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Translators censoring Propaganda – A case study on the translation of Salazar's speeches into English

This paper aims at analyzing the role of translators in Portuguese external propaganda during the dictatorial regime of António Oliveira Salazar (1932-68), with particular emphasis in the 1930s and 1940s when many of the foundations of the regime were laid down. Translation was viewed as a support for Propaganda, through a specific institution which housed translators and produced many of the works on the regime which came to be known outside Portugal. From tourism brochures to political intervention in the form of booklets and books of speeches, the Secretariado de Propaganda Nacional (SPN) produced translations with the main objective of improving the image of the mainly in the United Kingdom and in the U.S. The existence and role of the official Propaganda Office (SPN) is not ignored by Portuguese historians. Nevertheless their focus is mainly on the actions undertaken by the Office as an organ of control and repression and hardly ever on the Office as a center of production or industry of translation. Translation from within the regime was very important and constituted a real industry. Contact with other countries and the need to amplify international support originates several approaches. Different works on the guidelines and main objectives of the regime were therefore translated into English, French, Spanish, Italian and German. This paper will attempt to prove the relevance Salazar's regime attributed to translation providing examples from relevant documents. Unfortunately not much research has been done on translation in periods of censorship from within the regime. This paper looks at this relationship and on how translators tried to overcome censorship, especially if they used specific translation procedures in certain situations while working for the state itself. The amount of translations produced in a time when censorship and dictatorship went hand in hand is also addressed and this apparently contradictory phenomenon exists to show that in periods of repression translation is of utmost importance. This paper focuses on a research developed in two parts. First it investigates the importance Salazar's regime attributed to translation, mainly from Portuguese into English. Second it analyzes a set of translated speeches by Salazar in order to understand how translators influenced the image of the country abroad, due to the changes introduced mainly through omissions and additions. These translation procedures contributed to an ideological shift in the final text. Due to the constraints of living and working in a censorship, translators behaved like censors. Both activities monitor what comes in and goes out, creating specific norms in a specific context. Translators had to keep in mind that there was a double audience to please. On one hand Salazar, who wanted his speeches in good English, on the other

the English reading audience in itself. As a result the notion of acceptability poses a problem which needs to be solved. For whom do the translations need to be acceptable? For the dictator or the final reader?