetorical and material investment in translation by the Soviet state. Indeed, the translation discourse generated in the Soviet Union between the two wars was, I will argue, so serious, systematic and sustained as to qualify as an alternative origin of Translation Studies or, to use the Russian term introduced during that period, *perevodovedenie*.[4]

Before documenting that tradition, however, one might ask: What exactly defines a field as a discipline? Much has been written on the subject both outside of Translation Studies, such as Armin Krishnan's "What are Academic Disciplines? Some observations on the Disciplinarity vs Interdisciplinarity Debate" (Krishnan 2009), and within it, such as these essays by Daniel Gile: "Institutionalization of Translation Studies" (Gile 2012) and "Scienticity and Theory in Translation Studies" (Gile 2013). From those various writings, I have distilled four key characteristics of a modern academic discipline:

> 1. A distinct name for the discipline, consistently applied to distinguish it from other (adjacent) fields of inquiry;
> 2. A level of systematic and sustained theorization, characterized by a certain degree of scienticity;
> 3. Disciplinary self-consciousness manifested in, among other things, the mapping of the past, present and future of the discipline; and
> 4. The institutionalization of disciplinary-specific training and research programs at institutions of higher learning.

Below I examine Soviet Translation Studies in the *entre-deux-guerres* period in relation to these four characteristics.

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4   It should be noted that the Ukrainian term *perekladoznavstvo* also came into use during this period (Kalnychenko 2011).

2. The act of naming

One of the reasons James Holmes's essay "The Name and Nature of Translation Studies" (Holmes 1988) is so widely cited in histories of the field is for its Adamic act of naming. The emergence of equivalent names in other languages is, however, more difficult to pinpoint. There is some debate over when exactly the French term *traductologie* appeared and who was responsible for introducing it, although it seems to have occurred in the late 1960s. In German, the situation is more complicated. While the term *Übersetzungswissenschaft* emerged in the early nineteenth century (D'Hulst and Gambier 2018, 2), Google N-gram indicates a dramatic and consistent increase in usage over the course of the 1950s. The first recorded use of the Russian term *perevodovedenie,* however, occurred in the mid-1920s.

On November 22, 1928, at the State Academy for the Artistic Sciences in Leningrad, Dmitrii Usov gave a lecture titled "Переводоведение в Ленинграде" [Translation Studies in Leningrad]. According to the synopsis of the lecture provided in the Academy's yearly *Бюллетени* [Bulletins]*,* Translation Studies had by this time already grown into a sub-discipline of literary studies:

> Тезисы доклада:
> 1. Переводоведение перерастает в самостоятельную литературо-ведческую дисциплину. Из появившихся по нему за последние годы работы изданы, однако, *лишь немногие*. Ввиду этого между организациями, ведущими работу по изучению перевода, желате-лен информационный обмен. (Cited in Neshumova 2011, 496)

> [The theses of the lecture:
> 1. *Perevodovedenie* has grown into an independent discipline within Literary Studies. There have been, however, only a few works published in it in recent years. In light of that, an exchange of information among the organizations conducting work on the study of translation is recommended.]

In 1929, Usov would refer to "теория и практика современного переводоведения" [the theory and practice of contemporary *perevodovedenie*] (cited in Neshumova 2011, 494). He had earlier proposed the compilation of a bibliography of all extant writings on translation, which he consistently referred to as a *bibliografiia perevodovedenia* [Translation Studies bibliography], discussed in greater detail below.

3. Systematic and sustained theorizing

Already in 1919 with the publication of Kornei Chukovsky and Nikolai Gumilev's *Принципы художественного перевода* [Principles of Literary Translation] (Chukovsky and Gumilev 1919), an in-house guide for translators at the World Literature Publishing House, there were calls in the Soviet Union for the study of translation to become a *nauka*, or science.[5] As the publishers write in the closing paragraph of their preface:

> С этой же целью издательство выпускает в свет и предлагаемую брошюру, в надежде, что почин ее авторов не останется без продолжателей и что в близком будущем общими усилиями удастся, быть может, заложить принципиальные основы, если не науки, то хотя бы практического руководства к одному из самых трудных и требовательных искусств—искусству художественного перевода. (Chukovskii and Gumilev 1919, 6)

> [With this goal in mind [that of improving the quality of Russian literary translations], the publishing house is issuing this brochure, in the hope that the initiative of its authors will not remain without successors and that in the near future through combined effort it may perhaps be possible to lay the basic foundations of, if not a *science*, then at least a practical guide for one of the most difficult and demanding arts—the art of literary translation.]

Translation theory became a topic of increasing interest and debate over the course of the 1920s, as evident in the lectures delivered at two institutes that were at the forefront of the study of translation at this time, Государственный институт истории искусств [State Institute for the History of the Arts], or GIII, in Leningrad, and Государственная академия художественных наук [State Academy of Artistic Sciences], or G.A.Kh.N., in Moscow.[6] For example, at the latter institute, in 1925 (December 16) Efim Moiseevich

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5   While Soviet rhetoric typically emphasized the historical novelty of Soviet scholarship, the roots of Soviet Translation Studies are eclectic and reach deep into the decades preceding the October Revolution. Major influences include the Ukrainian linguist and philosopher Aleksandr Potebnya and the Russian literary theorist and comparatist Aleksandr Veselovskii, as well as German historical-comparative philologists and Francophone linguists, such as Charles Bally and Michel Bréal. A focus on translation was to some extent a natural outgrowth of the increasingly comparative approaches emerging in the late nineteenth century in literary studies and linguistics.

6   In addition to personal contacts between the members of G.A.Kh.N. and the members of GIII, there were at least plans for professional collaboration. On September 27, 1928, at an organizational meeting of the G.A.Kh.N. subcommittee, Usov gave a report on plans for a collection of articles done in collaboration with GIII (Neshumova 2011, 488).

Ryt delivered a lecture titled "Окраска места, времени, народности, переводимого языка, общественной среды (*couleur locale*) в свете основных принципов теории перевода и литературы вообще" [Local, Temporal and National Coloration in the Translated Language and the Social Milieu in Light of the Basic Principles of the Theory of Translation and of Literature in General] (*Biulleteni G.A.Kh.N.* 1925, 2/3: 35), and on May 3, 1928, Dmitrii Usov gave a lecture titled "*Из новейшей литературы по теории перевода*" [From the Latest Writings on the Theory of Translation] (*Biulleteni G.A.Kh.N.* 1928, 11: 36) in which he reacted to an article by the Ukrainian scholar Volodymyr Derzhavin, titled "Проблема віршованого перекладу" [The Problem of Literary Translation], which had appeared in the Ukrainian journal *Плужанин* in 1927. Usov critiques Derzhavin's views of translation theory for being too abstract and for failing to differentiate between the translation of poetry and literary prose.

Others questioned the very possibility of a normative theory of translation. At a meeting of the G.A.Kh.N. subcommittee on May 28, 1928, Boris Vladimirovich Gornung delivered a lecture titled "Проблематика перевода" [The Problematic of Translation], in which:

> докладчик разбирает понятие х у д о ж е с т в е н н о г о перевода и перевода ф и л о л о г и ч е с к о г о и указывает на абсурдность идеи нормативной теории перевода. Идеалом перевода, по мнению докладчика надо считать сочетание об›ъективной интерпретации с качеством художественности. (*Biulleteni G.A.Kh.N.* 1928, 11: 37)

> [The lecturer discusses the concept of *literary* translation and that of *philological* translation and demonstrates the absurdity of the idea of a normative theory of translation. The ideal of translation, in the lecturer's opinion, must be the combination of an objective interpretation with the quality of artistry/literariness.]

Dmitrii Usov objected to what he called Gornung's "skeptical view" on the theory of translation, maintaining that "теория перевода возможна" [a theory of translation is possible] (cited in Neshumova 2011, 487).

Mikhail Alekseev's inaugural lecture as professor at Irkutsk State University in 1927 (published in 1931), titled "Проблема художественного перевода" [The Problem of Literary Translation], opens with the statement:

> Вопрос, который избрал я темой своей вступительной беседы в общий курс истории западно-европейской литературы, несомненно

принадлежит к числу интереснейших проблем так называемыой «сравнительной истории литературы» и, как мне бы хотелось показать, имеет немаловажное теоретическое и практическое значение. (Alekseev 1931, 3)

[The topic that I have chosen as the theme for my inaugural lecture in the general course on the history of Western European literature undoubtedly belongs among the most interesting problems in what is called "the comparative history of literature" and, as I would like to show, is of rather great theoretical and practical significance.]

Also in the late 1920s (the exact date is unknown), Vladimir Shklovsky, the older brother of the Formalist Viktor Shklovsky, authored an unpublished essay titled "Теории перевода" [Theories of Translation] (RGALI Shklovskii 2004), in which he provided an overview of European theories of translation, concluding that the German Romantics represented a significant advance in translation theory in terms of sophistication, a result of their acknowledgement of cultural and linguistic particularity. And so, in the introduction to his 1929 *Теорії й практика перекладу* [Theory and Practice of Translation] (in Ukrainian), the first ever monograph on the topic, Oleksandr Finkel' declared: "Translation theory is today on the agenda" (Finkel' 1929, 5).

Further evidence of this is provided in the lengthy entry on translation (перевод), authored by Aleksandr Smirnov and Mikhail Alekseev, which appeared in volume eight of the eleven-volume *Литературная энциклопедия* [Literary Encyclopedia], published in 1934. It opens with a section titled "Теория литературного перевода" [The Theory of Literary Translation], the first lines of which read:

П[еревод] представляет собой проблему, далеко выходящую за пределы чистой литературно-лингвистической техники, поскольку каждый перевод есть в той или иной мере идеологическое освоение подлинника. Для процесса освоения существенен уже самый выбор произведений для П[еревода]. (Smirnov and Alekseev 1934, 512)

[Translation represents a problem that extends far beyond the bounds of purely literary-linguistic techniques, insofar as every translation is to some extent an ideological adoption of the original. Significant in this process of adoption is the very choice of works for translation.]

One important line of theorization in the Soviet Union over the course of the 1920s was focused on establishing the essential creativity of the translator's task and discrediting

literal translation as inaccurate and obfuscating. As Kornei Chukovskii puts it in his contribution to the 1919 edition of *Принципы художественного перевода* [Principles of Literary Translation]:

> Переводчик художественной прозы не фотографирует подлинник, а творчески воссоздает его. Чтобы быть переводчиком, недостаточно знать тот или иной иностранный язык. Переводчик— это художник, мастер слова, соучастник творческой работы того автора, которого он переводит. Он такой же служитель искусства, как актер, ваятель или живописец. Текст подлинника служит ему м а т е р и а л о м для его сложного—и часто вдохновенного—творчества. Переводчик—раньше всего талант. (Chukovskii 1919, 7)
> [The translator of literary prose does not photograph the original but artistically recreates it. In order to be a translator, it is not sufficient to know this or that foreign language. The translator is an artist, a master of the word, a co-participant in the creative work of that author whom he is translating. He is the same kind of servant of art as an actor, sculptor or painter. The text of the original serves as the *material* for his complex—and often inspired—creation. The translator is first of all a talent.]

This critique of literal translation is based on the fundamental asymmetry of natural languages. As Oleksandr Finkel writes in his 1922 article "О переводе" [On Translation] verse lines will rarely be the same in a translation as in the original because "языки неадекватны друг другу" [languages are not commensurate with one another]. This position is further elaborated by Dmitrii Usov in his 1934 monograph *Основные принципы переводческой работы* [Basic Principles of Translatorial Work]: "Языки разнятся между собою и по морфологии, и по лексике и по синтаксису, и в каждом есть совершенно специфические трудности и специфические способы разрешения этих трудностей" [Languages differ among themselves in terms of morphology, lexis and syntax, and each has it specific difficulties and its specific means for resolving those difficulties] (Usov 1934a, 4). For this reason, translations can establish a relationship of подобие, or resemblance to the original, but never one of тождество, or sameness (Fedorov 1930, 90).

As a result of this incommensurability, translators face a choice of options in rendering any given passage, which requires, as Chukovskii argues, talent. A central tenet of this anti-literalist position, grounded in the fundamental creativity of the translator's task, was the need for guiding principles. For example, at a meeting of the translation

subcommittee at G.A.Kh.N., on February 23, 1928, the members criticized a new translation of Ben Jonson's play *Bartholomew's Fair* by N.N. Sokolova, noting that the translator's striving for accuracy made the translation difficult and unsuitable for stage performance. In addition, "Принципы, которым следовала переводчица, кроме того, не всегда в достаточной мере ясны и убедительны" [The principles followed by the translator, moreover, were not always sufficiently clear and convincing] (*Biulleteni G.A.Kh.N.* 1928, 11: 36). The importance of guiding principles was positively reinforced at a subsequent lecture by G.P. Gerd, on April 19, titled "Принципы перевода с вотского языка на русский и с русского на вотский язык" [The Principles for Translating from the Votsk Language into Russian and from Russian into the Votsk Language"] (*Biulleteni G.A.Kh.N.* 1928, 11: 36). In the synopsis, the lecture is described as "offering extraordinarily valuable material for discussion."[7]

A logical extension of the creativity of the translator's task was the promotion of the translator's visibility. As Fedorov expressed it:

> Как бы то ни было, те переводы, которые мы знаем и которые принадлежат крупным нашим поэтам и свою ценность имеют—переводы в полной мере подписанные: личность переводчика остается в полной силе и оказывается зачастую неподатливою по отношению к оригиналу, оставляя свой очень отчетливый знак на переводе. Отказа от изучения этой личности, отрицания ее значения в поэтике перевода быть не может. (Fedorov 1930, 118).

> [Regardless, those translations that we know and that belong to our great poets and have their own creative identity—those are translations that are fully signed: the creative identity of the translator remains fully in effect and often turns out to be unyielding in relation to the original, leaving its mark on the translation. We must not refuse to study this creative identity or deny its significance in the poetics of translation.]

While Fedorov uses signature figuratively here, Usov literalizes the metaphor in the following passage from his 1934 *Basic Principles of Translatorial Work*:

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7   The term "principles" appears in a number of lectures, e.g., V.O. Nialender's, "О принципах перевода античных метров" [On the Principles of Translating Ancient Metres] (April 14, 1927); D.S. Usov's, "О принципах перевода на русский язык двенадцатисложного французского стиха шестистопным ямбом" [On the Principles of Translating Twelve-syllable French Verse in Russian with Iambic Hexameter] (May 12, 1927), and F.I. Kogan's, "О принципах перевода древне-еврейских псалмов" [On the Principles of Translating the Ancient Hebrew Psalms] (May 19, 1927).

Переводы издаются часто без указания имени переводчика. Это не-
правильно—анонимного, обезличенного перевода быть не должно.
Имя переводчика всегда должно значиться на его работе, как имя
ответственного участника. Часто над переводом одной книги ра-
ботают три (и более) переводчика. Это не идет на пользу переводу,
так как редактору не всегда удается привести к единству неизбеж-
ный разнобой в средствах языкового выражения. (Usov 1934a, 4)

[Translations are often published without indicating the name of the
translator. This is not right—there should not be anonymous, imperson-
al translations. The name of the translator should always be on his work,
as the name of the responsible participant. Often three (or more) trans-
lators work on the translation of a single book. This does not benefit the
translation nor the editor, who does not always succeed in bringing unity
to the inevitable discord in the means of linguistic expression.]

The debate over translation theory was also heavily influenced in the pre-WWII pe-
riod by the concept of *adekvatnost',* as introduced by Fyodor Batiushkov in the 1920
revised edition of *Принципы художественного перевода* [Principles of Literary
Translation]. As Batiushkov argues, when the target culture feels itself superior to
the source, then translations will privilege content over form, as reflected in the *belles
infidèles* of eighteenth-century France. When the target culture feels itself inferior to
the source, however, then translations will privilege form over content, as reflected in
the unsystematic borrowing of lexis and linguistic structures in eighteenth-century
Russian translations from Western European languages. Only when the source and
target cultures are at the same level of what Batiushkov refers to as "spiritual devel-
opment" is it possible to produce an adequate translation, that is, one that gives equal
consideration to the form and the content of the original.[8]

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8   It is not entirely clear what Batiushkov intended by spiritual translation, but it should
probably not be read in a narrowly religious way. The noun, *dukh*, from which the adjec-
tive *dukhovnyi* is derived, is the standard Russian translation of Hegel's *Geist*, suggesting
another possible translation: the development of *Geist* or World Spirit. Not surprisingly,
the concept of development would find fertile ground in Soviet discourse, evident in the
1934 entry on translation in the *Literary Encyclopedia*: "Между отдельными классами
разных стран наблюдается усиленное взаимопроникновение переводной лит-ры,
причем дающим классом обычно оказывается тот, к-рый достиг более высокой
ступени развития" [Among the various classes of different countries one observes an
enhanced mutual penetration of translated literature, with the class that has achieved the
higher stage of development being the one that gives [the texts for translation]] (Smirnov
and Alekseev 1934, 512).

Over the course of the 1920s translation scholars would debate Batiushkov's notion of *adekvatnost'*, as evident in the following lecture delivered by E.M. Ryt on October 27, 1927, at G.A.Kh.N. in the translation subcommittee: "Передача формы и содержания при переводе" [The Transfer of Form and Content in Translation]. In that lecture, according to the synopsis provided in the *Biulleteni*, Ryt attempted to outline a normative poetics of translation:

> Докладчик, стремясь придать переводу задачи культурно-просветительные, предлагал отказаться от передачи формальных элементов подлинника. В прениях было отмечено, что приемы, предлагаемые докладчиком для перевода художественных произведений, могут быть приняты лишь *для* передачи научных произведений, где сохранение формальных элементов подлинника не всегда обязательно. (*Biulleteni G.A.Kh.N.* 1927–1928, 10: 23)

> [The lecturer, in attempting to attribute cultural and educational tasks to translation, proposed rejecting the transfer of the formal elements of the original. During the debate it was noted that the devices proposed by the lecturer for the translation of literary works are acceptable only for the translation of scientific works, where the preservation of the formal elements of the original is not required.]

The opposition to Ryt's position, based on a differentiation of approaches to the translation of literary and scientific texts, demonstrates how deeply a text-type specific approach to translation had already taken root in the Soviet Union. Usov's objection introduces the notion of purpose, or *tsel'*, theorized decades later in Western Translation Studies as *skopos*:

> [Usov] указывает, что отсечение при переводе формальных признаков, характерных для подлинника по рецепту докладчика создаст неполное и неправильное представление о подлиннике, благодаря чему подобный перевод не будет достигать цели. Задача перевода - быть научно художественным; тогда он только и будет иметь культурное и культурно-воспитательное значение. (cited in Neshumova 2011, 486)

> [[Usov] shows that the cutting out in translation of formal elements that are characteristic of the original according to the lecturer's recipe will create an incomplete and incorrect understanding of the original, as a result of which such a translation will not achieve its goal. The task of a

translation is to be scholarly-artistic; only then will it have cultural and cultural-educational significance.]

Usov will later argue that with verse translation, the rendering of content may take a back seat to the rendering of formal characteristics: "Теория и практика современного переводоведения требует прежде всего бережного отношения к ритму и стиху, тогда как вопрос о сохранении содержания отходит на второй план" [The theory and practice of contemporary *perevodovedenie* demands first of all a respect for rhythm and verse, such that the question of preserving content is secondary] (cited in Neshumova 2011, 494).

Soviet translation theory in the 1920s was also profoundly influenced by the work of the Russian formalists. Andrei Fedorov, who studied under Iurii Tynianov at the Petrograd State Institute for the History of the Arts, or GIII, was responsible for introducing key formalist concepts, such as device, function and dominant, into Soviet Translation Studies. Functionalism in the Soviet context, by the way, referred to the translation of the function of textual units rather than their linguistic form, again as a way to move beyond literalism and formal equivalence. It is worth noting, however, that in his contribution "Приемы и задачи художественного перевода" [Devices and Tasks of Literary Translation] to the 1930 volume *Искусство перевода* [Art of Translation], Fedorov elaborated three possible approaches to translating culture specific items and constructions from the source text that do not exist in the target language: *obrusenie*, or Russification (quite similar to Venuti's concept of domestication); *chuzhaiazychnost'* (foreign-languageness), in which the translator preserves source language lexis and forms; and *sglazhivaiushchii perevod* (or smoothing over translation), in which the translator avoids culture and language-specific forms from both the target and the source language in favor of what Fedorov describes as "translation with a more or less even, neutral language that does not call forth any local impressions or national coloration nor impressions of foreignness or unusualness" (Fedorov 1930, 126).

While Fedorov does not express a preference for one of the approaches over the others, the second approach was, at least until the mid-1930s, often described as "enriching" the target culture language and repertoire of literary forms and metrics: "Такому обогащению [литературы] способствует дело перевода" [The work of translation facilitates such enrichment [of literature]] (Usov 1934a, 3). This approach, however, would become increasingly stigmatized over the course of the 1930s, a victim of the growing paranoia and xenophobia of pre-WWII Stalinist culture. Indeed, the increasingly categorical rejection of literal translation is evident in this pithy statement in the 1934 collection of German texts for translation, mentioned above: "Дословный

перевод искажает текст и делает его непонятным для читателя" [Literal translation deforms a text and makes it incomprehensible for the reader] (Usov, Tsil'ts, and Tuntser 1934, 7). Perhaps the last positive mention of "foreign languageness" as a viable method is in the introduction to a 1937 volume of French lyric poetry, translated by Benedikt Livshchits. There, the editor writes:

> Задача перевода не только в ознакомлении читателя с поэзией другого народа. Очень часто перевод играет значительную роль в деле разработки новых изобразительных средств языка. (Saianov 1937, 8)

> [The task of a translation lies not only in acquainting a reader with the poetry of another people. Translation very often plays a significant role in developing new expressive means in the [target] language.]

Livshchits, by the way, would be arrested in 1937, a victim of the Great Purge, and executed in 1938. His name would be removed from subsequent republications of his translations until his official rehabilitation in 1958.

Also notable in terms of Soviet theorizing of translation in the 1920s is the increasing differentiation of translation approaches according to the nature of the source text. The 1919 edition of *Principles of Literary Translation,* for example, was divided into poetry and prose. The 1920 edition added a section on drama translation, authored by Batiushkov. An important expansion to these literary typologies occurred with Finkel's 1929 *Theory and Practice of Translation.* Finkel may have been the first to extend translation theory beyond literary and sacred texts to include the category of non-literary prose, under which he included the subcategories of administrative, journalistic and scholarly texts. This would provide the basis for increasingly detailed text typologies that appeared throughout the 1930s, which often referred to the goal (*tsel'*) or orientation (*ustanovka*) of the source and target texts, and in some cases the readership of those texts, which should shape the translation in fundamental ways (see Baer and Hofeneder, forthcoming). As Usov notes in the introduction to a 1934 collection of German texts for translation:

> Переводчик—работник на многих участках советского строительства—имеет дело с весьма разнообразным материалом: переводятся и деловые письма, и инструкции, и научные книги по различным отраслям техники, и политическая, и военная литература, и социально-экономические работы (разного типа), и газетные статьи, и литературные произведения.

Установка перевода при этом не может быть одинаковой. (Usov 1934b, 5)

[The translator—as one who works in various sectors of Soviet construction—has to deal with a variety of texts: business letters, instructions, scholarly books on various technological topics, political writings, socio-economic works, newspaper articles (again, of various kinds, from telegraph messages to essays to feuilletons), as well as literary works.

And the orientation of the translation cannot be the same.]

In that same year, Usov published his monograph *Basic Principles of Translatorial Work*, which focuses on academic translation (*uchebnyi perevod*). There he makes a distinction between academic translation as defined by the nature of the source texts involved and academic translation as defined by the venue in which a text is published, such as textbooks, which may contain "scientific, socio-political or literary texts" (Usov 1934a, 3).

To give some idea of the theoretical sophistication or scienticity of these writings from the 1920s, and of their diversity, consider three examples taken from lectures given at G.A.Kh.N.:

1. A 1926 (11/25) lecture by V.E. Morits titled "Готье—Гумилев" [Gautier—Gumilev], which was "dedicated to the translation of the collection *Émaux et camées* and was based on a statistical method for calculating the accuracy of a translation. The lecturer introduced a series of very valuable data, which offered the possibility of establishing a specific coefficient of accuracy in a translation" (*Biulleteni G.A.Kh.N.* 1927, 6/7: 43).
2. A two-part lecture in 1927 (held on February 10 and March 10) by Efim Moiseevich Ryt titled "Введение в учение о переводе" [Introduction to the Study of Translation], in which he "acquainted listeners with the extensive bibliography he had compiled on the art of translation. In the lecture, which initiated a lively exchange of opinions, Ryt insisted on the principle that a translation should be an interpretation of a text" (*Biulleteni G.A.Kh.N.* 1928, 8/9: 31).
3. A 1928 (5/24) lecture by Boris Vladimirovich Gornung titled "Проблематика перевода" [The Problematic of Translation], in which he "unpacked the concept of literary translation and philological translation and pointed out the absurdity of the idea of a normative theory of translation. In the opinion of the lecturer, an ideal translation must be

considered one that combines an objective interpretation with the quality of artistry" (*Biulleteni G.A.Kh.N.* 1928, 11: 37).

One can discern from these titles an aspiration to scienticity, evident in the use of terms such as co-efficient, data, statistical method and objective interpretation.

The mention of philological translation in the third lecture acknowledges the emerging alternative to the anti-literalist position of the early 1920s, as articulated by Chukovskii, Finkelʹ, Fedorov and Usov, among others. The philological position was more source-oriented and based on extensive philological research (see Baskina 2021; Malikova 2017). This approach, however, would be condemned in the 1930s as *porochnyi* [perverted] and the practitioners labelled with the derogatory title *bukvalisty*, or literalists (see Azov 2013). This, along with the condemnation of formalism in translation, reflected the growing fear of translation as a vehicle for foreign influences.

4. Disciplinary self-consciousness

At the two institutes mentioned above, G.A.Kh.N. and GIII, subcommittees were created dedicated to the study of translation—at G.A.Kh.N., in 1924, and at GIII, in 1926. The subcommittee at G.A.Kh.N. was jointly housed in the Literary Section and the Bibliographic Department (Комиссии по изучению художественного перевода литературной секции и библиологического отдела), while the subcommittee at GIII was housed in the section on literary/artistic language (художественная речь). Both sub-committees hosted regular lectures on the theory and practice of literary translation and were the intellectual home to individuals who would become central figures in Soviet Translation Studies—Dmitrii Usov at G.A.Kh.N. and Andrei Fedorov at GIII. Moreover, G.A.Kh.N published a yearly bulletin recounting its activities, including those of the translation subcommittee, and GIII published the journal, *Поэтика* [Poetics], which regularly featured articles on translation, including Fedorov's first scholarly articles: "Проблемы стихотворного перевода" [On the Problem of Verse Translation] in 1927 and "Звуковая форма стихотворного перевода" [Sound Aspect of Verse Translation] in 1928.[9]

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9   GIII produced a volume documenting its activities, but without the synopses of the lectures and ensuing discussion one finds in the *Biulleteni* produced by G.A.Kh.N. Moreover, the titles of the lectures on translation at GIII are often not terribly informative. For example, in addition to his lecture titled "Поэтика стихотворного перевода" [Poetics of Verse Translation] in 1925 (Dec. 20), Andrei Fedorov gave a lecture in 1927 titled simply "О современном переводе" [On Contemporary Translation], while V.M. Alekseev gave a lecture titled, rather cryptically, "Фантасмы переводчика" [The Fantasms of the Translator]. For this reason, most of the lectures cited in this article were given at G.A.Kh.N.

