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Nordic Division at the ATA Annual Conference 2004

Resumes & “Language Dots”

You couldn't help but notice. Many of our members have pointed out that when they register for the conference, there are never any “language dots” for the Nordic languages, even though both Finnish and Danish are languages in the ATA certification program. However, what was perhaps a more concerning omission at this year's ATA Annual Conference was that the conference organizers had not planned for tables in either the Job Marketplace or the Networking Session where Nordic translators could leave their resumes and meet other Nordic translators respectively.

Although it took some persistence to work our message to the top, and a thick magic marker for the immediate answer, the Nordic Division was able to bring the oversight to the attention of the conference organizers, as well as rectify the signage issue. It turns out that Nordic translators were not alone in their confusion and concern over the lack of a designated space for their resumes. The presence of tables for “Other European Languages” and “Languages of Limited Diffusion” created a veritable smorgasbord of resumes on these tables.

Nordic Division Annual Meeting

The Annual Business Meeting of the Nordic Division was held in Toronto on Thursday, October 14. Once again, looking at the issue of “no Nordic language dots,” members of the division agreed to spend a

small amount of our budget on purchasing Danish, Swedish, Finnish, and Norwegian flag decals that we can use for future conferences. The issue of the resume table was raised in a written letter to ATA President-Elect and Conference Organizer Marian S. Greenfield, who apologized for the oversight.

It is important to note that although “the squeaky wheel gets the grease,” the dwindling membership of the Nordic Division does not improve our situation. Languages that have a larger number of members or have an established certification program often loom largest in the minds of conference organizers – and attendees. Which brings us to our next topic...

Shrinking Division Numbers

Nordic Division membership has declined in the past year from 170 to 152. That's a little more than a 10% decrease. This is troubling because it can create a vicious cycle: fewer members mean fewer

dollars, which mean fewer ND activities and benefits, which in turn attract fewer members. We can change this! I encourage every ND member to contact 3 other colleagues, whether they work 100% in the Nordic languages or not, and ask them to join the Nordic Division this year. For a mere \$15 – the cost of a business lunch – they can help sponsor our newsletter, website, Annual Conference guest speakers, and mid-year conference as well as improve the visibility and recognition of Nordic Languages in the translation and interpreting communities. Membership is the key, as explained below...



Nordic Division Budget

The Nordic Division budget is a budget in the true sense of the word. It's not that everyone's \$15 is held in a piggy bank underneath the Administrator's bed. Rather, the \$15 membership fee represents \$15 that the American Translator Association allots for the Nordic Division's use. Headquarters holds the purse strings. Once deductions are made from our budget for overhead costs, such as, assisting with newsletter editing and layout, fielding member questions, and providing general administrative support, the division usually has about \$1,000 to pay for ND activities during the year.



The Nordic Division's budget is also part of the larger ATA budget and as such falls under the purview of ATA's auditors. To meet the auditors' request for standard accounting practices, ATA Division Administrators were asked to develop guidelines for division spending. The process was a long one, with several drafts coming and going, but as often happens, good things resulted from all the hard work. The new guidelines streamline division budgeting as well as ensure that resources are available for basic membership benefits across all divisions. And perhaps

most importantly, there is an option in the guidelines for individual divisions to petition the ATA Board of Directors for additional funding of worthwhile special projects. This option certainly holds promise for ATA's Nordic Division.

Webmaster & Newsletter Editor

The Nordic Division is still looking for a volunteer or two to help administer the ND website and/or edit the newsletter. Volunteers can receive a stipend for their work on these division projects. If you are interested, or know someone who might be <g>, please contact me at david@northcountrytranslations.com

Linguistic Minority Council

Because the Nordic Division represents a number of different languages, we would like to create individual committees for each language – Danish, Finnish, Norwegian, and Swedish – to find and recruit speakers for future conferences. In addition, these committees would work together to coordinate networking-social events. To volunteer, please contact the Division Administrator at: david@northcountrytranslations.com



Impressions of the ATA Conference

"I was quite overwhelmed by the first ATA conference I attended in Atlanta a couple of years ago. In its scope and professionalism it far outshone the conferences I had attended in Canada, including a regional FIT conference in Montreal. There was something for everyone, and everyone was there. That was what most impressed me, in fact: that a national conference would attract so many diverse attendees from all over the world. The Toronto conference this year was more of the same.

