Milan V. Dimic

TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETATION
IN BICULTURAL AND MULTICULTURAL SOCIETIES

Today I will be speaking to you for some forty or fifty minutes about the place and role of translation and interpretation in past and present bicultural and multicultural states and societies. I will also touch upon some of the institutionalized attempts to resolve communication problems associated with bi- or multiculturalism. Vast as it is, this topic is only one segment of the even broader general question of translation and interpretation, with all its linguistic, semiotic, psychological, sociological and other aspects.

In 1968, prefacing his booklet on the linguistic problems of newly independent bilingual or multilingual states, *The National Language Question*, R. B. Le Page confessed that because of his limited "experience of the problems discussed" (limited, he said, to only fourteen years' teaching and research), he was obliged to plagiarize freely from appropriate sources.[1] Having myself experienced bilingual and multilingual situations from childhood, but lacking Le Page's research, I will have to reproduce a great number of reliable sources even more closely,[2] meditating at the same time and not without mortification upon

---

[1] R. B. Le Page, *The National Language Question: Linguistic Problems of Newly Independent States*. London-New York: Oxford U. P., 1964, p. vi.

[2] For a preliminary survey of sources and useful suggestions, I am indebted to two of our Ph. D. candidates specializing in problems of literary translations, Mr. Jože Lazar and Mr. William Ulrich. I would like to thank them again for their reliable work.
About bilingualism and multilingualism in general: M. Beziers and M. Van Overbeke, *Le Bilinguisme : Essai de définition et guide bibliographique*. Louvain: Université Catholique de Louvain, 1968 (=Cahiers de l'Institut des Langues vivantes, 13); W. F. Mackey, *Bilinguism as a World Problem / Le Bilinguisme phénomène* mondial. Montreal : Harvest House, 1967; W. F. Mackey, Ed., *Bibliographie internationale du bilinguisme /* International *Bibliography on Bilinguism*. Quebec: Les Presses de l'Université de Laval, 1972; A. Tabouret-Keller, "Plurilinguisme", *Encyclopaedia Universalis*, v. 13 (Paris, 1973), pp. 183-187; V. Vildomec, *Multilingualism*. Leiden: Sythoff, 1963; U. Weinreich, *Languages in Contact, Findings and Problems*. New York: Linguistic Circle of New York, 1953 (The Hague: Mouton, 1963).
About the distribution of languages and their statistics: S. I. Bruk and V. S. Apečenko, *Atlas narodov*

Montaigne's words about experience (*Essais*, 1.III, ch. 13):

> "Il y a plus affaire à interpreter les interpretations qu'à interpreter les choses, et plus de livres sur les livres que sur autre subject: nous ne faisons que nous entregloser."

The basic situation in a human exchange of meaningful communication can be described as a dialogue. No wonder that dialogue has today become a concept with ontological, religious, ethical, and pedagogical implications, and that it plays a role in philosophical statements about society and history. The most recent German historical dictionary of philosophy concludes that "für die Dialog Philosophie des 20. Jh. bedeutet 'Dialog' ein Gespräch, das durch wechselseitige Mitteiling jeder Art zu einem interpersonalen 'Zwischen', d.h. zu einem den Partnern gemeinsamen Sinnbestand führt."[3] Thomas Mann, who expressed in his works many of the mainstreams of 19th and 20th century Western thought, has the humanistic Herr Settembrini exclaim to Hans Castorp, the educational object of the *Magic Mountain (Der Zauberberg*, ch. 6): "Die Sprache ist die Gesittung selbst... Das Wort, selbst das widersprechendste, ist so verbindend... Aber die

---

mira. Moskva: Akademija nauk, 1964; A Meillet adn M. Cohen, *Les Langues du monde*. Paris: Champion, 1952; S. H. Muller, *The World's Living Languages*. New York: Ungar, 1964; W. Schmidt, *Die Sprachfamilien und Sprachkreise der Erde*. Heidelberg: Winter, 1926.

A wealth of relevant facts can be found in specialized journals, of which one was checked systematically: *Babel, Révue internationale de la traduction*, Organe officiel de la Fédération Internationale des Traducteurs (=FIT), Avignon, 1955ff. As a last resort, the following general sources were used: *Encyclopaedia Universalis* (1968ff.), *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1974) and the United Nations *Population and Vital Statistics Report*.

[3] "For the dialogue philosophy of the 20th century, 'dialogue' means a discourse which, using all kinds of mutual communication, achieves an interpersonal 'inbetween', i.e. establishes a meaning common to both participants." J. Heinrichs, "Dialog, dialogisch", J. Ritter, Ed., *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, v. II (Basel-Darmstadt: Schwabe and Co., Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1972), pp. 226-229, quote on p. 226.

Wortlosigkeit vereinsamt."[4] And more than a century earlier Hölderlin, in his "Friendensfeierode", in verses defying imitation, links knowledge and experience with dialogue and man's very essence:

> "Viel hat von Morgen an,
> Seit ein Gespräch wir sind und hören voneinander,
> Erfahren der Mensch..."[5]

To converse, within this meaning, implies always the acquisition of speech-habits in such a way that an individual's responses will be easily recognized for what they are and will stimulate responses from others which he in turn can understand. No two individuals, with the possible exception of identical twins, can hope to achieve this perfect communion, so that both in practice and in principle communication implies the transformation of unknown or lesser known signs and concepts into more familiar or fully grasped terms. The two words usually designating this process are translation and interpretation. Leaving aside, for the purposes of this paper, transformations from one representational system into another, we are left, first of all, with the act, process or instance of translating, i.e. rendering from one (natural) language into another. In its intuitive way, well before philosophers and even poets, language itself has developed symbolic connotations within the words used to describe this activity.[6] The English term and similar words in all Romance languages were developed from

---

[4] "The language is civilization itself... The word, even the most contradictory one, unites... But wordlessness isolates."

[5] "Much, from the morning onwards,
Since we have been a discourse and have heard from one another, Has human kind learnt..." (transl. M. Hamburger, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966, p. 439).

[6] This passage is based on standard etymological dictionaries. Cf. also: W. Koller, *Grundprobleme der Übersetzungstheorie: Unter besonderer Berücksichtigung schwedisch-deutscher Übersetzungsfälle.* Bern-München: Francke, 1972, pp. 11ff.; G. Mounin, *Die Übersetzung: Geschichte, Theorie, Anwendung.* München: Nymphenburger, 1967, pp. 14ff.

the Latin suppletive participle *transferre*, which means to translate, but also to transfer, to transpose as if to transport from one shore of a river to another; the same applies to the German *übersetzen* and *Übersetzung* (which Heidegger links with *Überlieferung*)[7] as well as to the Russian *perevodít* and *perevód* (cf. e.g. *perevesti na druguju storonu ulicy*). The Latin *interpretatio* at first meant the explanation of what is not immediately plain or explicit (*interpres iuris* and *interpres poetarum*), reminding one of the Latin *pretium* (value), and therefore of "to give, explain value", and of the Greek *hermēneutikos*, to interpret, to understand properly. As a result, the meaning in both languages became: the act or the result of translating from one language into another. This was initially used both for written and oral translation, the latter meaning dominating at least since the 12th century. The German *Dolmetscher* (from the MhG *tolmetze*), the Russian *tolmač*, and the Hungarian *tolmačs* go back to the Osmarli Turkish *tilmač*; the English and French *dragoman* (*drogman*) to the Arabic *tartuman*, the old Arabic *targoman* and this probably to the Aramaic *targum* and Mitannic *talami* and to the Assyrian *ragamy*, all meaning "to interpret", but also simply to be able to talk.