These subcommittees, especially the one at GAKhH, were quite interested in mapping both the history and future trajectory of Soviet Translation Studies. As stated in the minutes of the inaugural meeting of the G.A.Kh.N. subcommittee:

> Перевод есть искусство и имеет свои изобразительные средства. – Изучить приемы и границы этого искусства – вот задача подсекции. – По необходимости мы ограничиваем материал Россией – перевод на русский язык или с русского. Мы хотели бы изучить русский перевод в теоретическом и историческом ракурсе. (RGALI, f. 941, op. 6., ed. khr. 26, l. 6–6ob)[10]

> [Translation is an art and has its own representational means. To study the devices and limits of this art is the task of this subcommittee. Out of necessity, we are limiting our material to Russia—translation into and out of the Russian language. We would like to study Russian translation from both a theoretical and historical perspective.]

They then go on to map those two perspectives:

> I. В теории нас интересуют:
> а) общие принципы, полагаемые в основу перевода
> б) приспособление русского языка и метрики к иностранным формам, т.е. обогащение русских литературных форм
> в) взаимоотношение между языком русским и разными другими и трудности, возникающие при переводе
> II. В историческом разрезе нас интересуют в значительной мере русские переводы 19 и начала 20 века, но не исключительно.
> [I. In terms of theory, we are interested in:
> a) The general principles at the basis of translation
> b) The adaptation of the Russian language and metrics to foreign forms, i.e., the enriching of Russian literary forms
> c) The relationship between the Russian language and various other languages, and the difficulties that arise in translation
> II. In the historical perspective, we are primarily interested in Russian translations of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but not exclusively.]

Another example of such disciplinary self-consciousness is the *bibliografiia perevodovedeniia* [Translation Studies bibliography] proposed by Usov at the inaugural

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10   This archival document was generously shared by Susanna Witt, University of Stockholm.

meeting at G.A.Kh.N. At a meeting in 1929, the members of the translation subcommittee agreed to move forward with the initiative, offering the following rationale:

1. Библиография переводоведения до сих пор отсутствует в русских специальных изданиях и указателях и крайне неполна в иностранных.

2. Работа по составлению такой библиографии представляется современной в настоящий момент, когда ведется кампания на повышение культуры и качества советского перевода и когда встает во всей остроте. (cited in Neshumova 2011, 496)

[1. A bibliography of Translation Studies does not yet exist in Russian specialized publications and indexes and is extremely incomplete in foreign publications.

2. The work of compiling such a bibliography is timely at the present moment when a campaign is underway to elevate the culture and quality of Soviet translations and when the demand for translations into the languages of the peoples of the USSR and from those languages has become acute.]

They then propose a *rubrikatsiia* [conceptual framework] for the bibliography (see Neshumova 2011, 497):

1. Библиография [Bibliography]
2. История переводного искусства [History of the Art of Translation]
3. Общетеоретические работы [General Theoretical Works]
4. Техника перевода [Techniques of Translation]
5. Стихотворный перевод [Verse Translation]
6. Вольный перевод [Free Translation]
7. Вопросы перевода с отдельных языков [Issues of Translation from Specific Languages]
8. Вопросы перевода отдельных авторов и произведений [Issues of Translation of Specific Authors and Works]
9. Писатели-переводчики [Writer-translators]
10. Современное состояние переводного дела в РСФСР [The Contemporary State of Translational Activity in the RSFSR]

While the final category focuses on the Russian Federation, the previous categories should not be assumed to be restricted to Russia or to Russophone texts. In fact, documenting scholarly writings on translation from other languages and cultures would

become a hallmark of Soviet Translation Studies as exemplified in the lengthy bibliographies contained in every issue of the post-war journal *Мастерство перевода* [Translation Mastery], organized by country.

5. Institutionalization

Translation began to be taught in higher educational institutions in the Soviet Union already in the 1920s. Usov, for example, taught the theory and practice of literary translation from German at the Higher Courses of Foreign Languages hosted by the Library of Foreign Literature in Leningrad from 1927–1929. Two university programs in translation were created in 1930, one in Moscow and the other in Kyiv, which was later moved to Kharkhiv. The creation of those programs created an urgent need for pedagogical materials, especially for the teaching of Scientific-Technical Translation (see Kalnychenko and Kamovnikova 2020; Kolomiyets 2020). The First Five-year Plan (1928–1932) called for the rapid industrialization of the Soviet economy, requiring the translation of Western scientific-technical texts to support that effort. Three of the leading figures in Soviet Translation Studies were commissioned to create a series of pedagogical materials for the teaching of scientific-technical translation from English, French and German:

> • Morozov, Mikhail M. 1932–1938. *Техника перевода научной и технической литературы с английского языка на русский* [Techniques for Translating Scientific and Technical Writing from English into Russian]. Moskva: In-Iaz.
> • Retsker, Iakov U. 1934. *Методика технического перевода* [A Method for Technical Translation]. Moskva: Izdatel'tsvo NKTP.
> • Fedorov, Andrei V. 1933–1936. *Теория и практика перевода немецкой научной и технической литературы на русский язык* [The Theory and Practice of German Scientific and Technical Writing into Russian]. Moskva: In-Iaz (the second edition was published in 1937–1941).
> • Usov, Dmitrii, Zigmund Tsil'ts, and Al'fred Tuntser. 1934. *Сборник текстов для перевода с немецкого языка. С приложением статей по методике и технике перевода. Пособие для высших педагогических учебных заведений* [Collection of Texts for Translation from German with an Introductory Essay on the Methods and Techniques of Translation. A Handbook for Institutions of Higher Pedagogical Education]. Moskva: Uchpedgiz.

The materials are quite sophisticated, integrating theory and text-type descriptions with pedagogical exercises. All these textbooks are organized according to the text-typologies that had emerged in the wake of Finkel's 1929 monograph, introducing ever greater degrees of differentiation among the various text-types, especially within the category of non-literary prose. In the collection of texts for translation compiled by Usov, Tsil'ts and Tuntser, for example, the contents are organized into a tri-partite text typology, consisting of literary, socio-economic, and technical texts, each containing a variety of sub-types.

Also worthy of mention in this regard is the map of Translation Studies offered in the syllabus of the theoretical course "Методологія перекладу" [Translation Methodology] compiled by Mykhailo Kalynovych for the Ukrainian Institute of Linguistic Education for the 1932/33 academic year. Kalynovych distinguishes between two main branches of Translation Studies: Theoretical Translation Studies and Practical Translation Studies. He divides Translation Studies into a theoretical aspect (methodology of translation, history of translation, and history of translational thought) and a practical aspect (general theory of translation, special theories of translation from a foreign language into the mother tongue and from the mother tongue into a foreign language, and the study of clichés and stereotypes in official speech). Kalynovych also expressly distinguishes between the object of translation (lexical, morphological, syntactical, and phonetic features, as well as style and language functions) and the object of Translation Studies, discussing them in separate lectures. The course outline included such theoretical points as the definition of translation, the object of Translation Studies, as well as translation and its cross-disciplines (linguistics, philology, literary studies, history of class struggle, and national studies) (see Dzhuhastrianska and Strikha 2015; Kolomiyets 2023).

These syllabi, textbooks and theoretical writings already in the early 1930s display a degree of institutionalization (as well as disciplinary self-consciousness) in the form of self-citation. By the mid-1930s, a body of Russian and Ukrainian theoretical and historical work on translation was being routinely cited, forming a rather stable conceptual core for Soviet Translation Studies.

6. Conclusion: Toward a comparative Translation Studies

Acknowledging the existence of Soviet *perevodovedenie* and its emergence in the 1920s confirms the association of Translation Studies, or the systematic study of translation, with internationalism. At the same time, it invites us to compare and contrast the communist internationalism of early Soviet society with the internationalism of the post-WWII period marked by triumphalist discourse related to the promise

of science against the backdrop of Cold War paranoia. It is also time to acknowledge the existence of a Socialist Translation Studies grounded in a materialist view of language and the desire, albeit increasingly rhetorical, to imagine a translation practice not built on capitalist exploitation and a World Literature that pays equal attention to cultures of the East and West, in their formulation, and both large and small. Finally, the existence of distinct Translation Studies traditions, even the most international, underscores the importance of tracing the distinct, though often overlapping intellectual genealogies of these traditions.

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About the author

Brian James Baer is Professor of Translation Studies at Kent State University. He is founding editor of the journal *Translation and Interpreting Studies* and co-editor of the book series Literatures, Cultures, Translation (Bloomsbury), with Michelle Woods, and Translation Studies in Translation (Routledge), with Yifan Zhu. His recent publications include the monographs *Translation and the Making of Modern Russian Literature* and *Queer Theory and Translation Studies: Language, Politics, Desire,* and the collected volumes *Translation in Russian Contexts*, with Susanna Witt, and *Teaching Literature in Translation: Pedagogical Contexts and Reading Practices,* with

Michelle Woods. His recent translations include *Culture, Memory and History: Essays in Cultural Semiotics,* by Juri Lotman, *Introduction to Translation Theory,* by Andrei Fedorov, and *Red Crosses* by Sasha Filipenko. He is a member of the advisory board of the Mona Baker Centre for Translation Studies and of the Nida Center for Advanced Research on Translation.

There are no words: An interlinguistic foray into artificial languages and translation

Kelly Washbourne ⓘD

Kent State University, United States of America

ABSTRACT

This study partially remedies the neglect in current Translation Studies research on artistic or invented languages, and interlinguistics more broadly. The work investigates the drama of translatorial sense-making, and how radical difference is encoded as (mis)translation phenomena in many literary works. I consider limit cases (asemia, glyptolalia, pataphilology) and scrutinize the apparent untranslatability posed by others (musical or pictographic languages), and even entertain works translated *into* diagrammatic images or "ekphrastic translations". However, the "cryptographic-translation idea" of languages as mutually decodable makes for pseudo-invented languages in those cases in which *a posteriori* constructed languages are in fact existing natural languages in disguise. At bottom, the study is a meditation on how invented languages are used in transfiction. To name but four functions: 1) as a poetics of defamiliarization of the everyday, 2) as a vehicle of ideological ends (e.g. preventing understanding), 3) as parody (for example, of academic discourse), and 4) as metacommentary on translation. Embracing translation as multi-sensorial, multimodal, and interrelational between form, sound, and text, and works actively or ostensibly defying or transcending translation, I utilize illustrative microcases from linguistic fantasies (linguistic fiction), parables, poetry, concrete poetry, and text-based art.

Keywords: invented languages, interlinguistics, cryptography, glyptolalia, asemia

Za to ni besed: interlingvistični izlet na področje umetnih jezikov in prevajanja

IZVLEČEK

Pričujoča študija delno odpravlja vrzeli na malo raziskanem prevodoslovnem področju umetnih oziroma izmišljenih jezikov in, v širšem smislu, interlingvistike. Prispevek se osredotoča na prevodno vzpostavljanje smisla in na to, kako se v številnih literarnih delih radikalne razlike enkodirajo kot (napačni) prevodni pojavi. Obravnavam mejne primere (asemija, gliptolalija, patafilologija) in preučujem navidezno neprevedljivost drugih primerov (glasbeni ali piktografski jeziki), in se celo ukvarjam z deli, ki so prevedena v diagramatske podobe, oz. ,ekfrastičnimi prevodi'. ,Kriptografsko-prevodna ideja' jezikov, ki trdi, da se da vse jezike vzajemno dekodirati, nam dovoljuje, da dekodiramo psevdoumetne jezike v tistih primerih, v katerih so jeziki, ki so bili izumljeni *a posteriori*, v resnici zakrinkani obstoječi naravni jeziki. V osnovi je pričujoča študija razmislek o tem, kako se umetni jeziki uporabljajo v transfikciji; če naštejemo le štiri funkcije: 1) kot poetika potujitve vsakdana, 2) kot sredstvo za doseganje ideoloških ciljev (npr. s preprečevanjem razumevanja),

3) kot parodija (npr. akademskega diskurza) in 4) kot metakomentar na prevod. Za ponazoritev prevoda kot multisenzoričnega, multimodalnega in medodnosnega pojava med obliko, zvokom in besedilom in za predstavitev del, ki aktivno oziroma navidezno izzivajo ali presegajo prevod, uporabim ilustrativne mikroprimere iz jezikovne domišljije (jezikovne fikcije), zgodb, poezije, konkretne poezije (*carmina figurata*) in na besedilu temelječe umetnosti.

Ključne besede: umetni jeziki, interlingvistika, kriptografija, gliptolalija, asemija

1. Introduction: Invented languages and translation

This work addresses the relative neglect of artificial languages in the field by entertaining some limit-cases of non-linguistic or apparently universal languages that dramatize sense-making. Invented languages are shown to be productive catalysts of defamiliarization, ideology, parody, and metatranslational commentary. Along the way I will discuss many interrelated phenomena, such as words as images, cryptography, and the meanings to be found in language inaccessibility, or the search for access.

Schnapp (1990, 179) reveals a key characteristic of imaginary or artificial languages in calling them "an elaborate game of hide and seek", and thus "both immediately available to all and restricted to an elite".[1] They are, furthermore, projections in that they are "spoken in the name of an-Other", displaced and "*spoken through*", and in their "urge to return to an originary act of naming", often appearing with an imaginary writing system (Schnapp 1990, 180). They differ in degree, from occasional radically alien nouns to whole languages that require glossaries. They also differ in how much participation they expect from readers to decipher, often reflecting whether a working language is in fact at work, and this variable affects how much the invented language is presented directly to the reader. For instance, in Harry Mathews' epistolary novel, *The Sinking of The Odradek Stadium* (1975), the attentive reader can work out many of the neologisms and corruptions, but in Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1726), as we will see, they largely cannot (at least not definitively). In the case of Ursula K. Le Guin, Nüshu was a "real" constructed language from which she produced "imaginary translations" of this form of women's writing. Although there is some overlap,

> a distinction should be made between what are normally defined as engineered languages (which serve as a means of philosophical, logical, or linguistic experimentation), auxiliary languages (namely invented

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1   For the reader interested in parsing the terms "constructed", "artificial", "invented", "fictional", "auxiliary", and more see Cheyne (2008) and Yaguello (2022); for "inventive" vs. "invented" languages, see Noletto (2024). Here we will use the general term "artificial languages" to mean in-universe literary creations. We use the term "interlinguistics" in the narrow connection to fictional artistic language ("artlang") creation and translation.

languages that could be learned by everybody and that could be used internationally as a lingua franca), and artistic languages (that is to say constructed fictional languages which were created by a particular author in a specific work of art). (Canepari 2018, 31–32)

In some cases, the artificial language is a degenerated natural language, as in the case of *Riddley Walker* (Hoban 1980), narrated by a 12-year-old "connection man" (seer) from a post-literate future. Related projects deform a prior text through multiple constraints or processes that produce a text fractured to the boundary of legibility or indexical relation to its source. An example is bp Nichol's *Translating Translating Apollinaire: A Preliminary Report* (Nichol 1979), which takes a text through transformations and defamiliarizations according to, for example, order of recall, the words viewed "walking east along the northern boundary looking south", or "labyrinthine view beginning in the interior & walking out". Renewed interest in pataphilology in recent decades, including *Imagining Language: An Anthology* (McCaffery and Rasula 1998) and later, *Pataphilology: An Irreader* (Gurd and van Gerven Oei 2018), which features language pushed to extremes in the service of "real solutions to imaginary problems" (Gurd 2018, 37). But these "real solutions" can apply to actual texts in actual languages, and turn unreal by prizing other dimensions of meaning, for instance the "ekphrastic translation" of glyphs that are descriptions of what the glyphs evoke, in what amounts to a kind of written audio description from another writing system. Ekphrastic translation is defined as "Meaning (core) is the epiphenomenon of Sign (surface)" (McCaffery 2018, 11). The result is "'parodic philology' with the ludic refusal of sense" (Gurd 2018, 59).

A second kind of defamiliarization is the translation of languages all around us that we cannot perceive. The parable "The Author of the Acacia Seeds and Other Extracts from the *Journal of the Association of Therolinguistics*" (1974) by Ursula K. Le Guin shines light on human interactions with the sentient world, a posthumanism, or ecotranslation. As Washbourne (forthcoming, 93) summarizes:

> The first extract is a found manuscript in an anthill, a pseudotranslation from messages written by a single ant "in a touch-gland exudation on degerminated acacia seeds". The seeds themselves are also arranged, suggesting complex communication systems (chemosensory, tactile, kinesic). […] Humans (therolinguists) are shown as working at the limits of their understanding, translating tentatively, especially inasmuch as they are applying rules from human language, and the purposes of human speech acts (the confusion arises in part from not knowing what *kind of communication* the ant is performing).

We see speculative, alternative readings of a species that has no singular "I":

Seeds 1-13

[I will] not touch feelers. [I will] not stroke. [I
will] spend on dry seeds [my] souls' sweetness.
It may be found when [I am] dead. Touch this
dry wood! [I] call! [I am] here!

Alternatively, this passage may be read:

[Do] not touch feelers. [Do] not stroke. Spend
on dry seeds [your] soul's sweetness. [Others]
may find it when [you are] dead. Touch this dry
wood! Call: [I am] here! (Le Guin 2005, 4)

The text ends by pointing beyond this realm to a further legibility: the horizon of
reading beyond the animal realm, the phytolinguists (plant translators), and ultimate-
ly, suggesting an evolution of translators toward the highest readers, of the insensate,
timeless Earth:

And with them, or after them, may there not come that even bolder ad-
venturer – the first geolinguist, who, ignoring the delicate, transient lyr-
ics of the lichen, will read beneath it the still less communicative, still
more passive, wholly atemporal, cold, volcanic poetry of the rocks: each
one a word spoken, how long ago, by the earth itself, in the immense
solitude, the immenser community, of space. (Le Guin 2005, 14)

Le Guin's geolinguists might be read as a call to a primal eco-memory, our birthright
forgotten, language made to *seem* artificial. Consider other ways artificial languag-
es can denaturalize a natural one. Xu Bing's *Square Word Calligraphy* (1994), which
disrupts perception in an art installation in which viewers are invited to learn New
English Calligraphy, in which English words are transformed into the strokes of tradi-
tional Chinese characters. English-language viewers can familiarize the text by drop-
ping the mental barrier of illegibility, while Chinese-language viewers have their ex-
pectations of legibility thwarted: "translanguaging opens up a ,line of flight', to borrow
Deleuze and Guattari's term; instead of folding toward itself into a closed discursive
loop, the visual sign flees from itself, that is to say, "'deterritorialises' itself, escaping its
own boundary through visual transition into another language" (King Lee 2015, 450),
a metaphor for cultural translation (King Lee 2015, 452). King Lee describes a second
work by Xu Bing, *A Dictionary of Selected Words from A Book from the Sky* (1991):

a translational text that shapes itself in lexicographical form. As in a dictionary, there are on the one hand selected pseudo-characters from the parent work; on the other hand, there are purported pinyin transliterations of these words, followed by a series of meaningless "definitions" in "English". These definitions are couched in randomly jumbled letters that render the word strings nonsensical, as if they were a form of encryption. What we have here is a tongue-in-cheek dictionary of pseudo-Chinese explained in pseudo-English. (King Lee 2015, 451)

A third project by the same author – *Post Testament* (1992) – takes two translations (of the Bible and Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past*) and intercalates them, changing after each word for three hundred large bound volumes and producing a faux-English text that is transdiscursively "a textual monstrosity" despite the respective legibilities of the texts involved (King Lee 2015, 456–61; see also Schwenger [2019, 93–100], and King Lee's engagement of *Post Testament* as intralingual translanguaging and borders of readability).

Not all fictional translators' access means the actual *readers* have access. For instance, a fictional translator's note in the linguistic novella *The [Widget], The [Wadget], and Boff* by Theodore Sturgeon shows the tensions between a translator's knowledge and the normative obligation to modesty; extraterrestrial details are bracketed throughout the report from an expedition to Earth. In this way the trope of the deficient translator is inverted, adding unreliability – the translator *knows but does not reveal*:

> [1]TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Despite the acknowledged fact that the translator is an expert on extraterrestrial language, culture, philosophy, and the theory and design of xenological devices, the reader's indulgence is requested in this instance. To go into detail about these machines and the nature and modes of communication of the beings that operate them would be like writing the story of a young lover on the way to his reward, springing up his beloved's front steps, ringing the bell—and then stopping to present explicit detail about circuitous wiring and dry, dry cells. It is deemed more direct and more economical to use loose and convenient translations and to indicate them by brackets, in order to confine the narrative to the subject at hand. Besides, it pleases the translator's modesty to be so sparing with his [omniscience]. (Sturgeon 2013, 3–4)

Modesty here transforms into apparent discretion, while the fictional translator actually performs a gatekeeping role, "loose and convenient" translations adding instability

to the implied pact of accuracy. Readability is thus reserved for the arch-reader, the translator, but withheld from the extradiagetical reader. We find the topos inverted in the confession of a translator of a *lingua ignota*, parodied as long ago as 1647 in the anonymously authored *The King of Utopia*, which features an appendix, "Postscript from the Translator to the Reader". In this, the translator apologizes that he "is not wel vers'd in the Utopian tongue", and the book's subtitle itself undermines them further by withholding their name: *Translated Out of the Vtopian Tongue, into Broken English by ‚Tis No Matter Who.*

1.1 Translation and decipherment

Cryptography plays a prime conceptual role in the quest for a utopian language, particularly with the development of machine translation (MT). Famously, Weaver (1955, 18) wrote, "When I look at an article in Russian, I say: ‚This is really written in English, but it has been coded in some strange symbols. I will proceed to decode.'" The "cryptographic-translation idea", as he called it, held that languages are codes, their information lying latent within them to be cracked, or as Alan Melby and C. Terry Warner phrase Weaver's idea: "The message is the same for all languages; only the encoding system differs" (Melby and Warner 1995, 17). The complications inherent in this idea are reflected in theorists' objections to MT's reduction of the site of struggle or difference resolved into unproblematic assimilation, or into the ideologically ethnocentric notion that English lies behind, or somehow precedes, unfamiliarity, and needs restoring (Raley 2003).[2] The (mis)understanding of languages as polygraphies or codes underlies the logic of many invented languages and constitutes the focus of section 1 of this study. Part and parcel of these attempts were the creation of *a posteriori* languages – that is, languages made of features of existing languages – as gradually after the Enlightenment the *a priori* or philosophical languages,– those attempting to represent the world as it is, receded in favor of the pragmatic goal of international communication.[3]

Universal language accessibility and language failure are flip sides of the same coin. The problems of decoding have been explored in literary form, often as a

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2   It is perhaps the Anglocentrism of Tolkien's instructions that "Names that are given in modern English therefore represent names in the Common Speech, often but not always being translations of older names in other languages,..." (Lobdell 1975, 155). In other words, English stands for the tacit agreement of the overcoming of difference.

3   When the title characters meet in *Gargantua and Pantagruel* (Book II, chapter ix), for instance, Panurge's 13 different attempts to communicate include Lanternois, Antipodean and Utopian, ostensibly invented languages, but they are in fact natural languages in disguise (Pons 1931).

breakdown. Mistranslation is thematized in the form of riddles or ciphers in *Galactic Pot-Healer* (Dick 1969), for example, a work set in bleak, totalitarian Cleveland in the 2400s. A now obsolete man, the anti-hero Joe Fernwright, finds his life's entire meaning in "The Game": a sad, worldwide contest that involves guessing multiple machine-translated titles back into their original languages (sample: The Male Offspring In Addition Gets Out of Bed > *The Sun Also Rises*). The game is implemented through a 24-hour dictionary robot service and a kind of proto-Internet uniting its lonely players. Fernwright is offered a job from a mysterious, godlike, shapeshifting commissioner to raise a sunken cathedral on another planet, and to be paid in *crumbles*, itself a term that generates multiple conflicting meanings as to its senses and values on different worlds. Mistranslation provides the pretext for, and characterizes, contact with others: for instance, the hero flirts by offering trivia about a "hydraulic ram" which appears as a "water sheep" in translation.[4] Once on the mysterious trip off-world to Plowman's Planet (a name suggesting *Piers Plowman*, a book full of quest visions en route to Truth), he buys a strange, precognitive book, The Book, which contains translations from a primary text revealing all things past, present, and future, but only some in recognizable language, prompting translations and mistranslations, and foretelling doom for the salvage project. Updating itself constantly, the cryptic Kalends are discovered to be its authors: are they making the things they write happen? The accuracy of The Book's prophesies in turn depends on nuances of interpretating and translation. The entire novel draws on a mistranslated intertext: a "quasiarachnid" character offers a mangled translation of Goethe's *Faust* (from a language dead in the 2400s, German) to frame the action with a kind of chorus.