In Ottawa I don't meet other translators of Scandinavian languages. Not normally in Toronto either, where I once worked. The ATA conferences are rare opportunities to encounter other members of this rarefied population. I joined the Association this year, and the Nordic Division, and look forward to future meetings with its members, in cyberspace and in person." *Peter Christensen*

"As an ATA member living in Toronto, this year was a perfect opportunity for me to attend the Annual ATA Conference and to get to know some of my cyberspace peers. After all, I didn't have to travel very far, as the Conference took place in Toronto. I picked the day that offered most seminars in my language pairs (Danish/Norwegian/German), and I was not disappointed.

One particular seminar that I found to be of enormous value was 'Getting the Message Right: Translating Advertising and Marketing Texts in Swedish' by Ian Hinchliffe. First of all, you didn't have to know much Swedish, if any, to follow this great speaker, who really knew what he was talking about. Ian was fascinating, inspiring, and entertaining. He also understood how to get the message across to the audience about the difficult task of translating advertising. As Ian put it: 'Translating advertising text is not just about translating words, it's an intellectual re-creation, a transcreation. We are translating ideas – not words. We have to be able to understand the cultural, linguistic and visual associations to be able to get the message across in our translation.' How well put!" *Lone L. Fundby*

"On Wednesday, I attended the preconference seminar entitled "Basic Notetaking Techniques for Practicing Interpreters" presented by Daniel Giglio, a Spanish-English translator and interpreter. After introducing himself, Daniel started out by reviewing a bit of translation and interpreting theory: the Broadbent and Loftus memory models. Since consecutive interpreting does rely quite a bit on short-term memory, it helps to understand the processes that run behind the scene, as it were.

Daniel gave us useful pointers on the features a notetaking system should have in order to function well. For example, such a system should be highly visual and as independent of language as possible so you can use the same notation for more than one language. Structuring your notes on the page is also useful: writing ideas instead of sentences by writing the subject on one line, verb on the next, object on the next – and then perhaps drawing a horizontal line across to indicate the end of that thought and the start of a new one. This makes it faster to read when you're using it as a memory aid.

He also provided some tips on ways to create your own symbols. You can take a word and remove the vowels, for example: "court" becomes "crt." Or you can have symbols that denote word endings such as "-tion" or indicate verb tenses, e.g. "run" with a wavy line under it could be used to indicate the conditional: "would (have) run." You should also have link symbols, e.g. "+" for "and." Another of Daniel's excellent tips was to use a notepad appropriate to the situation. Don't lug a huge tablet around a site tour.

He also covered how to prepare for a job. Make a list of key terms, their genders, collocations – and important names, dates and abbreviations or acronyms. Get all the information and background material you can out of a client beforehand; look up company information and/or speaker biographies on the Internet. Try to optimize your working conditions: good equipment, breaks, help speakers understand what you do so they can help you do a good job, etc. Get to the job early.

In another section Daniel called "Damage Control," he talked about what to do when your job becomes tougher than it has to be: the speaker has an unintelligible accent (focus; ask for clarification), talks too fast (ask him to slow down), or you run into a totally foreign concept (ask what it is). If you find yourself not understanding, stop taking notes and start concentrating on listening and processing what you hear. If you miss something, sometimes you can weave it into the next chunk you interpret, for example. If someone corrects you, never show frustration or anger. Politely thank the person, or if you feel the correction was inappropriate, say in a neutral tone, "The interpreter stands by his/her interpretation."

