

PREFAZIONE EDITORIAL PREFACE

Compared to the first three issues of *RITT*, the contents of this issue display a greater balance between articles dealing with literary and non-literary translation, thus complying with the proposals outlined in the Editorial Preface of the last issue. The contributions in the current issue accordingly deal with all major areas of translation, including wide-ranging studies on the role of translation theory and practice (Newmark, Komissarov, Parks), as well as essays on specialised translation (Magris, Ross), literary translation criticism (Newmark's second paper, Giambagli, Sánchez Montero) and translation teaching (Marchand, Straniero Sergio).

Peter Newmark's opening paper in this issue (his fourth contribution in the five-year history of *RITT*) is a transcription of the Inaugural Lecture he gave in June 1997 for the official opening of the new premises of the S.S.L.M.I.T. in Trieste. His address is a passionate appeal for translation theory courses to revisit areas that have never been properly investigated in the past, such as the two main issues of free vs. literal translation and the definition of the translator's responsibility for her translation. Another very eminent translation scholar who contributes to this issue, Vilen Komissarov, sheds light on the importance of translation activity in Russia, which he traces back to Kiev Rus (9th-10th centuries), and highlights the even greater importance that both translation work and teaching have in the present day in his country. The fundamental role translation has in all contacts between different cultures becomes the main theme of Gerald Parks's contribution, where he convincingly argues for a conception of translation which takes into account important sociological issues such as the different status of languages involved, the choice of the text to be translated and the purpose of the translation.

Peter Newmark's second contribution to this issue uses instances from the two English translations of Thomas Mann's masterpiece "Death in Venice" to illustrate some general propositions on literary translation, imaginatively condensed to 12 commanding statements. Similarly, the other two essays on translation criticism — Maria del Carmen Sánchez Montero's full-blooded criticism of the latest translation in Italian of a collection of poems by Federico García Lorca and Anna Giambagli's more sympathetic analysis of the Italian translations of Marguerite Duras's last two works (*Ecrire* and *C'est tout*) — provide many examples drawn from the translations they are examining and, in so doing, both comply with Newmark's most frequent remark in his reviews of

publications on translation, ie. that authors should not be too economical with their examples.

Turning now to the two articles on non-literary translation, Marella Magris's contribution continues her investigation on computerised terminology and its use by professional translators which she began in *RITT* n.2. Then as now she takes her lead from a research project currently underway at the S.S.L.M.I.T. which is setting up an on-line terminology databank. Dolores Ross's article carries out an analysis of the language of the speeches made by the Members of the European Parliament during parliamentary sessions and of the very specialised type of translation it calls for, given the mixed nature of the source texts which are a cross-over between oral and written political texts.

Lastly, both Yvette Marie Marchand's contribution on the teaching of the translation of Elizabethan poetical and theatrical texts and Francesco Straniero Sergio's article on the 'mental agility' exercises devised by the author for interpretation and translation students alike, are very valuable and much needed hands-on accounts of undergraduate teaching methodologies aiming at the students' acquisition of basic translation skills whilst at the same time making them aware of the ever-present issue of cultural adaptation.

The new Book Review section contains three short straight-to-the-point reviews of books on translation that have very little to do with the full-length essays on translation criticism of previously published translations to be found elsewhere in the journal. These book reviews exemplify the type of contributions to be included in this section in the future, for which contributions are particularly welcome. The last section, Letters to the Editor, has instead been devised as a loose container for all the 'bits and bobs' which do not fall neatly in neither of the two main sections in which the *Rivista* is currently organised (Essays and Book Reviews) but which have been nevertheless thought worthy of publication.

Finally, a few words on very practical matters. A third change of publisher has occurred: possibly the last as our new publisher is the Academic Press of the University of Trieste which is based in the very premises of the S.S.L.M.I.T.! The deadline of contributions for the next issue is 1st October 1998. Your articles should be sent to the Editor on a disk (preferably in Word for Windows/Mac) together with a printout and your bibliographical references must follow exactly the style set out in the articles of this current issue of *RITT*. The working languages remain English, French, Italian, German and Spanish, and those of you not writing in English should present your contributions together with an Abstract in English.