1.2 "Abolishing all words whatsoever": Musical and pictorial languages

Writing, and translating from, wordlessness is a frontier in artificial languages. Music and images are two forms we will consider here. Godwin's *The Man in the Moone: or A Discourse of a Voyage Thither* (Godwin 1638) is a pseudotranslation featuring a Spaniard borne to the moon by *gansas* (a geese-eagle hybrid). The protagonist's name, Domingo Gonsales, is not accidental, but translatorial: he is named for the Toledo School translator of *De divisione philosophiae*, Dominicus Gundissalinus, a 12th-century treatise on musical language (Galán Rodríguez 2017, 43). Accordingly, the language of the moon's denizens "consisteth not so much of words and Letters, as of tunes and uncouth sounds that no letters can expresse. For you

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4   This old chestnut has been around since at least 1919, though whether it is apocryphal, a marketing joke, or actual MT output is uncertain.

have wordes but they signifie diver and severall things, and they are distinguished onley by their tunes that are as it were sung in the utterance of them ..." (Godwin 1638, 35–36). The "innovation was then not that of thinking of the musical code in the first place but that of suggesting its use as a means not of concealing knowledge but rather of communicating it" (Knowlson 1968, 361). In Swift's Balnibari, from *Gulliver's Travels*, music and science form the basis of communication: "Their ideas are perpetually conversant in lines and figures. If they would, for example, praise the beauty of a woman, or any other animal, they describe it by rhombs, circles, parallelograms, ellipses, and other geometrical terms, or by words of art drawn from music" (Swift [1726] 2008, 176). Wordlessness is put forward as a way around the curse of Babel:

> The other project was, a scheme for entirely abolishing all words what-soever; and this was urged as a great advantage in point of health, as well as brevity. For it is plain, that every word we speak is, in some degree, a diminution of our lungs by corrosion, and, consequently, contributes to the shortening of our lives. (Swift [1726] 2008, 203)

A text germane to our discussion here in that it is based on a substitution cipher or cryptographic translation is *Dicamus et Labyrinthos: A Philologist's Notebook* (Schafer [1979] 1984). First decoded, then translated, the graphic novel is prefaced by a mock-academic letter summarizing the history of 19 Magia Tribia tablets from antiquity and whose inscriptions in "Ectocretan" have defied translation. In the "found manuscript" tradition, the tablets are reproduced, along with the unnamed philologist's notebook or diary detailing his efforts at unravelling the mystery of the text: false starts, missing text, "diversion messages", calligraphy, sketches, pal-impsestic scrawl from different (imaginary) interlocutors overwriting each other or musing in the margins, and a running progress report. Along the way there are wry metacomments on translation, such as this one that may sum up the book: "An experience I especially like: reading an author in the original without knowing a word of the original language, so that as the text emerges phrase by phrase from the dictionary, a whole culture is learned in the process. But in this case even the dictionary remains to be invented" (Schafer [1979] 1984, no page). The cipher, he hypothesizes, hides secret knowledge: what really happened between Theseus and the Minotaur in the labyrinth, in order to conceal its truth. The uncanniness of the premise is that the decoded text proves to be English enciphered – but how, if it is an ancient text?
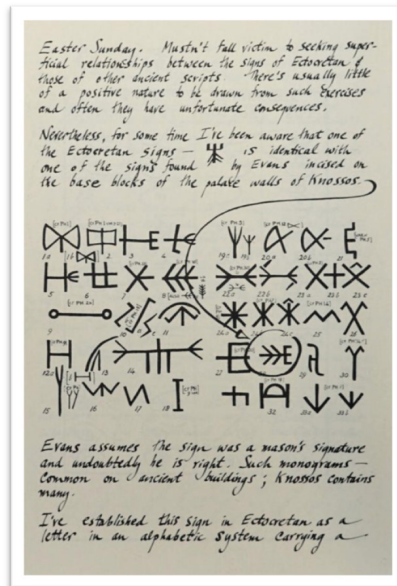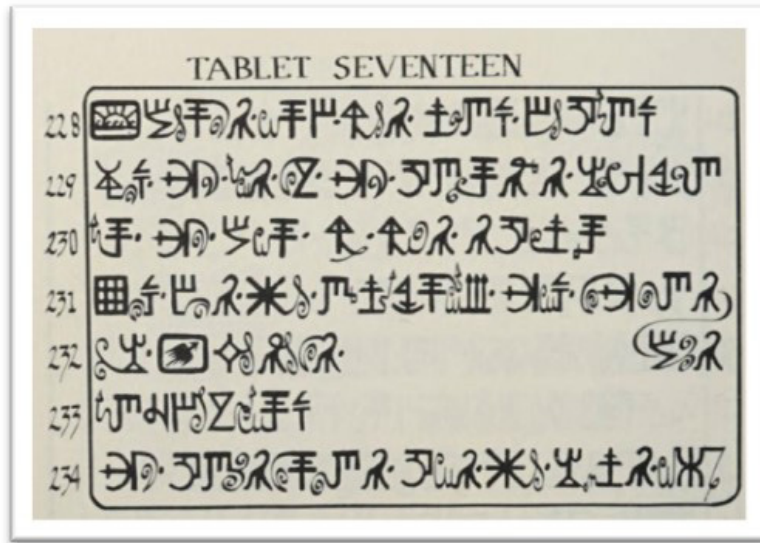
Figure 1. Pages from Schafer's Dicamus et Labyrinthos.

Armand Schwerner's *The Tablets* (Schwerner 1971), in the tradition of Ezequiel Zaidenwerg's translations of invented poets, are translations from a made-up source. Gingerich calls them "sacred forgeries and translations of nothing", an "immense silence" in translation

meant to hide the "inarticulate Divine" behind it (Gingerich 2001, 18). The playfulness surrounding the texts suggests a hoax, underscored by its mock-solemnity. One famous translator's note is virtually a breakdown, or a performance of performance anxiety:

> There is a growing ambiguity in this work of mine, but I'm not sure where it lies. Some days I do not doubt that the ambiguity is inherent in the language of the Tablets themselves; at other times I worry myself sick over the possibility that I am the variable giving rise to ambiguities. Do I take advantage of the present unsure state of scholarly expertise? On occasion it almost seems to me as if I am inventing this sequence, and such a fantasy sucks me into an abyss of almost irretrievable depression, from which only forced and unpleasurable exercises in linguistic analysis rescue me. (Tablet VIII; Schwerner 1971, 32)

Some works comment on translation by ostensibly pointing beyond it. The 1903 concrete poem, "Fisches Nachtgesang" (Figure 2; Guinness and Hurley 1986, 95–96) by Christian Morgenstern would appear to transcend natural language and culture, apart from its title. Popov's analysis (Popov 2002, no page) reveals that it is "itself already a translation of sorts, as well as a critique of poetic reason", a parody of Goethe's "Ein Gleiches", compositionally a swansong of the fish (that is, in its resemblance to a fish on the line), and "its material is the notion of poetry as numbers". The poem reads:
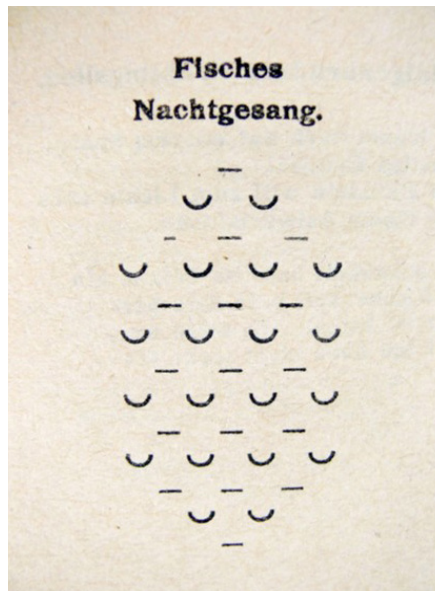
Figure 2. "Fisches Nachtgesang", by Christian Morgenstern.

But the editors of *Auctor Ludens* offer three translations. A.E.W Eitzen, the translator of the first one, "Night Song of Fish", playfully calls the otherwise identical work "undoubtedly the only absolutely perfect translation of a literary work". But is it? Does the poem *need* a translation or *admit* translation? These may be different questions. A hidden ideology of translation is contained in the assertion of the text's self-evidence (would all cultures recognize the suggestion of fish scales?). Guinness (Guinness and Hurley 1986, 95) offers a translation, which he titles "Fishy Nocturne", and which is alike in all other respects except for the tenth line (Figure 3):

Figure 3. "Fishy Nocturne", translated by Gerald Guiness.

The parodic retitling ("fishy" is self-subverting) and inverted "u" or fish scale suggest, according to Andrew Hurley's commentary, that homogeneity for the Anglo-Saxon people is incongruous, given their penchant for individualism (Guiness and Hurley 1986, 96). A third translation, by Max Knight, inverts the "cup" symbols all throughout (Guiness and Hurley 1986, 96). The "German" original proves generative in other ways, having given rise to musical compositions (intersemiotic translations) and even a translation with a punning translator's note in the centre of the graphic: ["sorry, I seem to be floundering for words – The translator"] (Ezust 2008). Hans Martin Sewcz produced an art installation called *Ad-libbed from Christian Morgenstern* (1995), a moving painting (5:24 min.), in which participants in a video mouth round-mouth shapes for the half-circle cups, and use a straight mouth for the horizontal lines. The titles, too, cannot be forgotten: Max Knight's 1964 title is "Fish's Night Song", the singular of which is an interpretive choice, especially given the German plural of the title (des Fisches), and the near-infinite options in English ("Fish Night Melody", for instance, casts a "fish night" and a "night melody" across the mind). Knight's choice threatens the evocation of the long and short poetic stress symbols as well as inserting unhappy mouths (Popov 2002).

Harry Mathews, the American member of Oulipo, the group of writers and mathematicians formed by the poet Raymond Queneau and mathematician François Le Lionnais, examines not iconicity (resemblance) but the place-value of signs in his essay-story "Remarks of the Scholar Graduate", an "academic spoof". In it, an anthropological linguist returns to his alma mater to give a talk on Bactrian texts, a language that uses seven horizontal dashes for each word. Texts from roughly 2000 BCE conform to a pattern, as he explains with regard to his argument with rival linguists, of

groups of seven lines. He describes his innovation as the breakthrough that the dash on the bottom of the identical series is not, in fact, identical (though identical in form, their position constitutes meaningful difference), or – to use his words – the possibility that "the words were all the same while their denotation silently varied; or [...] the words themselves changed with their denotations" (Mathews 2002b, 47).

Now for a few examples not from literary works but evoking other texts and semiotic systems. A cancelled poem (a verbal text with crossings-out) such as Man Ray's "Paris Mai 1924" (Figure 4) approaches ineffability, but its semanticity derives from how it isolates and activates the *form as meaning*:
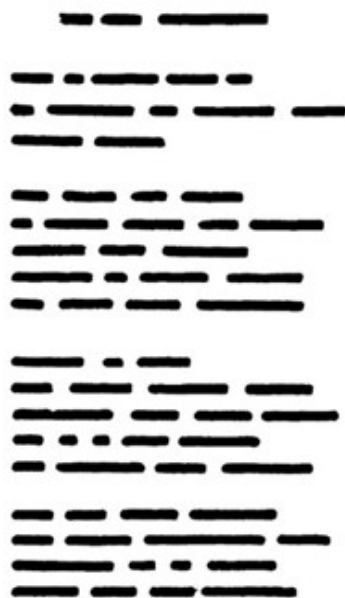
Figure 4. "Paris May 1924", by Man Ray.

White (2007, 130) finds the poem to be "an iconic artefact, not simply standing for a conventional poem made up of words, but also itself functioning as an abstract poetic construct", even, one might posit, if the construct resists convention itself. The legibility of such a text opens out if we consider it an extreme form of *sous rature*, that is, the Heideggerian erasure of elements that are neither wholly adequate but also not negligible given the constraints of language. A poem is there but cannot be accessed directly – it is more a poem, in fact, than an alien script found without context. It points past itself to *all poems of this sort*, the mind filling in the censored bits anew on

each reading. Again, though, unlimited semiosis is curbed, the title framing the reading – the poem is published as "Poem", "Paris Mai 1924", "Poéme optique", and even "Dada phonetic poem without words" (Adler and Ernst 1987, 260; White 2007, 131).

Translations from words to conceptual image – the opposite direction – may be found in such works as Derek Beaulieu's graphic translations of *Flatland: A Romance of Many Dimensions* (Figure 5):

Figure 5. A page from Beaulieu's Flatland (Beaulieu 2007, 4).

The image is part of a translation of E.A. Abbott's science-fiction work *Flatland* (1884), a social satire in which geometrical figures are the protagonists. Beaulieu explains his "rhizomatic map of possibility": "each page of my graphically realized *Flatland* is a diagrammatic representation of the occurrences of letters. By reducing reading and language into paragrammatical statistical analysis, content is subsumed into graphical representation of how language covers a page" (Perloff 2007, 108). Perloff (2007, 108) pronounces this "an Oulippean constraint to *difference*".

Augusto de Campos' 1964 "Olho por olho" [Eye for an Eye], a (mostly) non-verbal poem, would appear to transcend translation, although its title depends on the Biblical law of retribution from Leviticus (although it is more properly understood with the emphasis on *no more than* an eye for an eye). Almost lost at the apex of the pyramid of

images is an "I", a multilingual pun. The street signs, also at the tip, are culture-specific in shape but transculturally, even politically, suggestive. If the reader knows there are images of Brazilian luminaries (Aleijadinho, Sousândrade, Pele), but also King Tut, Sophia Loren, Sammy Davis Jr., and even consumer logos (Westinghouse), a syntax of such juxtapositions and parallels emerges. Lines "are" verses, images metonymize words, patterns and repetitions are thrust into awareness: the reader takes form to be a translation of genre and must reconcile expectations with this artefact, especially with respect to whether and how a would-be poem must look and act like a poem. De Gusmão Aranha and Rodrigues Borborema (2016, 58; see also de Araújo Pires 2016) illustrate a "poetry 2.0" configuration whereby users can interact with the original pictogram poem, which expands multimodally and multilingually (three languages) if the user "plays" skillfully; on the poet's homepage, he hosted a digital poem version of his "Criptocardiograma" [Cryptocardiogram], now inactivate, which invited readers to drag letters to their proper place in the pictogram until letters replaced the icons, unlocking a secret code, and animating the image (retitled "Cliptocardiograma" in reference to video clips) to beat like a heart, and produce sound effects. To worms, fire, philistinism, and censorship can be added a fifth enemy of literature: technology (at least, in this case, as with the multimedia program Flash Player's death, so died any unpreserved born-digital works depending on it). Generative literature was analogue first, of course. Raymond Queneau's *Cent mille milliards de poèmes* (1961), for example, was an early poetry-generating "machine" or recombinatory technology, featuring lines from ten sonnets that had a hundred thousand billion possible combinations, and the Internet has made the work's entry into electronic literature, including in translation, both possible and actual.

1.2.1 You are the fictional translator: Codex Seraphinianus

An image-based text based on asemia forces translation on the reader. This art book, *Codex Seraphinianus*, an encyclopaedia of an imaginary world, has a cult readership – it has been stolen ritually from libraries worldwide, was prohibitively expensive and backordered for years, and is debated by laypeople and linguists alike. Inevitably compared to the Voynich manuscript, and to various Borges *ficciones* ("Tlon, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius," "The Library of Babel"), the text was published in an Italian edition in 1981 by artist Luigi Serafini. Detailing a phantasmagoric reality in methodically ordered sections on flora and fauna, physics, vehicles, human beings, history, architecture, and more, the book presents cues from form itself, expectations of meaning from the macrostructure, but they are thwarted at every turn. A reference book that is non-referential and non-informational, the *Codex* includes a mock "decodex" in an inner sleeve

(in Italian and six parallel translations), first published in the 2006 Rizzoli edition, and in multiple languages in 2013. In it, Serafini is unhelpful but for another turn of the screw: the "combining of a text and an image, we all know, generates a semblance of meaning, even if we understand neither the one nor the other" (Serafini 2013, Decodex, 9). In the language section of the book a Rosetta stone is shown, but it is placed alongside an indecipherable script. For our purposes, the *Codex* is significant for its presentation of untranslatedness *as meaning*. "The book creates a feeling of illiteracy which, in turn, encourages imagination, like children seeing a book" the author has stated, in one of the few hermeneutical clues he has offered – in other words, a *prelinguistic* reading experience. Surace (2019, 134) finds that if there is an unmooring of the relationship between signifier and signified it does not necessarily mean the latter is without meaning, paradoxically. Meanings are imposed, regardless, by readers, simply because of Griceʻs law of relevant utterances: it goes counter to reading instincts to imagine nothing behind the tens of thousands of words. Meaningful or meaningless, the text attracts meaning-seeking: attempts to decode it continue unabated (recalling Borges again, in the fable in which the imprisoned priest Tzinacán seeks to decipher a divine sentence written in a jaguarʻs spots, hidden there on the first day of creation: "More than once I cried out to the vault that it was impossible to decipher that text. Gradually, the concrete enigma I labored at disturbed me less than the generic enigma of a sentence written by a god." ["The Godʻs Script"]). Surace (following Schwenger 2006, 121) names what we are looking at in the *Codex*

> a completely untranslatable set of graphemes, or unsignified signifiers. Peter Schwenger describes the Codex as glyptolalia: "The word is formed by analogy with oral glossolalia, the phenomenon of ʻspeaking in strange tonguesʼ – but it refers to the inscription of imaginary languages in a text, where it is the glyph (sign, character) rather than the *glossé* (tongue) that babbles (*lalein*)". (Surace 2019, 134)

The words in this art-text sometimes appear to "be made out of the things they describe" (Gurd 2018, 36), posing the most formidable obstacle to translation of all, a semiotic ouroboros: a thing representing a word that represents the thing. Under a microscope, letters are revealed to be full of schools of fish, teeming masses of humans, or a highway (Schwenger 2019, 138).

The question is not, at bottom, is this untranslatable? But what about it is translatable? Or, *why*? What skopos but more absurdity would guide a project to translate the asemic into meaning? Peter Schwenger, in *Asemic: The Art of Writing*, describes asemic writing as freed from the signifier and *a priori* signification, writing that announces its

own writing, writing that both encourages and frustrates meaning-making (Schwenger 2019, 1–2). He meditates on art's role as "striv[ing] for new translations" and that the asemic artefacts, "precisely because they defy translation, allow us to let go of conventional words and to grasp, or to grasp at, something that would otherwise elude us" (Schwenger 2019, 31).
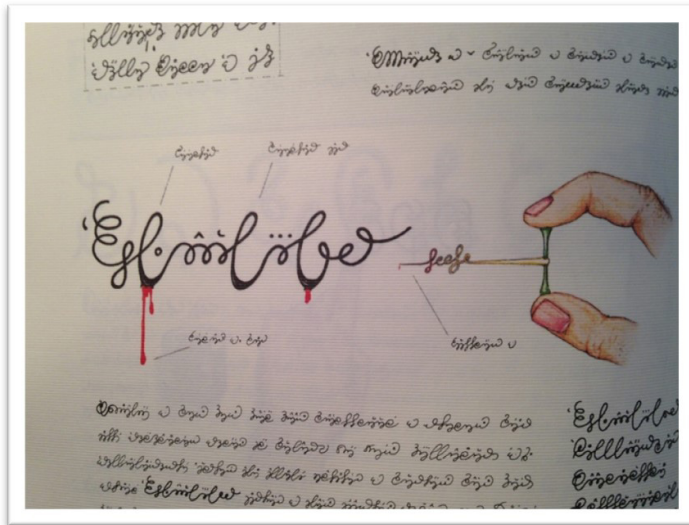
Figure 6 (above) and 7 (below). Images from Serafini's Codex Seraphinianus.

Italo Calvino writes of the image shown in Figure 7, "In the end, as we see in the final image of the Codex [37], the destiny of every written work is to disintegrate into dust, while all that remains of the writing hand is its broken skeleton. Lines of words break off the page and crumble to the ground. But from the piles of dust tiny rainbow-colored forms emerge and begin to leap above the debris. The vital force of all the alphabets and metamorphoses resumes its life cycle" (Ricci 1991, 287, ctd. in Portelli 2014, trans. by Theodora Lurie).[5]

In this dust – and renewed life – we are reminded of perpetual human striving to make sense. In some works, we watch the translator (our double) be foiled time and again. In Ferenc Karinthy's *Epepe* (1975) (translated in English as *Metropole* in 2008) a linguist enters a strange city where he and the entire population cannot understand one another. In other works, the translator-hero may seem to be "on the inside" but is really outside with us. In the case of *Gulliver's Travels*, the invented language may be *too* multiplicitously interpretable, an unwinnable semiotic game with too many possible clues and no end in sight:

> The ‚languages' in Gulliver's Travels have resisted systematic translation by anyone (except Gulliver) for over 250 years. They represent the vertigo principle in extremis: words give off flashes of significance, but the giddy anarchy of their parts cannot be marshaled into stable, intelligible order. [...] the words Gulliver learns on his voyages and reports to his readers present themselves as impenetrable, unanalyzable linguistic objects—vertiginous verbal constructions caught and preserved in full whirl, before their fall into meaning. Their unyielding strangeness, however, sets up another fall: the fall of interpretation. (Baker Wyrick 1988, 80)

Baker Wyrick sees a connection between Swift's satire on human pride – trapping us in "our own hermeneutic impulses", "our proud urges to know hidden answers"– and Gulliver's, and our own, *apparent* linguistic facility (Baker Wyrick 1988, 80–82). Successful decipherment assumes the author's deliberateness and consistency, but the critic strongly suspects Swift's is a game without rules, a "crumbling tower of Babel" (Baker Wyrick 1988, 84). But perhaps Gulliver deserves our accolades when we consider his careful translational recreation of style on several occasions, each of which he does to show the thinking of a language's users; e.g. the Articles and Conditions of his freedom from Lilliput (Part 1, chapter 3), which are given in foreignized translation.

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5   Calvino's original essay is from 1982.

But Swift also makes of the verbal universe an anti-cipher of sorts, an infinitely solvable puzzle whereby meaning is always already imminent. To wit, the language machine (Figure 8; Swift [1726] 2008, 202) known as the knowledge engine is found at the Grand Academy of Lagado:
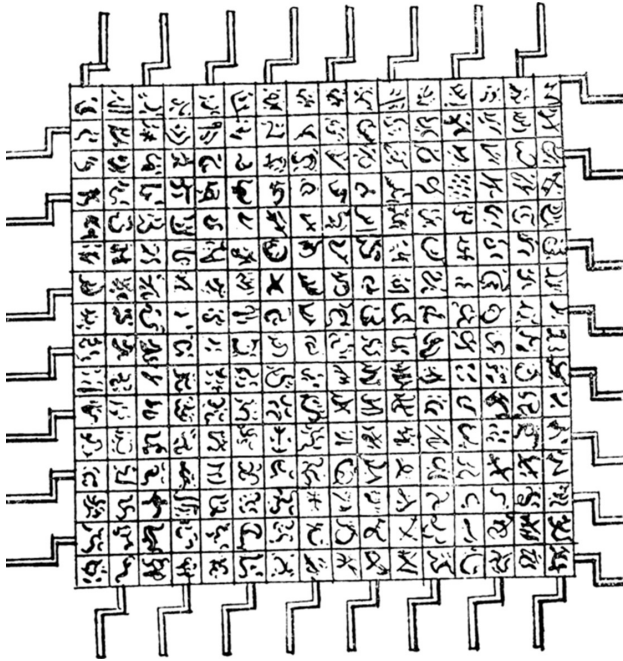
Figure 8. "The Engine", Gulliver's Travels, by Jonathan Swift, Wikimedia Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_Engine_(Gulliver).png.

Gulliver's notebook records that the fictional writing device (which many observers call the first computer in literature) contains, like a proto-Surrealist parlor game, all the words in the English language. They can be randomly recombined into meaningful utterances, democratizing specialized communication by making knowledge both unnecessary and accessible to anyone who can operate the crank. It is an *artificialization* of a natural language, we might say, by making its generativeness a matter of potentiality and chance. The idea that written language is a problem to be solved mechanically undergirds the satire, and the field of machine translation would be entertaining a related debate centuries later.

2. Invented language, translation, and power

Artificial language, as is well documented in studies of *A Clockwork Orange*'s invented anti-language Nadsat, can serve ideological ends.[6] Let us briefly consider another such case. In Václav Havel's *The Memorandum* (translated into English in 1967 by Vera Blackwell), Ptydepe, a new office language, is introduced mysteriously into a business organization. Ptydepe is touted as a rational language, natural languages having succumbed to equivocation and imprecision, and thus they are "dilettantish" (Havel 1967, 15). The organizational language increases redundancy to prevent any confusion with similar words. Havel parodies political and organizational cultures via the illogic of their communication, as seen in a basic Ptydepe lesson on the "simple" interjections, a passage of which will suffice to show the utter untranslatability of the language due to pragmatics, and note here especially the sociolectical variables tied to power differentials:

> LEAR: ... the interjection "boo" is used in the daily routine of an office, a company, a large organization when one employee wants to sham-ambush another. In those cases where the endangerment of an employee who is in full view and quite unprepared for the impending peril is being shammed by an employee who is himself hidden, "boo" is rendered by "gedynrelom". The word "osonfterte" is used in substantially the same situation when, however, the imperiled employee is aware of the danger. [...]. "Ysiste etordyf" is used by a superior wishing to test out the vigilance of a subordinate. "Yxap tseror najx" is used, on the contrary, by the subordinate toward a superior, but only on the days specially appointed for this purpose. (Havel 1967, 38)

Though a Ptydepe Translation Centre is set up for the interim while everyone learns the language, obtaining a translation is a highly ritual, hierarchized, and Kafkaesque affair. Language inaccessibility comes to stand for the logical impasse at which those outside the language find themselves:

> GROSS: As I've just discovered, any staff member who has recently received a memorandum in Ptydepe can only be granted a translation of a Ptydepe text after his memorandum has been translated. But what happens if the Ptydepe text which he wishes translated is precisely that memorandum? It can't be done, because it hasn't been translated officially. In other words, the only way to learn what is in one's memo, is to know it already. (Havel 1967, 47)

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6   See, for example, Vincent and Clarke (2020).

The managing director, Josef Gross, is unhappy, lamenting that if human language is taken away,

> created by the centuries-old tradition of national culture, we shall have pre-vented [Man] from becoming fully human and plunge him straight into the jaws of self-alienation. I'm not against precision in official communication, but I'm for it only in so far as it humanizes Man. (Havel 1967, 12)

The deputy director, Jan Ballas, defends the language on the grounds it eliminates emotional overtones and ambiguity: "It is a paradox, but it is precisely the surface inhumanity of an artificial language which guarantees its truly humanist function!" (Havel 1967, 34). The linguistic determinism recalls nothing so much as Orwell's Newspeak, particularly the scene in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* in which Syme says to Winston, "You don't grasp the beauty in the destruction of words", and:

> Don't you see that the whole aim of Newspeak is to narrow the range of thought? In the end we shall make thoughtcrime literally impossible, be-cause there will be no words to express it. Every concept that can ever be needed, will be expressed by exactly *one* word, with its meaning rigidly de-fined and all its subsidiary meanings rubbed out and forgotten ... the Revo-lution will be complete when the language is perfect. (Orwell 1958, 44–45)

Ptydepe's limits show its purpose: it is not used outside its designated functions, and thus cannot be used for protest, and the agency of its subjects are unclear (see also Beebee 2012). The power of the translators places them high in the social order, but none can ultimately master the language. Havel's comment on the illusion of "scientif-ic" progress and the doublespeak of socialist ideology is clear: it is a language meant to exclude, consolidate, limit, and conform speakers (Fidler and Cvrček 2020, 261, 278). By the end of the play, Ptydepe is made obsolete, and a new and different language, Chorukor, is rolled out to reverse Ptydepe's error, the language's words now not as un-like from each other as possible, but their similarities exploited: Monday is "ilopagar", Tuesday is "ilopager", Wednesday "ilopagur", and so on.[7]

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7   Semantics is defamiliarized in a classic weird tale, "The Gostak and the Doshes" by Miles J. Breuer ([1930] 2008). In this fourth-dimensional travel tale exploring relativity, a young professor enters a world very like his own, until the populace is roused to patriotic fury, for and against, the slogan "*The gostailk distims the doshes*". The near-homology of the worlds' respective languages makes the phrase's uncanniness all the more intensely felt. The nonsense sentence is recognizably English in form but devoid of sense, try as the protagonist might to define its terms. The impenetrable phrase leads to his surrender and arrest for failure to report to war, a caustic comment on manipulative sloganeering.

Power lies at the heart of the "magic transformation" procedure used by the Pagolak (New Guinea) tribe in "The Dialect of the Tribe" (Mathews 2002a). The linguist narrator recounts that they translated their own utterances for neighbouring tribes, but in a way that simultaneously was acceptable and also concealed their true meaning. Moreover, untranslatability was an inherent and inescapable property of the language – Pagolak is a *process* of translation. The linguist attempts a translation, revealing unbridgeable lacunae and interlanguage in his struggle:

> (afanu) is sitokap utu sisi. This phrase leaves an impression, approximately, of "resettling words in [own] eggs": aptly enough, after the youngsters emerge from afanu through sitokap utu sisi into nuselek and its attendant privileges of ton wusi and aban metse, they claim to be emerging from boyhood (rather: "boybeing") seabirds from chicken eggs (utopani inul ekasese nuselek ne sami sisinam) – dear Christ, it doesn't mean that – […] (Mathews 2002a, 11)

"The spontaneous and paradoxical nature of translation is the foundation of Pagolok, and only total surrender to one's inability to understand Pagolok seems to allow one to understand Pagolok" (Conley and Cain 2006, 43). By the end, the linguist narrator can describe the text he wants to translate only by reciting it verbatim, an impenetrable act of non-translation.