Daniel told me many things I already knew, but there were more than enough new angles and information sprinkled throughout to keep my interest. And even if some of it was review, it was nice to hear it presented in an orderly, structured fashion that will help me remember it in future. There was also a great deal of value in hearing about how a colleague tackles familiar problems or certain situations I've been lucky enough not to run into yet. I highly recommend it if Daniel holds it again next year. *Dee Shields*

Scandinavian Translation Workshop Results

Although the texts looked short from the outside, the debate that went on inside the conference room for the Nordic Translation Workshop was quite extensive. We only managed to cover 2 of the 3 texts into English (Danish and Swedish) and had no time to work on the English>Nordic text. After such an interesting and lively discussion, here are the results:

Danish (Berlingske Tidningen 9/11/04)

Polariseringen påvirker ikke kun USA, den rækker fra det amerikanske bagland ind i FN, ind i andre internationale sammenslutninger, den sætter den dagsorden, som vi i Danmark skal tage stilling til. Når u-landene ikke kan få FNs hjælp til en kondomkampagne eller til abortklinikker, fordi politikerne i USA er midt i en opslidende kulturkamp - så påvirker polariseringen os alle.

Splittelsen er resultatet af en bevægelse, som satte sig i bevægelse på et udefinerbart tidspunkt i 1960erne, et sted mellem opfindelsen af p-pillen og den store frigørelse, mellem den minimale risiko og den maksimale fristelse, og som filosoferne har belært os: En tese bliver til en modtese, som bliver til syntese, og sådan er det gået over stok og sten. Men ved præsidentvalget i 2000 løb den filosofiske dialektik tilsyneladende løbsk eller tør, og resultatet blev et præsidentvalg, hvor partierne stod præcis lige. Lige mange vælgere støttede det ene parti og det andet parti, støttede to vidt forskellige holdninger til - syntes det - alting, og med talkolonnerne, der stod og blinkede på TV-skærmen, og med delstaterne, der lyste op i hver sin farve, åbenbarede det i al sin matematiske nøgternhed: Amerika var politisk brækket midt over.

This polarization doesn't just affect the USA; it stretches from the American heartland, to the UN, to other international organizations; it sets the agenda that we in Denmark have to address. When developing countries cannot get the UN's help for a condom campaign or for abortion clinics because politicians in the USA are engaged in a divisive culture war, this polarization affects us all. The split resulted from a movement that started sometime during the 1960s, between the discovery of the pill and the sexual revolution, between a time of minimum risk and maximum temptation. As philosophy teaches us: thesis becomes antithesis, which becomes synthesis – in an ever-accelerating process. But by 2000, this philosophical dialectic appeared to have run high and dry, and the result was a presidential election in which the parties were neck and neck. An equal number of voters supported each of the parties, supported two widely different positions on – apparently - everything, and with the vote counts flashing on the TV screen and each state lighting up in red or blue, the numbers said it all: America was politically split in two.

Swedish: (From ETC No. 3-4 2004)

Natten mot den 25 mars 1949 knäckade det på hans familjs dörr, dörren till en stor gård i sydöstra Lettland. Det var natten för Sovjetunionens andra stora folkflyttning. 43 000 letter tvångsflyttades; sammanlag blev 120 000 fängslade och deporterade under Stalins styre. 14-årige Robert och hans familj sändes till Sibirien i boskapsvagnar. Tågfärden tog en vecka och Robert såg många dö under resan. I åtta år tvingades han arbeta i taigan, den oändliga skog som sträcker sig över norra halvklotet. Minnena är klara, det finns inte så mycket att minnas, bara monotona långa dagar. Han arbetade 13 timmar om dagen sju dagar i veckan, utan ledighet och helger. På vintern kunder kylan vara extrem, och fingrana runt sågarna blev stela som trädrötter. Om sommaren blev det lerigt och luften var full av insekter. Det var omöjligt att fly -- inte för att de var under bevakning, utan för att det inte fann några transporter, inga vägar.

