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Editorial

Like so many other ideas in our field, the notion of 'cultural translation' has been around now for over thirty years; however it remains a concept which is hotly contested (Maitland, 2018). On the one hand, translation purists maintain that it can only be the provenance of those working professionally in the translating of meanings from one language to another; on the other, cultural translation has been accused of being appropriated by 'Anglo- American cultural studies, where the trope of translation has been appropriated without the need to actually learn languages other than English in order to do so' (Trivedi, in Maitland, 2018, p. 20). The four papers which I have managed to assemble into another themed open issue this month all address some aspect of what might broadly be called 'cultural translation'; and in a happy coincidence, this fifth issue thus previews the theme of the next IALIC Conference to be held at the University of Valencia (20-22 November, http://ialic.international/conference-2019-valencia/). In so doing, this issue also engages with four corners of our multidisciplinary field ranging from literature to anthropology, and from ideology critique to translation studies.

Over the past couple of decades, book groups have become widespread across Europe and North America. These are informal meetings held between groups of readers, usually to discuss novels which their members have chosen to read together. From my own associations it seems that book groups mostly range from a handful of people to around twenty. Book groups meet informally in someone's house or in some form of civic centre, for example a library or book shop; and their members come to view them as a regular part of their monthly social routine, and arguably as part of their 'social identity'. The first paper in this issue, by Duygu Tekgül, intriguingly proposes that books groups are part of the 'public sphere', after Jürgen Habermas's eponymous book *The structural transformation of the public sphere* (1969/1989). As a young Turkish woman, Tekgül carried out participatory research around Britain by sitting in on twelve different book groups. These happened to be comprised of mostly white, female, British readers. All of these groups were reading ‘international novels’, i.e. novels set in countries other than the UK, and written in languages which were then translated into English for international consumption. This gave the opportunity for Tekgül to investigate not only how book clubs operate as social practice, but also to observe how their members recontextualised the meanings and values constituted in one cultural context to a different context – be it to a library in Devon or to a bookshop in Dorset. In so doing, these book clubs veered between the ‘cultural hospitality’ of liberal cosmopolitanism to a certain, jokey essentialism – both of which, arguably, constitute different aspects of cultural translation.

Elewa opens his paper on the ideological translations of Arabic quotations in English language newspapers by asserting that no act of translation is ever value-neutral. To varying degrees, all translation attempts to ‘naturalize’ the culture of the source text to the expectations of the readers of the target text (after Lefebvre, 2000, p. 237). From a political perspective, this is where ideological meanings also come to be infused into the translated texts. This second paper in the issue considers the way in which a small corpus of translated Arabic quotations are rendered in English in two left-leaning newspapers: *The New York Times* (USA) and the *Guardian* (UK). In this, Elewa draws on the principles of Critical Discourse Analysis (hereafter CDA, after Fairclough, 1989, 1992, 1995) to analyse his texts. While Elewa does not adhere slavishly to any particular CDA formula, he captures the spirit of the critical approach by analysing the ways in which the language of the English translations appear to have been knowingly altered from what would otherwise have been their literal meaning in Arabic. His analysis reveals four strategies which were used to accomplish this alteration of the language of these texts: omission, nominalisation, modality, and foregrounding. Through these, Elewa argues, not only were the quotations ‘manipulated’ in order to conform with the existing beliefs and values of the intended Anglophone readers, but they were also one way in which certain ideological meanings were produced, maintained and transmitted within the public sphere.

While Elewa quite reasonably views quotations in newspapers as being unproblematically equivalent units of text to compare across Arabic and English, our third paper by José Dávila-Montes challenges conventional approaches to the notion of comparability across different linguistic systems. In so doing, he suggests a novel and principled way in which the rhetorical features of different languages might be compared. The nub of the problem that Dávila-Montes addresses is this. Much of the ‘work’ that has to be done in translating from one language to another revolves around the ‘deviations’ that occur between different linguistic systems, i.e. how the translator can realise a particular set of meanings in one language which has a different stylistic way of expressing them to another. However, as he points out, deviation also occurs *within* languages, and particularly between different genres of writing. For example a Virginia Woolf novel has very different stylistic characteristics to a financial report. To address this issue, Dávila-Montes pulls together the hitherto incommensurable disciplines of contrastive stylistics, comparative rhetoric and corpus linguistics in order to carry out – unusually for this journal - a small scale ‘proof of concept’ experiment. Here, he uses corpus analysis techniques to reveal the degree of deviation that occurred in relation to two rhetorical features - enthymemes and metonyms - in small corpus of one particular type of persuasive text in English and Spanish, political speeches. Dávila-Montes concludes by suggesting ways in which the further analysis of the degree of stylistic deviation *within* languages can assist the analysis of the differences *between* translated texts and texts which were originally written in a particular language.

This issue concludes with a fascinating paper by Katarzyna Sepielak, Dawid Wladyka and William Yaworsky which engages with the practical interface between two mainstays of intercultural communication – translation and anthropology. The accepted practice during what was arguably the ‘classical’ period of anthropology in the first half of the twentieth century was for anthropologists to undertake their fieldwork while claiming to learn the language, or languages, of the people(s) they were researching. However Sepielak and colleagues respectfully question the extent to which even the most revered anthropologists of that period ever really achieved any meaningful degree of proficiency in these native languages. In more recent times, anthropologists have more often than not resorted to interpreters in order to communicate with peoples whose languages they do not speak. However, the role of the interpreter and the extent to which they participate fully in the research process has rarely been addressed. To shed more light on this problem, Sepielak and colleagues carry out a survey of contemporary anthropologists working in the Arab League countries to find out just how their decisions to use interpreters during fieldwork have affected their research. Their investigation revealed a range of formality and awareness relating to this use of interpreters: from some anthropologists who still purport to know the local vernacular, to those who actually used interpreters to communicate with their participants. Not least their paper reveals that as reflected in the title of their paper, the interpreter remains something of an under-rated and under-considered co-worker in the context of much anthropological field work.

Our first book review in this issue, of Moira Inghilleri's *Translation and Migration* by Tingting He, keys in nicely with our theme for this end-of-summer issue. Then, Sara Ganassin considers what the extensively refreshed, second edition of Adrian Holliday's *Understanding Intercultural Communication* brings to the field. We are grateful to both our book reviewers for their labours keeping us up to date with these recent publications.

Valete and salvete

Sadly, two notable colleagues are departing from the LAIC team this month. Maria Dasli is relinquishing the reins as Reviews and Criticism Editor. We are grateful to Maria for her energetic and stalwart work in the reviewing chair over the past three and a half years. We have very much benefitted from her commitment and keen critical eye over this period. After more years than I care to remember, Lucy Sheach has also finally relinquished LAIC from the portfolio of journals she manages at Taylor and Francis. We are extremely grateful to Lucy for all her support and encouragement over the years, and wish her well in her future endeavours.

We welcome Kate Morse, who is taking over as our Managing Editor as I write, and we look forward to her collaboration and guidance in the years to come.

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