3. Conclusion

Any conclusions here can only be tentative connections and paths forward or *out*ward. This work answers the call, in some small measure, for more attention to be paid to invented languages in Translation Studies, as Buts (2022) urges. Transmedia and traditional media, even across multiple translations and adaptations, can provide no end of objects of study in this context. Meanwhile, some of its manifestations, as surveyed above, reveal representations of artificial languages in creative works, and their re-representation in translations or resemiotizations, to be transmetic, illustrative of the "translational turn". Translation's multimodality, both an opportunity and problem, complexifies: word and image here are shown to act each other's part, revealing semiotics, particularly in these works that are translation-defiant or aspirationally translation-transcendent, as an increasingly vital critical tool in Translation Studies, as is the intersemiosis of their interplay. (Bio)semiotic conceptions of translation argue, as Zheng, Tyulenev, and Marais (2023, 169) have asserted, "that all meaning-making, not just meaning-making that includes language, entails a translational aspect.

In other words, this conceptualization does not exclude language from its remit, but at the same time, it does not limit translation to the lingual. Secondly, it argues that it is not only human animals that translate" (for non-lingual translation, see also Blumczynski, 2023). A prime effect observed in my brief survey here is defamiliarization, in turn heightening the reader's own awareness of meaning-seeking, and by the same token, revealing frustrated communication through an illegibility born of human incompetence: translation failure as root cause and emblem of incommunicability. Fictional translators are shown to be unreliable in cases in which they limit access: we witness thwarted translation processes, parodic pseudotranslations of fragments, and provisional decipherments. Utterances' meaning potential here is often shown to lie in *form as meaning*. In many cases, works are intersemiotic translations but call into question their own constructedness, or point to their own unfinishedness, and invite the reader to make sense of them, perhaps haplessly. Language, in such cases, is the plot. And we also saw cases of artificial languages as vehicles of power and ideology, defying rather than facilitating communication. Artificial languages, far from mere set dressing in world-creation, are constitutive of those worlds, or symbolic (verbal, acoustic, or visual) translations of them. The ways in which *literary glossopoeisis* (language invention in literary works; Noletto 2024, 2) extends to and relates to *literary translation glossopoeisis* is still a subject ripe with possibilities. The fictional translator and the real reader in the end are playing the same game with sense and senselessness.

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About the author

Kelly Washbourne is Professor of Spanish at Kent State University (Ohio, United States). His publications include Nobel Laureate Miguel Ángel Asturias' *Legends of Guatemala* (2011), which won the National Endowment for the Arts and National Endowment for the Humanities fellowships. His translation of Reinaldo Arenas' *Autoepitaph: Selected Poems* was longlisted for the 2015 PEN Award for Poetry in Translation. He co-edited the *Routledge Handbook of Literary Translation* (2018), and has translated *El Criticón* (1651-1657), a three-volume allegorical novel by Baltasar Gracián. His intellectual biography of twenty late-20th-century translators is entitled *Translators on Translation: Portraits of the Art* (Routledge, 2025).

Advertising in the Latvian press: From early editions to modern times

Gunta Ločmele ⓘD

University of Latvia, Latvia

ABSTRACT

The publication of *Latviešu Avīzes*, the first Latvian newspaper, on January 5, 1822, marked the birth of Latvian print advertising. In the early days of *Latviešu Avīzes*, advertising emerged from news articles that incorporated promotional elements and from classified advertisements. Since its formative years in the early 19th century, Latvian advertising has undergone several notable transformations. The contrast with modern-day advertising in popular magazines is showcased in various examples of changing values, foreign language influence in translations, brands, terminology and multimodality. The analysed examples show that advertising, in particular translated ads, has influenced and continues to influence the development of the Latvian language.

Keywords: Latvian print advertising, historical development of advertising, translation strategies, language influence, multimodality

Oglaševanje v latvijskem tisku od začetkov do sodobnosti

IZVLEČEK

Ko je 5. januarja 1822 začel izhajati prvi latvijski časopis, *Latviešu Avīzes*, je to pomenilo tudi začetek oglaševanja v tisku v latvijskem prostoru. Najprej se je oglaševanje pojavljalo v obliki časopisnih člankov, ki so vsebovali tudi promocijske elemente, in malih oglasov. Od začetkov v zgodnjem 19. stoletju se je oglaševanje v latvijskem prostoru močno spreminjalo. Primerjava zgodnjih oglasov s sodobnim oglaševanjem v priljubljenih revijah pokaže pomembne razlike, ki se odražajo na različnih nivojih: v spremenjenih vrednotah, v vplivih različnih tujih jezikov, v blagovnih znamkah, spremembah v terminologiji in multimodalnosti. Analizirani primeri kažejo, da je oglaševanje, zlasti prek prevedenih oglasov, vplivalo in še vedno vpliva na razvoj latvijskega jezika.

Ključne besede: oglaševanje v latvijskem tisku, zgodovinski razvoj oglaševanja, prevodne strategije, jezikovni vpliv, multimodalnost

1. Introduction

The emergence of Latvian print advertising can be traced back to the publication of Latvia's first newspaper, *Latviešu Avīzes*, on January 5, 1822. Early advertising in

Latviešu Avīzes took on two main forms: news articles that incorporated promotional elements and standalone classified advertisements. Given the prevalent storytelling culture of the time (Liniņš 2022), advertisements incorporated storytelling elements to engage readers and effectively convey their messages. Many advertisements integrated past events into the narrative of the promoted product. The communication employed a didactic approach, aiming to influence purchasing decisions by explaining the rationale for particular actions concerning the product. Thus, in an advertisement for *Latviešu Avīzes* newspaper subscriptions (*Latviešu Avīzes*, December 19, 1829, 4), a didactic narrative was employed to convey the consequences of delayed ordering. The advertisement recounts the previous year's experience where those who failed to order promptly missed out on receiving the initial issues of the newspaper due to a limited print run. This story served as a cautionary tale, urging readers to place their orders in advance for the upcoming year. This slightly didactic advertising tone aligns with *Latviešu Avīzes* overall mission of educating Latvian peasants.

The demand for *Latviešu Avīzes* among Latvian peasants was influenced by the peasants' literacy rate. Around 1800, only one-third of Latvian peasants in Courland could read (Zanders 2018, 673). However, the number of literate peasantry may have increased by the time *Latviešu Avīzes* was published. In 1803, during the reign of Alexander I, Russia introduced school laws that mandated the establishment of parish and governorate (gymnasium) schools (Vičs 1926, 6). Despite opposition from the German nobility in Courland, who viewed these laws as overly revolutionary, approximately 34 schools were established by 1840 in Courland (Vičs 1926, 97). Additionally, children were taught to read at home through homeschooling. However, as stated by Daija in his interview with Liniņš, *Latviešu Avīzes* was not created in the response to a demand, but instead generated its readership (Liniņš 2022).

Advertising in Latvia has undergone a number of remarkable transformations since the early 19th century. This article explores the nascent stages of advertising in the Latvian press, specifically in the newspaper *Latviešu Avīzes* during the first half of the 19th century. It then analyses the evolution of advertising by contrasting these early examples with those found in contemporary women's magazines *Ieva*, *Santa*, *Lilita*, and *Una*, and the men's magazine *Klubs* in 2023 (800 ads), and investigates the influence of language contact and translation on advertising. The research focuses on the formulation of advertising (involving language contact and translation) and does not take into account the target audiences. According to Zelče (2023, 114), during the first several years of the newspaper's existence, about 200 of its subscribers included wealthy farmers and tenants, manorial servants, parish officials and clerks, church sextons, innkeepers and teachers.

The article considers the first important newspaper in the Latvian language, which played a role in formation of the Latvian nation 200 years ago. It also contributed to changing the reading habits of peasants, who had primarily read religious texts before its publication. The only magazine in Latvian that was published before the newspaper *Latviešu Avīzes* was *Latviešu Ārste* [The Latvian Doctor]. This magazine existed for a short period from 1768 to 1769 and did not contain classifieds, but offered advice about medicines and ailments for both people and cattle. According to Zelče (2009, 70), it was not popular among Latvian peasants. *Latviešu Avīzes* thus served as the first medium for the development of advertising language and translation, as it contained classifieds published exclusively in Latvian.

During the 1920s and 1930s, the leading weekly magazine *Atpūta* gained significant popularity. It contained advertisements and became the primary medium for their development. The peculiarities of advertisements from that time, along with the impact of translated ads on culture, values, and language, have been discussed in an earlier work (Ločmele 2016, 2022).

Latvia experienced a decline in advertising during the Soviet era, as it was considered a part of the capitalist system of exploitation (Zitmane 2005, 270), and there was no local need for it due to the scarcity of goods in the market. However, some advertising appeared in the 1970s for goods that were not in short supply, and limited advertising existed for a few foreign markets (Hanson 1974; Zitmane 2005). Among the least developed types of advertising, according to Hanson, were press advertisements (Hanson 1974, 61–71). In 1991–1993, after the restoration of Latvia's independence in 1991, magazines began to publish classifieds alongside the first ads from foreign companies. The classifieds and adverts were consistently framed (Zitmane 2005, 283), resembling the classifieds in the first Latvian press. By 1995, lifestyle magazines had developed into a stable channel for advertising.

The first newspaper, *Latviešu Avīzes*, seems to have had some elements of the lifestyle magazines that appeared later: *Latviešu Avīzes* published news relevant to peasants, including news translated from the German and Russian press. This, along with the historical peculiarities of ad development in contemporary magazines and the current decline in the popularity of printed Latvian newspapers as an advertising medium, provided a reason for comparing the first newspaper adverts with contemporary magazine ads.

The first issue of *Santa* was published in 1991, and the magazine *Ieva* appeared in 1997, gaining widespread popularity. In the same year, *Una* was launched, and *Lilita* has been in Latvian market since 2005. The leading men's magazine *Klubs* has been published since 1995.

The dominant source language in the 19th century, as with literary translations (Apīnis 1977, 314; Veisbergs 2022), was German. At the beginning of the 20th century German remained the dominant source language, but with the growth of trade and the influx of foreign goods into Latvia, other languages, such as French and English, also began to be used (Ločmele 2014, 2022). During Latvia's time as part of the Soviet Union, traditional advertising was largely absent, but some ads produced for foreign markets, primarily within the Eastern Bloc, were translated into English.

Following the restoration of Latvia's independence, English became the primary source language for translations and continues to hold that role today. Russian also served as a significant source language due to historical and economic ties, although since 2014, following the EU sanctions against Russia in response to its actions undermining Ukraine's territorial integrity and independence and, later, its full-scale war against Ukraine, the use of Russian as a source language in advertising translations has declined.

The development of the Latvian press has been studied extensively. Research was carried out by scholars such as Zeiferts (1895, 1896, 1901) and Ārons (1922) in both the late 19th century and the early 20th. More comprehensive studies have been conducted by Zelče (2009, 2023), Apals (2011), Grigoroviča (2017) and Dimants (2022) in more recent years. The emergence of the Latvian press is closely tied to the formation of Latvian national identity, a connection explored in Hanovs' research (Hanovs 2003). The formation of national identity has been studied in depth by Apals (2008), Volfarte (2009), Buceniece (2013), Kūle (2013), and Jēkabsons (2020). More specific studies by Dribins and Spārītis (2000) and by Grudule (2013) have focused on the role of the Baltic Germans in Latvian history and their influence on Latvian culture. Additionally, the historical relationship between Latvia and Russia, as well as the Russian population in Latvia, has been explored as part of identity studies by Volkovs (1996).

A closely related field has been explored by scholars such as Krūmiņa (2005) and Daija (2013a, 2013b), who examine the development of Latvian literature and culture, and Jansone (2018), who focuses on language and writing.

Stepens (2019) analysed Latvia's history in 1941 –the year the Nazi occupation began – through the lens of classified advertisements. Research on advertising in Soviet Latvia has been conducted by Zitmane (2005, 2017). However, the history of advertising in Latvia, covering all periods of its development, has not been studied comprehensively (Stepens 2019, 73), nor has the role of advertising in shaping the Latvian language.

Advertising has been studied from various angles. The perspective and approach of translation scholars from Eastern and Central Europe, for example Jettmarová, Piotrowska

and Zauberga (1997), have been holistic in describing the post-Soviet situation in their countries (including Latvia), and have contributed to understanding the growing need for advertising translation after the breakdown of the Soviet Union in these new, changing markets (Torresi 2022). The work of Jettmarová (2004), Smith (2006), and Sikora (2010), who examined foreignizing and domesticating approaches to advertising, has influenced the related research in Latvia, where inconsistencies in applying these methods and the resulting hybrid, complicated texts were discussed (Ločmele 2014).

An intercultural perspective (Fan 2017), research into the multimodality of advertising discourse in general (Pérez Sobrino 2017), and the multimodality of advertising as a multimedia medium in particular (Valdés 2007), as well as its intertextuality (Ločmele 2003), have added further facets to studies on the translation of advertising. Torresi's views on adaptation, localization (Torresi 2021, 2022), and new ways of considering advertisement transfer as transcreation analysed by Díaz-Millón and Olvera-Lobo (2023) have provided further insights into the translator's profession in advertising.

Studies on the translation of advertising focusing on decisions about translations driven by their impact on sales (Valdés 2016) add yet another dimension to the literature. From a critical perspective, viewing advertising discourse through the lens of the ecology of language and discussing the roots of early advertisements can highlight the role of human translators in handling cultural, linguistic and communicative subtleties, and may also help safeguard the future of the translator's profession in advertising.

Studies of early media in Latvia have not paid special attention to advertising. Research into the beginnings of advertising in the press and the way human thought contributed to its development, alongside current challenges, may offer new evidence supporting the need for human involvement in its future translation. The study of advertising in Latvia, given the country's historical context, may serve as a case study of the cultural interface between smaller and larger languages and cultures.

2. Advertising at pivotal moments in societal and media development

Advertising in the Latvian language emerged at a pivotal juncture in Latvian history. In 1817, serfdom was abolished in Courland, a region within Latvia where about 90% of inhabitants were serfs of German landlords. This momentous event had a profound impact, fostering the need to develop the economy, strengthen the Latvian language, and embark on a path of societal, educational, and cultural modernization (Zelče 2002a, 12). The newspaper *Latviešu Avīzes* was established in Courland's city of Jelgava with the

dual purpose of cultivating the Latvian language and fostering a sense of national identity among Latvians (Leitāne 2022; Zelče 2009, 2023). This commitment to linguistic and cultural advancement is evident in the advertisements published within its pages. As advertisements were also translated from German, the presence of translated ads maintained the pressure of a foreign language – German – since literal translation introduced unnecessary calques and constructions. The advertisements in *Latviešu Avīzes* not only provided information about individual services but also reflected the growth of commerce. The shops promoted in these ads offered goods from various parts of the world, while agricultural products were produced and sold to a wider range of consumers. Advertisements for Latvian-language books on religious matters, calculus, and other subjects enhanced the cultural awareness of peasants. In the interplay of these circumstances, the advertising language in the contemporary press was formed.

The modern consumer differs from the reader of the past in that they are more inclined to express their individuality, which is seen as a consequence of the digital and social revolution (Kotler, Kartajaya, and Setiawan 2010). In today's world, advertising is becoming increasingly concise and image-based. In our information-saturated reality, this allows the recipient of the advertisement, who is ever less inclined to read advertising texts, to ascribe their own meaning to the advertisement they see, to create their own dream. Advertising communication is shifting from a rational to a more engaging and dream-evoking approach (Amatulli et al. 2018, 71). Unlike the advertisements published in the early newspapers, which, like all newspaper content, likely received more of the reader's attention, today's print advertisements are more prone to be skimmed over, and the recipient may have divided attention, as communication via digital tools may be taking place simultaneously with the processing of the ads. Furthermore, due to the vast array of available information, the modern consumer's attention is far more fragmented than in the past. Paralleling the historical influence of a foreign language, German, in early advertising, contemporary advertising demonstrates a prevailing influence of the English language. By influencing the Latvian language, it simultaneously influences advertising communication itself. Concerns have thus been raised that using English as a *lingua franca* in global luxury brand advertising tends to standardize communication and homogenize interpretation, thereby diminishing consumer engagement (Amatulli et al. 2018, 72), although engagement is the primary objective of advertising.

3. Values

The earliest advertisements – classifieds – promised wealth and prosperity as values to achieve. For example, an offer is expressed to rent a tavern with adjacent farmland

and meadows, promising that "thus one could live a life of wealth"[1] ("ka warr baggati pahrtikt" [*Latviešu Avīzes*, May 5, 1841, 4]). Nowadays, wealth, although still a pleasant dream, is no longer explicitly mentioned in advertisements, as luxury has replaced it as a symbol of riches. Moreover, luxury as a marker of special status is now offered at affordable prices, allowing people to experience the dream of belonging to those who can afford exclusive luxury items, and thus feel wealthy. In this way the German decorative cosmetics brand Artdeco positions itself as a professional luxury cosmetics brand in the Latvian market, offering customers "luxury that everyone can afford" ("luksusu, ko var atļauties ikviens" [Douglas, n.d.]). Although the advertisement is in Latvian, the headline of the advert – the campaign name – is written in English: "Mat & Shine" (*Lilita*, June, 2023, 7). The choice of spelling ("mat" instead of the more common variant "matte") showcases a modern minimalist approach, but may not be easily grasped by a Latvian audience. The campaign features two types of products: a matte lipstick and a lip gloss. The image, which features similar models showcasing these different products, is accompanied by a brief list of the key features of each product, as well as the brand name and the phrase "Established in Munich – since 1985" in English below it. This highlights the brand's history, which is crucial for luxury goods, as it enhances the brand's credibility and value while reinforcing its position as a luxury brand. In line with the advertising trends of luxury brands, the final message is not translated, but in doing so, it excludes those from the audience for whom English may still be incomprehensible today. Luxury goods, intended for a narrow circle of buyers, have always existed alongside mass production. Luxury advertising today differs from mass-produced product advertising in that it relies more heavily on imagery, allowing the consumer to interpret it themselves and create their own dreams, while mass-produced product advertising usually places emphasis on text. Even though it is supplemented with an image, its message is rational and informative (Amatulli et al. 2018, 72). While luxury goods are traditionally considered to include fashion items, perfumes and cosmetics, wines and spirits, watches and jewellery (Fionda and Moore 2009), there is no complete consensus on this classification, and it can vary across different cultures. However, there is a consensus that among the characteristics of luxury brands are craftsmanship (see Kernstock, Brexendorf, and Powell 2017), which also includes handcrafting, and time – both because these goods take time to make and because these brands have a long history. Moreover, craftsmanship is closely linked to aesthetics (Amatulli et al. 2018, 73). Fashion clothing and exclusive eyewear are among luxury products that have untranslated advertisements and are sold in Latvian shops, which are sometimes given foreign names. In this context an English name, "Take a Look", has been given to an exclusive eyewear gallery in Riga, and is placed in

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1   Example translations in the article are provided by the author.

the magazine as an image caption. The image allows the reader to imagine their own story. It depicts a young woman in modern sunglasses with sensually parted lips. The text "Briļļu galerija | optika" [Eyewear Gallery | Opticians] can be found at the bottom of the page, along with the gallery's address. For more information about the eyewear brands offered, the reader is referred to the inside margin of the page, requiring them to turn the magazine 90 degrees (*Lilita*, June, 2023, inside cover). Further fuelling dreams is the advertisement for the shop named "boutique Trebeka", where in the top corner of the page, without the shop's name and address, the reader sees only a dream-like image of a woman in a sandy expanse. Exactly how this woman in a fine dress has found herself in the endless sands furrowed by tractor tracks, and what message she is conveying, are left to the individual interpretation of each reader. The name of the exclusive German clothing brand *annette görtz* is located below the image (*Lilita*, June, 2023, 3). Values and their reflection in advertising have evolved from the early days of the Latvian press to the present day. It seems that the representation of similar values has become more complex, with a greater reliance on undertones and subtext to convey them (see also Ločmele 2018).

4. The evolution of indirectness and the change in shades of meaning

The call to action, which is the goal of advertising, is one of the components of the AIDA advertising model: attracting *Attention*, generating *Interest*, *Desire* to own the advertised product and prompting *Action* – its purchase. This call to action can be indirect. Nowadays, an indirect form of advertising is increasingly being used, where companies do not insistently call for purchases, but instead build and maintain relationships with customers. This approach was also found in the early examples of advertising in the Latvian press, when marketers and other advertisers personally addressed their customers. For instance, an advertisement for the opening of a new shop begins by addressing the customer: "Wiſſeem manneem draugeem un paſihſtameem Kurſemmê es ſcheit ſinnamu darru" [for my dear friends and acquaintances in Courland I make it known that] (*Latviešu Avīzes*, December 21, 1822, 4). Or a bookbinder's widow announces her new location and addresses her customers: "luhdſu ſawus augſti zeenitus paſihſtamus pirzejus…" [I kindly ask my esteemed known customers...], followed by a direct call to order, "…manni ar ſawahm apſtelleſchanahm, tik labb grahmatu=ſeeſchanâ, kà arr pukku taiſiſchanâ, apgohdaht." [...to honour me with their esteemed orders, both for bookbinding and for flower crafting] (*Latviešu Avīzes*, May 25, 1839, 4).

In modern advertising, the call to action to purchase a product is most often not expressed explicitly. The slogan for Lithuanian *Džiugas* hard cheese, "Laiks nogaršot, laiks novērtēt!" [It's time to taste, it's time to appreciate!] (*Santa*, March, 2023, 76), is

an indirect call to action to buy and taste the cheese, as the manufacturer explains that only by tasting it can you truly appreciate it. This slogan is identical in the Lithuanian, English, German, Russian, and Polish versions of the advertisement, but differs in French, where the call to action is even more implicit – it is included in the statement "le goûter, c'est l'apprécier" [to taste it is to appreciate it] (Džiugas, n.d.).

Our analysis indicates that less direct advertising techniques are more characteristic of modern advertising style and apply not only to the call to action but also to the advertising message itself. For this purpose, hedges (Banks, Dens, and De Pelsmacker 2016) are used, such as "kind of", for example. Hedging is evident in the metaphor ""Reference Line" ir sava veida laika mašīna" ["Reference Line" is a kind of time machine] (*Klubs*, April, 2023, back cover), which is a literal translation of the sentence "It is a kind of a time machine" (MBL, n.d.) present in the English source text of an advertisement for the audio equipment "Reference Line". Hedging techniques can even differ in advertisements aimed at male and female audiences. Banks, Dens and De Pelsmacker (2016) advise marketers to use hedges and fewer pledges (such as the adverb "definitely") in advertising and argue that men are more influenced by these probability markers than women and show preference for hedges. In the translation of this same text in the women's magazine *Santa*, a different strategy was used – instead of a metaphor, the comparison ""Reference Line" ir gluži kā laika mašīna" ["Reference Line" is just like a time machine] was chosen (*Santa*, March, 2023, inside back cover), which probably makes the text slightly more direct than the translation of the same sentence in the men's magazine *Klubs*. However, the change is very subtle, and the reason for it might be of a different nature.

Such hedges are pragmatic elements in the text. The Danish beer Carlsberg's 2021 campaign featured the hedge "probably" in its title – "Probably the best beer in the world" (Ads of the World, n.d.). Similar hedges are used in several translated advertisements in Latvia, and these may combine effective persuasion of the audience with a means of avoiding accusations of unfounded or false advertising. According to "The Code of Ethics of the Latvian Advertising Professionals", even though hyperbole and other stylistic devices are allowed, the information presented must be true (LRA 2014). For example, the claim in the advertisement for the Estonian brand Alma yogurt is softened in Latvian: "Iespējams, labākais starp jogurtiem" [Possibly the best among yogurts] (*TV3*, April 16, 2023). The adverb "potenciāli" [potentially] is used in a similar way in the advertisement for the dietary supplement Erekton to enhance male sexual ability, "Erekton. Potenciāli labākais produkts tirgū" [Erekton. Potentially the best product on the market] (*Klubs*, April, 2023, 11). It carries multiple meanings, including "possibly in the future", "likely", and, in this context, it is associated with the noun "potence" and acquires a meaning related to male sexual potency.

A semantic-pragmatic change is also a shift in tone from negative to positive. There are adjectives whose nuance can be rather negative, such as "fanātisks" [fanatic], but in the context of advertising, they acquire a positive connotation [fanatical dedication to quality]. Similarly, the adjective "uzkrītošs" [brash] can be interpreted both negatively and positively, but in the context of advertising, it is positive: "moderns, uzkrītošs dizains" [modern, brash design] (*Klubs*, February, 2023, 49, *Hansgrohe Pulsify* shower ad).

5. The influence of foreign languages

In contrast to the German press in Latvia, which existed during the publication of *Latviešu Avīzes* and which exhibited a certain multilingualism, as it also printed advertisements in Russian, all advertisements in *Latviešu Avīzes* are published in Latvian. Translation played a pivotal role in this. In *Latviešu Avīzes*, at the end of 1822, an announcement was published that could be considered self-promotion of the newspaper. This announcement (*Latviešu Avīzes*, December 21, 1822, 4) explained that advertisements could be submitted in both Latvian and German, and those submitted in German would be translated into Latvian. No additional fee was charged for translation, but such advertisements would be placed in the *Latviešu Avīzes* one week later (see also Ločmele 2023). The contribution of Baltic German editors, who were pastors, to the development of the Latvian language in *Latviešu Avīzes* during the first half of the 19th century is remarkable. This influence began with the first editor, Karl Friedrich Watson, and continued under his successors – Johann Christoph Köhler, Julius Wilhelm Theophil von Richter, and Wilhelm Christian Pantenius. After Watson's death, the content of *Latviešu Avīzes* gradually became more conservative (Zanders 1977). Despite this shift and the decline in popularity under Pantenius (Zelče 2002b, 12), which appears to have caused a drop in the number of advertisements, the quality of the language in the paper's advertising continued to improve. However, in many instances the influence of the German language is felt, as seen in construction calques (word-for-word translations), borrowings, grammatical features.

In the announcement of the reprinted edition of the book "Lihku ſpreddiki us behrehm laſſami" [homilies to be read at funerals], a calque from the German word combination "Wort für Wort" is used: "Tahs lihku runnas irr **wahrd' us wahrda** tà likti kà taî pirmâ drukkâ bijuſchi," literally [the homilies are **word on word** placed as it was in the first printing] (*Latviešu Avīzes*, May 18, 1844). A more natural Latvian wording, as can be judged from later press publications, seems to be "tulkot wahrdiſki," literally [translate *verbatim*], a term used in the 1930s, for example, in *Latvijas Vēstnesis* on 12 November 1921 (*Latvijas Vēstnesis*, November 12, 1921). This phrase, however, is no

longer used in modern Latvian. As a synonym, "tulkot burtiski" was also used, where the word "burtiski" appears to have been borrowed from the Russian "буквально" (*bukvalno*), meaning [letter by letter]. For example, see the explanation "Navajag nikod tulkot burtiski (bukvaļno)" ["There is no need to ever translate literally (bukvalno)"] in the editor's letter to the translator in the Latgalian newspaper *Taisneiba* [March 30, 1928]). This phrase is still in use today.