On the night of March 24, 1949, there was a knock on the door of his family home, a large farm in southeastern Latvia. It was the night of the Soviet Union's second great ethnic relocation. Forty-three thousand Latvians were forced from their homes; 120,000 in total were imprisoned and deported under Stalin's rule. Fourteen-year-old Robert and his family were sent to Siberia in cattle cars. The train trip took a week, and he saw many people die during the journey. For eight years, he was forced to work in the taiga, the endless forest that stretches across the northern hemisphere. His memories are clear; there isn't that much to remember, only long, monotonous days. He worked thirteen hours a day, seven days a week, without a break or holidays. During the winter, the cold could be extreme, and his fingers around the saw became stiff as tree roots. During the summer everything was muddy, and the air was full of insects. It was impossible to escape -- not because they were being guarded, but because there was no transportation -- no roads.

Norwegian: (Dagsavisen 9/11/04)

Overlege Fekjær hjelper spillegale som er hektet på bingo. Nå vil han stoppe planene om økt toppgevinst, som Lotteritilsynet vil tillate.

– Bingo har allerede et element av gambling i seg som fører til at en del får problemer og må behandles for spillegalskap. Hvis toppgevinsten økes til 50.000 kroner så vil det føre til at flere spiller om mer penger enn de egentlig har råd til, sier overlege ved Blå Kors Senter og leder for Foreningen for Pengespillproblematikk, til Dagsavisen.

I dag er toppgevinsten på bingo 12.000 kroner, og det spilles årlig for over 1,9 milliarder, viser tall Dagsavisen har innhentet fra Lotteritilsynet. Tilsynet går nå inn for å øke toppgevinsten til 50.000 kroner.

– Myndighetene er under konstant press fra dem som vil tjene på pengespill, både private aktører og foreninger, sier Fekjær.

Årlig hjelper han mellom to og tre personer som har spilt seg bort på bingo.

Chief Physician Fekjær helps gambling addicts who are hooked on bingo. Now he wants to halt the plans for an increased top prize which the Lottery Agency wants to permit

“Bingo already has an element of gambling, which leads to a number of people developing problems, and who must be treated for gambling addiction. If the top prize is increased to NOK 50,000, it will lead to more people playing for more money than they can really afford,” says the Chief Physician at the Blue Cross Center, and leader of the Association for Problem Gambling, to Dagsavisen.

The current top prize for bingo is NOK 12,000, and people spend over NOK 1.9 million annually, as shown by numbers that Dagsavisen has obtained from the Lottery Agency. The agency is now trying to increase the top prize to NOK 50,000.

“The authorities are under constant pressure from those who would like to profit from gambling, both private players and unions, says Fekjær.

Each year, he helps between two and three people who have gone bankrupt from bingo.

Tips for Tax Time

It's tax time again, and I thought we might all benefit from some tax advice from the Intuit Quicken site. Be sure to check with your own accountant before filing your taxes.

Taking a Home Office Deduction

You must use a certain area of your home both *regularly* and *exclusively* for business in order to take this deduction. In most circumstances, the area should be a separate room in your home. However, a common area in your home that is not in a separate room can also qualify – as long as you use it exclusively for business.

If you have a desk located in a family room, for example, mixing your business correspondence with your personal mail could cause the deduction to be disallowed. The IRS takes this point very seriously.

And *exclusive use* means that your children cannot use your office computer to do research for school, or to play computer games.

Regular use does not necessarily mean that you must use the office daily or even weekly – just that you use it on a continuing basis. Occasional or incidental use does not qualify, even if you use the office exclusively for business.

Can you prove regular use? Do you have a log of phone calls made from the office? Do you have invoices on a computer that show you used the office? Keep all records that can prove you use the office on a regular basis.

To qualify as the principal place of business, your home office must be where you perform the most important part of your work, or you must use the office for administrative or management activities of a trade or business, and you can't perform a substantial portion of these administrative or management activities at any another location, such as another office off-site.

Administrative and management activities include, but are not limited to

- Billing customers
- Keeping books and records
- Setting appointments
- Ordering supplies

Travel Expenses

You can save a substantial amount of money by being aware of the following rules governing tax-deductible travel expenses.

1. Attitude is everything

When is the trip deductible? "It comes down to point of view," says Judith Dacey, CPA and owner of Small Business Resources, Inc., www.easymas123.com, in Orlando, Fla. "If the primary reason for the trip was business, it counts as a business trip." A rule of thumb is that if less than 25 percent of a trip is spent on personal issues, it can be considered a business trip, Dacey says.

