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# ITIA BULLETIN

June 2007

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**Irish Translators' & Interpreters' Association**  
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## ■ Editorial

Dear Readers,

This month, I have come across two events in Dublin that get translators/interpreters together in the same room. Fostering a sense of community among translators/interpreters has so many benefits. On a personal level, networking with people who face the same work issues as us can alleviate the sense of isolation. Freelancing can be lonely at times but there is comfort in knowing that you are not alone! Professionally, the advantages of these get-togethers are huge. They present an opportunity to compare experiences with agencies, clients, software etc. For example, interpreters for Lionbridge have learned that those who signed contracts this year are being paid 20% less than interpreters who signed contracts last year (see Mary Phelan's article below). Only by getting together and comparing notes can these things come to light. As a community, we are our own best resource.

Enjoy!

**Elizabeth Hayes**

Editor ITIA Bulletin

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## ■ ITIA Community Interpreting Sub Committee

The *Community Interpreting Sub-Committee* of the ITIA organised a meeting of interpreters on Wednesday 20th June. Over twenty people attended the meeting.

### Legal Interpreting

A number of translation agencies and interpreters have expressed their concern to the ITIA that the contractor for court interpreters has been unable on a number of occasions to provide interpreters as the need arises. In these cases the Courts Service has contacted other translation agencies. Perhaps these are just teething problems, but it is very worrying if cases have to be adjourned or if judges try to proceed without the help of an interpreter.

The *Wicklow People* reported on 7th June 2007 that no Polish interpreter was available for a defendant who spoke 'a little Russian' and was assisted by a Russian interpreter. The charge was driving without insurance.

The language barrier led to some problems, particularly when Judge Donnchadh O Buachalla attempted to find out how long the defendant had been driving the car. 'I think I now know what it's like to be called a dentist,' commented Judge O Buachalla. One can only imagine the confusion in court and one has to wonder why an interpreter could not be found for Polish.

Instead of increasing, the hourly rate for interpreters recruited by Lionbridge, has gone down from €25 for interpreters recruited in 2006 to €20 for interpreters recruited in 2007. Similarly, the mileage rate has been reduced from 25 cents to 20 cents. This is a drop of 20%. However, it was interesting to hear that some interpreters have managed to negotiate a rate of €30 for evenings and weekends.

The Courts Service recently introduced a provision that interpreters working in the courts should not interpret for solicitors. The Law Society has made written submissions to the Courts Service and the Courts Policy Division of the Department of Justice to voice their concern about solicitors being unable to communicate with defendants. Apparently the Courts Service was concerned that interpreters who work for the gardaí and solicitors could be influenced by what they hear and there could be cross-contamination of evidence. It was

## ■ Translated work wins lucrative IMPAC prize

A work translated from Norwegian to English has won the 2007 *International IMPAC Dublin Literary Award*. The winning novel, "*Out Stealing Horses*" was written by Per Petterson and translated by Anne Born. Born, who is also a poet, has previously translated many literary works from Danish, Sweden and Norwegian into English. She will receive €25,000 of the €100,000 prize fund.

Boyd Tonkin, literary editor of *The Independent* described the work as "a novel of consistent beauty, subtlety and wisdom, but one that creeps up on the reader and gets unforgettably under your skin rather than announcing its virtues and its visions with a loud fanfare. Translated with unfailing grace and flair by Anne Born, '*Out Stealing Horses*' will stay with you like a friend, a guide and a witness."

The IMPAC award has always shown itself open to translated works. In fact, six of the twelve winners of the IMPAC award to date have been novels written in a language other than English. Go IMPAC!

interesting to hear of these concerns but the idea of sourcing different interpreters for solicitors is not very realistic, particularly for certain languages and in certain parts of the country where it may be very difficult to find interpreters. Also, if this is the case there must be practical mechanisms in place to ensure that solicitors can access interpreters when they need to communicate with defendants in cells awaiting a hearing. However, at the meeting some interpreters said that the rule had been relaxed and they can now interpret for solicitors. Others, however, said that they were not allowed to. There appears to be a lot of confusion on this issue.

