

informATIOn

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Literary Translators' Association of Canada – Representing Literary Translators Across the Country

By Lisa Carter, C. Tran. (Canada) and LTAC Vice-President, Ontario Region

Given our duality of cultures and languages, it may come as a surprise to you that Canada's history of literary translation is not all that old. Essentially, this art only came to light in the 1970s in response to the FLQ crisis in Quebec. Once this political situation made headline news, publishers started to become interested in bridging the cultural divide by having French literature translated for an English-speaking audience. Many of the translators involved in these early developments (specifically Patricia Claxton, still an active translator, and the late Philip Stratford) established the Literary Translators' Association of Canada (LTAC) in 1975 to share experiences and advance their goals.

There are seven specific objectives set out in LTAC's by-laws, and the Association goes about achieving these in a variety of ways. Although many of its activities advance more than one of its goals, let us look at them one by one.

1. To represent and promote the interests of literary translators in Canada.

LTAC has official representatives with various bodies in order to promote different aspects of interest to its members. It is involved with the Public Lending Right Commission, which establishes and makes payments to authors for the public use and copying of their works. As a result of joint efforts, a 50% share of Public Lending Right payments was obtained for the benefit of translators. The Association also works with the Canadian Conference of the Arts, an advocacy group that is currently lobbying for "social recognition" of artists through the implementation of various tax and employment insurance policies. LTAC is also an active member of the International Federation of Translators (FIT), which represents the moral and material interests of translators worldwide.

2. To ensure that high standards are respected in the field of literary translation.

Through initiatives such as the John Glassco Translation Prize, LTAC has become known for its high standards. Every year since 1982, the Association awards a \$1,000 prize for a first book-length literary translation into either official language. As a result of its good reputation, LTAC was asked to participate in the 2004 CBC/Radio-Canada Literary Awards, jurying the selection of translators for the prize-winning works. And finally, publishers and authors who are looking for reputable translators often contact the office for referrals.

3. To promote relations and the exchange of ideas among literary translators.

Before its AGM in June of each year, the Association holds a mini-conference where members can network with and learn from their colleagues. In 2005, LTAC joined forces with the American Literary Translators Association (ALTA) and held a spectacular four-day conference in Montreal.

Further, in order to keep dialogue going and to unite a membership that is spread across the country, the Association has *Topica*, an e-mail listserv, and *Transmission*, a newsletter.

Continued on page 3

Inside

School of Translation and Interpretation Celebrates 35 Years	Page 3
An Intercultural Journey	Page 4
Congratulations To Newly Certified Members	Page 5
2006 Banff International Literary Translation Centre	Page 6
Translated Words on the Street	Page 7
Calendar of Events	Page 7
Last Issue's Survey Results	Page 8

4. To define, cause to be recognized, and protect the professional rights of literary translators.

One way in which LTAC fulfills this objective is through a model contract it has had drafted by Marian Hebb, perhaps Canada's top intellectual property lawyer. Members and the public alike can use this model contract as a guideline to compare with contracts that may be proposed by a publisher, or use it in its entirety.

Perhaps the Association's most significant accomplishment to date is that it obtained codified recognition of translations as literary works in the *Canadian Copyright Act*.

5. To promote literary translation across Canada.

LTAC promotes literary translation by sponsoring and participating in events nationwide, including Words on the Move, a member initiative for poetry translation held each spring in Montreal; Blue Metropolis, an annual international literary festival also held in Montreal in the spring; Word on the Street, an annual outdoor book and magazine festival held simultaneously in five Canadian cities, with the Association taking part in both Calgary and Toronto; the Side by Side Festival Côte à Côte, a festival of literary translation held each fall in New Brunswick; International Translation Day celebrations at the annual University of Alberta mini-conference; as well as other readings and round table discussions throughout the year.

6. To promote English-language and French-language Canadian literature in other countries.

Through the unique residency program at the Banff International Literary Translation Centre (BILTC), translators from Canada, the U.S. and Mexico come together to discuss translation and work directly with their authors. A great number of LTAC members have participated in this program, helping to bring Canadian literature to readers abroad. The Association is also a member of BILTC's Advisory Council, helping to select translators and shape the future of the Centre.

7. To encourage literary translation in Canada and raise the profile of literary translators.

In effect, the mere existence of the Association and all of the activities mentioned above combine to fulfill this final and essential goal.