2. Get the free weekend

One way small business owners can make the most of a business trip is by scheduling it to run across a weekend. If you have an interpreting appointment on Friday and one on Monday, even if you do no work at all on Saturday and Sunday, those count as business days, Dacey says. "They were necessary for you to make your Monday appointment," she says.

3. All in the family

It's not unusual for small business owners to get help from family members when they are on a business trip, such as at a seminar or trade show. But unless that person is an employee of your company, their

expenses aren't deductible, even if they end up doing as much work as you.

4. Hotel hints

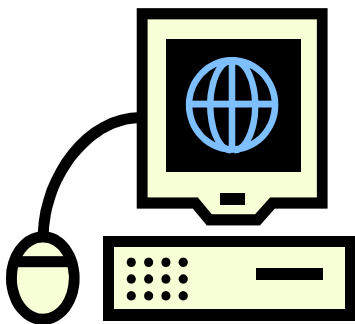
There's no per diem rate for lodging, so be sure you keep actual receipts, Dacey says.

5. Meal matters

When it comes to claiming the 50 percent meal deduction the IRS allows, small business owners are usually better off taking the per diem deduction rather than keeping receipts and totaling actual expenses, Dacey says. "Per diems are reasonable and an amount you can deduct whether you spend it or not," she says. Go to www.gsa.gov for the government's per diem rates in each city.

6. On the road

You have two choices when it comes to claiming car mileage: take the IRS rate of 34.5 cents per mile, or maintain your own actual operating and fixed costs. "My personal opinion is take the IRS rate," Dacey advises. "Most entrepreneurs are not itty-bitty pieces of paper people, so they lose half of their receipts and the rest are in a box and they end up losing money." Even if you take the IRS rate, you still must keep a mileage log, recording the date, miles and purpose of the trip.



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ATA Nordic Division Trip to Finland

Preliminary Schedule

Time: Sunday July 31st - Wednesday August 3rd, 2005

- **Sunday:** Get-together in Helsinki.
- **Monday:** 1 or 2 professional visits and informal tourist program
- **Tuesday:** 1 or 2 professional visits and informal tourist program
- **Wednesday morning:** 1 professional visit or informal tourist program
- **Wednesday afternoon:** Transfer to Tampere (the Congress town) independently (2-hour train or bus ride)

Accommodations: No arrangements will be made by the trip organizers. Information about possible hostels and hotels in Helsinki will be provided later. For accommodations in Tampere, see <http://www.fit2005.org/7.htm>.

Our current travel plan includes the following professional visits:

1. **The Language Technology** and the **Multilingual Communication Programme** at the Department of General Linguistics of University of Helsinki (<http://www.ling.helsinki.fi/>).
2. **Kielikone Ltd.** (<http://www.kielikone.fi/english/>), a Finnish language technology company that develops and produces dictionary software, machine translation software, terminology management software, spell checkers, and grammar and style checkers.
3. **The Localization Department of Nokia**, the Finnish cell phone giant.
4. **The Finnish Centre for Technical Terminology** (<http://www.tsk.fi/>), TSK, is a non-profit association "whose primary tasks are to promote the compilation and publication of high-quality terminologies in Finnish and Swedish, to increase the know-how and awareness of the principles and methods of terminology, and to provide information about terminological activities and products".

The association has done a good job compiling, for example, an IT terminology databank in cooperation with specialists in various technical fields (<http://www.tsk.fi/termialkoot/index.html>).

5. **Sauna Evening** together with representatives from the Finnish translation and interpretation organizations, such as SKTL (<http://www.megabaud.fi/~sktl/>).

We are currently trying to find out which of the above places and organizations will be able and willing to host us during the trip.

If you have any questions or suggestions, **please contact Tuomas Kostianen (tuomas@jps.net)**.

