

**SIMON, Sherry, ed. (2013): *In Translation: Honouring Sheila Fischman*. Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 221 p.**

Jane Koustas

Volume 61, numéro 2, août 2016

URI : <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1037772ar>

DOI : <https://doi.org/10.7202/1037772ar>

[Aller au sommaire du numéro](#)

Éditeur(s)

Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal

ISSN

0026-0452 (imprimé)

1492-1421 (numérique)

[Découvrir la revue](#)

Citer ce compte rendu

Koustas, J. (2016). Compte rendu de [SIMON, Sherry, ed. (2013): *In Translation: Honouring Sheila Fischman*. Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 221 p.] *Meta*, 61(2), 487–488. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1037772ar>

approximate) decreases, but such sampling error is not an 'error' in the ordinary sense of the word, and some 'error' of this kind is virtually certain to occur whatever the size of the sample. On page 73, they write: "there is nothing wrong with convenience samples." Is there "nothing wrong" with samples in which the potential bias is not known or addressed? What they probably mean is that in many environments, including the interpreting environment, it is an accepted practice to use convenience sampling because it is extremely difficult to do otherwise. On page 78, they discuss briefly the very important concept of statistical significance, without explaining what it means. Then they add: "if your results are statistically significant, they can be taken seriously and inferences can be made to other populations." This not only does not make sense in statistical terms (inferences are made from a sample to one population which it is assumed to represent), but also sends out the wrong message about significance and about the value of findings of empirical research in general: findings should be taken seriously if a study was well conducted, regardless of whether inferential statistics have been used or not, and if they were, regardless of whether significance was found or not. What they may have meant is that journals prefer to publish papers which report clear-cut results. But this is not the same thing, is it?

On page 78, Hale and Napier explain correlations "as any links that there may be between questions," and on page 79, they say that independent variables are called as they are "because they cannot be affected or changed by other variables."

It is unfortunate that such infelicities and inaccuracies were not detected before the book was published. But they can easily be corrected in a revised version, and when this is done, the result could be an excellent reference tool for research training.

DANIEL GILE

Université Paris 3 Sorbonne Nouvelle,  
Paris, France

## REFERENCES

- GILE, Daniel, DAM, Helle, DUBSLAFF, Friedel, MARTINSEN, Bodil and SCHOLDAGER, Anne, eds. (2001): *Getting started in Interpreting Research*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

SIMON, Sherry, ed. (2013): *In Translation: Honouring Sheila Fischman*. Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 221 p.

In this collection of essays, interviews and personal testimonies, translation scholars, writers, editors and, especially, fans and friends discuss, analyze and celebrate the accomplishment of Canada's most prolific, influential and lauded translator. The artist responsible for over 150 book length translations (and the complete list is included), co-founder of the bilingual literary review *ellipse* and the Literary Translators' Association of Canada, recipient of the Governor General's Literary Award for translation, several honorary doctorates, the Molson Prize and other honours as well as a poet in her own right, Fischman, over a career spanning more than 30 years, has "played a significant part in making a body of a kind of literature available to people who otherwise would not have access to it" (p. 136). In doing so, she has shaped Canadian literary translation and the landscape of letters in Canada. Sherry Simon resisted the temptation of the purely festschrift model however well-merited this may have been; Fischman's accomplishments, impact, and contribution go well beyond the count of books and honours. Thanks to contributions by writers she translated, translation scholars she influenced, editors and publishers with whom she worked and close friends, the reader has a privileged glimpse into the personal and professional life of a Canadian who found in French a language to "live in" and the inspiration "to inhabit our [Quebec writers'] most secret solitudes and to make each book, in a gesture of humanity, an impossible gift" (p. 175).

The collection opens with a section entitled "Beginnings." Contributors, including Graham Fraser, Canada's Commissioner of Official Languages, and Patricia Godbout, a fellow resident of the Eastern Townships where Fischman was first introduced to a truly eminent literary congregation dubbed "The Athens of the North," provide background and insight on Fischman's foray into translation; Roch Carrier, the author she translated first and the most frequently, was one of her neighbours. Several contributors recount a memorable bilingual poetry reading in 1968 which included such luminaries as Gerald Godin, Roland Giguère, F.R. Scott and D.G. Jones, and degenerated into a political cum linguistic confrontation. This was a formative moment for Fischman who, although she "wasn't trying to make bilingualism work" was "visibly upset" (p. 8) by the failure to bring the two groups amicably and constructively together at this event. This was "the beginning of the rest of her professional life" (p. 8) and the moment she decided to "devote the energy and skills [she]

could muster to attempting, only attempting, to break down some of the barriers between French and English speakers" (p. 9). D.G. Jones' deeply personal account of their time together, including the founding of *ellipse*, acknowledges Fischman's role in elevating translation to the status of an art rather than "some kind of hackwork producing makeshift versions of masterpieces" (p. 30). Kathy Mezei's tribute focuses on Fischman's role as an agent of change who "has exerted a quiet but impressive power and persistently pursued and articulated her characteristic translation norms and practices for others to emulate" (p. 36).