In his memorable memorial lecture at McGill in 1966, W. F. Mackey made the point "that bilingualism, far from being exceptional, is a problem which affects the majority of the world's population".[8] He then documented this claim most convincingly (although he never stated, as someone did in a short note published in *Babel*, 1968, Nº. 3, p. 192, that 70% of all men are bilingual). Although we still lack a detailed historical survey of the phenomenon, it is safe to state that this situation has existed from before the dawn of civilization. The Austrian anthropologist Hugo Bernatzik has found, in this century, that the primitive tribesmen of Upper Laos live in isolated small groups, but that "fast jeder von ihnen sprach ausser einer eigenen Sprache noch eine oder zwei andere, je nachdem, mit welchen

---

[7] M. Heidegger, "Aus 'Der Satz vom Grund'", H. J. Störing, Ed., *Das Problem des Übersetzens*, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1969 (=Wege der Forschung, 8), pp. 369-383, part. p. 375.

[8] Mackey, *Bilingualism*, p. 11.

Bergvölkern er in Berührung gekommen war."[9] Lévi-Strauss makes similar observations about the most primitive and isolated tribes in the jungles of the Amazon river bed.[10]

Some of the oldest records about translation and institutionalized interpretation have been preserved from Old Egypt.[11] According to Herodotus (II, 164), the people of that country were divided into seven classes, one of which was the interpreters. These were needed not only for frequent external wars, diplomatic and trade relationships, but also to cope with internal situations. Although the laudatory term *rmt* (man) was reserved for those speaking Egyptian, while all others were (as later in Greece) barbarians, there are signs that during the old empire chief interpreters in Elephantine (e.g. during the reign of Neferirka-Re, cca 2500 years B.C.) and in Memphis were among the highest dignitaries of the realm, and that languages were methodically taught during the new empire (1610-715). The oldest bilingual records are the 15th century B.C. Tell-El'Amarna letters in Egyptian and Akkadian; according to Herodotus, the Pharao Psammetic (663-610 B.C.) entrusted Egyptian boys for their education to Greek settlers in the delta of the Nile, and organized a corps of interpreters. The famous Rosetta-stone from the 2nd century B.C. is in Greek, as well as hieroglyphic and demotic Egyptian, again primarily for internal state reasons. At the apogée of Greek influence and presence, groups of Hellenistic teachers and scribes in Alexandria produced innumerable translations and glosses on readily available papyri. It is not known for certain if at some time Pythagoras and Thales really visited Egypt, but Solon, Herodotus and Plato

---

[9] "almost every one of them spoke, beside his own language, one or two others, depending on the mountain tribes he had to deal with." H. Bernatzik, *Die Geister der gelben Blätter*. Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1941, p. 137.

[10] C. Lévi-Strauss, *Tristes Tropiques*. Paris: Union génerale d'editions, 1955.

[11] For the passage about Old Egypt A. Hermann, "Dolmetschen im Altertum. Ein Beitrag zur antiken Kulturgeschichte." K. O.Tthieme, A. Hermann and E. Gläser, *Beiträge zur Geschichte des Dolmetschens*. München: Schriften des Auslands- und Dolmetscherinstituts (der Universität Mainz), v. 1, 1956, pp. 25-60, part. pp. 26-30; cf. also Koller, p. 13; S. Kovganjuk, *Praktika perekladu (z dosvidu pereladača)*. Kijv: Dnipro, 1968, pp. 53f.; Mackey, *Bilingualism*, p. 50, 53; Mounin, p. 23; H. Pohling, "Zur Geschichte der Übersetzung", *Studien zur Übersetzungswissenschaft (=Beihefte zur Zeitschrift Fremdsprachen*, ¾). Leipzig: VEB Verl. Enzyklopädie, 1971, pp. 125f.

sojourned there and found themselves quite at home. The truth of the matter is that Egypt had at least five major periods of official bilingualism: under Persian rule from 525 B.C. until 323 B.C.; under Greek kings until about 146 B.C.; under the Romans until about 640 A.D.; from that time on for almost ten centuries under Arab dominance, and since 1517 under a Turkish government. Still, Egyptian remained a living tongue until the 18th century, and during the last two or three centuries the inhabitants of Egypt have spoken, in significant numbers, Arabic, Turkish, Coptic, Hebrew, French and English.

The Mesopotamian civilization gave rise to the Assyrian and Babylonian multi-national states.[12] In the third millenium B.C., Sargon of Assyria proclaimed his victories in the many languages of his realm. The Babylonian language itself was a Semitic development of the old tongues of Sumeria and Akkad, so that in the times of Hammurabi (about 2100 B.C.) the city was truly multilingual, with professionals translating the old language into the popular Aramaic, into Old Persian, Egyptian, Hittite and other languages of the Middle East. There were special offices with scribes, usually one for each important language. It is significant that almost a fourth of the tablets found in the royal library at Nineveh are devoted to dictionaries and grammars of Sumerian, Babylonian and Assyrian. The population of Assyria proper was a mixture of Semites from the civilized south (Babylonia and Akkadia) with non-Semitic tribes from the west (probably of Hittite and Mitannian affinity) and Kurdish mountaineers from the Caucasus. The Old Testament abounds in references to translations and to interpreters; one of the better known passages in Daniel (I, 4) mentions that Nebuchadnezzar in the 6th century B.C. ordered Jewish teenagers to be trained in Chaldean.[13] The Aramaic language, especially in its written form–perhaps because of its superior Phoenician script–was the second language of most cultivated people and for centuries a *lingua franca* of the Middle East.[14] Interpreters were, it seems, sometimes

---

[12] For the passage about Assyria adn Babylonia: Kovganjuk, pp. 53f.; M. Lambert, "La Traduction il y a 4000 ans", *Babel*, v. 10 (1964), pp. 17-20; Pohling, p. 126.

[13] Koller, pp. 14f.; Pohling, p. 126.

[14] Mackey, *Bilingualism*, p. 40, 46.

organized in guilds so that some 1800 years B.C., the multilingual city of Cappadocia had a *rabi targumann*ē, a chief dragoman.[15] In general, the interpreter was, in all mid-eastern civilizations, the privileged middleman between men and barbarians, even between the language of men and the language of the gods (and, when a healer, an intermediary who had access to the languages of demons).[16] As Hermes was later, the Egyptian Thot was a god of languages and a mediator.