The lexis of advertisements published in *Latviešu Avīzēs* contains many borrowings from the German language, such as *andele* (from German *Handeln* [deal, trade]), *apftelleſchana* (from *Bestellung* [order]), *priſchs* (from *frisch* [fresh]), and also some that were no longer used in the newspaper after some time, thus reflecting the development of the Latvian language. For example, in an advertisement about market days in 1846, the word *mandags* (from the German *Montag*) is used to denote Monday, but in 1847, the Latvian word *pirmdeena* is already used to denote Monday in the advertisement for the same market (*Latviešu Avīzes*, August 28, 1847, 4).

Analysis of the advertisements in *Latviešu Avīzes* reveals a progressive substitution of German-influenced grammatical features with structures characteristic of native Latvian. This is particularly evident in texts that are repeated year after year. One example is the newspaper's self-promotion, in the announcements about subscribing to it. Comparing the text of this advertisement in 1830 and 1846, grammatical and syntactic changes can be observed: from the more German construction "kam patihkams buhtu" (*es wäre angenehm*), literally [to whom it would be pleasing] (*Latviešu Avīzes*, December 18, 1830, 4) to the Latvian "kam patiktu" [who would like it] (*Latviešu Avīzes*, December 14, 1846, 4), from the passive voice "ſcheit tohp ſinnams darrihts" [here it is made known] (*Latviešu Avīzes*, December 18, 1830, 4), which is a literal translation of the German *hier ist bekannt gemacht worden* used in the Baltic German press of the time (*Pernausche wöchentliche Nachrichten*, 1812, 9) to the active voice – "ſcheit ſinnamu darra" (*Latviešu Avīzes*, December 14, 1846, 4). Similarly, the next sentence is transformed from the passive voice to the active voice: "tahs arri nah-koſchâ 1831â gaddâ **taps rakſtitas**" [They will also be written in the next year 1831] (*Latviešu Avīzes*, December 18, 1830, 4), to "tahs arri nahkoſchâ 1847â gaddâ **rakſtihs**" (*Latviešu Avīzes*, December 14, 1846, 4). There are also grammatical changes in the form and use of conjunctions: in 1837 we read "bet **kà** warretu ſinnaht, zik awiſchu lappas buhs likt rakſtôs eeſpeeſt, tad…", literally [but **so** that one could know how many newspapers will need to be in writing published…] (*Latviešu Avīzes*, December 16, 1837, 4) with the conjunction form influenced by the German *so*, in 1839 this form is already changed – "bet **ka** warretu ſinnaht, zik awiſchu lappas buhs likt rakſtôs eeſpeeſt, tad…" (*Latviešu Avīzes*, December 21, 1839, 4), and in 1846 the conjunction

is changed to the one still used today *lai*: "bet **lai** warretu finnaht, zik awiſchu lappas buhs likt rakſtôs eeſpeeſt, tad…" (*Latviešu Avīzes*, December 14, 1846, 4).

Modern magazine advertisements exhibit a notable influence of the English language, especially in the aforementioned luxury goods advertisements. A mix of languages is also evident, often featuring interjections in other languages. French phrases are most common in advertisements for French-made cosmetics. For instance, the headline for the French sunscreen Avène reads "Eau Thermale Avène Laboratoire Dermatologique" in French, followed by an image and then the subtitle "Avène Sun Care" in English, and the main text in Latvian: "Piemērota aizsardzība jutīgai ādai" [Suitable protection for sensitive skin]. The advertisement concludes with the text "Formulated to limit its impact on marine ecosystems" in English (*Una*, June, 2023, 43). The presence of multiple languages in Latvian magazines is now becoming increasingly common, and French is used in cosmetics advertisements as a symbol of the experience and quality of French cosmetics manufacturers, a usage that has a relatively long history. Although French was not present in *Latviešu Avīzes* in the first half of the 19th century, it was used in advertisements in the 1920s and 1930s when many French cosmetics brands entered Latvia. Their products, based on patented recipes, were also produced in Latvia, and even local brands were given French names (Ločmele 2022, 38-39). To avoid confusion and educate readers, French names were sometimes accompanied by their pronunciation at the time: "Parfumerija "Vigny" (Vinji) Parizē" (*Atpūta*, June 19, 1929, 18).

In early press publications, compound words were written using a hyphen or an equals sign (Skujiņa 1994, 140), which may have been introduced by Georg Mancelius in the 17th century from the German language (Bukelskyte-Čepele 2017, 33). In Latvian, this symbol had a specific term, "biedruzīme", which literally translates to "companion sign". Interestingly, this hyphen is making a comeback as a stylistic orthographic expressive device in the compound word "Dubult=spēks" [double=strength] used in the headline of the pharmacy *Mēness aptieka* vitamin D advertisement (*Ieva*, January, 2022, 29). Those unfamiliar with the hyphen may also interpret this symbol as an equals sign, creating a metaphor expressed through a mathematical symbol: "double is strength." This is further emphasized by the *Mēness aptieka* promotion "1+1" graphically highlighted in the advertisement, where a set of two products could be purchased at a more favourable price. This sign also serves as an expressive device.

6. Brands

Brands have been an important component of advertising throughout history. In the *Latviešu Avīzes* newspaper they appear as proper nouns, often associated with the

names of estates and markets: "Kalna = muiſchas Labrentſcha tirgus" (*Latviešu Avīzes*, June 16, 1832). Labrenča markets, named after the Latvian Spirit of Fire whose image is based on the Catholic Saint Laurence (Tēzaurs 2009–2024), were typically used for trading livestock, but the spelling of their names varied depending on the organising estate. For example, unlike Kalnamuiža, the manor Lielās Iecavas muiža advertised its market as "Labrenzu tirgus" (*Latviešu Avīzes*, July 23, 1836).

Latviešu Avīzes was printed by the publishing house J.F. Steffenhagen und Sohn in Jelgava, but the newspaper did not use the brand name in its self-promotion. Instead, the surnames of the publishers served as a kind of brand. The announcement of the newspaper's publication in 1823 and the opportunity to subscribe to it, published at the end of 1822, was signed by "Tee Awiſchu apgahdataji, Watson un Steffenhagen" [those newspaper publishers Watson and Steffenhagen] (*Latviešu Avīzes*, December 21, 1822).

The popularity of surnames in brand names has also persisted in modern advertising, for example, as explained in the Steinhauer's beer advertisement, this drink was created by Andris Lūkins, the founder of Spirits&Wine, and Aigars Ruņģis, the owner of the Valmiermuiža brewery (*Klubs*, April, 2023, 39). The beer is named after an 18th-century Latvian entrepreneur named Jānis Šteinhauers, who has connections to both Andrejosta, where the central Spirits&Wine shop is located (Šteinhauers was a mast timber sorter in the port of Andrejosta), and Valmiermuiža, which was a cradle of the Brethren's congregations in Vidzeme, while Šteinhauers led the congregation in Riga (Valmiermuiža 2024). Most likely, following the spelling of the possessive case of English nouns and also aiming at foreign markets, an apostrophe is used in the beer's name: *Steinhauer's*. It is noteworthy that this beer brand is brought closer to the Latvian audience in its online advertising by removing the apostrophe from the name: "Gaišais alus "Šteinhauers"" and adapting it for the international audience in the English translation as "Light beer "Steinhauer"" (Valmiermuiža 2024), thus creating an inconsistency with the name on the label: Steinhauer's. Overall, this shows a modern fascination with the brand's connection to history – the creation of a timeline and story, and introducing a touch of tradition.

Brands have their ambassadors – experts who promote them. In *Latviešu Avīzes*, it was Baltic German pastors who expressed their opinions about the advertised books. However, nowadays they are often scientists and doctors. Their opinions, experiences, and sometimes even images are added to advertisements for cosmetics and over-the-counter medications that are published in magazines. Foreign experts may be retained in translated advertisements. For example, in an advertisement for Vichy cosmetics, we read: "Paulīna Andriča. Farmaceite un medicīniskās komunikācijas

vadītāja Vichy laboratorijās" [Paulina Andrycz. Pharmacist and Medical Commu-nications Director at Vichy Laboratories] (*Una*, June, 2023, 3) – the name of the ex-pert is transcribed in Latvian according to the Latvian translation tradition. In other cases, the advertisement is localized by choosing a local specialist as an expert. For example, the preparation *Magnerot* of the German company *Worwag Pharma*, rep-resented in Latvia, is advertised by offering the opinion of local nutritionist Viāna Kuļša (*Una*, June, 2023, 57).

Experts can also play a more significant role – active participation in the creation of a brand. "Zelta saule aust" [golden sun rises] (*Una*, June, 2023, back cover) is an advertisement for exclusive jewellery created in collaboration between the jewellery store chain Grenardi and former Latvian President Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga, who is also known as a researcher of folk songs, and the sun has a central place in them. The advertisement also features Vīķe-Freiberga's signature. The advertising text, brand name, and jewellery motifs resonate with the theme and events of the XXVII Latvian Song and Dance Festival that was held in 2023, which forms the topical context of this advertisement.

The socioeconomic and cultural contexts are thus important for understanding the terms used in advertising.

7. Terms

Terms have played a significant role since the early days of advertising. Their function was most often informative, for example, this was the function of the term *brand-wihna = tulles = ſihmes* [tax labels for spirits], where *tulle* was a contemporary term for liquor tax used in the advert for a market with an explanation that beverage traders had to register for these labels on a specific date before market day (*Latviešu Avīz-es*, September 9, 1843). However, sometimes terms, in addition to their informative function, also had a pragmatic function – they influenced the reader. For example, in a shop advertisement where the owners were going to sell "buhweſchanas = un leetas = kohkus" [wood material for construction and sawn timber], the list of goods to be bought shows a concentration of terms – "Pohļu ritteņu lohki, Ollanderu un Emden-eru dakſtiņi, Eņglenderu ugguns = ķeeģeļi, Fleņsburgeru klinkeri" [Polish wheel rims, Dutch and Emden-made tiles, English firebricks, Flensburg bricks] (*Latviešu Avīzes*, August 8, 1845, 4), the names of which include the designations of the inhabitants of the countries and cities that produced these materials, or after the samples of which these materials were produced in Latvia. For example, Dutch tiles were possibly also produced in the Jelgava brickyard as early as the 17th century (Ose 2015, 50). These

designations indicate the type of material (thus Dutch tiles were curved tiles [Ose 2015, 50]), but at the same time, the use of terms emphasizes the wide range and excellence of the materials sold in the shop.

Modern advertising uses terms to create confidence in the product's compliance with the latest scientific achievements. Terms are also used as an attention-grabbing tool, a modern way of expression. For these purposes, they are sometimes used in a foreign language, most often in English. In advertising, they can also supplement the range of descriptors, acquiring an expressive meaning: in the word combination *high-end class*, the term is used in the function of an epithet, which creates the belief that a highly valued product by specialists is being offered, since it is described in the language used by specialists. In order to instil greater confidence in the superior qualities of a particular technology, specialists, and sometimes even non-specialists, can be offered a wide range of technical terms: *CD transports, ciparu-analoga pārveidotājs MBL 1611, priekšpastiprinātājs MBL 6010, jaudas pastiprinātājs* [CD transport, digital-to-analogue converter MBL 1611, preamplifier MBL 6010, power amplifier MBL 9011] (*Klubs*, April, 2023, back cover).

To give the reader a little break from the world of complex technologies and the terms describing them, the adverb *vienkārši* [simply] is sometimes added, which also serves to convince the reader, for example, "vienkārši nospiežot pogu" [just by pressing a button] (*Klubs*, February, 2023, 48, *Hansgrohe Pulsify* shower advertisement). To make the text more reader-friendly, terms in advertisements are also sometimes explained, for example, the advertisement for *Vichy* cosmetics products mentions: "Neovadiol aktivizē ādas atjaunošanās mehānismus ar nostiprinošu proksilāna un Ķīnas kanēļa (kasijas) ekstraktu." [*Neovadiol* activates skin renewal mechanisms with a firming extract of propylene glycol and Chinese cinnamon (cassia)] (*Una*, June, 2023, 3). The term *kasija,* cassia, is then used in the text.

8. Syntax and content creation

Advertising texts published in *Latviešu Avīzes* begin with classifieds that have an average overall length of 40 words and typically a single-sentence structure. Book advertisements stand out for their longer texts, consisting of at least 80 words. In the mid-19th century, changes gradually came about in the syntax and content creation of advertisements – long one-sentence advertisements gradually turned into shorter ones. The message is created by linking the thought expressed in the sentences with particles, for example, additional information is added with the particle *tèklaht* [in addition], which is no longer used today: "Tèklaht es wehl peeminnu, ka..." [In addition,

I would like to mention that…] (*Latviešu Avīzes*, August 6, 1842, 4) in an advertisement for the services of an intermediary – a goods seller.

Over time, advertising syntax has changed. From one-sentence advertisements we have come to modern advertisements, which consist of short sentences. In addition, the sentence is divided in such a way as to create an emphasis, to underline the importance of what is said. It also happens under the influence of translated ads: "Tava rīta rutīna ar C vitamīnu. Katrai dienai, visa gada garumā." [Your morning routine with vitamin C. For every day, all year round.] (*Lilita*, July, 2023, 1) is a headline that introduces the image in an advertisement for L'Oreal Paris Revitalift Clinical serum and fluid. Punctuation marks have a pragmatic function in this, as they create emphasis, although in a different context they could be dispensed with. Here, the creators of the text for the mass market brand L'Oreal use 11 words in the headline and 17 words in the captions displayed under the product images , allowing the reader to envision her own dream of the promised radiant skin and its benefits, and emphasizing that the brand will accompany and support the user on her journey to this dream every day.

The graphic layout of the advertising text has also changed, and today the text is easier to read and understand. Text highlights are made with both bold and italic, and by using a different colour for the letters. In addition to words, other signs are used: today, the emojis popular in social networks, emails and text messages are also used in advertising, as well as pictograms. Thus, in the advertisement for the food supplement MagLiquid, the effect of the preparation is depicted with pictograms, and for clarity a verbal message is also added to each sign (*Klubs*, April, 2023, 7). Advertising in magazines is generally more visual and concise. However, for more expensive and specific products, such as women's cosmetics, which are intended for specific age groups and talk more openly about different cycles in women's lives, texts can be longer.

Changes in content creation and text type are related to the multimodality of modern advertising.

9. Multimodality

There were no drawings in *Latviešu Avīzes* until the mid-19th century. Gradually, however graphic highlights were introduced in advertisements, placing them in a decorative frame.

If earlier advertising contained a story element in the text, which allowed it to be better remembered and visualized, today the function of storytelling and visualization in the advertising published in magazines is often taken over by the image. Furthermore, interested parties can find additional information, including stories about the brand,

on the manufacturers' websites. The interaction between different semiotic systems is consciously created – between the word and the image, for example: "Beidz kūkot, nāc darīt! Kļūsti par "Lauku sētas" jubilejas ķirsīti!" [Stop sitting around, come and do it! Become a cherry for the "Lauku sēta" anniversary!] (*Una*, June, 2023, 59) is an advertisement for the television programme *Lauku sēta*, which invites readers to apply to participate in this reality show. Two meanings of the verb *kūkot* are played with: the first – *to sit idle for a long time* (Tēzaurs 2009–2024) (which is actualized by the verb *darīt* [to do]) and the second – *to eat cakes* (Tēzaurs 2009–2024), which is actualized with the image of the *Lauku sēta* host Jānis Rāzna and the show's 10th anniversary cake, to which Rāzna adds cherries. The call to become the *Lauku sēta* anniversary cherry is a reference to the expression "kā ķirsītis uz kūkas", which is a frequently used translation of the English idiom "the cherry on the cake" into Latvian.

10. Translated advertising

Throughout the history of advertising, the use of translation has been a common practice. As early as 1822, a notice in the news – *Sinna* – section of *Latviešu Avīzes* advertised the possibility of placing orders for the newspaper (*Latviešu Avīzes*, December 21, 1822, 4). As noted before, it was stated that advertisements could be submitted in either Latvian or German, with the latter then translated into Latvian at no additional cost, but they would be published in the newspaper a week later.

Nowadays the source language has shifted, with most advertisements in Latvia being translated from English. Translation strategies have also evolved, moving from the faithful translations of the early days to modern adaptations. This shift is also driven by the multimodal nature of modern advertising, where some of the association building can be entrusted to the image. For example, the headline for the *Liebherr* wine cabinet advertisement, "The best stories are about coming of age", in the source text, takes on another meaning – the aging of wine (Liebherr, n.d.). The headline is adapted as "Labākie stāsti rodas gadu gaitā" [the best stories are born over time] (*Klubs*, April, 2023, 33). The Latvian headline, while intriguing and encouraging further reading, loses its direct connection to the aging of wine implied by the source text phrase "coming of age". The equivalent Latvian term "vīna nogatavināšana", meaning "wine maturation", cannot be played upon in a similar manner. Thus, a slightly more generalized adaptation was produced, which entrusted the creation of the link to the advertised product to its image and the advertising text.

Latvian metaphors appear in the translated text where they may not be present in the source. In the *Hansgrohe Pulsify* shower advertisement, the phrase "ieskaujot ķermeni

liegā ūdens pilīšu mākonī" [surrounding the body in a gentle cloud of water droplets] (*Klubs*, February, 2023, 48) is a translation of the source text "transforms water into a delicate coat of countless microdroplets" (Hansgrohe 2024). The word *coat* is transformed into a more metaphorical term – *cloud* in the Latvian translation. Translations can thus sometimes be more expressive than the source text. Such translations fall under the category of transcreation, which is used in persuasive contexts like advertising. Transcreations are creative translations that take into account the culture of the target audience and, by transferring the sense, style, and tone of the source text, may "imply adaptations that move away from the original text to a greater or lesser extent to fit the original purpose, transmit the original message and overcome cultural barriers" (Díaz-Millón and Olvera-Lobo 2023, 358).

As a result of such translations, words can acquire new meanings. In Latvian, the noun *rutīna* has several meanings: a skill acquired through work, and a stereotyped, conservative way of doing things (Tēzaurs 2009–2024) (the latter has a slightly negative connotation). However, in translations from English, another meaning emerges – simple everyday activities that are done regularly (Dictionary.com 2024), and "the morning routine" in the L'Oreal Paris Revitalift Clinical serum advertisement becomes "Tava rīta rutīna ar C vitamīnu" (*Lilita*, June, 2023, inside cover), initially a quite unusual word collocation in Latvian, which, under the influence of translations from English, has gradually seeped into the language.

Similarly to the time when advertisement texts were translated by newspaper editors for their own newspaper's target audience, even today there are sometimes different translations of the same advertisement text in different magazines. For example, the Reference Line audio system advertisement has different translations in the magazines *Santa* (*Santa*, March, 2023, inside back cover), a women's magazine, and *Klubs* (*Klubs*, April, 2023, back cover), a men's magazine. The use of epithets differs in this translated advertisement. The advertisement in the magazine *Klubs* uses *drosmīgs* [bold] – "drosmīgas inženierijas virsotne" [the pinnacle of bold engineering] in a translated advertisement for audio equipment (*Klubs*, April, 2023, back cover). The translation of the same advertisement in the magazine *Santa* uses a different epithet, *pārgalvīgs*, which means "daring", or even "reckless" in other contexts: "pārgalvīgās inženierdomas virsotne" [the pinnacle of daring engineering thought] (*Santa*, March, 2023, inside back cover). There are some stylistic differences between advertisements in women's and men's magazines in Latvia, with those targeting women demonstrating a more playful tone (Ločmele and Gizeleza 2020). However, it is difficult to make generalizations in this case due to the limited data available.

11. Conclusion

From the first advertisements in the Latvian press to the present day, advertising has come a long way. It emerged in the first newspaper in Latvian *Latviešu Avīzes* at a crucial moment in Latvian history – the abolishment of serfdom in Courland. Along with *Latviešu Avīzes*, it has generally promoted the democratization of reading, possibly also increasing interest in *Latviešu Avīzes* itself. The critical juncture of the development of modern society – the digital revolution and the advent of AI – are naturally having an impact on the development of advertising. Advertising has participated and continues to participate in the formation of the Latvian language, translations serving as a significant influence in this process. Mirroring the historical dominance of the impact of German in early Latvian advertising, English now exerts a strong influence on contemporary advertising. Moreover, this influence extends beyond language, shaping the very way advertising messages are communicated, such as making them less direct. The translation of adverts also plays an important role in ad hoc term creation by bringing borrowings and claques that, with time, may become more established in the language. Overall, advertisements contain lasting testimonies to the events of their time in language, society, and the national economy, and thus are an interesting and valuable research subject.

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About the author

Gunta Ločmele (Prof., Dr. Philol.) works at the University of Latvia. She has over 90 research publications. She is a member of the editorial board of the translation research journal *Vertimo Studijos*. Her research interests include translation studies and diachronic and synchronic aspects of language of advertising.

The legal status of legal translators within the community of Portuguese speaking countries

Ariadna Coelho iD

University of Lisbon, Portugal

ABSTRACT

The Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP) encompasses nine countries across Asia, Africa, Europe and South America, with their own set of rules governing legal translators and interpreters. To study the legal status of those professionals within the CPLP, we analyze both international recommendations, and national legislation from each CPLP member state, and deontological and ethical codes from associations of translators. Our focus is to understand the rights, duties, and obligations of legal translators as defined by these instruments. The findings reveal that not all these nine countries follow international recommendations, nor do all have a regulated professional status. It is thus recommended in the conclusion that common efforts should be pursued to improve the legal status of this profession.

Keywords: Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries, CPLP, legal translators, legal status

Pravni status pravnih prevajalcev v Skupnosti portugalsko govorečih držav

IZVLEČEK

Skupnost portugalsko govorečih držav (CPLP) obsega devet držav v Aziji, Afriki, Evropi in Južni Ameriki, ki imajo vsaka svoja pravila, ki regulirajo delo pravnih prevajalcev in tolmačev. Analiziramo tako mednarodna priporočila kot tudi nacionalno zakonodajo vseh držav članic Skupnosti CPLP in deontološke in etične kodekse prevajalskih združenj, z namenom, da bi raziskali pravni status poklicnih prevajalcev v skupnosti CPLP. Osredotočimo se na razumevanje pravic, dolžnosti in obveznosti pravnih prevajalcev, kot so te definirane v omenjenih dokumentih. Izsledki pokažejo, da mednarodnim smernicam ne sledijo vse države Skupnosti CPLP, niti nimajo vse omenjene države reguliranega statusa za ta poklic. V sklepu predlagamo, da bi s skupnimi močmi lahko izboljšali pravni status pravnih prevajalcev.

Ključne besede: Skupnost portugalsko govorečih držav, CPLP, pravni prevajalci, pravni status

1. Introduction

This article is an excerpt of an ongoing doctoral research project that investigates the legal (and social) status of legal translators[1] across the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries (CPLP) through a descriptive-comparative and applied study.

The CPLP refers to nine countries that have Portuguese as their official language and was formally founded in 1996. The CPLP is geographically disperse and present on four continents: Europe (Portugal), South America (Brazil), Asia (East Timor) and Africa (Angola, Cape Verde, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique and São Tomé and Príncipe). The geographical distribution of CPLP member states is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Geographical distribution of CPLP member states (Further Africa 2021).

In general, legal translators navigate a complex landscape where linguistic precision, legal knowledge, and cultural awareness are essential for professional practice. Besides navigating the complexities of different legal systems (Prieto Ramos 2014), legal translators sometimes need to explain legal systems within the same language (Biel

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1   Throughout this article, we will use the term translators to encompass both translators and interpreters. This inclusive term avoids repetition and simplifies terminology.

2007; cf. also Klabal 2022). This is particularly evident within the CPLP, where Portuguese is the official language, but each of its nine member countries has its own distinct legal system. As a result, the legal status of a translator can vary considerably across these member states.

In many countries, translators lack official recognition through legal frameworks, which means that they may not have a professional status defined by law (Pym et al. 2012, 54). Moreover, legal translators often also face a persistent lack of status, leading to challenges such as inadequate compensation, limited access to social benefits, such as paid sick leave and pension rights, and a sense of insufficient consultation by legal professionals (Morgan 2011, 6–7).

The legal status of a legal translator is a multifaceted construct, shaped by a combination of factors. These include international guidelines, national regulations governing the profession, professional standards and codes of conduct adhered to by practitioners, and each country's legal framework. This interplay defines the rights, responsibilities, and operating parameters of legal translators within the CPLP.

This complexity raises some important questions regarding the profession of legal translators and their legal status: (i) Are the international instruments defining legal translators implemented by CPLP member states? (ii) Is there specific legislation in each CPLP member state that governs these professionals? (iii) Are there codes of conduct that govern the profession? (iv) What are the rights, duties and responsibilities of legal translators?

We use documentary research methodology (Scott and Marshall 2015) to answer the above questions, and so identify, systematize and comparatively analyze legal instruments on the legal status of legal translators within the CPLP.

This article is organized as follows: Section 2 presents the background and context to this study. Section 3 explores the concepts of legal translator and legal status. Section 4 outlines the methodology and data analysis employed. Section 5 presents the results and examines the findings. Section 6 then offers the concluding remarks, as well as some possible implications.

2. Background and context

The Sociological Turn (Heilbron 1999; cf. also Inghilleri 2005; Heilbron and Sapiro 2007) brought about a paradigm shift in Translation Studies (TS), moving research away from a purely linguistic and culturological approach to a more nuanced understanding of the translator's role. This shift, among others inspired by Venuti's

groundbreaking work in 1995, focuses on understanding the values and predispositions cultivated by the translator in the preparation, practice and production of translation.

Moreover, the Sociological Turn recognizes translators as cultural mediators (as they had been recognized already by Hatim and Mason 1990; cf. also Snell-Hornby, Jettmarová, and Kaindl 1997), actively shaping the communication process through their own values and expertise. It focuses on translators as key players in that process, and emphasizes, as other currents have done before, the values translators bring to their work, recognizing them as agents (Bassnett [1980] 2013; cf. also Venuti 2013). Viewing translators as cultural agents has inspired scholars to investigate the sociological process of translation, exploring their activities and attitudes, interactions with the social environment, history, and influence (Pym 2010).

This focus on the translator's agency has led to the development of new fields within TS, reflecting the growing recognition of the diverse and specialized nature of the translator's work. On one hand, Chesterman's (2009) proposal for Translator Studies, as a distinct branch of TS, acknowledges the importance of understanding the translator as a unique individual with specific skills, experiences, and values. This perspective goes beyond the traditional focus on linguistic competence and delves into translators' social and cultural contexts (Wolf and Fukari 2007), beyond their role as language and cultural mediators. This lens focuses on their actions, highlighting the dynamic relationship between translators and the environment they operate in.