Membership in LTAC is open to all Canadian citizens or permanent residents in Canada as set out in the *Immigration Act*, and falls into three categories: full members must have published a translation of a least one book or equivalent work, not at their own expense, or have done comparable translations in media other than book publication; student members must be studying translation or literature; and the only requirement for associate membership is an interest in

literary translation and literary translators. The major difference in the types of membership is that student and associate members have no voting rights.

The Association currently boasts a membership of over 200, spread across Canada, and languages cover the full spectrum, including French, English, German, Russian, Spanish, Arabic, Romanian, Italian, Portuguese, Mandarin, Dutch, Polish, Danish, Lithuanian, Hungarian, Yiddish, Persian and Serbo-Croatian. While French and English remain the largest language pair, there is a growing shift in language focus that reflects Canada's current reality.

In summary, LTAC is a professional association that provides many direct and indirect benefits to its members and the profession as a whole. If you would like to join, more information and application forms can be found on LTAC's Website www.attlc-ltac.org

School of Translation and Interpretation Celebrates 35 Years

By David Lowe, Director, Salaried Translators

The University of Ottawa's School of Translation and Interpretation celebrated its 35th birthday on Saturday, September 16, during the university's Homecoming weekend in Ottawa. Over 150 guests attended the party, which also served to celebrate the careers of three retiring professors: Jacqueline Bossé-Andrieu, Jean Delisle, and Roda Roberts.



Jean Delisle

All areas of the language professions were represented: government, private and public companies, universities, professional associations, students and former students, and, of course, professors both new and old.

Old acquaintances were renewed, and new ones were made by those who attended. The mystery "voice from the past," former ATIO president and professor, Brian Harris, sent best wishes to all via an audio clip from his home in Valencia, Spain.

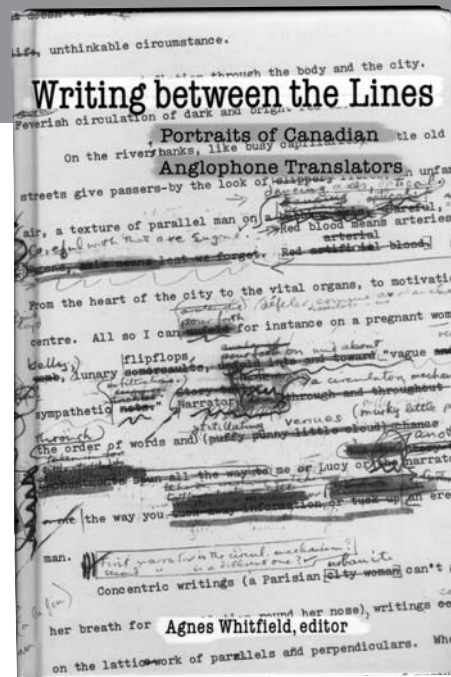
ATIO would like to wish the school all the best in its next 35 years.

An Intercultural Journey

By Agnes Whitfield, C. Tran. (Canada)

My passionate adventure with French began in the mid-sixties. After just two years of high school courses in the language, I set out with some thirty other students from Peterborough, Ontario, for Baie Comeau, Quebec, as part of an inter-provincial exchange. We caught the train at Port Hope one fine July morning, arrived in Rimouski sometime after midnight, and early the next day picked up the first ferry across the St. Lawrence to the North Shore. When I saw the smoking chimneys of the immense pulp and paper mill emerge from the fog in the harbour of Baie Comeau, I thought I had landed on a different continent. My correspondent, Lise Tardif, and her family welcomed me warmly, and came to my rescue rapidly whenever my French faltered. The mystery of another language, the charm of Québécois *chansonniers* like Gilles Vignault and Félix Leclerc, the sense that French was part of my heritage as a Canadian, I was hooked. A few years later, I would major in French at Queen's University, spend a year at the Université de Besançon, and return to France for an M.A. at Paris-IV-La Sorbonne, but Quebec remained my first love. I completed a second M.A. at Queen's, writing a thesis on Victor-Lévy Beaulieu under the supervision of Gérard Bessette, himself an important Quebec writer, and then enrolled in a Ph.D. in Quebec literature at Laval University.