Indeed, the next section "The Art of Translation," is a fitting tribute to Fischman's agency. Translators Alberto Manguel, Pierre Anctil, Luise von Flotow, Michael Henry Heim and Lori Saint-Martin recount, in occasionally very personal terms, their encounter with the or an Other and the challenge of performing the "tightrope dance" (p. 97) of translation. For example, the article by the late Heim, an extraordinarily prolific and versatile translator, provides a hands-on and compelling argument both for and against domestication and foreignization. In her discussion of Edouard Roditi, Simon stresses the translator's function as a literary talent scout, a role frequently played by Fischman. Simon argues that Roditi, who spoke some seven languages fluently and translated from more than ten (p. 100), was, like all translators, "not only [a] mirror for [his] own time" but an "actor in literary history." (p. 98). For these agents and artists, "the task of the translator" is "the commitment to a literature that knows no boundaries" (p. 107).

Simon has reserved the third section, "Words of Sheila Fischman" for a privileged and rare conversation with Fischman, the translator, ambassador, poet, mentor, family member and friend. Dedicated to her sisters, Fischman's poems entitled "Water" reveal the depth of her sensitivity and the breadth of her command of language. Included as well is an extraordinary translation of Gaétan Soucy. "The Anguish of the Heron," first published in a hand-printed, illustrated edition, is a fitting example of Fischman's art. The section ends with two interviews with Fischman, the first in 1994 and the second in 2012. The titles "Esthetic Affinities" and "No Boundaries" respectively sum up concisely a career devoted to a "labour of love" (p. 36) in the service of an author with whom she shares aesthetic affinities and inspired by dialogues with the authors that broke down stylistic, aesthetic and genre boundaries.

This outstanding collection ends with "Témoignages," ten first-hand accounts by authors translated by Fischman and with whom she remains in dialogue, and by editors and publish-

ers. As titles such as "My Translator, My Sister" (Soucy), "What I Learned from Her" (Bissonnette) or "Merci, Sheila" (Carrier) suggest, the authors acknowledge Fischman's tremendous contribution not only to their careers but indeed to their writing. While it is not unusual, although regrettably not that frequent, to have a translator's foreword or afterword, it is indeed exceptional to have authors' comments on the translation and the translation experience. These first person tributes situate translation as a personal dialogue grounded in mutual appreciation. In Carrier's words: "If my first novel opened a path for her, she opened roads for me that I have taken in the spirit of discovery – a discovery of people living on this earth" (p. 103).

It is indeed fitting that the book ends with a poem by her husband, Donald Winkler, who translated many of the contributions. They have shared "Putting a little more French into English/ Putting a little more English on love" (p. 106).

Simon and her contributors are to be congratulated not merely for honouring Sheila Fischman, but for deepening and broadening our understanding of the art of translation, of its contribution to Canadian literature and of the aesthetic affinities between writers and translators. Readers will appreciate the range of subject matter, from reflections on issues in translation studies to humorous accounts of some of Canada's most famous writers behaving infamously, of tenor, from somewhat academic discourse to very personal first person accounts and of genre, from poetry to interviews. In this collection, Fischman is indeed honoured, studied and showcased as an extraordinary translator, and in her own words, "match-maker" (p. 136) extraordinaire.

JANE KOUSTAS

Brock University, St. Catharines, Canada

SELESKOVITCH, Danica et LEDERER, Marianne (2014): *Interpréter pour traduire*. Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 432 p.

L'édition d'*Interpréter pour traduire* qui paraissait en 2014 chez Les Belles Lettres est la cinquième mouture de cet ouvrage qui présente les fondements de la Théorie interprétative de la traduction (TIT). Publié en 1984, puis réédité en 1986, en 1993 et en 2001 aux Publications de la Sorbonne, l'ouvrage était depuis peu épuisé, et c'est pour le rendre de nouveau accessible aux étudiants, chercheurs et pédagogues que les codirecteurs de la collection Traductologiques, Jean-René Ladmiral et Jean-Yves Masson, présentent l'ouvrage revu et corrigé. Il n'est pas inintéressant de souligner que c'est pour la même raison que l'ouvrage avait été