

www.aatia.org

The Letter

of the Austin Area Translators
and Interpreters Association

January 2002



LitSIG creates translator cooperative

AT A WELL-ATTENDED MEETING in early December, members of AATIA's Literary Special Interest Group (LitSIG) sketched out a plan for a new venture that should keep them busy for quite some time to come.

The centerpiece of the project is a cooperative anthology of literary translations, a collection of works translated by "LitSiggers" themselves. This anthology, and the process of creating it, will serve to teach current members and future generations of translators about the business of publishing and the mechanics of literary translation.

In the spirit of a cooperative, all participating members will constitute an editorial board of the whole, to which translations will be submitted for critical review. The process of critiquing and being critiqued is an essential part of literary translation, and aspiring contributors are advised to check the thickness of their skin before committing to the project. And it will take commitment, because there's more to this than the anthology itself.

The group's idea is to give participants the chance to be involved in every step of the process, from choosing a text and establishing copyright, continuing through all stages of production and printing, and finally to the promotion and distribution of the finished book. At the same time, each step will be documented, thus creating a narrative that will serve as a reference for new literary translators. Part of this documentation activity will involve researching the possibility of securing a grant to fund the project.

In order to be a part of this anthology, LitSIG members must agree to at least three main conditions:

1. must be able to accept the criticisms of one's peers;
2. must perform a significant task in the process;
3. must be willing to meet more frequently, at least once a month in some cases.

So there is much to do. The group is projecting a monthly meeting that will alternately focus on the translations and the production aspects of the project. Anyone interested in being part of this undertaking is invited to contact Marian Schwartz at schwartzm@sbcglobal.net. LitSIG will next meet on Saturday, January 19, 1-3 p.m., at 1207 Bickler Road, to begin charting the long road ahead. ★

January 12 meeting

Finding clients— and keeping them

ONE OF THE FIRST QUESTIONS new translators and interpreters ask is, "How do I find work?"

Unless a staff position is found, the question is asked again and again. Over time, some of the answers that led to assignments may not be as effective as they once were. And even if proven methods are leading to new projects, new ideas on profitable self-promotion are always welcome.

Members and guests who attend AATIA's January 12 meeting will go home with a collection of innovative ways to market their linguistic talents.

"Tips for Scoping Opportunities, Upgrading Your Image, Snagging Assignments, and Keeping Clients Happy," is the title of Patti DeNucci's presentation. In a career of more than 22 years she has helped more than 200 organizations and individuals in nearly 40 business sectors develop clear, effective promotional materials and programs.

DeNucci is particularly interested in self-promotion, professional development, and sharing information, resources, and experiences that help people make positive changes in their lives and careers. As a mentor and consultant, she has helped colleagues develop the contacts, strategies, and techniques that allow them to build their businesses and enjoy greater personal and professional satisfaction.

She founded what is now Freelance Austin in 1993 to promote professionalism and networking among freelance communicators. The group has grown to more than 100 members. She now operates DeNucci & Company, a talent bureau that helps individuals, organizations, and businesses tap into Austin's most experienced and talented freelance



Party: January 12

IF IT'S JANUARY, IT MUST BE PARTY TIME FOR AATIA! Plan to attend the regular meeting at the Austin History Center and celebrate the new year at a party that same evening. Further details will be announced on the website and at the meeting. ★

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President's message

"Welcome to what's next"

THAT LINE FROM A TIME WARNER CABLE ADVERTISING campaign earlier this year could well apply to the year 2002 in AATIA.

Progress is being made to have a searchable database on the website that will contain more information than current website listings provide. That online database will also allow each member to update his or her data.

Attention is being given to striking a balance between the craft and the business of translating and interpreting in professional development programming for bimonthly meetings. Your suggestions on how best to present programs on our craft are most welcome.

Your requests and input will help define what workshops will be offered this year. Those might include a workshop designed to help prepare for the American Translators Association (ATA) accreditation examination. There will be two sittings for the ATA accreditation exam in Austin on April 21. Check the ATA website at www.atanet.org for information.

Those examination sittings will be the day following SpanSIG's first daylong conference.

LitSIG is moving forward with an ambitious project to produce its own publication of members' work. Following preliminary discussion at the December 1 LitSIG meeting, the first actual work session is scheduled for January 19.

The Medical and Community Interpreters SIG (MCISIG) will celebrate its first anniversary this year. It will provide valuable professional development to help address federal requirements in this area of interpretation.

