ROUTLEDGE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF TRANSLATION STUDIES

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Canadian tradition

The 27 million inhabitants of Canada are mainly of French and British descent, but there are also a number of large minorities which include the original inhabitants (Indians who speak a variety of Huron-Iroquois and Algonquian, and the Inuit who speak Inuktitut), Germans, Italians, Chinese, Ukrainians and Dutch. The exploration of Canada began in 1497 when John Cabot reached the coasts of Newfoundland and Nova Scotia. The first permanent settlements were made by the French and began in 1608 when the French explorer and colonizer Samuel de Champlain (*c*.1570–1635) established the settlement at Québec, known as 'New France' since Jacques Cartier gave it the name in 1534. In 1763, Canada was ceded to Britain by the Treaty of Paris. Currently a member of the British Commonwealth, Canada also plays an active part in 'La Francophonie', the organization which represents French-speaking communities. The official languages are English and French.

Translation under French rule

The history of translation in Canada began with a kidnapping. While exploring the Gulf of St Lawrence in 1534, the French navigator Jacques Cartier (1494–1554) came into contact with several Indian tribes. In order to communicate with them, he had to resort to sign language. Before setting sail once again, Cartier unceremoniously 'recruited' the two sons of the Iroquois chief of Stadacona (present-day Québec City) and took them to France, where he taught them the rudiments of the French language. These two natives became the country's first interpreters.

On his second voyage, Cartier's new interpreters, Don Agaya and Taignoagny, began to teach him about New France: its geographical features, natural resources and inhabitants. They even saved Cartier's expedition from catastrophe by teaching the 'pale faces' how to treat and cure scurvy, a terrible disease that had decimated Cartier's crew. When his exploratory expedition was completed, Cartier took his two interpreters back to France, for by now they had started to plot against him and his men. They settled in Brittany and collaborated on the compilation of two bilingual Iroquois–French lexicons, the first lexicographical works to which Canadian translators had contributed.

At the beginning of the seventeenth century, Champlain created an institution of resident interpreters in the new colony. He placed young French adventurers with the allied tribes and gave them the task of defending the interests of merchants, particularly those involved in the fur trade, and officials responsible for colonizing the shores of the St Lawrence River. These young men were resident interpreters in the sense that they lived among the natives, dressed like Indians, slept in tents, hunted, fished and took part in the feasts, dances and rites that made up the everyday life of their hosts. Through daily contact with the natives, the interpreters became familiar with their way of life and world view, and hence eminently qualified for dealing with the tribes. Among the first such interpreters were Étienne Brûlé, Nicolas Marsolet, Jean Nicolet, Olivier Letardif, Jean Richer, Jacques Hertel and François Marguerie.

The linguistic map of New France at that time was fragmented, with numerous dialects deriving from two language families: Algonquian and Huron-Iroquois. Although all the Indian languages belonged to one of these two

families, a different interpreter was required for specific languages such as Micmac, Abenakis, Montagnais, Algonquian, Huron, Nipissing, Iroquois, Ottawa, and so on. Each language created a new linguistic barrier. In addition, the absence of written grammars, and of a written tradition, made the dialects difficult to master. Pronunciation (particularly of guttural sounds), intonation, breathing and rhythm, not to mention the difficulty inherent in translating abstract French vocabulary, created linguistic traps that could lead anywhere from a humorous mistranslation to a diplomatic incident. The missionaries, unlike the interpreters, did attempt to compile grammars and dictionaries, but they continued to run up against cultural taboos which complicated the translation of prayers. For example, it was no easy task to teach *Our Father, who art in heaven* . . . to natives who had lost their fathers, for to speak of loved ones who had died was to insult them.

After Champlain's death, young people continued to go and live with the Indians to learn the challenging craft of interpreting. Pierre Boucher, Charles Le Moyne, Guillaume Couture and Nicolas Perrot were four eminent interpreters of this period. In the words of Bacqueville de La Potherie, 'The merchants could have offered 100,000 écus worth of merchandise, but they would not have sold even a pound of tobacco without the assistance of their interpreters' (Margry 1883: 186; translated).

In Montréal, the courts often required interpreters for Indian languages, as well as interpreters for English and Dutch, the languages used by merchants in the colonies to the south (New England and New Holland). Jean Quenet, Pierre Couc, René Cuillerier, Françoise Goupil (one of only two women to have served as interpreters at the time), Robert Poitiers du Buisson and Louis-Hector Piot de Langloiserie were among those who interpreted for the courts. They were essentially settlers, milliners, traders and manufacturers, and only occasionally worked as interpreters. Today, they would be considered part-time freelancers.