The Persian Empire, ruled by a military power using mainly Old Persian at first (a language closely related to Sanskrit) and later also Zend and Pahlavi, comprised a considerable number of bilingual zones, albeit in each zone the number of bilingual people was small.[17] Darius I caused his carvers to engrave in the mountains of Media a record of his deeds in Old Persian, Assyrian and Babylonian. Alexander the Great, who on his conquests in Central Asia used Persian, Hyrcanian, Sogdian and Indian interpreters, organized what was probably the first large-scale school of languages when he ordered that, in the interest of the new multicultural state, thirty thousand Persian boys should master Greek.[18]

The Indian subcontinent,[19] initially inhabited by pre-Aryan tribes and nations speaking, among others, old Dravidian languages, was over-run by Aryans using Sanskrit out of which a whole family of languages developed: Pra-Urit, Pali, Hindi, Hindustani, Urdu, Bengali–today about one hundred in number. Smaller and sometimes major parts of the subcontinent were invaded and ruled by Persians (at the time of Cyrus and Darius), Greeks (Alexander and his successors), Scythians, Parthians, Tocharians, Hunns, Turks, Arabs, Mongols, Portugese, Dutch, French and English, creating an intricate web of multilingual and multucultural political and social entities.

---

[15] Pohling, p. 126.

[16] Hermann, pp. 34f.; Koller, pp. 13ff.

[17] Mackey, *Bilingualism*, pp. 35f.; Pohling, p. 126.

[18] Koller, p. 15.

[19] For the Indian subcontinent i.a. Le Page, pp. 53-63.

China[20] remained a multinational, multicultural and multilingual state throughout its thousands of years of changing frontiers and political structures, a state counting among its inhabitants, beside the "true" Chinese, Mongols, Turks, Tungus, Thai, Tibeto-Burman and people of other tongues. In addition, the spoken language has in time diverged from the written and from the standard "mandarin", into a hundred dialects some differing to the point of mutual unintelligibility. The Chinese have themselves contributed to the creation of bilingual and multilingual zones: besides spawning important colonies in South Eastern Asia, they incorporated into their political sphere Korea for four and Viet Nam for ten centuries, and decisively marked the culture of Japan for at least a thousand years. Insular Japan[21] was not only submitted to this Chinese influence, but also received a very important Korean immigration, particularly during the 3rd and 4th centuries A.D. Large parts of older Japanese literature were written in Chinese (which should not be mistaken for a similar language) and the knowledge of other languages was not limited to priests, clerks, traders and officials.

To combat a similar pre-eminence of Chinese influences, the Mongolian scholars in the Middle Ages chose on purpose we are told, the classical Tibetan (instead of the Chinese) to serve in many ways as Latin was serving at that time in Europe.[22]

Graeco-Roman antiquity[23] continued mid-eastern practices. The interpreter was the mediator between man and man and between man and God from Homer to Plato to

---

[20] For China i.a.: W. Bauer, *Western Literature and Translation Work in Communist China*. Frankfurt/M.-Berlin: A. Matzner, 1964; O. Lattimore, *Inner Asian Frontiers of China*. New York: American Geographic Society, 1951 (new ed. Boston, 1962), Le Page, pp. 16f., 19f. and 30.

[21] For Japan, i.a. M. Inoue, *Japan: Its Land, People and Culture*. Tokio, 1958.

[22] B. Rintchen, "Histoire de la traduction oïrato-mongole", *Babel*, v. 15 (1969), pp. 15-16.

[23] H. S. Gehman, *The Interpreters of Foreign Languages Among the Ancients: A Study Based on Greek and Latin Sources*. Diss. Lancaster, Pa., 1914; Hermann, op. cit.; Koller, pp. 14ff.; *Lexikon der Alter Welt*. Zürich-Stuttgart, 1965, s. v. "Übersetzungen"; Mackey, *Bilinguism*, pp. 22, 24f., 36f., 40ffé, 46ff.; Mounin, pp. 23ff.; Pohlmann, pp. 127ff.; H. E. Richter, *Übersetzen und Übersetzungen in der römischen Literatur*. Diss. Coburg, 1938. The Themistocles anecdote, from Plutarch, is quoted in R. Lederer, "The Role of the Interpreter in the Modern World", *Babel*, v. 13 (1967), pp. 144-148, this pp. 144f.

Augustinus and Isidore; his practical role in foreign missions, trade and domestic administration is attested by Herodotus, Livius, Plinius, Plutarch, Polybius, Xenophon and many others. His was an exposed position, therefore often dangerous: Themistocles had an interpreter executed on the spot because he had dared to used the Greek language to transmit an offensive message from the Persians.

It is well known that some of the basic dilemmas of translation have been formulated by Cicero and Horace; it is commonly less clearly perceived that the world of the Greeks and the Romans was, by definition, a multilingual world which in its last millenium boasted two dominating languages. It took the Greeks five centuries to settle Greece alone–as long as it took the Romans to establish Latin in all of Italy (before the 5th century, B.C., it had been merely one among several dialects spoken in the peninsula and was largely overshadowed by Etruscan). The Greeks established important settlements in Asia Minor, Egypt, North Africa, Sicily, South Italy, the Dalmatian Coast, Southern France and Spain; the Romans expanded their power step by step throughout the Mediterranean world, organizing Roman communities around fortresses and, under particular conditions, extending Roman citizenship to the colonized areas. They exported a way of life and a way of communicating instead of a nationhood based on race and common history. Wherever they settled, the Greeks and the Romans instituted private elementary schools and educated a bilingual or trilingual elite which held the new commonwealth together. The conqueror and the conquered had to know each other's language for centuries because, to quote two examples only, Gaulish was still alive in the 4th century A.D. and Iberian dialects in the 5th. Romanized Britains had a command of Celtic and Latin; much later, after the invasion by the Francs, Gauls who were by then latinized, became bilingual again.

Even later, when the Normans arrived in Sicily, Greek and Arabic were still the written languages of the island. In Byzantium, Greek was the official language until the 15th century. There are many documents explaining Roman practices when confronted with foreign languages; in its usual efficient way, the Roman state had a central service of interpreters (*interpretes diversarum gentium*) under the authority of the *magister officiorum*, who was responsible for external affairs.

But "internal" use was just as important. Be it mentioned in passing to an audience interested in literature that few of the important Latin authors were Roman by birth. As enumerated by W. F. Mackey, the first, Livius Andronicus, was a Greek slave translating the *Odyssey*; Seneca, Quintilian, Martial, Lucan, Orosius, Prudentius, and Isidore of Seville were all from Spain; Virgil, Catullus, Livy, and the two Plinys were of Celtic origin; Horace and Ovid were Oscan; Cicero was Volscian; Varro was from Gaul.[24] All educated Romans were supposed to know Greek as a second language (*utrusque linguae*). Cicero's Greek address to the critical Syracusean Senate shows that this knowledge was not exclusively used for artistic and philosophical purposes.