### Translation Agencies

A number of translation agencies are requesting that interpreters sign a contract. The agencies do not guarantee any specific amount of work but they ask the interpreters to be available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. They also specify that interpreters should not work for other agencies. The ITIA is very concerned about this sort of arrangement. We believe that this sort of contract would not stand up in a court of law, so we wonder what is the purpose? Obviously it suits agencies if interpreters are available for work around the clock but realistically interpreters and indeed translators need to work for a number of agencies in order to make a living.

The rates on offer for some translation work are also of concern. We would advise all translators to be very careful to agree rates before commencing work. Otherwise you may be offered rates as low as 4 cents per word.

### EU surveys on Legal Interpreting in Criminal cases and on Interpreting in Civil cases.

Two surveys are in train. The more important one for our purposes is on Legal Interpreting is being coordinated by *Lessius Hogeschool* in Antwerp as a follow up to the Grotius conferences on Interpreting. The original idea here was that there was a need for a directive stipulating that all legal interpreters across the EU should be trained. However, a number of countries including Ireland, the Netherlands and the UK voted against this idea. Any one country could veto the idea under the third pillar of Justice. The survey will be carried out in all EU countries. The ITIA has provided the organisers with names and email addresses of legal interpreters, interested gardaí, solicitors and barristers. These people will be contacted directly by the organisers in due course.

The other survey is on provision of interpreting in civil cases. Its main concern is who pays for interpreters in civil cases. The Courts Service covers the costs of interpreters in family law cases but other cases are covered by the relevant parties.

It will be interesting to see the results of these surveys. Another option being considered by those interested in the area of legal interpreting is to tackle the lack of regulation of translators and interpreters. Perhaps this would be the best solution because in countries like Ireland and the United Kingdom, anyone can call themselves a translator or an interpreter.

### Dublin Rape Crisis Centre Training for Interpreters

Last year the Department of Justice allocated money towards projects to help immigrants to Ireland. The funding was awarded by *Pobal* and two involve interpreting. One is funding for training for interpreters working with victims of sexual violence, run by the Dublin Rape Crisis Centre. There will be four two-day training courses starting in September. Clearly this is a really interesting initiative but there seems to have been an assumption that most interpreters are already trained and professional. It will be important to ensure that all participants on the course are in agreement on ethical issues such as confidentiality, neutrality and understand the boundaries of their role.

The second project to receive funding was Dublin Inner City Partnership which will run a three pronged project in schools in Dublin 7. The first strand is translation and will involve DIT students translating information about schools from English to other languages. The second strand involves training interpreters to liaise between parents and teaching staff. The third strand will involve cultural mediation. There is clearly a real need for translation of information about schools and for interpreters to allow communication to take place.

### Research on Translation and Interpreting

The Department of Justice has allocated €100,000 through the Reception and Integration Agency (RIA) for research into “*Developing Quality Cost Effective Interpreting and Translating Services for Government Service Providers in Ireland*”. The project is being managed by the National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI). After a tender process the contract was awarded to a consortium led by Farrell Grant Sparks Consulting. This initiative is very welcome but the ITIA is very concerned about the short time frame for the research – the report is to be completed by the end of November 2007 so basically the time-frame is six months which we believe is too

short particularly considering the terms of reference which are:

- 1 The current provision of interpreting and translating services by Government service providers in Ireland.
- 2 Aspects of current service provision that work well or are unsatisfactory from the perspective of service users and other stakeholders.
- 3 Models of good practice.
- 4 Views on preferred options for quality cost effecting interpreting and translating services for Government service providers in Ireland.
- 5 Any other relevant issues.

For comparison's sake, a study on Sign Language Interpreting in Ireland in 2006 took ten months. A study in Scotland took three years.