Military interpreters formed another category. These men were members of the regular forces and often held command posts. Among the better known were Paul Le Moyne de Maricourt, Joseph Godefroy de Vieux Pont and François Hertel. In 1757, the army of the Marquis de Montcalm (1712–59), which had tried in vain to defend Québec against the troops of the British General James Wolfe (1727–59), included over 1700 Indians from various tribes, and ten interpreters.

In 1682, the governor of New France and successor to Frontenac, Joseph-Antoine de La Barre, wrote: 'One type of person who is indispensable to the service of the King in this country is the interpreter . . .' (Biron 1969: 253; translated). But the interpreter's role was not limited to that of a language intermediary. In fact, these multilingual mediators, representatives of merchants and civil authorities to the tribes, also acted as guides, explorers, brokers, diplomats, ambassadors and advisers on Indian affairs. They formed a sort of buffer which helped to ease the culture shock that resulted from the encounter with the Indians. They had a deep understanding of the native way of thinking and demonstrated that true communication is achieved not at the superficial level of words, but rather through genuine interaction with the cultural, religious, economic and social institutions of a community. The understanding of others hinges more on what they are than on what they say. The interpreter who had the most influence over the Indians was the one who intimately understood the Indian soul. The Indians gave one of the interpreters from this period the nickname 'double man', while another was called 'two times a man', which indicates the extent to which the interpreters of early Canada were in tune with the Indian mentality.

Translation under English rule (1760–1867)

After the surrender of Montréal in 1760, and following the Treaty of Paris which gave control of the colonies to Britain in 1763, it was the turn of the English conquerors to organize the administration of Canada whose population had now grown to approximately 65 000. Brunet points out that 'although the Conquest minimized the professional options for [French] Canadians, there is no doubt that it presented them with a new career opportunity, namely

translation' (1969: 24–5; translated). During the military rule (1760–4), English governors posted to Québec City, Trois-Rivières and Montréal appointed secretary-translators to translate into French (the language of the majority) the edicts and proclamations issued in English. Thanks to four British officers who were descendants of French Huguenots (Cramahé in Québec City, Bruyères and Gugy in Trois-Rivières, and Maturin in Montréal), the French language enjoyed a semi-official status during these four transitional years. In 1764, the first year of civil government, *The Québec Gazette* made its début. It was the first bilingual newspaper in North America. Written in English and translated into French, this publication was used extensively for official government communications.

In 1767, Guy Carleton (1724–1808) replaced James Murray as governor and took up residence in Québec City. Sensitive to the needs of the French, he decided that it was essential to have the French laws and ordinances of the 'old regime' translated into English, a task the English magistrates declared to be beyond their abilities. Moreover, Carleton needed a French secretary to translate the new English proclamations and other official documents into French. The only Canadian who seemed capable of filling this dual role was the bilingual jurist François-Joseph Cugnet (1720–89). On 24 February 1768, Carleton appointed him 'French Translator and Secretary to the Governor and Council'; the day before, the Council had decided that 'such a good and sufficient translator shall have an appointment of 5 shillings sterling per day'. For 21 years, Cugnet was responsible for official translation in the Province of Québec. When he died, his son Jacques-François (1758–97) succeeded him. Subsequently, the post was filled in turn by Xavier de Lanaudière, Philippe Aubert de Gaspé and Edward Bowen.

Following the establishment of the parliamentary system in 1791 and the division of the Province of Québec into two colonies (Upper Canada and Lower Canada), the Legislative Assembly also acquired a translator in 1793. In accordance with the wishes of the mother country, laws were enacted in English, but French was allowed as a language of translation. As of 1809, the work was carried out by two translators, one for French and the other for English.

Interpreters, so many and so visible under French rule, did not disappear after the Conquest. The large trading companies still employed many interpreters for their negotiations with native suppliers. The North West Company alone had 68 interpreters in 1804; 56 were francophone and 12 anglophone. The following interpreters and missionaries played a central role in the exploration and colonization of the western plains and the northern territories: Peter Ballenden, the Reverend John McKay, Felix Monroe, Father Albert Lacombe (1827–1916), Jean L'Heureux, Louis Léveillé, the Reverend James EVANS, Jerry POTTS and Peter ERASMUS. If there were few bloody battles between white men and natives in West Canada, it was due, in large part, to the efforts of interpreters such as Peter Erasmus and Jerry Potts, who acted with diplomacy on behalf of missionaries, explorers, surveyors and law-enforcement officers.