The archenemy of Rome, Carthage, had multilingual armies with specialized interpreters, and Latin oratory was taught at its best schools.[25]

The introduction of Christianity, the end of the Western Roman Empire and the great migrations of the last centuries of antiquity and the early middle ages created innumerable new multilingual and multicultural communities with relatively swiftly changing frontiers and needs. While preserving Latin as its unifying language, the Catholic church engaged in missionary activities which involved systematic efforts to translate and interpret the Bible and other religious texts.[26] Monasteries and religious orders, courts and armies had interpreters. The French courts and armies of the Middle Ages had specialists carrying the name of *trucheman* (from *tarðumān*) or *maistre latimier* (which meant master of all languages); indeed, the *chansons de geste* mention interpreters who boasted of knowing 13, 30 and 100 languages.[27] Medieval interpreters were needed for spiritual and material matters which would now be considered as belonging both to "foreign" and to "interior" affairs; thus,

---

[24] Mackey, *Bilinguism*, p. 22.

[25] Mackey, *Bilinguism*, p. 44; Pohlmann, p. 156 n. 18.

[26] For mediaeval translation practices cf. i.a.: A. V. Fedorov, *Osnovy Obščej teorii perevoda*. ³Moskva: Vysšaja škola, 1968, pp. 51ff.; Koller, pp. 16f.; Kovganjuk, pp. 53f.; Mounin, pp. 25ff.; Pohlmann, pp. 130ff.

[27] Koller, pp. 17f.

for instance, in German-speaking countries the system of laws and customs was in German, and decisions and judgements were made orally in that language and then translated into written Latin.[28]

One of the most important events since the 7th century was the rapid spread of Islam and the concomitant rise of Arabic. It became a new and highly important international language, used from India and Persia to North Africa and Spain. In the armies which invaded Spain, there were, it seems, only a few hundred Arabs and thousands of Copts and Berbers, but Arabic was the language of command and by the year 740 A.D. all slaves were required to learn this tongue.[29] Bilingualism in Moorish Spain is a controversial subject,[30] but it is probable that the majority of Muslims, whether of Spanish, Arabic, or Berber origin, were bilingual from the third generation after the invasion of 711. More specifically, the Toledan Mozarabs were bilingual, using Arabic until the 13th century; in Saragossa there is evidence of a Romance-speaking population at least until the 11th century; the Mozarabs had become bilingual and a large segment of Arabic-speakers remained there until the early 16th century; in Valencia there were large numbers of bilingual Mozarabs at least until the time of the Cid; Murcia was probably bilingual until the mid-thirteenth century; there were isolated bilingual pockets in rural areas surrounding Cordoba; and Seville and Granada were bilingual until after the 12th century, then unilingual with Arabic as the sole language until the capitulation, and then bilingual again for a generation or two. In the bordering Christian and Muslim kingdoms of the North, there are many examples of bilingual retainers and monarchs, especially in the 11th and 12th centuries. Arabic-Hispano-Romance bilingualism, according to B. B. Thompson, appears to have been common among the officials and poets of the era. Is it surprising to see that probably the oldest school of translators and interpreters was

---

[28] Ph. Heck, *Übersetzungsprobleme im frühen Mittelalter*. Tübingen, 1931, p. 2; same Pohlmann, p. 131.

[29] Mackey, *Bilingualism*, p. 38.

[30] B. R. Thompson, "Bilingualism in Moorish Spain", Diss. U. of Virginia, 1970 (Univ. Microfilms, Ann Arbor, Michigan).

established in Toledo in the 12th century? It lasted for at least a century and a half and trained Mozarabs and Spaniards, as well as converted Jews and some Englishmen, within a strict curriculum comprising lectures and exercises. Team-work was favoured and all known languages taught.[31] There are speculations that a similar but more modest school of Oriental languages existed at the University of Paris towards the middle of the 13th century.[32]

There are other striking examples of bilingual and multilingual, bicultural and multicultural states: the Carolingian states as shown by the trilingual *Strassburger Eide*, usually seen as the official birthdate of both German and French; England after the Normanic conquest; Byzantium; the Balkans under the Ottomans; mid-eastern states created during the Crusades; and the different Roman Empires of the German Nation (or the so-called Holy Roman Empire). Increasingly, Latin was not the only language for important communications, as can be illustrated by a famous Hungarian anecdote:

Ferdinand, the first Haspburg emperor who rule Hungary, received in 1530, while staying in Budapest, an important letter form the Sultan. Nobody could read it, so it lay around for a few weeks, and was at last translated into German. Having been educated in Spain, Ferdinand ordered the German translated into Spanish. The result of the delay and of lost shades of meaning was a diplomatic conflict, then war and at the end 150 years of Turkish occupation.[33]

A neighbouring country, Croatia, was occupied at that time for four centuries by

---

[31] About the school in Toledo: D. M. Dunlop, "The Work of Translation at Toledo", *Babel*, v. 6 (1960), pp. 55-59; Fedorov, pp. 53ff; Mounin, pp. 27f. Pohling, pp. 132f.; H. J. Störing, "Einleitung", *Das Problem des Übersetzens*, pp. Xf.; P. Werrie, "L'Ecole des traducteurs de Tolède", *Babel*, v. 15 (1969), pp. 202-212.

[32] Mounin, p. 192 n. 22.

[33] Recorded in: S. Karcsay, "Le Centenaire de la traduction hongroise officielle", *Babel*, v. 15 (1969), pp. 132-136, this on p. 132.

German-speaking Austrians, by Hungarians who were under the Austrian crown, by the Turkish in eastern parts, by the Italians in Dalmatia. The Italian influence in Dalmatia was so strong and the cultural interpenetration so mutual that the first printed publication of Tasso's *Aminta*, the most famous European pastoral, is not the Italian original, but the Croatian translation of 1580 by Dominko Zlatarić.[34] The capital of Croatia, Zagreb, was by the 19th century so Germanized that Molière was first performed in German, then in Croatian.[35] Some of the tensions in Austria-Hungary can be better grasped in the light of language statistics. Since 1867, i.e. in a period when the doctrines of nationalism had already enflamed all hearts in Europe with the notion of an organic and holy unity of blood, language and territory, the Germans were dominant in Cisleithania, the Hungarians in Transleithania, but both were outnumbered by the Slavs.[36]

Another multilingual imperial monarchy was the Russian state, now the Soviet Union.[37] Military, social, cultural and language conflicts with invading Tartaric tribes, during attacks on Ukrainians, Poles and the Baltic nations are one of the most essential aspects of

[34] Z. Gorjan, "Translators' Activity in Croatia", *Babel*, v. 8 (1962), pp. 194-196, this on p. 194.

[35] Gorjan, p. 195.

[36] For national (and linguistic) tensions in Austria-Hungary cf. e.g. K. Zwitter, *Les Problèmes nationaux dans la Monarchie des Habsbourg*. Belgrade, 1960.

