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La traduction littéraire comme création
Volume 62, numéro 3, décembre 2017

URI : https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1043963ar
DOI : https://doi.org/10.7202/1043963ar

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Éditeur(s)
Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal

ISSN
0026-0452 (imprimé)
1492-1421 (numérique)

Découvrir la revue

Citer ce compte rendu
et celui du docteur Paul Bonier dont la famille était
conne de celle de Claude Bocquet, et qui, dans
les années 1940, a aidé et sauvé des Juifs en faisant
en sorte qu’ils puissent passer en Suisse depuis
l’hôpital où il exerçait, à Saint-Julien-en-Genevois.
La présence de ces articles, apparemment « hors
sujet » (p. 409), pour reprendre le qualificatif utilisé
par Fivaz-Silbermann elle-même, est toutefois
éminemment pertinente dans cet ensemble où la
mise en lumière de l’importance des frontières et
des passages, du rôle des interprètes et des traduc
teurs, passeurs eux-mêmes, vient renforcer l’idée
que l’activité de traduction ne se fonde que sur des
valeurs humanistes d’honnêteté, de rigueur, de res
pect du texte à traduire, et de considération envers
le lecteur auquel est destiné le texte traduit, et cela
en dépit d’une censure rampante faite notamment
de contraintes éditoriales, de normes sociales ou
d’interdits que l’on se donne à soi-même.

La variété des approches et des thèmes abor
dés, le respect, l’affectation et l’amitié envers celui qui
fut un pionnier de la juritraductologie dont chacun
des articles témoigne, justifient pleinement le titre
de l’ouvrage, La traductologie et bien au-delà. Il
y est en effet question d’une pratique profession
nelle dans toutes ses dimensions, intellectuelles,
pragmatiques, éthiques et, sans aucun doute, le
lecteur, spécialiste ou non, non seulement enrichira
ses connaissances mais y trouvera ample matière
à réflexion.

MARYVONNE BOISSEAU
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NOTE

1. Un colloque international avait, préalablement
tà cette publication, rassemblé les 5 et 6 mai
2011 les auteurs de ces articles à l’Université de
Genève. Deux articles ont d’ailleurs fait l’objet
da première publication à la suite de ce
colloque dans la revue Parallèles, no 25, 2013
(revue de la Faculté de traduction et d’inter
prétation de l’Université de Genève).


Due to the evanescent nature of interpreting and
generally subordinate status of interpreters as
agents in historical events, interpreting activities
have seen much fewer records than translation and
even less research on their history. This new book
titled New Insights in the History of Interpreting
is a valuable collective effort in locating the
few references to interpreting and interpreters
in historical archives and personal accounts and
in analyzing how interpreting has been practised
over time and space as well as issues involved in it.

The book is a themed volume of ten original
articles about interpreting and interpreters in
inter-lingual and cross-cultural communication
through history. Collecting eight papers from
the international symposium on interpreting his
tory that was held at Rikkyo University in 2014
and two other select pieces, this volume records
and discusses interpreting practices, recruitment
of interpreters, and issues and challenges that
interpreters have faced in diplomacy, colonization,
religion, war, and occupation in different historical
periods and in various regions of the world such
as East Asia, America, the U.S.A. and the Soviet
Union.

One major value of historical study is to
discover ‘new’ historical facts hidden in the vast
number of archives and to make new interpreta
tions of “old” historical facts. This book represents
a good effort in providing new insights in the
history of interpreting across different regions of
the world.

Four chapters (Chapter 1, 4, 8 and 9) provide
ew discoveries about interpreting history in East
Asia. Rachel Lung, who is well-known for her
research on interpreting history in Early Imperial
China (Lung 2011), defines the multiple roles of
Sillan interpreters in first-millennium East Asian
exchanges. In an attempt to clarify the idiosyn
cratic title of “Sillan (ancient Korean) interpreters,”
she identified the thirty-eight references to Sillan
interpreters in Japanese monk Ennin’s (794–864)
travelogue of his China sojourn (838–847). Her
chapter outlines finer categories of these interpret
ers, whose duties were multifarious: including not
only language mediation but also liaison; network
; coordination and marine travel consultancy.
She argues that such multiplicity in tasks and
roles points to a major distinction between offi
cial interpreters and civilian interpreters. Torikai
Kumiko introduces Oranda Tsâiji, a group of Dutch
interpreters in Japanese history, as depicted in four
historical novels written by Yoshimura Akira,
which explore the life of Nagasaka Tsâiji in the
social context of pre-modern Japan during later
years of the Edo period. As a step furthering her
research on interpreting activities in the Tokyo
War Crimes Tribunal (Takeda 2010), Takeda
describes the diverse experiences of Japanese inter
preters in the post-World War II occupation period
(1945–1952): Some interpreted for the war crime
trials; others were persecuted as war criminals;
and others served foreign military occupiers. The
research reveals issues and risks faced by wartime
interpreters and local interpreters serving foreign
military occupiers, which points to the vulnerable

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position of interpreters in conflicts due to the complex nature of their work. Also on wartime interpreters, Shi-chi Mike Lan gives an account of the fate of Taiwanese interpreters who served in the Japanese army and were convicted for crimes committed while working as interpreters, formal or informal, for the Japanese occupation army during the Second World War.