In 1840, Upper and Lower Canada were united. Section 41 of the Act of Union made English the sole official language of the united Canada. This was a consequence of Lord Durham's report of the previous year, which had advocated a policy of assimilating francophones in Lower Canada. Francophones were quick to react. On 18 September 1841, the Legislative Assembly of Canada passed a bill tabled by Étienne Parent (1802–74) which consisted of three sections. It provided for the translation into French, the printing and circulation of all legislation by the new Parliament and of all imperial laws relevant to Canadian affairs. Parent's bill was entitled: *An Act to provide for the translation into the French language of the Laws of this Province, and for other purposes connected therewith.* It was the first bill to deal specifically with translation and to be adopted by a legislative body in Canada. In 1854, one of the translators of the Legislative Assembly, Antoine Gérin-Lajoie (1824–82), submitted to the speaker a plan for reorganizing the assembly's translation bureaus. The plan provided for three subdivisions: laws, documents, and votes and proceedings. This organization of parliament-

ary translation services was to last for almost 100 years. Eugène-Philippe DORION was another important figure in official translation immediately before and after Confederation in 1867.

During British rule, official translators served as mediators between the English and the French: they provided a link between two peoples who were destined to coexist in the same territory. At the crossroads of two legal traditions, civil law and common law, these translators were among the first to tackle the difficult task of expressing British law and institutions in French terms.

The years following Confederation (1867–)

Literary translation has not enjoyed a long tradition in Canada (see below). On the other hand, the translation of non-literary texts (administrative, commercial, technical and legal) has continued to flourish, primarily as a result of the language laws and policies adopted by various government institutions. For example, Section 133 of the British North America Act (1867) places French and English on an equal footing in the House of Commons and in federal and Québec courts. During the first half of the twentieth century, the most prominent figures in non-literary translation were Achille Fréchette (1847–1929), Léon Gérin (1863–1951) and Pierre DAVIAULT.

In 1934, the Secretary of State, Charles H. Cahan (1861–1944), tabled a bill providing for the centralization of federal government translation services and the creation of a Translation Bureau that would bring together some 100 translators working in various government departments. Over the years, especially those following the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism (1963) and the adoption of the *Official Languages Act* (1969), the Bureau has grown enormously. In its fiftieth year of service, it comprised over 900 translators, 100 interpreters, 100 terminologists and 550 support staff. It served 150 client-bodies from Ottawa and a number of regional offices and had an annual budget of over $85 million. The Bureau as a whole translated approximately 300 million words per year. Its multilingual department translated approximately 20 million words per year from and into some 60 languages, and it contracted work out to a pool of 500 freelancers.

The competence of Canadian terminologists has been recognized throughout the world. They have devised a sound methodology for conducting terminological research, and have provided translators and language specialists with two increasingly effective computerized terminology banks (see TERM BANKS). TERMIUM was developed by the Secretary of State and contains over one and a half million terms. The other bank, the BTQ, was created by the Gouvernement du Québec. Robert Dubuc, Marcel Paré, Pierre Auger, Nada Kerpan and Guy Rondeau have all played a vital role in the establishment of these terminology banks, and in the growth of the new profession of terminologist. Likewise, Québec's Office de la langue française (OLF), founded in 1961, has been responsible for countless initiatives in the field of language management in Québec and the francization of business and industry in particular. The Office has also gained recognition for the numerous glossaries it has published.

While developing TERMIUM in the 1970s, the Translation Bureau became interested in MACHINE TRANSLATION. In 1976, the machine translation research group at the Université de Montréal (TAUM) presented the Bureau with the prototype of MÉTÉO™. Since then, over 85 per cent of all Canadian weather reports have been translated by computer.

Canada's Translation Bureau is not only the largest employer of translators and interpreters in the country, it also plays a vital role in implementing the policy of official bilingualism and multiculturalism. The activities of the Bureau reflect broader national objectives related to the promotion of official languages. It should be noted, however, that over 85 per cent of all translation undertaken in Canada is from English into French, which raises the sensitive issue of the relative status of Canada's two official languages.