An Advisory Group has been established by the NCCRI and includes Annette Schiller, ITIA chairperson. The next meeting of interpreters will be on Wednesday 25th July at 7 p.m. in the Irish Writers' Centre, 19 Parnell Square. All welcome.

Mary Phelan

## ■ New Members of the ITIA

The ITIA welcomes the following new members...

### New Members

#### DANIEL MEISTER

71 Grove Cottages  
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email: keikoeire(a)yahoo.co.jp  
JAPANESE from English and French  
general (travel, tourism, biography, wine, letters, advertisements etc.)

### New Corporate Member

#### VICTORIA HINCUI & T LTD

14 Finstown Hall  
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Lucan  
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Mobile: 086 3077841  
email: vdvd(a)mail.com  
Contact: Victoria Hincui

#### Change of address:

Cristina Neville  
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Thornwood  
Booterstown Avenue  
Co Dublin

#### Change of phone numbers

Alice Hyrmanová McElveen  
Tel: 053 9255832  
Fax: 053 8356312  
Mobile: 086 8356312

### Joining the ITIA

The *Irish Translators' & Interpreters' Association* is always delighted to welcome new members to the Association. There are five categories of membership:

- ◆ Ordinary
- ◆ Professional
- ◆ Corporate
- ◆ Concession (undergraduate & senior citizen)
- ◆ Honorary

*Ordinary membership* is open to anyone with an interest in translating or interpreting. *Professional membership* is for those who meet strict criteria set by the professional membership committee of the ITIA and which is part of the drive to raise the status of the profession in the European market.

*Corporate membership* is for firms and agencies associated with the profession while *concession membership* is for undergraduate students engaged in third level language and/or translation studies and senior citizens. Finally, *honorary membership* is intended for national and international persons who have distinguished themselves in our professional field.

For more information on how to join as well as for the relevant application forms, visit the ITIA website at: [www.translatorsassociation.ie](http://www.translatorsassociation.ie)

## ■ Homage to Gregory Rabassa

Last 5th June, Colombia celebrated the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the acknowledged masterpiece of Nobel laureate Gabriel García Márquez, *Cien años de soledad* (One hundred years of solitude). Published in Spanish in 1967 and first translated into English three years later, this novel inspired generations of writers. The novel had the privilege of first being translated by Gregory Rabassa, one of the most reputed Spanish/Portuguese into English literary translators. This month we would like to commemorate the event by paying homage to this award-winning translator and his work. We would also like to take this opportunity to encourage you to read one of the greatest Latin American novels, *One hundred years of solitude*, or for Spanish speakers, *Cien años de soledad*.

Most of us would surely identify with one or other aspect of Gregory Rabassa's life, which is linked to travelling, languages and literature. He was born in Yonkers, New York in 1922. He studied French and Latin in school and in 1942 he obtained a bachelor's degree from Dartmouth. He said that he started collecting languages at this university: Portuguese, Russian, and German. After serving in the army during World War II and spending some time in Italy and Northern Africa, he returned to the United States where he studied for his master's in Spanish and finished his doctorate in Portuguese in 1954. He taught at Columbia University for over two decades before accepting a position at Queen's College, City University of New York, where he still teaches.

His translation activity started in the early sixties, when Rabassa began to translate some Latin American short stories to be published in a literary quarterly. Later, he

The next issue of the ITIA Bulletin will be out in July 2007. If you have any contributions, suggestions or scandals that you would like to share with over 1000 subscribers worldwide, send them to Elizabeth Hayes at [elizabeth.hayes7\(a\)mail.dcu.ie](mailto:elizabeth.hayes7(a)mail.dcu.ie).

### Subscribing to the ITIA Bulletin

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was asked by the editor of a publishing house in New York to translate a couple of sample chapters of Julio Cortázar's *Rayuela* (which has been called a "fiendishly esoteric novel"). Mr. Rabassa's work, titled *Hopscotch* won the first National Book Award for translation.