Translation as a professional activity first came into my life while I was in Quebec City. It was the mid-seventies, and the federal government's Translation Bureau was recruiting. The advertisement I saw was addressed to translators working from English into French. I had enjoyed two "thème" courses I had taken at Queen's University. Translating offered an opportunity to earn my living using the French language, so I applied. I started out on the arduous but rewarding on-the-job training process in the St. Clair Avenue office of the Bureau in Toronto. Our group was responsible for pedagogical material for the Armed Forces Staff College, including administrative and technical documents. Given the number of words to translate and the short deadlines, this was no mean challenge! Although nuclear submarine and bomber aircraft, military engineering and administrative processes, not to mention recipes for hungry Armed Forces personnel at Base Borden, might seem far from literary concerns, they kindled the wide-ranging curiosity that is inherent to a translator's vocation. Most of all, the experience of translating nearly one million words into my second language over some three years would be a linguistic watershed for me. French became *de facto* my dominant writing language. I spent my days translating into French, and my evenings working on my thesis on the contemporary Quebec novel. In 1978, I became a certified member (English/French) of ATIO, and in 1980, this combination of professional translation experience and academic background would lead to my first university appointment. The French Department at Queen's University was looking for a specialist in Quebec literature who could also coordinate its translation program.



Writing between the Lines Portraits of Canadian Anglophone Translators

Edited with an introduction by Agnes Whitfield

2006, Wilfrid Laurier University Press

ISBN 0-88920-492-6

320 pages

\$65

My interest in literature and translation would come together, in English, after I joined the faculty at York University. In 1991, Coach House Press was looking for a translator for *Venite a cantare*, a novel by Quebec author Daniel Gagnon. The translator initially solicited for the task had died, and the author, who had read at Glendon College in connection with an exhibition of his portraits of Quebec writers, suggested my name. I had some concerns that the novel would call on resources in spoken English and registers I was not necessarily comfortable with. In fact, the book proved to be highly poetic, an assignment I thought I could do. The experience would lead to a nomination for the Governor General's Award. It would also offer me a poetic language and be the beginning of my own writing activity. A volume of my poetry and a poetic novel, *Où dansent les nénuphars*, have been published by Le Nordir and another book of poems by les Écrits des Forges. At the same time, as translator and teacher, I increasingly felt the need to become involved in professional issues. As president of the Canadian Association for Translation Studies for two consecutive terms from 1995 to 1999, I signed an agreement with Yves Gambier, president of the European Society for Translation Studies (EST), to promote scholarly exchange. Although the association members were at times somewhat hesitant, I initiated and set up the Vinay-Darbelnet Awards for the best article, the best doctoral thesis and the best book in the field

to appear in the current year. To better acquaint the general public with literary translation, as a member of the Executive of the Literary Translators' Association of Canada from 1999 to 2002, I organized a series of readings and workshops across Canada with the assistance of grants that I obtained from the Canada Council for the Arts. Curiously, in one of those continual linguistic criss-crossings that have characterized my career, now that I live in Montreal in French, I find myself increasingly using English as a literary and professional language.

A Tribute to our Literary Translators

The idea for *Writing between the Lines* (Wilfrid Laurier University Press) and *Le Métier du double* (Fides, CRILCQ) came from a desire to bring to the public's attention the rich cultural contribution of our eminent anglophone and francophone literary translators. I wanted to give the translators themselves an opportunity to express their ideas about their craft, to tell their own story. What led them to become literary translators? What were their most significant challenges? How do they see the practice of literary translation? My aim was to highlight the accomplishments of translators whose work has been recognized by their peers, and who have made a significant contribution to the development of literary translation in Canada. At the same time, it was important to offer a representative sampling of the different areas of literary translation, from children's literature and poetry to prose and theatre translation.

The portrait format offered an excellent way to underline both the variety of the individual paths towards translation, and the breadth of their combined accomplishments. Obtaining copyright protection in Canadian law, founding a professional association, persuading publishers to publish translations, negotiating contracts, promoting translations in literary magazines and journals,

encouraging professional training and courses in literary translation, are among the many issues faced by our translators. It was, after all, in the years from 1970 to the present that literary translation was finding its feet in Canada. Through the different portraits in both books, written by respected scholars from across the country, the reader gains an overview of how these talented individuals established their own practice of literary translation as they worked through solutions to the many challenges they faced. Their fervor and sense of precision are immediately evident in their interviews. We can admire their erudition and selfless devotion to the cause of literature, and gain valuable new insights into the many different ways they have contributed, as dynamic literary agents, to the development of our francophone and anglophone literary traditions.