Translation in Canada is truly an industry: it provides a living for more than 6,000 professional translators, not to mention the hundreds of part-timers who translate in order to earn extra income. Most large organizations in the private and public sectors have in-house

translation services. Since the early 1980s, the number of translation agencies and translators in private practice has grown steadily. Employment opportunities are good and working conditions and wages are reputed to be among the best in the world.

The organization of the profession

Canada is a virtual paradise for translators; it is probably the place where the profession is most structured. In a country of barely 27 million people, there are no less than 25 different associations of translators, interpreters or terminologists. If we were to include the organizations that have disappeared since the first translators' association was founded in 1919 (the Cercle des Traducteurs des Livres Bleus), the total would reach 35. Between 1919 and 1984, a new association of translators, interpreters or terminologists was formed, on average, every two years.

The two oldest and largest translators' associations in the country are the Association of Translators and Interpreters of Ontario (ATIO), which was established in 1920 and has approximately 1000 members, and the Ordre des Traducteurs et Interprètes Agréés du Québec (OTIAQ), which was founded in 1940 and has some 2000 members. OTIAQ was initially known as the Société des Traducteurs de Montréal, became the Société des Traducteurs du Québec (STQ) in 1968, and finally OTIAQ in March 1992. In 1989, the Ontario Provincial Legislature recognized translators, terminologists, conference interpreters and court interpreters certified by ATIO and allowed them to use the reserved titles *certified translator*, *certified interpreter* and *certified terminologist* after their names. This was a real breakthrough which was initiated by André Séguinot, Julien Marquis and Richard Fidler (members of the ATIO Executive at the time), and Jean Poirier (MPP and former translator). A year later, the Corporation of Translators and Interpreters of New Brunswick (CTINB) received official recognition. And finally, after more than 25 years of hard work, the former Société des Traducteurs du Québec (STQ) was also recognized and, in March 1992, became the OTIAQ, a professional corporation with a reserved title for its members.

There are two reasons for the proliferation of translators' associations. First, because professional associations fall under provincial jurisdiction, Canadian translators must organize themselves by province. There are associations of translators and interpreters in eight of the 10 provinces and in one of the two territories. Together, these nine associations make up the Canadian Translators and Interpreters Council (CTIC), a national federation which represents Canada on international bodies such as the International Federation of Translators (FIT) and the Regional Centre for North America (RCNA). The RCNA, founded in 1986, provides a link between the CTIC, the American Translators Association (ATA) and Mexico's Asociación de Traductores Profesionales (ATP). The function of CTIC is to coordinate the activities of the member societies and to set standards for governing the practice of translation. For example, CTIC is responsible for organizing the national certification exam for translators, conference interpreters, court interpreters and terminologists. At the 1990 FIT World Congress which was held in Belgrade, Jean-François Joly, a Canadian who had served as president of CTIC from 1983 to 1986, was elected president of the worldwide federation.

The second reason for the proliferation of translators' associations has to do with the increased level of specialization in the profession. Since the mid-1970s, there has been a marked tendency for translators to group themselves into associations which reflect their fields of interest. Apart from the provincial associations, there are two associations for visual language interpreters, an association of literary translators, and an association of Schools of Translation (CAST), to name but a few. Within the OTIAQ, separate committees have been created for terminologists, conference interpreters and court interpreters. Other groups bring together translators who specialize in education, in health or who work in the pharmaceutical industry. Moreover, at the initiative of Judith Woodsworth of Concordia University, a learned society of translation scholars was also founded in 1987: the Canadian Association for Translation Studies (CATS), the first of its kind in the world. Its primary objective is to promote and disseminate research in translation and related fields.

Publications

Canada is not only the promised land in terms of professional associations, it is also a country where publications on translation abound. Since 1940, a new translation, interpreting or terminology periodical has been launched on average every two years. Well-known scholarly periodicals include *Meta* (1955–), which is published by the Presses de l'Université de Montréal, and *TTR* (1988–), the official journal of CATS. Some examples of professional or literary periodicals include *Terminology Update* (1968–), *Ellipse* (1969–), the OLF's *Terminogramme* (1979–), and OTIAQ's magazine *Circuit* (1983–). In 1990, *Circuit* was awarded the FIT prize for the best periodical published by a FIT member association.