On the other hand, Prieto Ramos (2014) argues for the establishment of Legal Translation Studies (LTS), emphasizing that legal translators require a deep understanding of both legal principles and the linguistic intricacies of legal texts. This argument stems from the recognition that legal translation operates within a highly specialized domain characterized by its own distinct terminology, legal frameworks, and cultural nuances. By establishing LTS as a distinct field, Prieto Ramos envisions a framework for developing rigorous research, training programmes, and professional standards specifically tailored to the needs of legal translators, ultimately contributing to the advancement of both legal translation practice and the broader field of TS.

Similarly to Chesterman's (2009) proposal to formalize Translator Studies by defining its name and nature, Prieto Ramos (2014) advocates for the formulation of LTS as a new interdisciplinary field within TS. While Chesterman focuses on the cultural turn in TS, examining translators rather than translations, Prieto Ramos examines the historical development of LTS, highlighting a field that

was already undergoing development and exploration by other scholars since the 1970s (Gémar 1979).[2]

Within TS, research tends to focus on the status of translators in European countries. Notable contributions include studies by Pym, Grin, Sfreddo, and Chan (Pym et al. 2012) in various countries, as well as specific research in Denmark (van Dam and Zethsen 2010), Portugal (Ferreira Alves 2012), Finland (Ruokonen 2013), Italy (Gentile 2015), the United Kingdom (EC, CIOL, and ITI 2017), and Sweden (Svahn 2020). Research on the status of translators has also been conducted outside Europe, such as Liu's (2021) thorough study across ten Asian countries.

While a significant proportion of those studies focus on the social status of translators, contributions have also been made regarding their legal status. Within LTS, an interdisciplinary exploration of this evolving field has yielded valuable insights, including advancements in theory (Soriano Barabino 2016), methodology (Biel et al. 2018), practice and training (Way 2014).

The continued research on the social and legal status of translators demonstrates their importance and relevance to TS. In the research reported in this article both subjects, Translator Studies and LTS, are also combined in a study of legal translators that examines their specific characteristics and roles. By focusing on legal translators within the CPLP, we explore their unique legal status and study the regulations, ethics and legal frameworks that govern their profession. This exploration is crucial for a better understanding of the specific challenges, rights, duties and responsibilities faced by legal translators from the CPLP member states, and will ultimately contribute to a more nuanced and comprehensive knowledge of their status.

3. Legal translators and legal status

The concept of a legal translator derives from the practices adopted by academic institutions, professional organizations and specialists in translation and law (Prieto Ramos 2014). Hence, our conceptualization of a legal translator aligns with the following definition "one who translates texts or documents of legal nature or related to the legislation of a country or an international organization, and that, therefore, belong to the field of law or legal science"[3] (Gesser 2013, 39).

Accordingly, our definition of a legal translator refers to a professional who translates a) texts that are legal in nature, directly pertaining to legal matters; or b) texts used in legal

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2   For a complete list of references on the first generation of LTS scholars see Prieto Ramos (2014).

3   All translations from Portuguese in this article are by the author.

contexts, which can be public instruments or documents employed within legal proceedings or frameworks. A legal translator's role thus extends beyond translating official documents, contracts, court sentences and legislation, as they also handle texts and documents where the content does not fall under the domain of law. For example, a medical report written in a foreign language might need to be translated and legalized[4] to be part of a legal process. Even though its content is not of a legal nature, the translation must be done by an official translator[5] to be accepted as evidence in a legal procedure.

Even though the term official translation could be used to refer to translations of legal proceedings, international commercial transactions, contracts between companies from different countries, and of texts where the precision of legal terms is essential, the term legal translation has a broader meaning. Thus, in this study, a legal translator is considered anyone who translates texts in the field of law, is a specialist in the legal area (but not necessarily a jurist), and translates legal documents, whether they are legislative norms or texts arising from the application of laws.

Our definition also takes into account Šarčević's (1997) definition of legal translation as a specialized form of translation that involves the interpretation and translation of legal documents, contracts, court rulings, and other texts related to the field of law. The legal nature of the texts translated by the legal translator highlights the complexity and the need for specialized legal knowledge. Therefore, legal translators need to have in-depth knowledge of legal terminologies and the legal system of the countries of both the source and target texts. Their specialty is related to their skills in interpreting and comparatively analyzing laws (Prieto Ramos 2015, 2).

In defining the concept of legal status, we follow the jurist de Plácido e Silva ([1963] 2014, 866), who classifies legal status as a set of legal norms whose common characteristic is to establish rules for the organization, functioning and legal protection of a professional class or entity, specifying its rights and duties. As such, our use of the term legal status of legal translators refers to the set of rules, rights and obligations governing the profession of legal translation.

While the study of international recommendations and national legislation of CPLP member states provides an insight into translators' rights, the deontological and

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4   On the legalization procedure that makes a national public document internationally valid through the Hague Apostille process, see The Hague Convention on the Service Abroad of Judicial and Extrajudicial Documents in Civil or Commercial Matters (HCCH Convention 1965).

5   Two types of official translation, certified and sworn translation, are presented in Section 5.2, when analyzing the legislation of CPLP member states regarding the legal status of legal translators.

ethical codes of associations of translators inform us about translator's principles, responsibilities, duties and obligations. For this reason, in order to describe the legal status, i.e., rights and duties, of legal translators in the CPLP member states, we analyzed a) international guidelines, recommendations, directives, b) specific legislation from each CPLP member states, and c) deontological and ethical codes of associations of translators.

A deontological or ethical code "sets principles, duties and professional practices, which must accompany and guide the translator's behavior in any circumstances" (APTRAD Código, n.d.). While outlining the principles and practices for translators, it does not carry the same weight as legal regulation. It serves as a set of guidelines for good conduct that members are expected to follow. However, it does not legally bind its members. An association can discipline members for misconduct, but this does not automatically translate to legal consequences. Unless the misconduct violates existing laws, it remains a matter of internal association rules.

4. Methodology and data collection

This section delves into our methodology, outlining the documentary research carried out to identify and analyze our findings: examining instruments on legal translators' legal status. We then discuss the data collection process, and finally provide insights on the data collected.

Our methodology thus combines: (i) documentary research used to identify and compile relevant legal instruments from international organizations and from each CPLP member state, as well as deontological and ethical codes from associations of translators, which provide a foundational understanding of the legal framework surrounding legal translators, and (ii) a legal analysis of the instruments and documents found. This approach will allow us to paint a comprehensive picture of the legal status of legal translators within the CPLP member states.

To collect data and carry out the documentary research outlined in section (i), we identified legal databases that are accessible both internationally and within CPLP member states. Additionally, we identified associations of professional translators and then analyzed their deontological and ethical codes.

When exploring international legal databases, we studied several organizations dedicated to establishing legal norms for a group of countries. Notable examples include the United Nations (UN), the European Union (EU), Council of Europe (COE), International Labor Organization (ILO), International Criminal Court, International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), North Atlantic Treaty Organization

(NATO), World Health Organization (WHO), among several others. These organizations act as crucial players in shaping the legal landscape across borders.

The UN boasts the widest scope within the group, with 193 member states. This reflects its global reach and influence, making it a key player in setting international standards and addressing critical global issues through its various bodies and conventions.

On a smaller scale, but also playing a crucial role, is the EU,[6] which encompasses 27 member states. It plays a significant role in shaping the legal framework for its members. For our study, it was particularly relevant to address EU-derived norms that affect Portugal.

Within the framework of the UN, the database of UNESCO Legal Affairs, which is the Office of International Standards and Legal Affairs of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, was analyzed. As it originates from UNESCO's General Conference, it carries significant authority and provides recommendations intended to influence the development of national laws and practices. We analyzed its document discussing translators and their profession: Recommendation on the Legal Protection of Translators and Translations and the Practical Means to improve the Status of Translators (see Section 5.1.1).

One of the EU databases is EU-Lex: EU-Law, which is the Official Journal of the European Union. It consolidates texts, summaries of legislation and different types of EU legal acts, such as regulations, directives, decisions, recommendations and opinions. Except for the last two in this list, EU legal acts are binding on all EU member states, with the formal application and flexibility on the incorporations depending on the type of document. For our study it is relevant to bear in mind that directives set binding objectives to be achieved by member states that are free to choose the manner in which they see fit to achieve those objectives. Particularly interesting for us is the following EU document focusing on translators and their profession: Directive 2010/64/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on the right to interpretation and translation in criminal proceedings, which is discussed in Section 5.1.2.

At a national level, we have identified three databases. Portugal and Brazil each maintain their own databases, while the remaining seven CPLP member states rely on a database management system created by the CPLP administration. Those databases are: Brazilian Planalto Legis; Portuguese Electronic Republic Gazette, DRE; and Legis

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6   Although technically a supranational union, for the purposes of this study we will refer to the EU as an organization. This is particularly relevant to Section 5.1.2, which focuses on the EU, within the broader context of Section 5.1 on international organizations.

PALOP+TL, a legal database from Portuguese-speaking African countries (PALOP) and East Timor (TL).

After identifying international and national databases, we proceeded to identify associations of translators in CPLP member states, which allowed us to examine their deontological and ethical codes.

At a global level, the International Federation of Translators (FIT) brings together associations of translators, interpreters, and terminologists from around the world. A search on FIT's Directory revealed that the following associations within the CPLP are members of FIT: Brazilian Association of Translators and Interpreters (ABRATES), Association of Translators and Interpreters of Mozambique (ATIM), and Portuguese Translators Association (APT).

In addition to the associations affiliated with FIT, there are two translator associations in Angola: Association of Translators and Interpreters of Angola (ATIA) and Independent Association of Tourist Guides, Translators and Interpreters of Angola (AIGITA[7]). Furthermore, we identified one more association in Portugal: the Portuguese Professional Translators and Interpreters Association (APTRAD).

A specific type of association, a professional union, was identified both in Brazil and in Portugal: the Translators Union (SINTRA) and the Portuguese National Union of Tourism Activities, Translators and Interpreters (SNATTI[8]), respectively.

In the end, it was established that there are no associations of professional translators in Cape Verde, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, São Tomé and Príncipe or East Timor. In addition to that it is important to note that the Angolan ATIA and Mozambiquan ATIM do not have active websites (for example, ATIM, while listed as a member of FIT, provides a website URL that is not functional). Consequently, we were unable to locate any deontological or ethical codes for both institutions.

Our research found that only the Brazilian ABRATES and SINTRA, and the Portuguese APT and APTRAD, have established deontological or ethical codes, which are analyzed in Section 5.3.

At the European level, an important professional association is the European Legal Interpreters and Translators Association (EULITA). The list of EULITA's members revealed that Portuguese SNATTI is a member, but that APT and APTRAD are not.

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7   AIGITA, while encompassing tourist guides, who may also translate or interpret, does not represent legal translators and was therefore not relevant to our study.

8   As AIGITA, SNATTI is not relevant to our study, as it does not represent legal translators.

Nevertheless, a brief presentation of EULITA's code of ethics is analyzed in Section 5.3.1, as a potential point of inspiration for future Portuguese associations.

5. Results and data analysis

This section includes the results of an analysis of (i) international rules on the protection of translators, (ii) CPLP member states' legislation that sets laws governing the translator profession, and (iii) general rules from deontological and ethical codes regarding professional conduct.

5.1 International organizations

5.1.1 United Nations

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) adopted its Recommendation on the Legal Protection of Translators and Translations and the Practical Means to improve the Status of Translators on November 22, 1976 (UNESCO Recommendation 1976), during its 19th session in Nairobi, to recognize and improve translators' rights. Recognizing the vital role of translators in promoting international cultural, scientific, and artistic exchanges, the Recommendation urges member states to ensure that translators receive the legal protections afforded to authors under copyright conventions and national laws.

As with other UNESCO recommendations, it is a non-binding instrument that outlines principles and norms for the international regulation of a particular area. It serves as a means for the General Conference of UNESCO to formulate shared values, standards, and guidelines for countries to consider and implement. Though not legally binding, they carry significant weight as they represent a consensus among UNESCO member states. In this sense, it is worth noting that all nine CPLP member states are also member states of UNESCO. Therefore, they have a responsibility to consider the Recommendation and to implement them into their national laws and policies.

Briefly, UNESCO gives some context, and 16 recommendations aimed at enhancing the protection and working conditions of translators to facilitate cultural exchange and international cooperation. The Recommendation outlines that translators should be given equitable remuneration, copyright protection like authors, and appropriate contractual agreements with users. It encourages written contracts, fair compensation, recognition of translation rights, and dispute resolution mechanisms. It suggests practical measures for countries to support translators through setting professional standards, training programmes, social benefits, and fiscal measures. Particular

attention is given to improving the social and fiscal status of independent and salaried translators and promoting their continuous education. The Recommendation acknowledges the importance of adaptability for developing countries and the need to maintain the higher protection levels already in place in some countries.

Specifically, we highlight UNESCO's starting point and four recommendations that we consider to be crucial to protect legal translators, and which should be taken into consideration by CPLP member states. Firstly, UNESCO recognizes the vital role translators play in serving culture and development. The organization understands that protecting translators is essential to guarantee the quality of translations needed to fulfil this crucial role.

Secondly, although the fundamental principles of protecting translators' rights are enshrined in international agreements like the Universal Copyright Convention and the Berne Convention, as well as in national laws of many member states of the UN, the actual implementation of these provisions frequently fails to meet their intended goals. While these agreements and laws contain specific conditions aimed at safeguarding translators' interests, their practical implementation can be inconsistent and inadequate. This can lead to challenges for translators in securing fair compensation, obtaining proper attribution for their work, and asserting their rights when their work is misused or exploited. The need for more effective enforcement mechanisms and a greater awareness of translators' rights is crucial to ensure that these protections are not merely theoretical but truly benefit the translators who contribute significantly to the dissemination of knowledge and culture.

Thirdly, UN member states bear a responsibility to actively foster an environment that supports the effective representation of translators. UNESCO thus recommends promoting the establishment and development of professional organizations dedicated to the interests of translators. Such organizations, including associations and unions, serve as crucial platforms for translators to collectively define and advocate for the standards, ethical guidelines, and professional practices that govern their work. By facilitating the formation and growth of these representative bodies, member states empower translators to play a more active role in shaping the landscape of their profession, ensuring their voices are heard, and contributing to the establishment of a robust and respected translation industry.

An important addendum set by UNESCO is to recommend that while membership in translator organizations or professional associations is valuable, it should not be a requirement for protection. UNESCO recommendations and protection should apply to all translators, regardless of their membership status.

Fourthly, the Recommendation aims to establish a minimum level of protection for translators. However, it should not be used to reduce existing protections offered by national laws, contracts, or agreements. The goal is to harmonize and improve the overall situation for translators, not to weaken existing protections. In essence, this recommendation should be seen as a floor, not a ceiling, for the protection of translators. It sets a minimum standard, but it should not prevent countries or organizations from offering even greater protection to translators.

Looking specifically at Recommendation 7 on the promotion and establishment of organizations for translators, such as associations or unions, we note that, within the CPLP, only four of the nine member states have implemented this: Brazil, Portugal, Mozambique and Angola. While not specific to CPLP, we refer to the European Association for Legal Interpreters and Translators (EULITA), as it potentially encompasses and affects professionals in Portugal. A table specifying the foundation of each association, and its deontological or ethical code is presented in Table 1. An analysis of those codes is presented in Section 5.3.

Table 1. Associations of Translators and Interpreters and their Deontological or Ethical Codes, when applicable.

Association	Foundation	Deontological or Ethical Code
Brazilian Association of Translators and Interpreters (ABRATES)	1974	Code of Ethics (ABRATES Código, n.d.)
Portuguese Translators Association (APT)	1988	Deontological Code (APT Código, n.d.)
Brazilian Translators Union (SINTRA)	1988	Statute (SINTRA Estatuto 2018)
European Association for Legal Interpreters and Translators (EULITA)	2009	Code of Ethics (EULITA Code 2013)
Portuguese Professional Translators and Interpreters Association (APTRAD)	2015	Deontological Code (APTRAD Código, n.d.)
Association of Translators and Interpreters of Mozambique (ATIM)	2016	no
Association of Translators and Interpreters of Angola (ATIA)	2019	no

To have a clear view of when each association was established, Figure 2 provides a visual representation that highlights the founding dates of associations in Brazil, Portugal, Mozambique and Angola. UNESCO's Recommendation and EULITA's foundation are positioned above the line for reference.
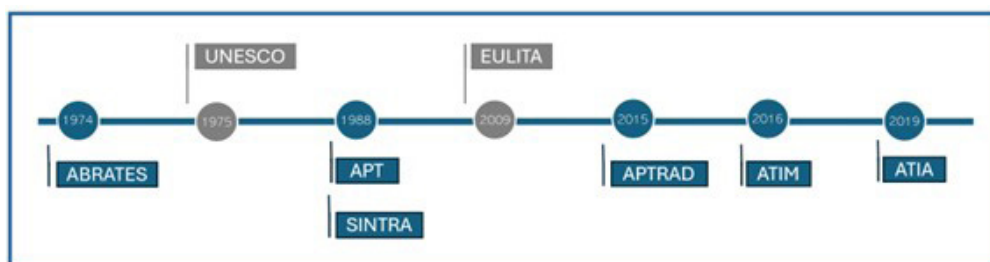
Figure 2. Timeline of translator association's foundations in CPLP member states.

The timeline reveals that ABRATES was established prior to the publication of UN-ESCO's Recommendation. The Portuguese Association of Translators (APT) and the Brazilian Union of Translators (SINTRA) were both founded in 1988. The European Association for Legal Interpreters and Translators (EULITA) was founded in 2009. In 2015, Portugal established the Portuguese Association of Translators and Interpreters (APTRAD). Mozambique and Angola followed suit, formally establishing their translators' associations in 2016 and 2019, respectively.

The fact that ABRATES was established in 1974 aligns with UNESCO Recommendation 16, which acknowledges that certain countries may have already implemented aspects of the recommendations organically. It is crucial to emphasize that this pre-existing implementation does not diminish or supersede the importance of the Recommendation, nor does it negate the need for continued efforts to ensure the legal protection and improved status of translators in Brazil.

The analysis underscores the enduring relevance of the UNESCO Recommendation in safeguarding the profession of legal translators. It provides a crucial framework for ensuring the ethical and professional standards necessary for accurate and reliable legal translations.

5.1.2 European Union

The European Union, through its Parliament and Council, stipulated Directive 2010/64/EU on the right to interpretation and translation in criminal proceedings. Although aimed at the right to translation/a translator (Gonzales Nuñez 2016), and not translators' rights,[9] it is a pivotal act of legislation that includes a provision for the creation of a register of these professionals.

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9   For more on the distinction between the right to translation and translators' rights see José de Oliveira Ascensão's study on this issue in the context of Portuguese law (de Oliveira Ascensão 1978).

> To promote the adequacy of interpretation and translation and efficient access thereto, Member States shall endeavour to establish a register or registers of independent translators and interpreters who are appropriately qualified. Once established, such register or registers shall, where appropriate, be made available to legal counsel and relevant authorities. (Directive 2010/64/EU, Article 5, point 2)

While some European countries, such as Belgium, the Czech Republic, France, Romania, and Slovenia, have successfully implemented the Directive's recommendation, Portugal has yet to follow suit. This lack of a centralized register presents several challenges. The absence of a comprehensive register hinders transparency regarding the qualifications and experience of translators, making it difficult for clients to make informed choices. This, along with the potential for unqualified individuals offering translation services, contributes to a less-than-ideal situation, which can lead to a lack of trust in the translation industry and potentially jeopardize the integrity of legal proceedings.

The Directive mandates the creation of a register that would represent a significant step forward in securing translators' rights, as it would enhance their visibility and increase their potential for work. However, it leaves the procedure and deadline for its establishment entirely up to the individual member states. This ambiguity has led to the absence of a comprehensive, nationwide register of translators in Portugal, as significant hurdles have impeded its establishment until now (Barbosa e Silva 2018).

The implementation of a comprehensive register of translators in Portugal, as envisioned by Directive 2010/64/EU, thus remains a crucial step towards improving the quality and accessibility of legal translation services in the country. Such a register would provide a much-needed framework for ensuring the competence and ethical conduct of legal translators, ultimately benefiting both clients and the legal profession itself.

5.2 National legislation from CPLP member states

Our data collection process identified three databases containing legislation from CPLP member states: Legis Planalto, DRE, and Legis PALOP+TL. Consulting them allowed us to identify laws regarding legal translators in Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Mozambique, Portugal, and East Timor. In Table 2 we present our findings, while providing a comment on the specificity of each instrument.

Table 2. Compilation of Legal Instruments Affecting Legal Translators within CPLP.

Legal Instruments	Origin	Comment
Recommendation on the Legal Protection of Translators and Translations and the Practical Means to Improve the Status of Translators (UNESCO Recommendation 1976).	United Nations	It serves as a valuable set of international guidelines that all nations should adhere to.
Directive 2010/64/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Right to Interpretation and Translation in Criminal Proceedings (European Union Directive 2010).	European Union	It directly applies to Portuguese legislation.
Decree-Law No. 237/2001 on granting chambers of commerce and industry, lawyers, and solicitors the authority to recognize, certify, and create certified translations of documents (Portugal Decree-Law 2001).	Portugal	It peripherally addresses the work of legal translators.
Law No. 14.195/2021 (Chapter VII, Articles 22-34) about the profession of translator and public interpreter (Brazil Law 2021).	Brazil	It amends Decree-Law No. 13.609/1943 on Regulations for the Role of Public Translator and Commercial Interpreter (Brazil Decree-Law 1943).
Decree-Law No. 9/2010, the Notary Code (Cape Verde Decree-Law 2010).	Cape Verde	It empowers public notaries to certify translations.
Boletim da República, 21 de Outubro de 2016 [Bulletin of the Republic, October 21, 2016], on the foundation of ATIM and other provisions.	Mozambique	It creates an association for translators, setting forth regulatory norms.
Justice Sector Strategic Plan for East Timor 2011–2030, a policy to create the translation and interpretation unit of the Ministry of Justice (East Timor Strategic Plan 2010).	East Timor	As of 2024, this has still not been implemented.

Currently, the Legis PALOP+TL database lacks legislation from Angola, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, or São Tomé and Príncipe, specifically addressing legal translators.

The data presented in Table 2 can also be visualized in a timeline in Figure 3. International rules are displayed above the line for reference, while below the line are CPLP member states with legislation affecting legal translators, regardless of how peripherally.
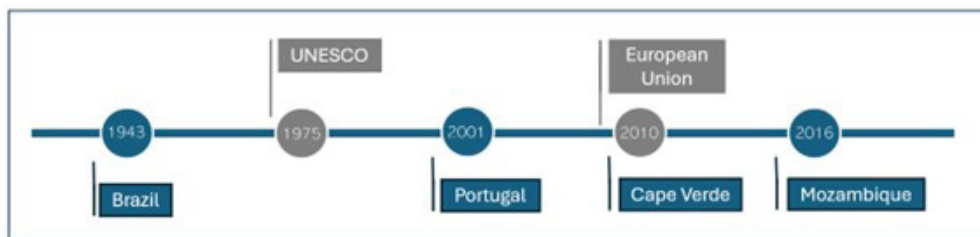
Figure 3. Timeline of international and CPLP member states' national legislation affecting legal translators.

The brief outline of legislation presented above reveals that official translations exist under different aegis within CPLP. Among them, we have identified two ways to officialize a translation: certified translation and sworn translation.

Certified translation (Hlavac 2013; cf. also Neves 2020) refers to a translation undertaken by a professional translator or a translation company, which is subsequently certified or recognized as accurate and complete in relation to the original translated document. In other words, a third party is authorized to certify the work performed by the translator. A certificate is typically issued attesting to the conformity of the translation with the original document. This type of translation is employed to prove the veracity and quality of the translated document in various legal and official contexts. The criteria for certifying the translation and the professionals qualified to certify it vary depending on the country that adopts this type of official translation.

Sworn translation (Brazilian Law No. 14.195/2021, Chapter VII), in turn, is carried out by a professional responsible for interpreting and translating documents in an official and legally valid manner. Sworn translators are recognized by the State and have the authority to certify the translations performed as official.

In Angola, Cape Verde and Portugal, translation certification and authentication are carried out by notaries, registration officers, lawyers, solicitors, chambers of commerce and industry, and consulates. On the other hand, in Brazil and Mozambique, sworn translators are invested with public faith and able to swear to the accuracy of a translation. While in Brazil one becomes a sworn translator when registered with the Board of Trade of one of the 26 Brazilian States or of the Federal District, in Mozambique the Court of Justice is responsible for such accreditation.

Even when using common terms like certified or sworn, each country specifies the qualified professionals or bodies responsible for certification and legalization of a translation. Within the CPLP, for example, we have:

1. Brazil: commercial boards regulate sworn translators.
2. Mozambique: the Court of Justice regulates sworn translators.
3. Portugal: professionals qualified to certify translations include notaries, lawyers, solicitors, consulates, chambers of commerce, and embassies.
4. Cape Verde: notaries are eligible to certify translations.

5.3 Deontological and ethical codes

This section examines the codes from associations of translators identified in our data collection, which was presented in Section 4.

5.3.1 European Association for Legal Interpreters and Translators (EULITA)

EULITA was founded in 2009, and its Code of Ethics was adopted in 2013. While it represents its associated members at the European level, it suggests that each judicial administration should work with legal interpreters and translators to develop specific codes tailored to their individual needs.

The Code is grounded in principles outlined in international human rights instruments, emphasizing the crucial role of legal translators in ensuring fair and equitable communication within the legal system. It distinguishes legal translator and legal interpreter, and outlines four interpreting techniques: consecutive, simultaneous, whispering, and sight translation. Additionally, it emphasizes the crucial importance of intercultural competence.

Regarding the obligations of legal translators, the code mandates language competence, including awareness of any cultural circumstances or conditions that may affect professional performance. It also stresses impartiality, the avoidance of potential conflicts of interest, and the strictest secrecy and confidentiality. A legal translator should refrain from providing advice, regardless of their legal expertise. In all cases, legal translators should act with respect, cooperation, and solidarity towards their colleagues.

5.3.2 Associations of translators and interpreters within CPLP member states

The Angolan ATIA and Mozambican ATIM, both lack websites. Additionally, Cape Verde, East Timor, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, and São Tomé and Príncipe have no translator associations. Consequently, no deontological or ethical codes could be found for these seven countries.

The Brazilian ABRATES' ethical code includes ten concise articles outlining general rules of good conduct. One interesting rule, which could be interpreted as addressing the protection of the translator's work, is found in Article 4. It states that "we will always seek to obtain appropriate compensation for the contracted services, taking into account qualifications, training, project characteristics, quality of service provided, and prevailing market practices" (ABRATES Código 2023). However, the association does not specify the recommended fees that professionals can charge.

The Brazilian SINTRA' Statute includes an ethical code in its provisions. Apart from the general rules, it has an interesting provision in Article 3, which stipulates that "SINTRA will suggest reference lists of prices charged in the market and will establish salary floors, when necessary, due to translators, taking into account regional differences" (SINTRA Estatuto 2018). In fact, it annually updates its website in a section named *valores de referência*, or "reference values". This is particularly important for early-career professionals who are new to the translation market and deserve to be paid fairly. It is also a form of protection of translator work as set out in UNESCO Recommendation 5. Nevertheless, SINTRA only suggests one set of fees for the whole country, and not different ones for the various different regions of Brazil.