Gregory Rabassa is generally known as the "Boom" translator, as he translated many of the works by the Latin American "Boom" generation of writers. He also translated European literature (from Spain and Portugal). Among his most recognized translations are *One hundred years of Solitude* (*Cien años de soledad*) by Gabriel García Márquez, *Paradiso* (*Paraíso*) by José Lezama Lima, *Posthumous Memoirs of Bras Cubas* (*Memorias póstumas de Bras Cubas*) by Machado de Assis. Other authors translated by Rabassa are Jorge Amado, Mario Vargas Llosa, Juan Benet, António Antunes, Osman Lins.

In 2005, aged 82, Rabassa finally published his own book, *If This Be Treason: Translation and Its Dyscontents* a reflection of his life's work contributing to the dissemination of mainly Latin American literature to an English-speaking readership.

On a more personal level, Rabassa is known to have developed a relationship with some of the authors he translated. He became a good friend of Julio Cortázar as they shared a passion for word play and jazz. In fact, he was highly respected by Cortázar. It was on Julio Cortázar's advice that García Márquez waited three years for Rabassa's schedule to become open so that he could translate *One hundred years of solitude*. García Márquez once said that Rabassa read *One hundred years of solitude*, sat down and rewrote it in English. He also said that Rabassa's translation improved on the original.

But for Gregory Rabassa rewriting is not at all what he does: "I'm reading the Spanish, but mostly I'm reading it in English, and it comes out that way... When I talk about it, I say the English is hiding behind his Spanish." Gregory Rabassa said he typed his translation of García Márquez's novel page by page, just as he did with Cortázar's work. Yet unlike his blind excursion with *Hopscotch*, Rabassa had already read *One hundred years of solitude* before he tried the translation. "I knew it was a damn good book, but it wasn't as much fun knowing all about it" he said.

*One Hundred Years of Solitude* tells the story of 100 years in the lives of the Buendía family, who live in the coastal jungles of an unnamed South American country. Or it could also be seen as the story of the town they

found, Macondo. Or the story of the life of Úrsula Buendía; all these things seem to become alive in a book of magic and fascinating story-telling. The title also clues us into a more open interpretation of the novel as a story containing examples of every type of loneliness and isolation: suffering of prison or blindness, the spiritual emptiness of sexual conquests, or the happiness of isolation with the one you love. Even their town Macondo seems to drift away from the rest of the world.

This June, Colombia ran a series of events to celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> birthday of this exceptional novel. In line with this celebration, we have decided to pay homage to one of its translators: Gregory Rabassa, being his life and work an inspiration to many of us. But our homage would not be completed unless we would recommend you to have a piece of his soul, to read some of the novels he translated. We hope to have opened your appetite for Latin American literature and in order to make you feel even hungrier, we would like to leave you with Rabassa's words in the opening lines of *One hundred years of solitude* (*Cien años de soledad*).

Many years later, as he faced the firing squad, Colonel Aureliano Buendía was to remember that distant afternoon when his father took him to discover ice.

Alda Gómez

## ■ Interpreting Central and Eastern Europe through local\_minds

The *local\_minds* project promotes artistic creation in young people from Central and Eastern European countries. This project was initiated and realized with the support of the European Union and approved under the official name of “*local\_minds - global challenges of intellectual creation*” in 2004. It involved several cultural European organizations and plenty of young talents working in the arts of writing and photography.

The project attracted nationals from fourteen countries: Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Macedonia, Moldova, Ukraine, Belarus, and Albania.

With the aim of creating space and opportunities for the development of young artists from small communities, seven editors and two translators joined and worked on sourcing prose, poetry, essays, plays, scripts and photography which was put on the website to represent local talent. See [www.localminds.com](http://www.localminds.com).

Currently the submission of new works has been terminated. The organizers are still looking for volunteers for editorial work from Poland, Croatia, Slovenia, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Moldova, Belarus and Serbia. *local\_minds* also needs volunteer translators to present in English works from Albanian, Romanian, Hungarian and Bulgarian because most of the works have been published in the native language of the participants.