[37] The passages about the U.S.S.R. are based on the following sources: *Aktual 'nye problemy teorii hudožestvennogo perevoda* (Symposium, 1966). Moskva: Sojuz pisatelej S.S.S.R., 1967; P. Bang, "Das Problem der Übersetzung in sowjetrussischer Sicht. Mit Nachtrag», Störing, *Das Problem des Übersetzens*, pp. 384-401; I. S. Braguinsk and N. A. Khalfin, "Traduction des littératures des peuples orientaux en Union Soviètique", *Babel*, v. 8 (1962), pp. 117-120; Fedorov, esp. pp. 115-154; G. Cačečiladze, *Hudožestvennyj perevod i literaturnyje vzajmosvjazi*. Moska: Sovetskij pisatel', 1972; E. Kalashnikova, "Translation in the USSR", Babel, v. 12 (1966), pp. 9-17; Kovganjuk, pp. 54-78 (for older Russian and Ukrainian history), 78-92 (for the period since 1917); W. K. Matthews, *Languages of the U.S.S.R*, New York: Russell and Russell, 1968 (originally Cambridge U.P., 1951); W. Winter, "Translation as Political Action", W. Arrowsmith and R. Shattuck, Eds., *The Craft and Context of Translation*. Austin, Texas: U. of Texas P., 1961, pp. 172-176.

Russian history. Today, the Soviet federation of states provides systematic language teaching in 100 tongues. There are some 200 in all and over 70 are official.

Although Russian is the dominant language (most bilingual persons are of non-Russian origin and this is one of the most direct ways to gauge the relative position of two languages), the amount of "internal" translation and even interpretation is literally staggering in all spheres of life. Great efforts were made for some of the smallest minorities; e.g. for the Adyg, some 90,000 speakers of a Caucasian tongue which before the Revolution lacked writing, or for the Abkhaz who are, with about 60,000 speakers, less numerous than the Navaho Indians (by 1957, there were 2,600,000 copies of translations produced in Abkhaz). In the sixties, about 60% of all published translations were the result of "internal" exchanges in 63 languages.

Time does not allow me more than to mention other multilingual situations in Europe; e.g. Finland, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia or Switzerland, not to speak of the newly-created *Gastarbeiter* category in most countries of Western Europe. Belgium is usually considered a particularly interesting example, one which entered history with a short passage in Caesar (50 B.C.) mentioning that its inhabitants are some Gauls and a majority of Germanic people. The Romanicized Gauls became Wallons (=étranger romanisé), the others Flemish (Flamands). In the 9th century, the division of the Carolingian empire left this territory under the rule of French feudals. Throughout the Middle Ages and in the post-Renaissance bourgeois society, the Flemish have always felt that the language frontier is at the same time a social demarcation. Belgium became independent in 1830, and at first proclaimed three official languages: French, Dutch and German. Official numberings of population accepted two parties or categories: Dutch or Flemish, French or Wallons (the Dutch or Flemish representing a majority, but with Brussels strongly French and all major universities with a French tradition–Gant, Louvain, Brusselles).[38]

---

[38] For Belgium cf. H. Baetens Beardsmore, "Aspects of Plurilingualism among Lower Level Social Groups", *Aspects sociologiques du plurilinguisme* (colloque Bruxelles, 1970). Bruxelles-Paris: AIMAV-Didier, 1971, pp. 76-91; A. J. van Lul, "La Situation linguistic en Belgique", *Babel*, v. 14 (1968), pp. 152-165.

It should be noted that most bilingual and multilingual societies and countries have remained in an uneasy equilibrium (the best being, it seems, the state of Switzerland), but that in some cases the use of force or the sheer weight of a dominant majority has all but eliminated the linguistic physiognomy of minorities (e.g. the Basque in France, the Cornish in Britain–in Ireland the proportion between English monolinguals and Celtic-Irish speakers seems to be 50 to 1).[39] "La raison du plus fort est souvent la meilleure"–this rule seems to have lost nothing of its force even in civilized communities with politically democratic institutions!

Throughout Black Africa[40] a tremendous ethnic diversity is inherited from the past within ever-changing frontiers. There is a large number of languages, dialects, and oral literatures, but an almost complete absence of codification of language. The colonial era, after the Arabic and Haussa, has added Spanish, Portugese, English and French, the latter two languages enjoying a preponderant influence. Two or three examples will suffice to illustrate this general statement. In the People's Republic of Congo, 60 languages are spoken by its one million inhabitants, in Ghana, there are three language families–with English as "common language", and for a period Haussa as the language of the army: two institutions are attempting to cope with this situation: the Bureau of Ghana Languages in Accra and the University of Accra Institute of African Studies. In some of the republics the influences of a European language is so strong that no need for internal translation arises any more; according to Mr. Pierre François Caillé's 1974 survey on "Translators and Translation",[41]

---

[39] Mackey, *Bilingualism*, p. 37.

[40] For the passage about Black Africa: R. Italiaander, "Die afrikanischen Sprachen und Dialekte", *Babel*, v. 4 (1958), pp. 205-109; Le Page, pp. 17, 32f., 37ff., 41ff.; J. Spencer, Ed., *Language in Africa–Papers of the Leverhulme Conference on Universities and the Language Problems of Tropical Africa* Cambridge U.P., 1963; *Translation in Africa.* Special issue, *Babel*, v. 7 (1961); n°. 4–particularly E. Dammann, "Die sprachlichen Verhältnisse in Ghana", pp. 168-176 and J. Lukas, "Die Sprachgruppen Afrikas", pp. 160-163.

[41] P. F. Caillé, "Translators and Translation–1974 Survey", *Babel*, v. 20 (1974), pp. 130-141, this on p. 135.

this is now the case in Senegal with French, and in the Cameroons, which are officially bilingual, with English and French. To deal with the external world, with other Africa states and sometimes with different groups within their own population, these countries still employ interpreters from developed countries. The problem is compounded by other elements of this linguistic diversity, for instance the relative lack of "family ties" between some of the languages and the fact that the Bantu group, best represented in the southern part of the continent, has a lesser literary stature than Swahili. Even the South African Republic is officially bilingual, albeit in Afrikaans and English.[42] As a subject, both languages are taught in all schools, and so-called bilingual medium schools in some subjects as a medium of instruction use the language less well known to the child. Some time ago it was estimated that about 65% of the white population is bilingual, while the rest is almost equally divided between the two unilingual segments of the population.

India[43] today has 15 official languages spoken by 575 million inhabitants, but only one of the official languages is used as a general medium of intercommunication: English. An association of scientific translators, located in New Delhi, is endeavouring to overcome the immense difficulties inherent in this situation. In Ceylon,[44] the Colombo House of Representatives is officially multilingual, with the institutionalized use of English, Sinhalese and Tamil. The Singapore[45] Legislative Assembly accepts four languages (English, Malay, Mandassin and Tamil). In nearby Malaya,[46] the Kuala Lumpur Senate and House of

---

[42] E. G. Malherbe, *The Bilingual School*. Johannesburg: Bilingual School Association, s.d. (1943).