The Portuguese APT's deontological code emphasizes a rule-based approach to ensure a high-quality translation that remains faithful to the original text "without revealing the existence of an intermediary" (APT Código, n.d.). However, Article 11 stands out as the only article explicitly addressing the protection of the translator's work and visibility. It states that "the translator must sign the work and require that his/her name, initials or pseudonym appear in the final text, regardless of the material support and the entity requesting the translation". Article 11, by emphasizing the translator's right to be acknowledged, insists that the translator's work is recognized and valued. In Article 13 APT sets an interesting parameter, that "the translator must not accept personal benefits as remuneration for the work carried out, other than the fees due" (APT Código, n.d.). However, it never recommends the fees they should charge for their work.

The Portuguese APTRAD's deontological code has 22 articles covering a broad range of areas, and this represents a code of good conduct that translators should follow during their work regarding colleagues, clients and the association itself. Article 8 states that "the translator and/or interpreter's fees must correspond to adequate economic compensation for the services provided, which must be paid in cash. When setting fees, the translator and/or interpreter must consider their experience, their skills, the importance of the services provided, the difficulty and urgency of the matter, the degree of intellectual creativity of their provision, the time spent and other

professional uses" (APTRAD Código, n.d.). It sets out the need for fair remuneration without ever recommending specific fees.

6. Discussion

This study aimed to help to identify and address international and national legislation on legal translators. Our analysis revealed that not all nine CPLP countries follow international recommendations or have a regulated professional status for translators. This highlights the need for further research and potential collaboration to improve the legal status of translators across the CPLP, and may eventually contribute to the development of such policies and regulations.

We believe our methodology is both adaptable and scalable. It might be applied to other language communities, such as English-speaking countries or the Commonwealth, and even within the CPLP itself to study other specializations. This adaptability makes our research a potential tool for comparative studies.

Ultimately, our research seeks to bring greater recognition and support for the vital profession of legal translators. In this sense, we plan to forge partnerships with organizations such as the CPLP, Bar Associations, and associations of translators.

As a community with a shared linguistic and legal heritage, the CPLP possesses a unique opportunity to advocate the protection of legal translators and implement practical solutions that elevate their professional standing. Active implementation and integration of UNESCO Recommendation into national legal frameworks and regulations would not only elevate the status of the profession, but also contribute to a more robust and reliable legal system within the CPLP region. This proactive approach would demonstrate a commitment to upholding the principles of fairness, transparency, and accessibility in legal proceedings, thereby enhancing the overall integrity of the legal system and ensuring that all parties have equal access to justice.

Although this article has aimed at covering legislation and deontological and ethical codes for legal translators within and beyond the CPLP, we anticipate discovering new findings as our ongoing doctoral research progresses. New literature, legislation, or codes of practice may emerge in the years ahead, which will be incorporated into our work.

Finally, we expect to publish an online database of instruments related to legal translators within the CPLP. This open access resource, compiled from existing recommendations, legislation and deontological and ethical codes, as per Tables 1 and 2, is expected to be a valuable tool for translators and interested parties alike. We foresee

interest from associations, entities, and individuals within the CPLP who seek the services of a legal translator.

Acknowledgements

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About the author

Ariadna Coelho is a psychologist, lawyer, PhD Candidate in Modern Literatures, Arts, and Cultures, and a Doctoral Research Fellow at the University of Lisbon Centre for English Studies (ULICES/CEAUL), financed by FCT Foundation for Science and Technology. She is an active member of the Translation and Reception Studies Research Group, integrated into ULICES, and a researcher collaborator in the project "Intercultural Literature in Portugal (1930-2000): A Critical Bibliography (CECC/ULICES)". Her main areas of research are: Cultural and Translator Studies, Legal Translation, Social and Legal Status, the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries.

Seek, and you shall find: English biblical elements in speeches in the European Parliament and their interpretation into Slovene and French

Katarina Čobec iD

University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

ABSTRACT

The Bible is the most frequently quoted text in European languages. In English, it is the King James Bible that has had the greatest cultural influence, mainly because it provided the language with hundreds of idiomatic expressions. Biblical quotations and expressions are also used in politics. The study reported in this article identifies the English biblical elements in the plenary sessions of the European Parliament (EP) from 2019 to 2024 in order to analyse their interpretation into Slovene and French. Quotations were identified by searching the EP corpus with keywords that can introduce biblical references, while biblical expressions were identified using a predefined list. Six examples of quotations and 41 different biblical expressions were identified. The accuracy and completeness of the analysed interpretations shed light on the biblical knowledge of the interpreters, who come from two countries with different cultural backgrounds but similar regulations on religious education in public schools, and both facing growing religious illiteracy. The results show that French interpreters fare slightly better than Slovene ones, and that while a satisfactory interpretation is possible without knowledge of the biblical reference, the overall quality of the message is much better when the interpreter is aware of it.

Keywords: biblical quotations, biblical expressions, biblical knowledge, European Parliament, interpretation strategies

Iščite in boste našli: angleški biblijski elementi v govorih Evropskega parlamenta in njihovo tolmačenje v slovenščino in francoščino

IZVLEČEK

Biblija je najpogosteje citirano besedilo v evropskih jezikih. Na angleški jezik je najmočneje vplivala *Verzija Kralja Jakoba,* ki je jezik obogatila s stotinami idiomatičnih izrazov. Biblijski citati in frazemi se uporabljajo tudi v politiki. Članek obravnava angleške biblijske elemente (citate in frazeme), ki so bili uporabljeni na plenarnih zasedanjih Evropskega parlamenta v obdobju 2019–2024, in njihovo tolmačenje v slovenščino in francoščino. Iskanje citatov v korpusu EP je potekalo s pomočjo ključnih izrazov, ki lahko uvajajo biblijske reference, iskanje frazemov pa na podlagi vnaprej pripravljenega seznama. Najdenih je bilo šest citatov in 41 različnih frazemov. Analiza primerov in tolmaških strategij nudi vpogled v biblično znanje tolmačev, ki prihajajo iz držav z različnim

kulturnim ozadjem, a podobno zakonodajo o poučevanju verskih vsebin v javnih šolah in vse večjo religijsko nepismenostjo. Rezultati kažejo, da imajo francoski tolmači nekoliko več bibličnega znanja kot slovenski. V primerih vidimo, da je sporočilo sicer mogoče ustrezno pretolmačiti tudi brez poznavanja biblijskega elementa, da pa je tolmačenje celovitejše, če tolmač pozna biblijski citat ali frazem.

Ključne besede: biblijski citati, biblijski frazemi, biblično znanje, Evropski parlament, tolmaške strategije

1. Introduction

Christianity has shaped Europeans' perceptions of time and people, and influenced European architecture, art, literature, and everyday language (Hill 2006; Davie 2000). Out of all Christian writings, it is the Bible that has played the most important role in the field of language. *The King James Bible* (1611), although not the first translation of the Bible into English, is considered to be the book that has had the greatest influence on English, and Crystal (2010, 258) even argues that there is "no other book that has provided the language with so many idiomatic expressions".

Because of the importance of biblical phraseology, linguists study the use of Christian terminology outside the religious context (Földes 1990; Kržišnik 2000, 2008, 2013; Crystal 2010; Fedulenkova 2020; Reznikov 2020). The use of the Bible in politics is also a topic of various studies. Scholars have examined the use of the Bible in contemporary political discussions as seen in the media (Stenström 2023), or in discussions in national parliaments (Løland 2023).

This study focuses on biblical elements in the discussions in the European Parliament (EP) and is motivated by the following research questions: Which biblical elements are used by English-speaking speakers in the EP? What interpretation strategies are used by Slovene and French interpreters for biblical elements? Are there differences in Slovene and French interpretation of biblical elements?

In order to answer these research questions, we first identified English biblical elements in the speeches of the EP plenary sessions. After these elements were identified, the Slovene and French interpretations were analysed to determine what strategies the interpreters use to deal with biblical elements in the fast and dense speeches typical of the EP. The collected data were then used to analyse differences in the level of biblical knowledge among Slovene and French interpreters.

Slovene and French were chosen mainly because of specific similarities and differences in the cultural context. Slovenia is a post-communist country, whereas France is an old democracy. Nevertheless, France is the country where the process of secularization

began in Europe, starting in 1789 and culminating in 1905 with the passage of a law on the separation of Church and state, which eventually extended to all European countries (cf. Rémond 2005). Religious education was already removed from republican public schools at the end of the 19th century and was absent from state schools for almost an entire century (Davie 2000, 92). In recent decades, however, the growing awareness of religious illiteracy (Davie 2000, 93) has led decision makers to promote the teaching of *fait religieux*, or religious facts or information about religions taught not as a special subject but across different disciplines (history, literature, art, etc.; Carpentier 2007). In Slovenia, religious education was banned from public schools by the communist regime in 1952. In 2005, an elective subject called *Verstva in etika* (religion and ethics) was introduced in grades seven through nine, and the law does not contain any provisions on religious education within the framework of other subjects (Ivanc 2011). From a legal point of view, therefore, religious education in public schools is similar in France and Slovenia (Kodelja 1999, 153). One notable difference concerns private (in both countries mostly Catholic) schools: in Slovenia, only around 1% of school-age children attend a private elementary school and around 7% of pupils attend a private secondary school (Eurydice 2023), whereas in France around 17% of pupils attend private schools (elementary or secondary; Vie publique 2023).

In the following sections, first the differences between biblical quotations and biblical expressions are explained. The article then describes the context of interpretation in the EP. The most extensive part of the article is devoted to the presentation of the corpus and the methodology, the quantitative analysis of the examples, and the discussion of the most important examples, followed by some concluding remarks on how the biblical elements are treated in French and Slovene.

2. Biblical quotations and expressions

Of all texts, the Bible is certainly the most frequently quoted in all European languages, although in some more than in others. The reason for the strong influence of biblical texts is that they have been around for a very long time and have a very large and diverse readership or audience. In addition, their content is human-centred (covering ethics, morality, and basic human law; Kržišnik 2000, 68). The different degrees of influence and the variants that exist in different languages are due to two main reasons. The first reason lies in the channel of reception. In Catholic countries, biblical texts were accessible mainly in spoken form; that is, through the medium of speech and hearing, by listening to and reproducing sermons and scriptures (Kržišnik 2008, 41). Protestants, on the other hand, tended to develop a culture of reading and studying the Bible. Snelling (2009, 93) emphasizes the familiarity of those born and raised in

the Protestant world with sacred texts, whereby regular study of Scripture in Sunday school was an undisputed part of life. The second reason lies in the different translations that were produced at different times in history that were more or less crucial for language development (Reznikov 2020, 116). The poetic creativity of the respective Bible translator also led to the development of interlingual variants (Földes 1990, 60).

When studying biblical elements in general, a distinction has to be made between quotations and expressions. Crystal (2010, 5) describes biblical quotations as "powerful and memorable sentences which have entered the stylistic consciousness of [English] speakers all over the world … and people using them are normally aware of their biblical origin". Quotations are likely to be used in elevated styles of the language and in religious contexts (Crystal 2010, 257). Reznikov (2020, xi) speaks about direct or indirect quotations, which is of relevance for this study, in which the rare quotations are rather indirect. He also emphasizes that quotations are linked to a religious topic, which is not the case in the EP speeches (see Section 5).

Biblical expressions – or what Kržišnik (2000) calls biblical set phrases – are further divided by Kržišnik into biblical established quotations and biblical phrases, the criterion for the distinction being the (non)recognition of the source. The established quotation also "preserves the sense granted to it in the original context whereas the phrase has its own meaning, and it acquires its sense in each new context" (Kržišnik 2000, 79). Crystal (2010) arbitrarily uses the terms *expression*, *phrase*, or *idiom* when discussing biblical expressions that have become an integral part of English. Reznikov (2020, xi) further explains that, for the majority of native speakers, the origin of these expressions is unknown or irrelevant, their meaning has often changed, they are used in a variety of non-religious contexts, and they are often subject to modern adaptations.

"These adaptations provide the best evidence of lasting biblical influence," argues Crystal (2010, 7), showing the full range of non-biblical contexts in which they are used in modern English. One of the most popular areas, according to Crystal, is also politics. In press titles, various reports, commentaries, and some famous political speeches, he identified about 25 different English biblical expressions used in political contexts. In the context of discussion in the European institutions, which is the type of discourse this study is focusing on, Crystal (2010, 216) identifies only one example: "And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand", which was used in the discussion about the ratification of the Constitution of the European Union.

In the context of this study, I use the term *biblical quotations* when we speak of random biblical elements, more or less direct quotations or references to biblical stories, events or parables. In this case, the biblical source is clearly recognizable and is always

explicitly mentioned by the speakers. I use the term *biblical expressions* when we are talking about expressions/phrases/idioms that have become an integral part of the language and are not used by the speakers with a conscious biblical reference.

3. Simultaneous interpreting in the European Parliament

The EP plenary speeches explored in this study have several specific aspects that need to be addressed. First, there are tight rules about speaking time: Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) have one to five minutes at their disposal and seek to use their speaking time to the maximum. Normally, they prepare written texts and read them very fast, and their speeches are also characterized by information density (Vuorikoski 2004; Altenberg 2015). Second, although the EP is an extremely multilingual institution, where the interpretation in all 24 official languages of the EU is guaranteed, there seems to be a more or less widespread conviction among the speakers that English is the most suitable means of communication (Graves, Pascual Olaguíbel, and Pearson 2022, 111). It should be emphasized that the English used in the EP is mainly spoken by non-native speakers, and this is even more the case since the UK left the EU. In 2024, only 20 (out of 720) MEPs are from a country where English is an official language (i.e., Ireland and Malta; European Parliament 2024a). Graves, Pascual Olaguíbel and Pearson (2022, 112) point out that interpreting from non-native English has a clear impact on interpreters. Bartłomiejczyk (2017, 177) also highlights the difficulties in interpreters' everyday work, including speed, reading out speeches that were not previously available, poor use of non-native language, puns, and literary quotations. Biblical quotations undoubtedly belong to this last group of difficulties.

Third, the professionalism of the interpreters themselves must also be taken into account. There are about 275 staff interpreters in the EP's interpreting service (European Parliament 2024c), but the service also uses external accredited interpreters. To enter the profession, each applicant must pass an inter-institutional accreditation test or a competition. Freelance interpreters are on an equal footing with staff interpreters, and none of the sessions in the EP are reserved for staff interpreters. However, plenary sessions are, where possible, reserved for interpreters who have already gained at least one year of professional experience in the EP's interpreting service (Altenberg 2015; Graves, Pascual Olaguíbel, and Pearson 2022). With regard to the overall duration of presence in the EP, it should be noted that the French booth has existed since the establishment of the Common Assembly of the European Coal and Steel Community in 1958, because French is one of the four languages of the six founding states, whereas the Slovene booth was established in the course of the 2004 enlargement process (European Parliament 2024c; Graves, Pascual Olaguíbel, and Pearson 2022, 104).

4. Method

4.1 The corpus

To answer the research questions, speech fragments in English containing biblical elements were needed, as well as the transcripts of their interpretation into Slovene and French. The corpus of the EP offers the possibility to search for such instances. It is accessible via a public website (European Parliament 2024b) intended for all citizens of the EU. Among other things, it contains the transcripts of the speeches of the plenaries, known as *verbatim* reports. It should be noted that these texts are not faithful transcripts of the speeches made, because they may differ slightly from what was actually said. They also do not take into account the characteristics of oral speech, such as hesitations, false starts, self-corrections, pauses, and so on (Bartłomiejczyk 2017, 166; Lambertini 2023, 221). Nevertheless, this feature was not an obstacle to this research because the focus was on lexical items with full meaning, which presumably are not omitted in the verbatim reports. The transcripts of the speeches are linked to the videos and the interpretation in all working languages. Because the corpus does not contain transcripts of the interpretation, this was prepared by the researcher herself (see Section 4.3).

This study focused on the plenaries of the five-year period from 2019 to 2024, which comprised 257 days of plenary sessions. The website does not provide any information about the number of words in the corpus. However, it can be assumed that the quantity of text present in the five-year period is large enough to obtain representative data. The EP corpus platform offers the possibility to choose the parliamentary term period, session dates, the names of the speakers, and one or more words in the titles of the plenary sessions or in the texts of the speeches. This study is based on this last feature: a search by (key)words.

4.2. Identification of English biblical quotations and expressions

Following the example of Lambertini (2023) for identifying Italian and French proverbs in speeches at plenary sessions of the EP, a two-step procedure was chosen.

In the first phase, the aim was to track down random biblical elements that might be used by speakers. These could be (in)direct quotations or more or less complete descriptions of various events, stories, wisdom, or parables from the Bible. These types of biblical elements were identified by searching for words that could introduce sentences with these elements. The words were the following: *Bible*, ten synonyms of the word *Bible* taken from the Cambridge Thesaurus, the adjective *biblical*, important biblical personalities (e.g. *Jesus, Paul*), and the most cited biblical books (e.g. *Genesis,*

Psalm). Only four different keywords provided concrete results (for further analysis, see Section 5.1).

The second phase concentrated on biblical expressions. As already emphasized, these are expressions that have fully entered the English language, and the perception of their biblical origin has largely been lost (Crystal 2010, 5). Two lists of biblical expressions were combined, comprising 257 expressions in total. To start, the list of 130 expressions from the pan-European dictionary of biblical idioms (Adamiia et al. 2019) was checked, and this contains biblical phrases, idioms, and proverbs in nineteen languages, including English, Slovene, and French. An important feature of this list is that the expressions are present in all the languages studied, and so interpreters are expected to use the equivalent expression in the target language. This first list was supplemented with the remaining biblical expressions from David Crystal's book (Crystal 2010), whereby equivalence was not always possible because sometimes the expression only exists in English. The search in the second phase yielded 94 examples of 41 different expressions and idioms (for further analysis, see Section 5.1).

It is worth noting that the search by keywords in the EP's corpus of *verbatim* reports does not produce direct results. The hits point to the discussion in which the word in question was used. For each discussion, one has to search further (using the search function Ctrl+F) to find a speaker that used the keyword(s). Only then is it possible to listen to the speaker's contribution and the interpretation of his or her speech.

4.3. Organization of data

The various data obtained were organized in spreadsheets with columns for the following items: keyword; the speaker, political affiliation, date and topic of the speech; the transcript of the original speech fragment; the transcript of the interpretation; the interpretation strategy; rendering of the message; and the presence of hesitation marks or pauses. One spreadsheet was created for the Slovene interpretation and another for the French interpretation.

The keyword makes it possible to see which biblical elements are found in concrete examples of use in the speeches at the plenary sessions. Keywords were used in the first part of research to find random quotations, and biblical expressions were used in the second part, where the aim was to find examples with the exact expressions or their variants.

The transcripts of the original speech fragments were copied from the website. For the purpose of this study, they are limited to the close context that precedes or follows the biblical element.

The transcripts of the interpretation follow the transcription conventions used by Lambertini (2023, 236). They are orthographic, and statements are written in standard notation, with minimal use of punctuation. The / symbol indicates the end of a portion of an utterance or a complete utterance based on the speaker's prosody. Semi-verbal and nonverbal events are marked (hesitations, pauses with indication of length, self-corrections, word fragments, vowel prolongation, and unintelligible passages).

The interpretation strategy is the most important column in terms of data analysis. The various definitions of interpretation strategies are adopted from Barik ([1971] 1994), who was the first to develop a general classification of the three most common situations in which the interpreter's version departs from the original speech: omissions, additions, and errors (Barik [1971] 1994, 121), along with several subcategories. Other researchers followed his coding scheme and adapted it to their specific needs and situations (cf. Altman 1994; Falbo 1998). This was also done in this study, in which the focus is on interpreting specific lexical items (i.e., biblical elements). The following categories of language departures from Barik's coding scheme were identified: omissions (including partial omissions), substitutions (including minor semantic errors and mild phrasing changes), and errors. For substitutions, the subcategory of substitution without idiomatics was introduced for cases in which the biblical idiom was interpreted correctly, but not with a corresponding idiom in the target language. This is distinguished from reformulation, a strategy that is suitable and necessary when there is no corresponding idiom in the target language. An important category was, of course, equivalence, which is not a language departure, and is therefore not mentioned by Barik.

Rendering of the message is the feature that reflects the overall comprehensibility of the interpretation in a wider context, not just the biblical element. If the biblical element is translated with a minor semantic error or mild phrasing changes or sometimes even omitted, this does not always affect the overall meaning of the speech fragment dealt with (cf. Barik [1971] 1994). The rendering of the message can therefore be successful (no loss of meaning), partially successful (little change in meaning), or unsuccessful (definite loss of meaning). These categories were defined based on Dose (2017, 80–81), with the partially successful rendering in the target language added.

The presence of hesitation marks/pauses immediately before the biblical expression can be understood as a sign of increased cognitive load for the interpreter. Triggers that are known to increase cognitive load are the delivery rate, lexical density, and proportion of numbers (Plevoets and Defrancq 2018, 5). In the case at hand, it is the presence of rhetorical elements that requires the mobilization of specific linguistic

and extralinguistic knowledge that in some cases may lead to hesitations and/or pauses.

The data collected and organized in the manner described above provided information about the concrete English biblical elements used in the EP speeches, their interpretation into Slovene and French, and the strategies used by Slovene and French interpreters. The quantitative analysis of the collected data, which was performed manually, helped to identify the differences in Slovene and French interpretation. Finally, some illustrative examples provided insights into the biblical knowledge of certain interpreters.

5. Results and discussion

5.1 English biblical quotations and expressions

In response to the first research question regarding which biblical elements are used in English speeches in the EP, several biblical quotations and expressions were extracted from the EP corpus. The search for random biblical quotations yielded six different examples, generated by four keywords (*Bible, New Testament*, *biblical*, and *Genesis*).

The search for biblical expressions resulted in 94 examples, which were analysed based on 41 different biblical expressions (see Table 1). The most productive expression is *cornerstone*, with 138 hits, followed by the variants of *set thine house in order* (26 hits) and *scapegoat* (17). If a particular expression generated more than five hits, only the most representative examples were analysed. If five or fewer hits were obtained, all examples were analysed. Sometimes, however, there was no video with interpretation and the analysis of the interpretation was not possible.

Table 1. English biblical expressions in the speeches of the EP (2019–2024).

Biblical expression	Number of hits / examples analysed	Biblical expression	Number of hits / examples analysed
cornerstone	138 / 7	*thou shalt not*	2 / 1
set thine house in order	26 / 4	*lambs to the slaughter*	1 / 1
scapegoat	17 / 6	*Garden of Eden*	1 / 1
go the extra mile	10 / 3	*to wash one's hands*	1 / 1
see eye to eye	8 / 3	*the land of milk and honey*	1 / 1
the letter and the spirit	7 / 5	*a millstone around one's neck*	1 / 1
stumbling block	7 / 4	*the promised land*	1 / 1
the powers that be	6 / 1	*to see the speck in another's eye and ignore the log in one's own*	1 / 1

Biblical expression	Number of hits / examples analysed	Biblical expression	Number of hits / examples analysed
to follow in the footsteps of somebody	6 / 4	*to wipe off the face of the earth*	1 / 1
David and Goliath	5 / 5	*if the blind leads the blind, both shall fall into the ditch*	1 / 1
drop in the ocean	4 / 2	*faith, hope and charity*	1 / 1
shall come to pass	4 / 3	*physician, heal thyself!*	1 / 1
eye for an eye	4 / 4	*a bottomless pit*	1 / 1
flesh and blood	3 / 2	*holier than thou*	1 / 1
from the bottom of one's heart	3 / 1	*a shining light*	1 / 1
God forbid	3 / 1	*a voice in the wilderness*	1 / 1
the signs of the times	2 / 2	*golden calf*	1 / 1
wolves in sheep's clothing	2 / 2	*love thy neighbour*	1 / 1
to move mountains	2 / 2	*Babel*	1 / 0
one's left hand does not know what one's right hand is doing	2 / 2	*and the word was made flesh*	1 / 0
as a man sows so he shall reap	2 / 2		

Twenty of the 41 English expressions are included in the pan-European dictionary of biblical phrases (Adamiia et al. 2019), six additional expressions have a corresponding expression in Slovene, and five in French according to monolingual dictionaries of Slovene and French (Fran 2023; Larousse 2024). There are 15 Slovene and 16 French expressions for which there is no corresponding idiomatic expression in the target language and that have to be reformulated in the interpretation.

5.2 Interpretation into Slovene

After identifying biblical quotations and expressions, the interpretation strategies into Slovene and French were analysed to answer the second research question. In the Slovene interpretation, in examples with random quotations, a complete or partial omission was found in all six interpreted examples. In one case with partial omission (Example 1), the message was still successfully rendered; in all other examples, the omission impaired the overall meaning of the speech fragment. Signs of hesitation and pauses were observed in four cases, two of which showed serious comprehension difficulties.

Example 1

>   OR: I advise them to *re-read the Book of Genesis. It was mankind eating the apple, and mankind will continue to be tempted.*
>   INT SL: *vendar preberite genezo / tam piše / da so ljudje podvrženi skušnjavam*
>   [but read Genesis / it says / that humans are subject to temptations][1]
>   ► partial omission, partially successful message rendering

In examples with biblical expressions having a corresponding expression in the TL, 61 different examples were found, of which 55 were analysed because six videos (and hence six interpretations) were missing. In a good 32% of examples, the biblical expression was retained and translated with the corresponding Slovene phrase (Example 2). In another third of the examples, a great loss of idiomatic character was noticed, despite a correct translation (Example 3, see Table 2). Nevertheless, the message was successfully rendered in 74% of cases because minor semantic errors and mild phrasing changes do not significantly affect the overall meaning (see Table 3). In one instance (example 4) the message was unsuccessfully rendered because of an error. Hesitation marks and/or pauses before the biblical expression are present in a third of all the cases (see Table 4), regardless of their strategy or the final outcome. In this context, it is interesting to note that the Slovene interpreters had slight difficulties with *scapegoat* in all the examples analysed, but in the end the Slovene equivalent *grešni kozel* was always found.

Example 2

>   OR: Well, we learned that we can *move mountains* when we need to.
>   INT SL: *naučili smo se / da lahko premikamo gore če želimo*
>   [we have learned / that we can move mountains if we want to]
>   ► equivalence, successful message rendering

Example 3

>   OR: and last, but not least, ensure policy coherence, so the *left hand knows what the right hand is doing.*
>   INT SL: *in kjer bomo imeli politiko / hm / ki bo razumna / tako da bomo vsi vedeli / kaj se dogaja / da bomo sodelovali*
>   [and where we will have a policy / um / that is sensible / so that we all know / what is going on / so that we work together]
>   ► substitution without idiomatics, successful message rendering

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1   Gloss translations in square brackets are by the author of the article.

Example 4

> OR: The Commission's EUR 7 million is *a drop in the ocean.*
> INT SL: *kje je teh sedem milijonov*
> [where are these seven million]
> ►   omission and error, unsuccessful message rendering

Table 2. Interpretation strategies in examples with biblical expressions having a corresponding expression in the TL.

Interpretation strategy	TL = Slovene (55 examples)	TL = French (58 examples)
Equivalence	18	33*
Substitution (without idiomatics)	17	6
Reformulation (using a similar idiomatic expression)	0	3
Omission	9	8
Partial omission	2	1
Minor semantic error	6	2
Mild phrasing change	2	2
Error	1	3

* One of them is equivalence with addition.