This should be an excellent project but after reading the first lines on the website you find out that it has been abandoned for quite a long time. No updates. No answer to emails. No life. The project was killed in its birth stage for financial reasons. Many of the artists' works have been channelled into satellite projects that stemmed out of this one. It is a major project with minor effects – a stub. Maybe there are hundreds of project corpses like this one around us.

Minka Paraskevova

## ■ Another translation product on the shelves

Yet another translation gadget is hitting the shelves this summer. Hardly a month goes by without some small software company releasing a magical translation product that will bring an end to linguistic incomprehension. We can scoff but there must be a market for these products.

This month's product is a hand-held device called the *Wizcom Quicktionary III Lite*. The pen-like device uses OCR (optical character recognition) and machine translation. The user scans the text for translation which appears on a small screen on the pen along with the suggested translation. While you can scan in full sentences, translation is only performed at word-level.

The pen can scan from left to right or right to left to adapt to users' preferences. The scanner has the usual OCR problems – difficulty recognizing punctuation and the letters *t*, *f* and *l*. The latest version is only available in French or Spanish with English so far.

All in all, this product is far from ground-breaking. It uses technology that has been around for a long time to perform a relatively basic level translation. Nonetheless, as this type of technology is becoming more mainstream, the resultant products are getting cheaper. The *Wizcom Quicktionary III Lite* is retailing at £100 or €149.99.

## ■ Conferences, Calls & Courses

### The Politics & Practice of Translation 2008 Graduate Student Translation Conference

Columbia University. March 29<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>st</sup>, 2008

Keynote Speaker: Charles Simic

The newly formed Center for Literary Translation at Columbia University is seeking graduate student translators from all over the country to participate in the third biannual Graduate Student Translation Conference in New York City, March 29<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>st</sup>, 2008. The Center hopes to gather a varied group of emerging and established translators for a weekend of workshops and round tables on the current politics and practice of literary translation in the United States.

The weekend will consist of Workshops, Round Tables, and a Saturday dinner at which Charles Simic will give the keynote speech. We encourage graduate students to apply for a place in one of the literary translation Workshops and/or to be one of the Round Table participants. Application details are below. Application materials must be received by September 31<sup>st</sup>, 2007.

#### 1. Literary Translation Workshops:

If you are a graduate student working on literary translations (from any language) and would like to be considered for a Workshop, please send an email to [info\(a\)centerforliterarytranslation.org](mailto:info(a)centerforliterarytranslation.org) with Conference Workshop Application as the subject line. Please attach a sample of your work (5-10 pages of poetry or prose), the original text, and a brief (up to 1 page) statement on your motivations for translating this particular work and the challenges you encountered in effectively rendering it into English. Please also include a CV.

Each Workshop will have roughly nine translators; each person will have one submission workshopped and will be expected to provide comments on the submissions of other participants.

#### 2. Round Tables

The Center also seeks applications from graduate students interested in participating in one or more of the following Round Tables:

- ◆ Translation and Theory
- ◆ Translation and Canon Formation
- ◆ Multilingualism and Translation
- ◆ Translation: Ethics, Censorship, Speaking Out

Each Round Table will have 3-4 participants; each person will give 5-7 minutes of opening remarks leading into a discussion involving the audience and the participants.

Interested graduate student participants should send an e-mail, with the Round Table title as the subject line, to [info\(a\)centerforliterarytranslation.org](mailto:info(a)centerforliterarytranslation.org). Include in the e-mail a brief (up to 1 page) explanation of why you want to be on the panel and what angle you plan to take on the issue. Please also attach a CV. For more information on the conference or the center, please visit [www.centerforliterarytranslation.org](http://www.centerforliterarytranslation.org). Please direct questions to [info\(a\)centerforliterarytranslation.org](mailto:info(a)centerforliterarytranslation.org).