Library reference systems rarely include information about the translator. To obtain a list of the works a translator has translated is practically impossible. To fill this gap, each portrait contains a complete bibliography, established with the generous assistance of the translator him or herself. By honouring the accomplishments of our reputed literary translators, both books will increase our understanding of the craft of translation and stimulate further research on literary translation in Canada. I hope that students interested in a career in literary translation will find the books informative, with their wealth of invaluable information about the multiple dimensions of being a literary translator, and that all readers will find the portraits as inspirational to read as they have been for me to edit. This year I am continuing my own research, through a position as virtual scholar for the Official Languages Support Branch of Canadian Heritage, with a project on literary translation's contribution to the promotion and recognition of linguistic duality.

CONGRATULATIONS!

Certified Through CTIC Translation Examination

French-English
Victoria Ralph

French-Spanish
Edward Wehner

English-Chinese
Selina Kan

English-Croatian
Goranka Šubašić-Muharemaj

English-Turkish
Behiye Cinkilic
Murat Kandemir
Şükrü Koyupinar

English-Ukrainian
Yuriy Kovalenko

Greek-English
Effrossyni Fragkou

Macedonian-English
Gordana Panoska

Norwegian-English
John Coakley

Turkish-English
Behiye Cinkilic
Murat Kandemir
Ekrem Kolcuoglu
Şükrü Koyupinar

Certified on Dossier in Translation

English-French
Dominique Nanoff

English-Spanish
Silvia Yáñez



2006 Banff International Literary Translation Centre

By Jorge Enrique Prieto, Student in Translation (ATIO)

My three-week residency at the Banff Centre for the Arts for the 2006 Banff International Literary Translation Centre was a very rewarding and memorable experience. Surrounded by the breathtaking Alberta's Rocky Mountains, the Banff Centre is an ideal setting to work on a literary translation project.

Among those present were 15 translators from Canada, Israel, Italy, Mexico, the Netherlands, Slovenia, Spain and the United States, eight invited American and Canadian writers, and a student from each of the three North American countries. The Translation Centre was run by four translators in residence, Linda Gaboriau and Daniel Poliquin from Canada, Michael Henry Heim from the United States, and Silvia Pratt from Mexico. The effort they devoted and time they invested to organize the Translation Centre cannot be measured. In addition, they were always most obliging when asked for assistance of any kind. Finally, a very competent, helpful and friendly group of Banff Centre Program coordinators, led by Kim Mayberry, made our stay truly enjoyable.

Not only did the residency allow me to work with and learn from very experienced literary translators, a few of whom I happily befriended, but it also allowed me to reach the goal I had set for myself during my stay at the Banff Centre—to translate a short story into English and Spanish.

As a second-year student in the University of Ottawa's M.A. program in translation, I heard about the bursary for the three-week residency at the Banff Centre through my professor Luise von Flotow, to whom I am deeply thankful for her constant support and encouragement. As part of the application process, I was required to submit a five- to ten-page sample translation into English. After consulting with Luise, I decided to translate a short story by Haitian/Québécois writer Émile Ollivier (1940-2002), entitled "*Regarde, regarde les lions*." This story is found in a collection of stories bearing the same name and is concerned, first and foremost, with a comical and poignant experience of a Haitian exile in Montreal.

I chose to translate Ollivier's story because very few Haitian-Canadian writers have had their works translated into English so far and because Ollivier fought all his life for dignity, social justice and democracy through his writing. Furthermore, Ollivier writes from the perspective of an immigrant and touches on some of the difficulties and hardships of having to relocate to a new country. Being a sort of immigrant to Canada myself—I am Colombian-Canadian and have always lived between the two cultures—I have experienced first hand what it is like to adapt in a new society. I think that as the influx of immigrants becomes greater in Canada, people will have more

to say about the way in which they are welcomed and treated. I believe that the production and translation of literature is a great way to ensure such voices and perspectives are heard in a country that is becoming increasingly multi-ethnic. Moreover, it may be a great way to raise awareness about the causes and impacts of stigmatization and marginalization. I hope to produce many such translations, with the aim of perhaps creating an anthology.

Even though I was able to achieve my goal of translating "*Regarde, regarde les lions*" into English and Spanish, thanks without doubt to the input of other translators, this proved to be a challenging task. Ollivier's style was particularly difficult to maintain in English. Translating sentences without verbs, extremely long and detailed descriptions, and circus vocabulary are examples of challenges I faced. My English translation required many rereads and edits to make it sound idiomatic. The translation into Spanish was somewhat easier, especially because French and Spanish are closely related languages in terms of syntax and vocabulary.

As a beginner, one of the most helpful things for me was having several translators look over my work and provide me with both positive and negative feedback concerning my work. Because of its many challenges related to culture-specific references, diction, language constraints, hidden meanings, play on words, etc. literary translation forces translators to be not only good writers, but also good readers and resourceful researchers.