TRAVELLING IN THE MIND, TRAVELLING IN THE PAST

The translator as detective

© Andrew Fenner, August 2004

Some people travel in the present. Others, such as myself here, travel in the past. Travellers in the present can report back on what they see; but the past is non-reproducible. It can only be 'recreated' on the basis of the evidence available, such as written documents and archaeological findings. But language itself and how it translates from one tongue to another can also be evidence. Indeed, it may be the only evidence in some cases, and perhaps only circumstantial then, as we will see.

As a professional translator, and linguist, I work from a number of languages. I have also encountered some other languages; while I do not work from them, I have endeavoured to learn some of them as best I can. The languages I am speaking of here are Swedish and its close relations, Norwegian and Danish, Irish (Gaelic) and Welsh. Over the course of time, I have become increasingly aware of certain similarities and relationships between them, that appear to provide evidence of movements of and contacts between peoples in the past, around the coasts of Europe and beyond, far beyond even perhaps.

Let us start from where I myself started: a single Irish word, 'siopador' ('shopkeeper'). The root, 'siop', is Scandinavian, 'köp' in Swedish ('k' is 'soft' before 'ö', pronounced something like 'sh'). It is the source of the English words 'shopping' and the name 'Chipping' in placenames, as in 'Chipping Barnet' where I live. It might be argued that this is a modern borrowing from English, perhaps, of which there are many in Irish; but the suffix '-ador' might indicate otherwise. It comes from Spanish.

So what we have here is a Scandinavian root with a Spanish suffix. Unique, perhaps? In general terms, elements from different languages are only combined where their speakers come into contact with one another. So is there any evidence that Spanish and Scandinavian speakers met one another? Yes, at least nearly so, from place names and records.

In Galway City on the West coast of Ireland, is the Spanish Arch. This is where Spanish merchants came to trade with the occupants. Galway is also known as the 'Spanish City'.

Further round the coast, but not too far, is the town of Donegal. In Irish, this is 'Dun na nGall' (pronounced 'doon na nall'), or 'fort of the foreigners', the 'foreigners' here being Vikings, according to municipal records.

Compared with the distance from Spain and Scandinavia respectively, from Galway to Donegal is not very far. So perhaps it would be reasonable to believe that the Spaniards and Scandinavians met up at some point, as the word 'siopador' might imply.

Let us travel on.

The Irish word for 'Norwegian' is 'loruach'. Not a borrowing obviously, which to my mind at least suggests direct contact (and is also strangely reminiscent of the 'Jorvik Museum' in York, also on Viking invaders).

Moving from the West coast of Ireland to the East, we know that the city of Dublin was founded by the Vikings [source]. ('Dublin' in Irish means 'black pool', by the way; what is puzzling is that in Irish syntax, it should be 'linn dubh', i.e. the other way round.) So we can be confident that the Vikings (or some other Scandinavians) came down the Irish Sea. And not just to Ireland.

There are a number of place names on the coast of Wales which are indicative of Scandinavian origin: 'Anglesey', for example – place names ending in 'ey' indicate an island, or 'ö' in Swedish, for example. What is rather strange is that such names appear on the northwest coast of Wales, and on the southwest, but not in between, which might indicate that the Scandinavians came down the east coast of Ireland, then across to Wales.

From Anglesey in the northwest, let us move to the southwest, to Fishguard. But here the situation becomes more complicated.

Take the name 'Fishguard', for example. To the English eye, it might appear quite innocuous; 'fish', yes, but why the 'guard'? To a Scandinavian, however, the name 'Fiskegård' would be instantly obvious as 'fishing port'. The word 'gård' is the source of the English words 'yard' and 'garden', amongst other things, so a 'fiskegård' is obviously a yard (as in the English word 'shipyard') where fishing is carried on.

Things get more complicated, though, when we look at its equivalent name in Welsh. It is immediately apparent that this is not an equivalent. It is nothing like it, in fact. Fishguard's name in Welsh is Abergwaun (pronounced 'Abergwine'), or 'mouth of the Gwaun'. ('Aber' in Welsh is the equivalent of 'Inver' in Scottish, as in the name 'Inverness', for example.)