So, just as translators' associations have become increasingly specialized, so too have translation publications.This is true not only of periodicals but also of books. Until the 1960s, translators such as Sylva Clapin, Léon Gérin, Léon Lorrain, Pierre DAVIAULT and Hector Carbonneau produced glossaries, vocabularies, bilingual dictionaries and works on usage. From 1970 onwards, a different type of book appeared on the market: the terminology and translation textbook. The titles that follow are just a few examples of books of this type: Irène de Buisseret (*Guide du traducteur*, 1972, revised and reprinted in 1975 as *Deux langues, six idiomes*); Geoffrey Vitale, Michel Sparer and Robert Larose (*Guide de la traduction appliquée*, I: 1978; II: 1980); Robert Dubuc (*Manuel pratique de terminologie*, 1978); Jean Delisle (*L'Analyse du discours comme méthode de traduction*, 1980, *La Traduction raisonnée*, 1993); Guy Rondeau (*Introduction à la terminologie*, 1981); Claude Bédard (*La Traduction technique*, 1986); Robert Larose (*Théories contemporaines de la traduction*, 1989). The history of translation is another field that seems to attract Canadian translation scholars, as evidenced by the following titles: Louis G. Kelly (*The True Interpreter*, 1979); Paul A. Horguelin (*Anthologie de la manière de traduire*, 1981); Jean Delisle (*Bridging the Language Solitudes*, 1984; *Translation in Canada, 1534–1984*, 1987; *The Language Alchemists*, 1990); Annie Brisset (*Sociocritique de la traduction. Théâtre et altérité au Québec, 1968–1988*, 1990). The predominance of books on translation pedagogy in the above list indicates the importance that translator training has assumed in Canada since the late 1960s.

Training

Professional translation has been taught at the University of Ottawa since 1936, at McGill University in Montréal since 1943, and at the Université de Montréal since 1951.

With the publication of their renowned *Stylistique comparée du français et de l'anglais* in 1958, Jean DARBELNET (1904–90) and Jean-Paul Vinay (1910–) made a substantial contribution to translation pedagogy and have long since achieved international recognition for their work. They laid the groundwork for what Vinay himself called the 'Canadian school of translation' (Vinay 1958: 148). Translators and terminologists belonging to this school have shared a common tendency to focus on the concrete reality of language, rather than on abstract principles, and believe that 'the primary goal of an adequate translation theory is to facilitate the act of translating' (Vinay 1975: 17; translated).

In 1968, the translation section of the linguistics department at the Université de Montréal, chaired at the time by André Clas, offered the first full-time three-year programme leading to a degree in translation. Soon after, the degree became known as a BA Specialization (similar to an Honour's Degree). Translation pedagogy flourished in the 1970s. Right across the country, but especially in Québec and Ontario, universities began to offer translator training programmes. Between 1968 and 1984, a new translation programme of one kind or another was launched every year, a new bachelor's programme every two years, and a new master's programme every four years. There are now over 1500 students enrolled on translation programmes across the country.

The rapid growth of translator training since the late 1960s is reflected in numerous publications on teaching methods as well as a significant number of conferences devoted wholly, or in part, to this topic. On 5 November 1955, Canadian translators held their first general meeting in Montréal. Since

that historic meeting, they have organized an average of three to five conferences, seminars or meetings annually.

The proliferation of professional associations, specialized publications, training programmes and conferences reflects the importance of translation in Canada. In addition, a true spirit of cooperation exists between professional associations, professional translators and university teachers of translation. This tripartite cooperation has led to the development of a variety of translation tools, machine translation systems and terminology banks. It has also resulted in translator training programmes that are better adapted to the needs of the market. Cooperation lies at the heart of the Canadian tradition and accounts for the current achievements of Canadian translators.

Literary translation

Although Canada is officially bilingual, the volume of literary translation is small compared to the mass of non-literary texts that are translated on a regular basis. According to the *Index Translationum* (1986), the Netherlands publishes 11 times more literary translations than Canada, Sweden six times more, and Finland and Portugal twice as much. In Canada, there is a tendency to use the term 'literary translation' to refer not only to novels, poetry, essays and drama but also to works in the humanities and social sciences.

Literary translation as a genre made its début around 1960: 'Before 1960 no significant novel was translated' (Stratford 1977: v). Prior to that time, Canada had produced no more than 60-odd titles (mainly accounts of French explorers and voyagers), half of which were translated and published elsewhere: in England, France or the United States. The relative success of literary translation since the 1960s can be attributed to the introduction of the Canada Council's Translation Grants Programme in 1972, the increase in the number of Québec and English-Canadian publishing houses, and the foundation in 1975 of the Association of Literary Translators, which gave literary translators what Philip Stratford called a 'collective sense of identity' (1977: viii). Few translators are able to make a living out of literary translation alone, even today. Most are academics, civil servants, journalists, salaried translators within corporations, or freelancers. One exception worthy of mention is Sheila Fischman (1937–), who has translated over 30 books into English over the course of 15 years. These included works by some of the best-known Québec authors, such as Anne Hébert, Marie-Claire Blais, Michel Tremblay, Jacques Poulin, Victor-Lévy Beaulieu, Yves Beauchemin and Roch Carrier.