Two chapters (Chapter 2 and 3) deal with the Spanish history of interpreting. Iciar Alonso-Araguás provides an account of the evolution of interpreting practices of explorers and conquerors in Spanish America, which is evident in the comparison between the initial journeys of discovery (1492–1524) and the period of early colonial administration in America. Initially, Spanish explorers and conquerors resorted to Old World traditional strategies to solve their linguistic and cultural challenges, but after the conquest of Mexico-Tenochtitlan, new strategies were designed with specific legislation on interpreters. The gradual institutionalization and regulation of interpreting practices can be seen as a pioneering endeavour applied throughout the vast Spanish empire for centuries thereafter. This initiative may also be regarded as a precedent of modern public service interpreting, though it happened then in a context of acutely asymmetrical power relations between the colonial authorities and the colonized. Marcos Sarmiento Pérez chronicles the early history of court interpreting for the Spanish Inquisition, which carried out its activities throughout virtually the whole of the Spanish Empire over three and a half centuries (1478–1834). Spheres of the Inquisition’s activities in which interpreters were required and common situations in which interpreters intervened are presented, and information about status, requisites and appointment categories of interpreters is discovered.

Three chapters (Chapter 5, 6 and 7) cover the early history of the modern interpreting profession, including the start of simultaneous interpreting in the United Nations (UN) and in the USSR, and the initiation of training of student interpreters in the U.S. Department of State. As an expert studying interpreters in conflict zones but also highlights the complexity and gravity of interpreters’ role in conflict situations.

In Chapter 10, Anthony Pym analyzes an interpreting event in conflict situations – a mediated military encounter in Afghanistan – as an extreme example of proximate alternative action, which shows that an interpreter’s failure to render significant material may be considered rational in terms of his possible distribution of risk priorities. Together with Chapter 8 and 9, this chapter explores not only the issues and risks faced by interpreters in conflict zones but also highlights the complexity and gravity of interpreters’ role in conflict situations.

The book also demonstrates innovative exploration of methodology for the historical study of interpreters and interpreting including both classical approaches of examining historical archives, personal journals/diaries, memoirs and correspondence and alternative ways of using photography and historical fiction as tools in research. In classical historical approaches, Lung’s chapter demonstrates the value of textual analysis of personal diaries in empirically pursuing the definitions of “interpreter” in their historical contexts. Sawyer’s chapter uses the administrative archives and excerpts of correspondence between senior diplomats to provide insights into the genesis of the early training program as well as the memoirs of student interpreters to relate personal impressions of the training experience. In alternative approaches to historiography, Baigorri-Jalón’s chapter shows how photographs can offer different angles of the dynamics involved in a complex observable event or series of events. He also points out that photographs can only be valid historical sources if we are able to interpret them, and that photographs need to be situated in time and space through a detailed exploration of the context in which they were produced. Torikai’s chapter underlines the potential of checking literary narratives against standard historical sources. Pym’s chapter exemplifies the use of risk analysis as a heuristic tool in the historiography of interpreters.
for the understanding of interpreting practices, in which he argues that risk analysis can enable us to understand multiple cases of what would otherwise appear to be unethical or non-standard practices. This highlights the importance of sound interpretation in historical studies of interpreting events.

The value of this new volume of interpreting history lies first in the identification, construction and preservation of new historical evidence about how interpreting practices have evolved to address various needs and issues in different geographical and geopolitical contexts and how interpreters played different roles in various historical periods and socio-cultural contexts. Such discovery and understanding of the past are actually relevant to the interpreting practices and profession of the present and the future. As Pym pointed out in his chapter, 

“[…] the writing of history itself is one way of actually constituting the identity and culture necessary for the profession. In that sense, historiography is a performative act, as we all like to say these days: it does not just describe professional status as its object, it helps to enact it.” (Pym, In Takeda & Baigorri-Jalón, 2016: 263)

The book also stimulates new perspectives on research methodology in analyzing how historical narratives about interpreting and interpreters were constructed in different socio-cultural backgrounds, which embodies a shift from earlier historical research into interpreting mainly focused on descriptive accounts of historical events and facts to “research based on the interpretation of these events and facts with the development of a methodology grounded in historiography” (Bastin and Bandia 2006: 2). Some inherent issues and themes in intercultural communication mediated by interpreters through history, such as “personal positioning of interpreters, the power relations with their employer and interlocutors, and the complex array of independent variables that impact on their conduct” as well as rules, norms, habitus, ethics and social identity are analyzed more intensely through interpretation of historical events and facts by the authors of the current volume. With such meaningful efforts, this new volume on interpreters and interpreted events in history can also shed new light on and complement traditional historical studies from a different angle. Although there still remain gaps in knowledge in the field of interpreting history, this book is a significant step in the right direction.

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**REFERENCES**


Throughout the years, a growing body of research in Translation Studies has relied on Corpus Linguistics, either in connection with the latest developments in Machine Translation (MT) or with empirical corpus-based translation research across languages. Apart from that, a number of statistical tools and methods have been added in order to further improve research in the field.

*Corpus methodologies explained: an empirical approach to translation studies* can successfully be framed within this context as it approaches the field of Corpus Translation Studies (CTS) from distinct methodological perspectives. From corpus-driven to corpus-assisted to corpus-based methodologies, the book gradually develops from a review of machine translation paradigms to contrastive textual genre analysis, also addressing translator style and, ultimately, reflecting on translation universals regarding language, all of this with the support of thorough statistical data.

The publication is a result of the joint effort of four translation scholars from Australia, China, Norway and UK, led by Ji, whose affiliation with the Waseda Institute of Advanced Studies of the Waseda University in Tokyo paved the way for the project here undertaken.

The book is organized into five chapters: Chapter 1 presents a review of the main methods which have been used for machine translation, ranging from the rule-based model to the statistical model; Chapter 2 relies on the contrastive quantitative analysis comprising English, Chinese and translational Chinese in regard to textual complexity and genre shifting; Chapter 3 deals with translation stylistics across different versions of a