One place, two names. What does this tell us? I would say it tells us that there were two peoples living side by side here but not intermingling. I call this an 'overlay'. The locals had one name for the place where they lived, the incoming Scandinavians another. The Welsh called it after its geographical location, the Scandinavians after its economic role. Maybe the Welsh never thought of taking up fishing as a way of earning their living; there are indications that some Irish at least never thought of it, even those that lived by the sea during the worst of the Famines. Living by the sea does not necessarily mean being of the sea: look at the North Cornish, miners but not fishers, not many at least.

There are similar occurrences elsewhere in Wales. 'Swansea', for example, has nothing to do with either swans or the sea, but is probably a corruption of 'Svensoy' or 'Sven's island'. (Islands need not be surrounded by water, by the way: they can also be enclosed by swamps and other hostile environments, like Hackney in London - which some would argue still is, perhaps).

Just south of Fishguard, near Milford Haven, however, is a place name that owes nothing to Welsh whatsoever: 'Landshipping'. Nothing to do with shipping, of course. Remember what we saw about 'köping' as a market above? Well this is a place where the Scandinavian traders came ashore ('Land') to hold a market; and, indeed, when I went down there, it's a quiet, sheltered estuary, with nice shallow flats for landing a boat. So to the Scandinavians, 'the place where we go ashore to trade'. Which local history records and folk memory bears out. (If it has a Welsh name, this is not recorded, which suggests that this was not a settlement, but an externally imposed location. And, indeed, there is no village as such there.)

From the Welsh coast, or the Irish Sea, the Scandinavians pressed on, to the coast of North Devon. They also 'invaded' the British Isles and Northern France more directly, as other place names witness, such as Selsey and the Channel Islands, Guernsey, Jersey and Alderney. They also left their mark in a number of rivers in Northern France by the name of 'Aa', the older spelling of 'å' ('oa').

This 'å' sound is very interesting in itself. I think it would be safe to say that it does not occur in any of the 'core' languages of what is now Western Europe, those of the peoples who arrived by land, but is found in all the 'marine' languages around its fringes. It exists in Scandinavian, of course, as we have seen. While not a letter in itself, it also appears in Irish, at least in speech: ask any Irish person to spell my surname, 'Fenner', for example, and they will respond 'F – E – N – N – E – Å'. I

am informed that there is a similar sound in Portuguese, 'o acute'; and I was intrigued to discover recently that the Greek letter Ω, 'omega' or 'big O' is pronounced in the same way.

What does all this tell us? I feel reasonably confident that it tells us that there was a network of coastal trading routes (I hesitate to call it a 'civilisation', although I think the merchants involved would have been aware of themselves as a 'loose federation') surrounding the coasts of what is now Western Europe. The prevailing model of how Europe was populated is one of successive waves of immigration, from East to West. I would argue that there was at least a parallel 'girdle' enclosing what are now regarded as the 'fringes' in some cases, that these 'fringes' were in fact some of the main highways of Europe then, possibly going back some thousands of years. It would certainly have been quicker and easier to travel by sea around Europe than overland across it – we cannot say 'by road', as until the Romans, at least, there were no roads as such.

There is evidence to support these ideas. The Cornish are known to have been trading with the Romans in tin and other minerals found there at around the time Jesus is supposed to have been born. And there is a small town in North Cornwall, Padstow, which holds a celebration on the first of May each year known as the 'Obby 'Os', which has been anglicised as 'hobby horse'; but the 'Oss' itself looks suspiciously like a West African mask. Which might seem unlikely until you consider that, if you were sailing from Cornwall to the Mediterranean, and got blown past the Pillars of Hercules, you could end up on the West African coast without losing sight of land, and without sailing any further than you would have to to reach Rome or Greece.

I am not the first to take up these ideas. While researching at the history library in the town of Ennis in County Clare, Ireland ('Ennis' or 'Inish' means 'island' in Irish; again, this can be an island surrounded by marshes, rather than the sea, as Ennis itself is), I came across a book "Atlantean" by Bob Quinn. Subtitled "Ireland's North African and Maritime Heritage", and drawing largely on musical and religious sources and comparisons, Mr. Quinn concludes (without quoting any specific evidence) that Ireland and North Africa were in contact and trading with one another as much as five thousand years ago. Which, by a strange coincidence, and again more intuitively, without very much in the way of objective evidence, is precisely the timescale I was working on.