[43] For the present situation in India cf. S. Kesavan, "Plurilingualism in India", *Aspects sociologiques du plurilinguisme*, pp. 103-109; Le Page, pp. 53-63; S. N. Metha, "Training of Translators in Scientific and Technical Translation for Research Libraries in India", *Babel*, v. 15 (1969), pp. 17-21.

[44] A. T. Pilley, "The Multi-lingual Parliaments of Asia", *Babel*, v. 8 (1962), pp. 19-22.

[45] Le Page, pp. 63-76; Pilley, op. cit.

[46] Le Page, loc. cit.; Pilley, op. cit.

Representatives is bilingual: English and Malay. Similar problems are encountered in Indonesia and in the different parts of the Pacific region. On the western side of Asia, the Knesset of Jerusalem is bilingual, Hebrew and Arab; many educated Israelis speak English and many more use one of the other European languages in their family.[47]

I will not attempt to describe before this audience the Americas before and since the European colonization, the two Americas with their native languages, dominating European languages, minority European languages, Creole languages, etc.[48] It must suffice to remind us that even pre-Colombian America was multilingual: the Aztec empire, for example, united peoples speaking Nahuatl, Otomi, Huaxtec, Totonac, Mixtec, Zapotec and Maya.[49] It must also suffice to state somewhat apodictically that even in the U.S. the famous melting pot does not yet seem to have attained the melting point.[50]

In the simplest mathematical language, the equation of languages and states is quite simple: there are about 30 times as many languages as there are distinct political units.

How is man today coping with this tremendous problem of communication–external and internal to his socio-political entities? Some institutionalized attempts should be singled out.

In modern times, the first school of translation seems to have been organized in 1699 by Louis XIV,[51] because of his difficulties in maintaining diplomatic relations with the Ottoman Empire where the Sultan and his dignitaries preferred to ignore Latin. The students

---

[47] Pilley, p. 19.

[48] Cf. e.g. E. Haugen, *Bilingualism in the Americas: A Bibliography and Research Guide*. Alabama: U. of Alabama P., 1956 (=Publication of the American Dialect Society, 26).

[49] "Précolombiens", *Encyclopaedia Universalis*, v. 13 (1973), pp. 460-479.

[50] A survey of facts in J. Fishman, *Language Loyalty in the United States*. The Hague: Mouton, 1966, and Haugen, op. cit.; similar conclusions in Mackey, *Bilingualism*, pp. 26ff., part. p. 29.

[51] E. Cary, *La Traduction dans le monde moderne*. Genève: Université de Genève, École d'Interprètes, 1956, pp. 136-139, 169f.; Mounin, p. 41.

of the École des Enfants de Langue were sent to specialize in Christian monasteries in Istambul and Ismire, and since 1721 to the Lycée Louis le Grand. The world famous École Nationale des Langues Orientales Vivantes in Paris[52] was founded in 1795 and it is still active although it increasingly resembles ordinary university departments of languages and literature. The first modern German school of interpreters (Dolmetscher-Schule) opened its doors in 1930 in Mannheim and became in 1933 an institute of the University of Heidelberg. According to answers to questionnaires sponsored by UNESCO and FIT, the situation today is as follows:[53]

ARGENTINA–3 States universities: Buenos Aires, La Plata, Córdoba; 3 private universities: del Salvador, Católica Argentina, and de Morón, all three located in Buenos Aires.

AUSTRIA–3 universities: Vienna, Graz, Innsbruck.

BELGIUM–7 schools and institutes.
BRAZIL–Minas Gerais School at Belo Horizonte.

BULGARIA–Departments specializing in the art of translation at the Arts Faculty of the University of Sofia.

CANADA–Québec: 5 universities – Montréal (since 1942, under Panneton and later Vinay), Laval (Québec), McGill (Montréal), Sherbrooke, Trois Rivières.
Ontario: 3 universities –Ottawa, Sudbury, Toronto.
New Brunswick: Moncton University.

---

[52] Cf. C. Fourrier, *L'Enseignement français des origines à 1945*. 2vs. Paris, 1965.

[53] P. F. Caillé, part. pp. 136f. Additions to Caillé's list are mine, and are based on sources indicated in notes 54 to 58.

FEDERAL PUBLIC OF GERMANY–3 universities: Heidelberg, Mainz (previously Dolmetscher-Schule in Germersheim), Saarbrücken; 1 private institute in Munich (under the Deutscher Dolmetscher-Bund).

FINLAND–still discussions, as for years, at Helsinki, Turku, Jyväskyläk.[54]

FRANCE–École Supérieure de Traduction et d'interprétation de l'Université de Paris. École de Traduction des Facultés catholiques de Paris. Université de Sceau (Law Department). École Supérieure des Traducteurs Internationaux (Lille). Institut d'Angers. University of Toulouse. University of Tours.

HUNGARY–Translators are trained in Arts Departments at the Universities of Budapest, Debrecen, Pécs, Szeged.

INDIA–according to Indian sources,[55] the training of translators on scientific and technical translations for research libraries is part of the normal language training at Universities, but among 70 universities few actually do teach languages to any extent (there is only one Ph.d. programme in German, and only one in Russian).

ITALY–Schools of Translation at the University of Trieste.

JAPAN–National Translation Institute of Science and Technology (NATIST) in Tokyo. Ishigaya Translation Schools.

---

[54] M. Widnäs, "L'École des traducteurs en Finlande. Projet et discussion", *Babel*, v. 11 (1965), pp. 61-64.

[55] Metha, op. cit.

NETHERLANDS–Institute of the University of Amsterdam.

PORTUGAL–Instituto Superior de Línguas et Administaçao (ISLA).[56]

SWITZERLAND–School at Geneva (since 1941, famous).

U.K.–Institute of Linguistics, London (since 1910, famous, first for diplomats and reporters); School at the University of Bath.

U.S.–Brandeis University; Brown University (Providence); Carnegie-Mellon Institute (Pittsburgh); College of St. Francis (Joliet); Georgetown University (first programme of this nature in the States) (Washington); Hebrew College (Brooklyn); Maygrove College (Detroit); Miami Dade Junior College; Monterey Institute of Foreign Studies; Rice University (Houston); Notre Dame College; Stanford University; Stephens College (Columbia); Texas Women's University (Denton); University of Puerto Rico (San Juan); University of Southern Mississipi (Hattiesburg). Regardless of these and perhaps other schools, even now 99% of American translators have not followed a formal course of learning.[57]

U.S.S.R.–A number of universities, particularly Moscow, Tartu, Tbilisi.[58]

---

[56] F. de Mello Moser, "Translation in Portugal", *Babel*, v. 14 (1968), pp. 14-16.

[57] Caillé, p. 137; L. Galantière, "On Translation as a Profession", *Babel*, v. 16 (1970), pp. 30-33.

[58] G. R. Gachechiladze, "Training Translators at the University", *Babel,* v. 11 (1965), pp. 154-155.