Table 3. Rendition of the message in examples with biblical expressions having a corresponding expression in the TL.

Rendition of the message	TL = Slovene (50 speech fragments)	TL = French (53 speech fragments)
Successful	37	43
Partially successful	6	2
Unsuccessful	7	8

Table 4. Hesitation marks and/or pauses in examples with biblical expressions having a corresponding expression in the TL.

	TL = Slovene (50 speech fragments)	TL = French (53 speech fragments)
Hesitations	10	6
Pauses	3	0
Both	3	1
None	34	46

There were 35 examples of biblical expressions without a corresponding expression in the TL, of which 31 were analysed because four videos were missing. Among the strategies, the presence of equivalence may sound surprising, considering that there is no corresponding expression in Slovene. However, this is related to two expressions: *David and Goliath* and *the signs of the times*, which as such do not exist in the Slovene dictionary (Fran 2023), which was the basis for the discernment. The predominant strategy in this section was reformulation (Example 5), sometimes accompanied by idiomatic expressions that have a similar meaning to the biblical expression in English (Example 6; see Table 5). The success rate in rendering the message was similar to the previous section (see Table 6); there were no pauses and hesitation marks were less common, too, appearing in just over a quarter of the cases (Example 7; see Table 7).

Example 5

> OR: Mercifully, and by the Grace of God, the predictions have not *come to pass,* and, so far, Africa has not witnessed the dire scenes that we feared.
> INT SL: *hvalabogu se te napovedi niso uresničile / in zaenkrat Afrika ni bila priča temnim scenam ki smo se jih bali*
> [thank God these predictions did not come true / and so far Africa has not witnessed the dark scenes we feared]
> ► reformulation, successful message rendering

Example 6

> OR: Before taking others to task, I strongly recommend we *get our own house in order* first.
> INT SL: *zato bi vas najprej pozval / da najprej pometemo pod lastnim pragom*
> [so I would ask you first / to sweep under our own doorsteps first]
> ► reformulation (using an idiomatic expression with a similar meaning), successful message rendering

Example 7

> OR: It stores 140 tonnes of plutonium, but it has been described as *a bottomless pit* of hell, money and despair.
> INT SL: *kjer je skladiščenih hm 140 ton plutonija / in hm velja za peklensko luknjo*
> [where 140 tonnes of plutonium is stored / and um is considered a hellhole]
> ► mild phrasing change, successful message rendering

Table 5. Interpretation strategies in examples with biblical expressions without a corresponding expression in the TL.

Interpretation strategy	TL = Slovene (31 examples)	TL = French (28 examples)
Equivalence	6	0
Substitution (without idiomatics)	0	2
Reformulation	11	9
Reformulation (using a similar idiomatic expression)	2	6
Omission	7	2
Partial omission	0	0
Minor semantic error	2	1
Mild phrasing change	3	4
Error	0	4

Table 6. Rendition of the message in examples with biblical expressions without a corresponding expression in the TL.

Rendition of the message	TL = Slovene (31 speech fragments)	TL = French (28 speech fragments)
Successful	22	21
Partially successful	5	1
Unsuccessful	4	6

Table 7. Hesitation marks and/or pauses in examples with biblical expressions without a corresponding expression in the TL.

	TL = Slovene (31 speech fragments)	TL = French (28 speech fragments)
Hesitations	8	4
Pauses	0	0
Both	0	0
None	23	24

5.3 Interpretation into French

In the interpretations into French, in examples with random quotations, the interpretation was correct in half of the cases, whereas the other half contained errors. The errors led to unsuccessful rendering of the message, with one exception in which the gist of what was said was well preserved despite the error. Hesitation marks and

pauses were present in half of the cases, but there is no correlation with a particular type of interpretation strategy, and it is impossible to claim that this is a consequence of the biblical content.

Example 8

> OR: But it reminds me *of the Bible and our Lord speaking about the talents. One had the five talents, another had three, another had one. He was very happy with those who use their talents, but he nearly blew the head off the person who didn't.*
> INT FR: *ça me rappelle la bible / Dieu qui parlait des talents / cinq talents pas un ni deux ni trois / il était très content de ces (.) talents / et il a failli décapiter celui qui n'était pas content de cela*
> [it reminds me of the Bible / God talking about the talents / five talents not one nor two nor three / he was very happy with those (.) talents / and he nearly beheaded the one who wasn't happy about it]
> ► error, unsuccessful message rendering

Example 9

> So you want to convert this debate about climate change into a theological argument. *The Bible says that God created the earth and the man, but gave the man the power to work the earth and make a living out of that work. So what you're proposing right now here is clearly violating God's command to respect the earth, but to use it.*
> INT FR: *donc vous voulez en faire un argument théologique / alors vous devez donner à l'homme la possibilité de travailler la terre et d'en vivre / c'est cela que dit la Bible / et ce que vous proposez ici va à l'encontre des commandements*
> [so you want to turn it into a theological argument / so you have to give man the chance to work the land and live off it / that's what the Bible says / and what you're proposing here goes against the commandments]
> ► partial omission and mild phrasing change in the first part, omission of the final part (to respect …); partially successful message rendering

Biblical expressions having a corresponding expression in the TL were found in 64 different examples, of which 58 were analysed because six videos (and interpretations) were missing. As far as interpretation strategies are concerned (see Table 2), the use of the equivalent French biblical expression was very high, at more than 50% of cases. It is also noted that in three cases similar idiomatic expressions were used

(Example 10), which is not the case in the Slovene examples. The presence of three errors should also be emphasized (Example 11), as there were no such errors in the Slovene examples. However, the success rate in rendering the message (see Table 3) was higher than in Slovene, and the presence of hesitations and pauses was kept to a minimum (see Table 4).

Example 10

> OR: … that democracy is the *cornerstone,* or transparency and access to documents is the *cornerstone,* in democracy.
> INT FR: *concernant le fait que la transparence et l'accès aux documents c'est la clé de voûte de la démocratie*
> [concerning the fact that transparency and access to documents is the cornerstone of democracy]
> ► similar idiomatic expression (the equivalence would be *la pierre angulaire*), successful message rendering

Example 11

> OR: And it's not surprising to Israel, which Iran wants to wipe off the face of the earth.
> INT FR: *pas plus qu'à l'Iran qui veut chager la face du monde*
> [any more than Iran, which wants to change the face of the world]
> ► error; unsuccessful message rendering

Biblical expressions without a corresponding expression in the TL were found in 33 different examples, of which 28 were analysed because five videos (and interpretations) were missing. The predominant strategy in this section was also reformulation, six times even with an idiomatic expression (Example 12, see Table 5). Four errors were also identified (none were found in the same category in Slovene) (Example 13). The French interpreters successfully rendered the message in three-quarters of the cases examined (see Table 6). In this category, too, the signs of hesitation were kept to a minimum (see Table 7).

Example 12

> OR: I am glad to note that Parliament and the Commission once more *see eye to eye* in this.
> INT FR: *je suis ravie d'apprendre que le Parlement et la Commission une fois de plus (.) sont sur la même longueur d'ondes*
> [I am delighted to learn that the Parliament and the Commission are once again (.) on the same wavelength]

► reformulation with an idiomatic expression, successful message rendering

Example 13

OR: … Palestinians are losing their lives – 30 000 people! It is not just a number, but real individuals of *flesh and blood.*
INT FR: *les vies palestiniennenes disparaissent l'une après l'autre / trente mille deja / le tribut en sang est immense*
[Palestinian lives disappearing one by one / thirty thousand already / the blood toll is immense]
► error, unsuccessful message rendering

5.4 Slovene versus French interpretation

The last research question concerns the differences between Slovene and French interpretations in terms of biblical elements. Regardless of the category (random biblical quotations, biblical expressions with or without a corresponding expression in the TL), fewer omissions can be observed in French on the one hand and more errors on the other. At the same time, French interpreters generally use more idiomatic expressions; they are not only better at finding the biblical equivalent in their language, but they also use idiomatic expressions that are not present in the original speech. Although there is a loss of idiomatic elements in Slovene, the rendering of the overall message is similar in both target languages (the difference is 7%). Every omission and every minor semantic error (e.g., an unusual collocation) does not necessarily lead to a definite loss of meaning. However, real errors (e.g., false meaning) always led to an unsuccessful interpretation. Based on the analysis, it can be assumed that French interpreters are braver and prefer to risk making a mistake rather than omit what they have heard. Slovene interpreters, on the other hand, are more inclined to leave elements of the speech out. As far as hesitation and/or pauses are concerned, these are observed almost 20% more frequently in Slovene interpreting. However, there is no direct correlation between hesitations and the accuracy of the interpretation.

The following examples were selected for their relevance or particular interest in the context of the study. They illustrate various situations that are treated differently by Slovene or French interpreters. Some of them offer an indication of the biblical knowledge of a particular interpreter.

The first two examples come from the category with the random quotations, in which biblical knowledge is of particular importance. The reference is longer and, in both

cases, refers to a specific Gospel story. In Example 14, the Slovene interpreter has serious difficulties, which are expressed by the sign for a long pause: (…). He omits the entire biblical reference and summarizes it with *to je nemogoče* [that is impossible]. The French interpreter, on the other hand, translates the biblical passage accurately and completely.

Example 14

> OR: I have seen that the Commission will use a multiplier of 45! *Even Jesus in the New Testament was not capable of doing that: a multiplier of 45 when he multiplied the fishes and the bread.* But the Commission is on that track, and that's not …
> INT SL: Sedaj gre za / hm /(.) multiplikacijo kar za 45 / to je nemogoče / (…) Komisija se je odločila na to- za to pot /
> [Now it's a / um /(.) multiplication by as much as 45 / that is impossible / (...) The Commission has decided on this- for this path /]
> INT FR: et puis avec un multiplicateur de 45 on propose d'apporter la solution / *mais même Jesus dans le Nouveau euh Testament n'avait pas un multiplicateur de 45 / lorsqu'il a multiplié la quantite de pain et de poisson*
> [and then with a multiplier of 45 we propose to provide the solution / *but even Jesus in the New uh Testament didn't have a multiplier of 45 / when he multiplied the quantity of bread and fish*]

Example 15 is a metaphor connected with the Nativity story. The Slovene interpreter retains only the basis of the biblical reference (*beg Marije pred Herodom* [flight of Mary from Herod]) and omits the entire metaphor, whereas the French interpreter, although showing some biblical knowledge, compounds his own (inaccurate) interpretation with an addition and also loses the entire metaphor.

Example 15

> OR: An image that strikes me as almost *biblical, as thousands of Marys hide with their newborns, evading King Herod in basements, subway stations and other stables.*
> INT SL: to je slika ki se mi zdi skorajda: *biblična* / (.) *gre* (.) *skoraj* (.) *da: za: beg Marije pred Herodom* /
> [this is a picture that seems to me almost *biblical* / (.) *it is* (.) *almost* (.) *about the flight of Mary from Herod*]
> INT FR: c'est une image presque *biblique* / *ce sont presque des Madonnes qui sont en train de donner naissance à leurs enfants / comme Marie le fît / alors que le roi Herode régnait sur la Judée*

[it's an almost *biblical image* / *they're almost Madonnas giving birth to their children* / *as Mary did* / *when King Herod ruled over Judea*]

The following six examples contain well-known biblical expressions with varying degrees of awareness of their origin. *A voice in the wilderness* (Example 16) is translated literally into Slovene and not with the corresponding expression *glas vpijočega v puščavi*. A more serious error is the omission of what precedes the expression (*naming them in here …*), thus losing the essence of the message. In French, this part is retained, but the expression itself (*au nom d'une véritable jungle* [in the name of the real jungle]) is an attempt to say something appropriate, but it gives the sentence a different meaning. In both cases the interpreters do not translate using the biblical expression.

Example 16

> OR: How many Yemeni children have been orphaned and starved? These are war crimes, too. But naming them in here makes you *a voice in the wilderness.*
> INT SL: koliko je otrok v Jemnu / ki so sirote / ki trpijo / ampak to je le *glas v divjini*
> [how many children there are in Yemen / who are orphans / who are suffering / but that's just *a voice in the wilderness*]
> INT FR: combien (.) d'entre eux et il s'agit des crimes de guerre également / et les nommer ici revient à s'exprimer *au nom d'une véritable jungle*
> [how many (.) of them and these are war crimes too / and to name them here is to *speak in the name of the real jungle*]

An eye for an eye is a very productive expression with many adaptations and wide applicability, as Crystal (2010, 59) explains, who also mentions a famous line by Gandhi: *An eye for an eye makes the whole world blind.* It is this sentence that is echoed in all four examples analysed with this expression. One would expect an accurate translation, yet three of the four Slovene interpreters omitted the expression (see Example 17, in which the interpreter only speaks about solidarity), and only one interpreted it with the TL equivalent, whereas the result in the French booth was the opposite (three equivalences and one omission). One French interpreter even added *dent pour dent* [a tooth for a tooth], which is a biblical continuation of *an eye for an eye.*

Example 17

> OR: But it has to be a Europe based on solidarity and knowing that, as always, *an eye for an eye* will only turn this world into blindness.

>INT SL: ampak pri tem moramo hm se opreti na našo solidarnost in na solidarnostna načela / hvala
>[but we have to rely on our solidarity and solidarity principles / thank you]
>INT FR: mais cette Europe doit se fonder sur la solidarité / en sachant que *œil pour œil* rendra le monde entier aveugle
>[but this Europe must be based on solidarity / in the knowledge that *an eye for an eye* will make the whole world blind]

In Example 18, two expressions with partly overlapping meanings are used, *the land of milk and honey* and *the promised land*. The same variants also exist in Slovene and French, but in French the first variant, *pays de lait et de miel*, is rare and is described in Adamiia et al. (2019) as bookish and sublime. It is therefore not surprising that the second variant, *la terre promise*, is used in French in both cases. In the Slovene interpretation, one finds the Slovene literal equivalent of *the land of milk and honey*, whereas *the promised land* and its larger context are reformulated. Neither the French nor the Slovene interpreter included *Moses* in the interpretation.

Example 18

>OR: Madam President, I voted in favour, as for many Brexiteers the WTO has become *the land of milk and honey*, with Donald Trump in the role of *Moses*, leading the British people to *the promised land* of global free trade.
>INT SL: glasovala sem za / saj je za številne zagovornike Brexita / STO *dežela* (…) *kjer se cedita hm med in mleko* / in Donald Trump naj bi bil (.) utelešenje obljube o prosti trgovini /
>[Thank you very much / I voted yes / because for many Brexiters / the WTO is a land (...) of milk and honey / and Donald Trump is presumed to be (.) the embodiment of the promise of free trade]
>INT FR: j'ai voté en faveur de cette resolution / en effet pour de nombreux pro-brexit les Etats-Unis sont *la terre promise* avec Donald Trump qui mènerait le peuple britannique vers *la terre promise* du libre-échange
>[I voted in favour of this resolution / indeed for many pro-Brexit the United States is the promised land with Donald Trump who would lead the British people to the promised land of free trade]

To see the mote (the speck, the splinter) in another's eye and ignore the beam (the log, the plank) in one's own is an expression that, according to Crystal (2010, 139), has had little influence outside of the religious context, mainly in literary and rhetorical

settings. In Example 19, the message of the original utterance is only approximately reformulated in Slovene; in French, on the other hand, the equivalent biblical expression is correctly used (after a long pause and a hesitation).

Example 19

> OR: So, we have to give up the habit *to notice the speck in one eye, but to ignore the log in our own.*
> INT SL: ni nujno da se vedno vmešavamo v ostale države / morda bi bilo tudi dobro / da uredimo zadeve pri nas
> [we don't always have to interfere in other countries / it might be a good idea / to sort things out at home]
> INT FR: donc il va falloir arrêter (…) de euh *voir la paille dans l'œil de l'autre et ignorer le poutre qui est dans le nôtre*
> [so, we're going to have to stop (…) *seeing the mote in the other's eye and ignoring the beam in our own*]

Two commandments were also found in the speeches: The first, *love thy neighbour*, as Crystal (2010, 246) explains, is a version of the golden rule and can therefore be used in different circumstances. The second is the fifth commandment of the Decalogue, *thou shall not kill*. In Example 20, the biblical elements are used as quotations with a clear biblical reference. In French, *love thy neighbour* is simply omitted, and the reformulation of the last sentence seems to be a result of comprehension difficulties. In Slovene, *love thy neighbour* is translated literally, which is an awkward and incorrect translation. *Ne ubijaj*, on the other hand, is the Slovene wording of the fifth commandment.

Example 20

> OR: Is that in line with family values and respect for the love of one's home? What about *'love thy neighbour'*? Is cluster bombing residential areas compatible with the commandment *'thou shalt not kill'*?
> INT SL: kako pa je s tistim / *ljubite svojega soseda* / ali je bombiranje hm civilnih področij skladno / s tisto zapovedjo *ne ubijaj*
> [how about / love thy next-door neighbour / is the bombing of civilian areas compatible / with the commandment thou shalt not kill]
> INT FR: est-ce que ce sont là les valeurs de la famille et de l'amour de la patrie / est-ce que bombarder des zones résidentielles c'est compatible avec les valeurs que la Russie prétend defender
> [are these the values of the family and love of country / is bombing residential areas compatible with the values that Russia claims to defend]

Faith, hope, and charity (Example 21) is a biblical trio from the last sentence of St. Paul's 1 Corinthians 13. Everyone with biblical knowledge knows this passage and this trio. For someone unfamiliar with biblical texts, the word *charity* can be a stumbling block. In modern English, this word often has an institutionalized sound and includes concepts such as benevolence and fair-mindedness (Crystal 2010, 248). Today, the English translator of St. Paul would have to use the word *love*. The Slovene interpreter obviously had difficulties with *charity* and ended up translating it as *milost* [grace]. The context was translated correctly. This does not apply to the French interpretation. The omission of the fact that these were names of the airplanes is more serious for rendering the message than the use of *espoir* instead of the synonym *espérance*, which is the usual term in this phrase.

Example 21

> OR: … when all that remained were their three barely functioning planes that they called *Faith, Hope and Charity* – named after what they were fighting for, after what was at stake.
> INT SL: vse kar jim je ostalo so bila tri komaj delujoča letala ki so jih poimenovali *vera upanje in hm milost* / poimenovali so jih po vrednotah / za katere so se borili in ki so bile na kocki
> [all they had left were three barely functioning planes which they called *Faith Hope and um Grace* / they named them after the values / they fought for and which were at stake]
> INT FR: il nous restait *la foi l'espoir et la charité* / et nous nous sommes battus / nous avons continué à nous batter
> [we were left with *faith hope and charity* / and we fought / we kept on fighting]

6. Conclusions

Regarding the occurrence of English biblical elements, two facts are surprising. First, the number of random biblical quotations is very small. In 257 days of plenary discussions, the Bible was intentionally quoted in English only six times. One possible reason for such a low number is mentioned in Bartłomiejczyk (2017, 167): "a lexeme-based electronic search will not identify more obscure or veiled references potentially present in the corpus". Another possible reason could lie in the fact that the vast majority of MEPs and their guests that give speeches in English are not native speakers, and so their English is less idiomatic. It is, as defined by Graves, Pascual Olaguíbel and Pearson (2022, 112), a "new form of Euro-English, based on new norms and rules".

Second, compared to the examples of biblical expressions in political contexts listed in Crystal (2010), the results of this study show a completely different picture. With the exception of *scapegoat*, *sheep (lambs) to the slaughter*, *wolf in sheep's clothing*, *a millstone around one's neck*, and *as you sow, so shall you reap*, none of the 25 political biblical idioms mentioned by Crystal were found in the corpus of the study. The biblical expressions identified also differ from examples in similar articles (Stenström 2023; Løland 2023) and from the researcher's personal expectations.

The most revealing examples are those in which the biblical origin is clearly recognizable to anyone with at least basic biblical knowledge. They offer some clues for answering the question of whether there are differences between Slovene and French interpreters in terms of their biblical knowledge. Both the quantitative analysis of the data and the individual cases show that the scales are tipping slightly to the French side. Considering that EP interpreters are generally highly professional and able to interpret a message in its entirety, the omissions and alterations of biblical elements show a certain difficulty or lack of knowledge in this specific area. As the results of the analysis show, it is possible to provide a satisfactory interpretation even if the interpreter does not know the biblical reference, but if, on the contrary, the interpreter knows the background or the specific expression in the source and target languages, the overall quality of the rendering of the message in the TL is much better and contributes to a better overall understanding of the given speech. This seems to prove, once again, how important it is for conference interpreters to have broad general knowledge, which also includes religious literacy.

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About the author

Katarina Čobec is Teaching Assistant at the Department of Translation Studies, Faculty of Arts at the University of Ljubljana, where she teaches French, German and conference interpreting. Her entry into the research sphere is her PhD, where she is focusing on biblical elements in the speeches of the European Parliament and their interpretation for four languages: English, French, German and Slovene. She is also a conference interpreter with work experience in the European Union institutions and in the free market.

Book review

Nike K. Pokorn, Agnes Pisanski Peterlin, Tamara Mikolič Južnič and Robert Grošelj, eds. *Zgodovina slovenskega literarnega prevoda*

Reviewed by Frančiška Trobevšek Drobnak

University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

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The work *Zgodovina slovenskega literarnega prevoda* (A History of Slovenian Literary Translation) is a long-awaited and extremely welcome publication. Under the careful editorship of Nike Kocijančič Pokorn, Agnes Pisanski Peterlin, Tamara Mikolič Južnič, and Robert Grošelj, it presents the research of over sixty authors from various fields, ranging from translation, linguistics, and librarianship to literary studies, comparative literature, and theology. The diversity of this array of authors is also reflected in the topics discussed and their methodological approaches, especially because the authors were mostly involved in various research programs and projects at the time of writing their contributions. In this light, the editors' decision not to require a unified approach from the authors is welcome and sensible. Any uniformity that the work may have thereby lost is undoubtedly counterbalanced by gains in integrity, appeal, and broader applicability not only among scholars, but also among the general public.

The work was published in two volumes; the first is subtitled *Pregled zgodovinskega razvoja* (An Overview of Historical Development), and the second *Slovenska literatura v dialogu s tujino* (Slovenian Literature in Dialogue with Foreign Literature). Together, they reveal astonishingly expansive and varied translation activity, which connects the Slovenian literary space with many "large" and "small" cultures, and "large" and "small" languages from the very beginning. They also represent a validation of the millennium-long efforts of known and unknown translators to connect and enrich the Slovenian linguistic area with the achievements of other cultures, while

they thereby simultaneously strengthen national self-awareness and nation-building in the noblest sense of the word.

The first volume of the publication consists of 595 pages and twenty-five contributions. Some of them focus on reviewing and analyzing the translation of foreign texts into Slovenian during various historical periods. These include contributions about the first translated texts, and about translations created during the Reformation, Counter-Reformation, Baroque, and Enlightenment, in the second half of the nineteenth century, or during the interwar period. Others devote themselves to analyses of translation by individual literary genres, such as the Bible, secular drama, poetry, and historical novels, and their influence on the development of standard Slovenian and the introduction of new literary trends in Slovenian. In doing so, the work does not limit itself to a narrow definition of literary translation but understands this functionally, thus treating all texts that have been subjected to literary translation processes, including religious and philosophical texts. Particularly valuable are contributions that address how translation from culturally more distant languages in different periods (variously) reflects the (expected) attitude of the readership toward foreign cultures and translators' prejudices and value judgments. The distance can also be ideological: especially during certain periods of Slovenian history, (self-)censorship by translators and editors in fear of or in the service of the ruling ideology can be seen. Part of the publication is devoted to the translation of Slovenian texts into foreign languages—for example, in connection with the cross-border Slovenian communities in Austrian Carinthia and Italy, as well as the Slovenian diaspora in America and Canada.

The first part of the publication is rounded off by contributions on the attitude toward translation activity in Slovenia, from an analysis of the status and working conditions of literary translators to an examination of the attitude of both the translators themselves and critics, a discussion of modern translation trends after 1991, and an exploration of the theoretical position of translation in Slovenia.

The second volume comprises eighty-seven contributions on 771 pages. In the introduction, central sociological theories about "translation centers" and the "translation periphery" are presented. This is followed by eighteen articles on the particular translation exchange between Slovenian and foreign literature by individual languages, genres, and authors. From a geographical point of view, translation production from foreign languages into Slovenian is very broad. It includes translations from practically all European languages, as well as many non-European ones. The publication analyzes translation exchange with the following European languages: Bulgarian, Czech, English, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Italian, Latin, Macedonian and other South Slavic languages, Polish, Russian, Slovak, and Spanish. Quantitative data are provided

for other European languages (Danish, Dutch, Estonian, Finnish, Irish, Latvian, Lithuanian, Maltese, Portuguese, Romanian, and Swedish). Among non-European languages, the contributions deal with translation exchange with Arabic, Chinese, Indian languages, Japanese, and Persian. "Translation gaps," when the translation exchange is surprisingly modest compared to the intensity of contact with individual cultures (e.g., Turkish and Albanian), are also analyzed. In the second part of the volume, the authors focus on the translation of special genres, such as librettos, solo songs, popular songs, and fairytales. A full thirteen contributions are dedicated to an overview and examination of frequently translated foreign authors into Slovenian. These are Homer, Dante, Petrarca, Boccaccio, Italian Renaissance poets, Manzoni, Shakespeare, Goethe, Pushkin, Dostoyevsky, Sienkiewicz, Joyce, Ibsen, Pirandello, and Celan. Two contributions are devoted to translations of two Slovenian literary giants, Prešeren and Cankar, into foreign languages.

An extremely valuable contribution presents forty-five Slovenian literary translators, their biographies, translation work, and authored work, and their views and thoughts on translation. Although the editors devoted almost two hundred pages to this task, they could not avoid the space limitations and the necessary (and difficult) selection this entailed. The criteria for it were explained by coeditors Nike Kocijančič Pokorn and Agnes Pisanski Peterlin. The first selection criterion was temporal: only translators from the beginning of the twentieth century onward are included because earlier translators are generally treated in the context of contributions about their translations (such as Trubar and Dalmatin). The second condition was the direction of the translation (into Slovenian) and is based on the consideration that in this case it makes a greater contribution to shaping Slovenian literary space than when translating from Slovenian into other languages. The third consideration was whether the translator had received the prestigious Sovre Award or Prešeren Award—and it is as fair as the conferral of the award itself can be. The general conclusion when reading the biographies of Slovenian literary translators and about their work and reflections is that their activity may covertly but no less effectively contribute to the standardization of Slovenian and the establishment of Slovenian as a language equal to the other languages that it comes into contact with.

This publication is a truly unique, monumental work and an invaluable contribution to shaping (self-)awareness of the greatness of Slovenian culture and its responsiveness in contact with other cultures, whether those arose among numerically strong or small communities, or among those in which Slovenians may feel at home or that seem completely foreign and exotic. The first and primary recognition must go to the editors of this work for their courage to undertake such a demanding project. The

many authors that responded to the invitation with their contributions deserve no less recognition. The result is a comprehensive, varied, and attractive work, a source of encyclopedic knowledge, which both general and demanding specialized readers will be happy to return to. At the same time, there is a great incentive to reflect on the paths and pitfalls of translation activity, including its social and nation-building dimension.