AND EVEN FURTHER PERHAPS

The Greeks and Romans called 'the North' (as Scandinavians call their own region) as 'Ultima Thule'. 'Thule' sounds like a perfectly valid Scandinavian word;

but I have never been able to discover what it means. But, when I ran an Internet search, I discovered that the name 'Thule' (pronounced the same way, 'Toola') was the name of a tribe of native North Americans who entered what is now North America from the north and east. Is this simply a coincidence, I wonder?

One more recent discovery: I was working on a Norwegian building lease, when I came across a strange

word, 'rokere'. I thought it meant something like 'smoking', at first; but why would a tenant insist on wanting to smoke in a car park? When I looked it up, I found it means to trade places, like 'castling' in chess. But the castle in chess is known as the 'rook', from the original Arabic, hence the word presumably. Now, either we have a modern borrowing here, or there's a fragment of Arabic in Norwegian. Which I don't even want to think about.

Bits and Pieces

As of January 2004, ATA-certified translators need to earn 20 points of continuing education credit over 3 years, with a maximum of 10 points in any given year, to keep their certification current. That means that if you didn't earn any continuing education points last year, you will need to earn at least 10 CEPs this year and 10 CEPs next year!

Certified members must also earn 1 continuing education point on the ethics of translation and

interpreting during their first 3-year reporting period. You may choose between attending an ethics workshop at the ATA Annual Conference or taking a self-directed course available online and in print. A self-directed course is expected to be available by mid-2004. The Continuing Education Requirements Committee may approve other ethics classes.

For all the details on ATA's CEPs Program, visit www.atanet.org/acc/Guide_Education_Points.pdf

ATA-eligible continuing education requirements fall into 6 categories:

1. Translation or interpreting courses, seminars, workshops, and conferences (max 10 points/1 year);
2. Other courses and seminars (max 5 points/3 years);
3. Memberships in professional associations (max 2 points/3 years);
4. Mentors, mentees, and ATA Certification Program graders (max 6 points/3 years);
5. New certifications and accreditations from other approved organizations or government agencies (max 3 points/3 years);
6. Authoring of articles or books (max 4 points/3 years).

You can check out the guidelines online at www.atanet.org/acc/Guide_Education_Points.pdf.

Interested in Helping Out? Want to Get Involved?

We are looking for individuals who would be interested in helping manage the Nordic division website and newsletter. A small stipend is provided. If you are interested, please contact David Rumsey (david@northcountrytranslations.com).

This newsletter is written for and by all of the members of the ATA Nordic Division. We welcome any and all submissions. Send submissions to david@northcountrytranslations.com

Connect With Your Colleagues Overseas! Important Nordic Translation Links

- Danish Translators Association
www.translators-association.dk
- Finnish Association of Translators and Interpreters
www.sktl.net
- Norwegian Non-Fiction Writers & Translators Association
www.nffo.no
- Swedish Association of Professional Translators
www.sfoe.se

FIT XVII Conference in Tampere, Finland August 2-7, 2005

The Fédération Internationale des Traducteurs, (International Federation of Translators), a worldwide organization for translators, will be hosting its 17th World Congress in Tampere Finland.

This gathering of translators and interpreters from the entire world is a chance to exchange information and experiences with colleagues in any number of countries. A complete program of seminars and social events is planned.

For more information, check with www.fit2005.org

A number of ATA Nordic division member are interested in organizing a study-trip to Finland, in conjunction with the FIT congress. Anyone interested in attending should contact Tuomas Kostianen at tuomas@jps.net

7th International Conference on Terminology and Knowledge Engineering August 16-19, 2005

Location:

Copenhagen Business School
Copenhagen, Denmark.

Dates:

- Pre-conference workshops: August 16, 2005
- Main conference: August 17-18, 2005
- Post-conference workshops: August 19, 2005

Conference Website

www.cbs.dk/tke2005



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