Economic factors have contributed to the low volume of literary translation in Canada. The going rate for translators working in the commercial or administrative sector is twice the maximum rate paid by the Canada Council. Initially a mere five cents per word, this rate was still only 10 cents per word in 1993. Nevertheless, the Council's Translation Grants Programme has encouraged many publishers to launch translation collections. The Montréal-based publishing house Le Cercle du Livre de France (known today as Les Éditions Pierre Tisseyre) was the first to launch such a series, in 1973, under the title *Collection des Deux Solitudes* (after Hugh MacLennan's novel *Two Solitudes*, 1945). The two solitudes refer to Canada's two main language groups, Francophones and Anglophones, who live side by side without really understanding one another. One of the specific objectives of the federal grants program is to enable Canadians to become better acquainted with the other solitude through literature. In 1989, the publishing house Québec-Amérique launched a new series of translations called *Littérature d'Amérique*. Les éditions Boréal also publishes translated works. English literary translations are published primarily by the following smaller presses: Harvest House, House of Anansi, New Press, Porcépic, Exile, Coach House, Talonbooks, Tundra, Guernica and NC Library.

As far as poetry is concerned, the magazine *Ellipse* (1969–) publishes translations of poetry by one English and one French poet in each issue. This magazine has introduced its readers to a large number of Québecois and English-Canadian poets and has brought together a distinguished and ever-growing group of translators of poetry. Members of this group have included John Glassco (1909–81), Frank R. Scott (1899–1985), D. G. Jones, Jacques Brault, Judith Cowan, Robert and

universities of Wales, Edinburgh and Manchester. In 1937, he went to America where he became an instructor in French at Harvard University (1938–9). In 1940, he moved to Canada, where he was to spend the rest of his life and to develop an international reputation as a translation scholar. He taught first at McGill University (1940–6), where he set up a three-year programme of night classes in translation, then at Bowdoin College (1946–62) and finally at Laval University (1962–75), where he continued as Professor Emeritus after his retirement. Darbelnet is best known for his seminal work on translation pedagogy, *Stylistique comparée du français et de l'anglais*, which he co-authored with Jean-Paul Vinay and published in 1958.

DAVIAULT, Pierre (1899–1964). Canadian translator, journalist, scholar, and a pioneer in the field of translator training. While working as a translator for parliament, he proposed to the rector of the University of Ottawa that a course in professional translation should be offered; he then proceeded to teach that very course for 27 years. An expert translator and Superintendent of the Translation Bureau from 1955 to 1964, Daviault also produced numerous publications on translation history and lexicography, for example *Langage et traduction* (1961).

DORION, Eugène-Philippe (1830–72). Canadian lawyer, translator and scholar. Appointed translator in the Assembly of the Province of Canada in 1855, Dorion was called upon to head its French translators' bureau in 1859, a post that he held subsequently with the House of Commons in Ottawa until 1870. His contemporaries spoke highly of his knowledge of classical languages, as well as of English, French and some Indian languages. He is believed to have improved the stylistic quality of legislation translated into French.

EVANS, James (1801–46). A native of Kingston-upon-Hull in England, the Reverend James Evans, a Methodist minister, made an invaluable contribution to the spread of the Gospel in Canada by devising a writing system for Indian languages. While working in Upper Canada (Ontario), he learned Ojibway and other Indian languages and translated passages from the Bible and the catechism, as well as several hymns. Using his knowledge of shorthand, he then devised a syllabic form of writing for Ojibway. After his transfer to Norway House in Manitoba, Evans learned the Cree language and, in 1840, modified his syllabic system to suit the peculiarities of Cree. This system could be learned in a few hours. Evans became known as 'the man who made birchbark talk', because he used birch bark instead of paper and transcribed the characters of his syllabic script on it with soot. Protestant and Roman Catholic missionaries alike adopted his syllabic system to help them carry out their evangelical work with the Indians. Evans left behind numerous translations of religious texts which he had printed himself on a makeshift press. In 1861, 15 years after his death, the British and Foreign Bible Society in London produced the entire Bible in Cree syllabics.