*Please note:* a limited amount of financial assistance for travel may be available in certain circumstances; contact the organizers if you would not be able to attend without some support. Every effort will be made to provide accommodations for successful applicants from outside the New York area; however, we can't guarantee accommodation

## American Translators Association 48th Annual Conference

San Francisco, California. October 31<sup>st</sup>-November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2007.

This four-day event showcases panel discussions, expert presentations, training workshops, and scholarly papers. The conference also features a job marketplace, a vendor exhibit hall, certification testing, and networking sessions designed to build professional contacts for attendees. ATA members receive discounted conference registration rates as a membership benefit. Things to see and do:

*Job Marketplace:* Market your services by displaying résumés, brochures, and business cards while meeting with owners and managers of participating language services companies. Interested in recruiting at the Job Marketplace? Contact Matthew Hicks at [mhicks\(a\)mcneill-group.com](mailto:mhicks@mcneill-group.com) or (215) 321-9662, ext. 19.

*Exhibit Hall:* See the new products available, compare products and pricing, and meet the company owners that you have been doing business with for years. Interested in becoming an Exhibitor? Contact Matthew Hicks at [mhicks\(a\)mcneill-group.com](mailto:mhicks@mcneill-group.com) or (215) 321-9662, ext. 19.

*Networking Session:* Take advantage of this opportunity to meet company owners, seasoned professionals, and newcomers in a relaxed atmosphere.

*Conference Dance:* Dance to live, local entertainment and mingle in a festive atmosphere as the 48th Annual Conference comes to an end.

Other events include:

- ◆ Welcome Reception
- ◆ Yoga Stretches for Translators
- ◆ Round Robin Tennis Tournament
- ◆ Scrabble Social
- ◆ Closing Reception
- ◆ Division Events

## International award for translation

It is an annual international award for distinguished works of translation and prominent institutions which contributed significantly to the field of translation from and into Arabic. The purposes of the award are as follows:

- ◆ To contribute to the transfer of knowledge from and into Arabic.
- ◆ To promote translation into Arabic in the various fields of science.
- ◆ To enrich the Arab archive by publishing distinguished works of translation.
- ◆ To recognize the achievements of institutions with outstanding contributions in the field of scientific translations from and into Arabic.
- ◆ To establish standards of excellence in translation with regard to originality, scientific value, and text quality.

ALL NOMINATIONS must be sent to the following address:

Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques Abdullah bin Abdulaziz International Award for Translation

P.O. Box: 86424

Riyadh 11622

Saudi Arabia

E-mail: [info\(a\)translationaward.org](mailto:info@translationaward.org)

For more information: [www.translationaward.org](http://www.translationaward.org)

## Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Prize for a Translation of a Literary Work

Competition in 2008 for Books Published in 2007

The Committee on Honors and Awards of the Modern Language Association invites translators and publishers to compete for the eighth Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Prize for a Translation of a Literary Work. The prize is awarded each even-numbered year for an outstanding translation into English of a book-length literary work. For the competition held in 2008, translations published in 2007 are eligible. Translators need not be members of the association. The award, which consists of \$2,000 and a certificate, will be presented to the winning translator at the association's annual convention in December 2008.

See [http://www.mla.org/prizeinfo\\_translit](http://www.mla.org/prizeinfo_translit)

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## ■ Contacting The ITIA

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### ITIA BULLETIN

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### ITIA COMMITTEE - 2006/2007

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CO-OPTED	Bernadette Moynihan

## ■ ITIA Resources for Translators

The *Irish Translators' & Interpreters' Association* has compiled a series of useful information leaflets for translators and interpreters - both members and non-members alike. These leaflets are available from the ITIA website at [www.translatorsassociation.ie](http://www.translatorsassociation.ie).

- ◆ *The Translation Profession*
- ◆ *Joining the ITIA*
- ◆ *Ordinary Membership Application*
- ◆ *Professional Membership Application*
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- ◆ *Code of Practice*
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