The training given in such institutions usually takes 4-6 terms (2-3 years).[59] It usually concentrates on two languages with the emphasis placed on practical exercises and some aspects of linguistics more than on philology or literature; in addition, the culture, history and geography of the respective states or areas are taught as well as essentials of the different specialized directions (political and social, technical, medical, etc.). It seems that while in most western institutions a good critical knowledge of a foreign language is taken for granted, Soviet schools continue with an intensive language training, and that while western interpreters are prepared for simultaneous translations at international conferences, Russians are more often led towards written translation or oral interpretation for delegations, groups of tourists and similar needs.[60]

Professional organizations of translators are another institutionalized approach to the business of translation and interpretation. The first modern organization of translators was founded in Russia by Peter the Great.[61] Interested in transmitting Western civilization and technology to Russia, the czar personally prepared lists of works to be translated and enlisted as translators and interpreters foreigners working as dragomans in his Foreign Office, and some students from the Moscow and Kiev theological academies. Under the authority of the ministry of foreign affairs and the supervision of the new Academy of Sciences, a particular administrative branch was created, with ranks ranging from the simple "translator" to the lofty "court poet" (*poète de cour*), all ranks assimilated into the general scheme of the bureaucracy (*čin*).

---

[59] J. F. Hendry, *Your Future in Translating and Interpreting*. New York: Richards Rosen Press, 1969.

[60] D. E. Bartley, *Soviet Approaches to Bilingual Education*. Philadelphia: Center for Curriculum Development, 1971 (=Language and the Teacher, 10); Gachechiladze, "Training Translators..."; A. Meynieux, "La Traduction et l'Université dans le monde (Questionnaire)", *Babel*, v. 7 (1961), pp. 31f.

[61] E. Cary, "Théories soviétiques sur la traduction", *Babel*, v. 3 (1957), pp. 179-190, esp. p. 179; Fedorov, pp. 53ff.; A. Meynieux, "Les traducteurs en Russie avant Pouchkine", *Babel*, v. 3 (1957), pp. 73-79; Mounin, p. 41.

Today there are national organizations of translators, at least in the following countries: Argentine, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada (Société des Traducteurs de Québec, Société des Traducteurs et Interprètes du Canada, and in a few weeks a new society will unite literary translators), Finland, France, both Germanies, Hungary, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Poland, Republic of China (Taiwan), Rumania, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United States, Uruguay and Yugoslavia.[62] Obviously there is no lack of associations! Most of them have obtained official accreditation and many other advantages (social and health insurance, pension). They belong all to the Fédération Internationale des Traducteurs (FIT), which has many specialized committees. The FIT was founded in 1953 and is sponsored by UNESCO, the organism of the UN which since 1948 has been directly responsible for an ambitious translation programme. This programme is in turn supervised by the CIPSH (Conseil International de la Philosophie et des Sciences Humaines). A particular international undertaking is the translation of the Bible for missionary purposes; this is now a collective work strongly institutionalized and centrally administered.[63]

The better known specialized reviews,[64] another form of institutionalized activity, are *American Translator, Babel* (FIT), *The Bible Translator, Fremdsprachen, Idiome, L'Interprète, Iral, Kongress-Revue, Lebende Sprachen, Mechanical Translation* (MIT), *META, Journal des traducteurs* (published since 1955 by the Université de Montréal, excellent reputation), *Mostovi, Mitteilungsblatt für Dolmetscher und Übersetzer, Der Übersetzer, Sprache im Technischen Zeitalter, Traduire, La Traduction automatique, Translator Inquirer*. The Translators Bible is, of course, *The Index Translationum* (UNESCO).

Problems of multilingual terminology in all areas of life are particularly acute in a world of instantaneous and omnipresent exchange of information. Different international

---

[62] Yearly list in *Babel*, as part of the report "La Vie de la FIT", usually in the first issue.

[63] E. A. Nida et Ch. R. Taber, *The Theory and Practice of Translation*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1969, pp. 174ff. (=Helps for Translators, 8).

[64] Lists periodically in *Babel*; a good selection in Mounin, pp. 206f.

bodies[65] are attempting to cope with the Tower-of-Babel-like confusion of tongues: UNESCO, Euroatom, the Association Internationale des Interprètes de Conférence (AIIC), the ICLA dictionary of literary terms, etc. But this can be an internal problem as well. The USSR[66] has at least two bodies standardizing terminologies: the Committee for Scientific and Technical Terminology of the Academy of Sciences (KNTTANSSR) and the All-Union Research Institute for Engineering Information, Classification and Translating (VNIIKI). In their 1970 paper on "L'Activité terminologique au Canada", Gilles Dubeau and Jean-Paul Vallée[67] enumerate the following bodies: Société des traducteurs et interprètes du Canada (STIC), Comité de linguistic Radio-Canada, Comité de linguistique de la Canadian Industriel Ltd. (and, I may add, similar committees of other important industrial enterprises and banks, e.g. the Bank of Montreal), Service de linguistic du Canadian National, Ministère des affaires culturelles du Québec, Office de la langue française du Québec, Académie Canadienne-Française, Comité d'étude des termes de médecine, Centre de terminologie d'Ottawa, Université d'Ottawa, Université de Montréal, Université Laval, and now also the University of Victoria under J.-P. Vinay. Since we are not only a bilingual but also a pluralistic society, even this list is probably far from complete.

Another world-wide phenomenon of institutionalized translation–and a difficult one linked with the whole sphere of cultural attitudes–is the process of "naturalizing" movies, TV programmes and publicity. In Canada,[68] for example, subtitling and dubbing are done

---

[65] J. A. Bachrach, "La Terminologie : Problèmes de cooperation internationale", *Babel*, v. 12 (1966), pp. 77-83; J. F. Henry, "The standardisation of Terminology in Europe", *Babel,* v. 16 (1970), pp. 34-37.

[66] H. Felber "Standardisation of Terminology in U.S.S.R.", *Babel*, v. 16 (1970), pp. 197-203.

[67] G. Dubeau and J.-P. Vallée, "L'Activité terminologique au Canada", *Babel*, v. 16 (1970), pp. 82-84. Cf. also P. Daviault, "Le Rôle du traducteur de l'État au Canada", *Babel*, v. 2 (1956), pp. 11-14.

[68] Information obtained from the National Film Board and from private companies in Edmonton. For translation and cinema cf. e.g. P. F. Caillé, "La Traduction au cinéma", *Übersetzen: Vorträge u. Beiträge v. Internationalen Kongress literarischer Übersetzer in Hamburg 1965*, Ed.

mainly in Montréal though there are also facilities in Vancouver, Toronto, and Ottawa. The National Film Board does all of its own work and has its main laboratory in Montréal. Commercial films, publicity spots, etc. are done by a variety of independent companies.