Evans' syllabic system was later adapted to Inuktitut by two missionaries, John Horden and E. A. Watkins. Their efforts enabled Edmund Peck to translate many biblical works into syllabics, a task he began in 1876 (Harper 1983).

ERASMUS, Peter (1833–1931). A native of Red River, Manitoba, Peter Erasmus was the son of a Danish man and a Metis woman and a legendary figure in the Canadian West. Over the course of his long life, he served as interpreter, translator, guide, explorer, mapper's assistant, prospector, farmer, fur trader, government employee and teacher. He helped bring peace and Christianity to numerous Indian tribes, interpreted hundreds of sermons, and translated long excerpts from the Bible and from prayer books into Cree. He transcribed Cree using the Latin alphabet (he must have been unaware of the syllabic writing form that James EVANS had developed). Like Jerry POTTS and Champlain's interpreters, he spent several years as a resident interpreter. In addition to English, Erasmus spoke Cree, Ojibway and

Blackfoot; he could even read Greek. Through his own personal efforts, numerous treaties were signed, including a well-known treaty which was negotiated in 1876 by the lieutenant-governor of Manitoba and the Northwest Territories, Alexander Morris. Chief Ah-tuk-a-kup (Star Blanket) told the members of his Band Council: 'Peter Erasmus is learned in the language the Governor speaks. [. . .] He is here to open our eyes and ears to the words that you and I cannot understand' (Erasmus 1976: 246). When the negotiations were completed, the lieutenant-governor told Erasmus: 'You are the first man I ever heard who interpreted to such a large audience without making a mistake' (Erasmus 1976: 244). In payment for the five days that the negotiations lasted, he received $290, the equivalent of a full year's earnings for a trapper. That same year, he was hired by the government as an interpreter at a salary of $600 a year, a substantial sum in those days.

POTTS, Jerry (*c.*1837–96). Fatherless at two years of age, Metis Jerry Potts lived among the fur traders in Canada. His daily contact with the Indians gave him the opportunity to learn Cree and Sioux, in addition to Blackfoot, his mother tongue. In 1873, after working for various trading companies, he joined the North West Mounted Police (known today as the Royal Canadian Mounted Police) as an interpreter, diplomat, peace-maker and negotiator. When interpreting from an Indian language into English, he was apparently terse; some said that 'he spoke a strange English' (Fardy 1984: 74). But when he interpreted into a native language, he spoke passionately and eloquently. Throughout his career, the 'paladin of the plains' as they called him enjoyed the respect of white men and natives alike, a rare occurrence in a period marked by high racial tension.

JEAN DELISLE

Chinese tradition

Chinese, a Sino-Tibetan language, is an official language of the United Nations and is spoken by more people than any other language in the world. It is the official language of the People's Republic of China and Taiwan, one of the official languages in Hong Kong and Singapore, and is spoken by a large section of the population in Thailand, Malaysia and Vietnam.

The Chinese language of high antiquity, which goes back to the first millennium BC, has remained accessible to educated speakers of Chinese by virtue of having been recorded in the form of characters, i.e. ideographs. Unlike a phonetic script, ideographs are not affected by phonological evolution and are therefore largely immune to change. Inevitably, however, the spoken language developed along its own lines, and the gap between the written and spoken word grew wider and wider. By the time a literature in the vernacular emerged, the spoken form was already quite distinct from classical Chinese. The vernacular did not replace classical Chinese as the medium of formal written discourse until the first half of the twentieth century.

Classical Chinese is characterized by

(a) its high density, often compared to the style of telegrams
(b) its grammatical versatility, whereby the same character can function as a noun, verb, adjective or adverb
(c) its sparing use of tense and number
(d) its tonality, a feature which is particularly relevant in literary composition and hence in literary translation.

These characteristics have traditionally led to wide differences in interpretation, particularly evident in the case of translation. The vernacular language, now known as Mandarin or *putonghua*, is heavily polysyllabic, has more definite word classes, and makes much more use of grammatical markers, though by no means as extensively or obligatorily as, say, French or German. Translation from European languages, predominantly English, has progressively brought modern Chinese closer to those languages, at least in terms of writing styles.

A vast country with scores of regional languages, China has probably witnessed translation and interpreting activities since the first tribal battle or produce-exchange. Early