I have very fond memories of the 2006 Banff International Literary Translation Centre. It served as a great introduction to literary translation, which I wish to pursue alongside my many other interests. Thanks to the great efforts of Linda Gaboriau and the many others involved in its organization, the 2006 Banff International Literary Translation Centre was an enriching and unforgettable experience, which made me even more interested in literary translation.

The Board of Directors of the
Association of Translators and Interpreters of
Ontario
regretfully announces the death of

Gérard Caron

ATIO Candidate for Certification in
Translation since 1995

Translated Words on the Street

By Lisa Carter, C. Tran. (Canada) and LTAC Vice-President, Ontario Region

The streets in five cities across Canada—Calgary, Halifax, Kitchener, Toronto and Vancouver—come alive each fall (Sunday, September 24th this year), with The Word on The Street, “Canada’s largest annual outdoor book and magazine festival.” The Literary Translators’ Association of Canada (LTAC) had a booth at the Toronto festival in order to raise the profile and awareness of translation in general and literary translation in particular.

This year’s event in Toronto was held at Queen’s Park from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. and some 200,000 visitors were expected! Over 250 exhibitors had booths, including booksellers, book publishers, libraries, educational institutes, literacy organizations, magazine publishers, multimedia organizations and writing organizations—in short, anyone and everyone involved in the writing and literacy fields. Entrance to this festival is always free and visitors perused the booths, browsed and purchased the latest literature, and checked out on-site performance venues, where there were author readings and discussions.

The theme of this year’s LTAC booth was “Words from Around the World,” highlighting the fact that much of what people read is not necessarily written originally in English but brought to them via the translator’s art. Members volunteered to be on hand to tell the public about our activities, provide pamphlets and information to prospective members, and exhibit published translations of Canadian and international poetry and fiction.

LTAC has participated in this event in Toronto and Calgary over the last several years and found it to be a worthwhile activity, generally counting on over 100 visitors to the booth.

Literary translators must use every opportunity that comes their way to tell the world about their endeavours, promote themselves as authors in their own right and boast about their published successes. After all, if we don’t spread the word, who will? The Word on the Street festival is an ideal, high-profile event where we can do just that.

Calendar of Events

✓ NOVEMBER 2006

November 3-5, 2006: FIT Committee for Court Interpreting and Legal Translation

8th International Forum

Zurich, Switzerland

Information: www.forum-zuerich.ais-oeg.com



✓ DECEMBER 2006

December 5-6, 2006: VI Symposium on Translation, Terminology and Interpretation in Cuba and Canada Bridging Cultures through Language Interchange

Havana, Cuba

Information: http://www.cttic.org/e_infolangind.htm

December 8, 2006: ATIO Christmas Dinner

The Westin Harbour Castle
Toronto

December 15, 2006: ATIO Christmas Dinner

National Arts Centre
Ottawa

✓ AUGUST 2008

August 1-7, 2008: XVIII FIT World Congress

Shanghai, China

Information: www.fit2008.org

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1202-1 Nicholas Street

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Tel: 613-241-2846 / 1-800-234-5030

Fax: 613-241-4098

E-mail: InformATIO@atio.on.ca

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Last Issue's Survey Results

By Nancy McInnis, Vice-President, Director, Independent Translators

We received only 84 answers (roughly 6% of members) to our vacation survey, but since travel plans figured largely in the responses, could it be that everyone else had already left on their own trip?

Of those 84 responses, 17 were from people who were planning to take advantage of the strong dollar and travel abroad or in the US. Fully one-third of respondents were planning to travel within Canada, and just a few more were travelling no further than the cottage or their own backyard.

I'm sure it will come as no surprise to you to learn that ATIO members are a social bunch. Thirty-three of the 84 respondents said that their ideal weekend involved family and friends. And absolutely no one was hanging out a "Do Not Disturb" sign and saying that all they wanted was a book and a beverage.



We are also a romantic (or maybe just adventurous) group, as almost half of respondents said that their ideal weekend involved a quick getaway. Perhaps that accounts for the number planning to travel in Canada this summer?

The question dealing with members' favourite summer activities provided a simple recap of what we learned from the first two questions. Almost half of respondents said that they loved road trips and other summer travel, and a social one-quarter said that they preferred a BBQ or a picnic.

And even though I'm sure there was more than one parent dancing a little happy dance when the kids boarded the school bus in September, no one admitted to counting the days until school started up again!