Another type of translation activity, institutionalized by definition, is the so-called mechanical translation, usually associated with computer programmes.[69] Substantial progress has been made since World War II primarily in the USSR, the U. K. and the U. S. In Soviet Russia, since the founding in 1956 in Moscow of the Ob'edinenie po mašinnomu perevodu, a large number of persons are engaged in the MT research–probably more than in all other countries combined. The Soviet Academy (ANSSSR) claimed the first workable programme in 1944; in the U. K., Birkbeck College, University of London has been active since 1947, and especially since 1955; in the U. S., of world renown are Harvard, MIT, Georgetown University, the Ramo-Wooldridge Laboratories, the University of California at Berkeley, the Rand Company, Wayne State University; in Bulgaria there is advanced research at the University of Sofia, and in Italy at the University of Pisa; in Canada, le Système de Traduction Automatique de l'Université de Montréal (TAUM) was created in 1965. Nevertheless, before further progress is possible, there appear to be, at least for the time being, basic limitations, both in principle (linguistic theory) and in practice (actual cost).[70]

If we are somewhat depressed by so many organizations and structures, let us not forget that even utopias think in such categories: institutionalized training of specialized official translators and interpreters are part of Campanella's Renaissance utopia, *Civitas solis*

R. Italiaander. Frankfurt/M.-Berlin: Athenäun, 1965, pp. 116-122; Mounin, pp. 141-147.

[69] For mechanical or machine translation cf. e.g.: A. Booth, L. Brandwood, J. P. Cleave, *Mechanical Resolution of Linguistic Problems*. London: Butterworth's Scientific Publications, 1958; Kröller, pp. 20f.; A. Ljudskanov, *Prevetdat čovek'm i mašinama.* Sofija: Nauka i izkustvo, 1967 (also in German); Mounin, pp. 169-184; E. A. Nida, *Toward a Science of Translating*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1964, pp. 253ff.; A. G. Oettinger, "Das Problem der Überstezung", Störing, *Das Problem des Übersetzens*m pp. 410-441; I. I. Rewin and V. Ju. Rozencvejg, *Osnovy obščego i mašinnogo perevoda*. Moskva: Vysšaja škola, 1964.

[70] Stated again by J.-P. Vinay in his paper on "The Theory of Translation–Myth or Reality", presented to this Translation and Interpretation Symposium in Ottawa (April 18 and 19, 1975).

(published in 1643).

It is time to conclude. Roaming widely through time and space, we have found, as others before us,[71] that, from a social and political point of view, there are basically three solutions to bilingual (and multilingual) situations:

(a) A tendency for one language to dominate and eliminate the other(s), usually after a transitional phase in which most of the members of the weaker group are bilingual and those of the dominant remain unilingual;

(b) A decision to separate one from the other, creating officially unilingual new states or other political entities supposedly along national lines;

(c) An attempt to maintain a plurality of languages, with an official status given to more than one.

None of these solutions is totally satisfactory, but the last one, although uneasy and unstable as it is and multiplying problems of communication, is not so rare neither in the past nor in the present, and has existed in brief and in extensive periods, both in small countries and in some of the greatest empires. Any attempt of a civilized approach, civilization meaning among other things tolerance of the difficult, the alien, even of the "intolerable", requires organized contacts, efforts of the educational system and the creation of specialized schools. Within a university context, it seems worthwhile exploring possibilities for the

---

[71] For findings of a general nature cf. e.g.: Beziers and Van Overbeke, pp. 132-138; S. De Coster, "Plurilinguisme et pluralisme social", *Aspects sociologiques du plurilinguisme*, pp. 5-14; J. A. Fishman, "The Impact of Nationalism on Language Planning: Some comparisons between early Twentieth Century Europe and more recent periods in South and South East Asia", *ibid*., pp. 15-30; R. J. Joy, *Languages in Conflict: The Canadian Experience*. Toronto-Montreal: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1972, pp. 135-139 (=The Carleton Library, 61) (first ed. 1967); Le Page, pp. 77-81; Mackey, *Bilingualism*, pp. 31-54, esp. p. 54. For particularities of the Canadian situation, beside the Report of the Royal Commission, cf. i.a.: S. T. Carey, Ed., *Bilingualism, Biculturalism, and Education*. (Proceedings, Conference, Collège Universitaire Saint-Jean, University of Alberta, 1973). Edmonton, Alberta: The U. of Alberta P., 1974; Joy, op. cit.; S. Lieberson, *Language and Ethnic Relations in Canada*. New York: Wiley, 1970.

introduction of a greater number of Ph.D., M.A., and perhaps B.A. degrees in translation, within the existing programmes in languages and in Comparative Literature, and the strengthening of present schools as well as the planning of future specialized centres for the training of professional translators and interpreters.

But the practical need to communicate, to establish contacts and to establish links will remain the strongest motivation for bi- or multilingualism of social proportions. To conclude, therefore, on a human, humorous and literary note, may I quote again from Thomas Mann's *Zauberberg* a passage (again from ch. 6) illustrating difficulties encountered by *eros* (if not by *agape*) trying to overcome language barriers. The chief physician of the sanatorium in Davos is probing into Hans Castorp's first intimate meeting with Frau Chauchat, the Venus of this Magic Mountain. In his hesitant and discrete way, Castorp answers:

> "'Gesprächsweise sind wir uns nähergekommen.'
> 'So!–Na?' machte der Hofrat. (...) 'Ich nehme an,, dass es mit meinem Französisch etwas gehapert hat', wich Hans Castorp aus. 'Woher soll ich's am Ende auch haben. Aber im rechten Augenblick fliegt einem ja manches an, und so ging es dann mit der Verständigung doch ganz leidlich.'"[72]

As Madame Chauchat is leaving, they both comment about her unwillingness to write letters. Hofrat Behrens continues the conversation:

> "Erstens aus Faulheit nicht, und dann, wie soll sie denn schreiben? Russisch kann ich nicht lesen,–ich kauderwelsche es wohl mal, wenn Not an den Mann kommt, aber lesen kann ich kein Wort. Und Sie doch auch nicht. Na, und Französisch oder auch Neuhochdeutsch miaut das Kätzchen ja allerliebst, aber

---

[72] "'In our oral communication we came closer to each other.' 'Yes!–Well?' muttered the Hofrat. (...) 'I believe that my French was less than perfect', said Hans Castorp evasively. 'Besides, where should I have learned it. But at the right moment one can improvise, so that we still understood one another quite readily.'"

schreiben,–da käme sie in die grösste Verlegenheit. Die Orthographie, lieber Freund! Nein, da müssen wir uns schon trösten mein Junge."[73]

Sapienti sat!

Source : «Translation and Interpretation in Bicultural and Multicultural Societies», symposium, University Carleton, 1975, p. 1-32.

---

[73] "First of all, out of laziness, but then how could she write? I cannot read Russian,–I can speak it sometimes in a broken jabbering way, when I am in dire need, but I cannot read a single word. And you neither, of course. Well, the kitty is able to miaul charmingly in French or Newhighgerman, but to write,–this would embarass her very much. Spelling, my dear friend! No, my boy, under such circumstances, we have to resign ourselves."