One of my priorities this year is to encourage the Russian SIG (RusSIG) and Interpreters SIG (ISIG, for court and conference interpreters) to return to active status. Those interested in revitalizing the Computer Assisted Translation SIG (CATSIG) have two new terminology management tools to investigate: Wordfast and Alair.

SIGs, or Special Interest Groups, are an effective method to provide professional development program-

Member statistics

At the December board meeting, Director of Membership Traci Andrighetti reported the following statistics:

Active members	154
with business listing	17
Associate members	13
Business members	6
Total	190
SpanSIG members	83
MCISIG members	15

ming to specific areas of interest in our diverse membership. It is up to those members with interests not being addressed to step up and help meet that need.

There will be a serious effort this year to research the needs of senior, or veteran, translators and interpreters, and then provide appropriate professional development opportunities for them in fora that compliment that programming.

This year's Board of Directors brings a diverse collection of talent and a high degree of dedication to your association. I look forward to working with this Board to provide grater volunteer opportunities for broader membership participation to help bring about What's Next. ★

SpanSIG to host regional conference

PLANNING IS UNDERWAY for a regional conference for translators and interpreters who work between Spanish and English.

The conference, offering a variety of concurrent sessions, will be held Saturday, April 20, 2002.

Two sitting for the American Translators Association accreditation exam will be held on Sunday. Seating will be limited for morning and afternoon sittings that are open to translators of all available language pairs. Registration information for the exams will be available soon at the ATA website www.atanet.org.

The preliminary program and registration information for the conference should be available in January. Anyone who would like to present at the conference should contact Harvie Jordan at hjc@texas.net or 441-5582. ★

2001 dues waived for late-year joiners

AT ITS DECEMBER MEETING, the AATIA Board of Directors welcomed Harvie Jordan, Esther Diaz, and Laura Spencer, incoming President, Director

of Communications, and Director of Finance, respectively, for 2002. Among other actions, the Board agreed to waive payment of 2002 dues for all new members who joined the Association after October 1, 2001. ★

McLean solves ethical problems

A CLIENT BRINGS HIS 8-YEAR-OLD daughter to a medical appointment and tells you that he prefers to have her interpret for him. What do you do?

This is just one of the ethical dilemmas attendees at the November member meeting grappled with as Maurine McLean reprised her popular program on ethics for interpreters.

McLean engaged her audience in a lively discussion of how to avoid sticky situations and how best to deal with them when they do arise. She recommends that interpreters always clearly explain their role to all parties in an interpreted proceeding and caution them not to say anything to the interpreter that they do not wish to have repeated to the other parties.

She also counsels interpreters to prepare carefully for assignments and engage in ongoing self-evaluation to ensure that they are conducting themselves in an ethical manner.

Finally, she offered this bit of sage advice: Before you criticize another interpreter, you should walk a mile in his shoes. That way, by the time you criticize him, you're a mile away and you have his shoes!

McLean, together with Lisa Rogers, began and ended her presentation with songs with an ethics-related theme. She and Rogers form the duo "The Therapy Sisters."

November's program also featured brief remarks by Patricia Thickett and Harvie Jordan, who attended the ATA annual conference in Los Angeles, October 31–November 3, 2001. Thickett spoke on recently approved changes to the ATA accreditation program, while Jordan explained the procedure for achieving active membership in ATA through peer review. ★

Finances improve dramatically

DIRECTOR OF FINANCE Edgar Guevara presented the bimonthly financial report for December, accompanied by a proposed budget for 2002. The financial report showed total assets of \$9,143.47, as compared to \$6,742.52 at the end of 2000. Guevara attributed the increase to higher Angel Donations, proceeds from workshops, and t-shirt sales. ★

Renewal deadline set for directory

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL DEADLINE for inclusion in the print version of the *AATIA Translator and Interpreter Services Directory* is **January 14**.

Membership renewal materials arriving after that date will not appear in print, but will be included in the online directory. ★



ARANJUEZ



by Tony Beckwith © 2001
www.tonybeckwith.com

JUST AS A SUDDEN FRAGRANCE CAN TAKE US BACK—the scent of freesias on the evening air, for example, or the first thick drops of rain on a dusty road—certain sounds can sweep us away. Rhythms and melodies can transport us to other moods, other moments, sometimes to places we’ve never even been. That’s how it was the first time I heard the *Concierto de Aranjuez*.

It was easy to stay up all night in Madrid in those days. After the final curtain call we wiped the greasepaint from our faces, turned off the lights in the theater, and walked down to *El Taburete*. The bar gradually filled up as the after-hours crowd arrived: musicians from the clubs, dancing girls from the Calderón, guitarists and singers from the flamenco taverns near the Plaza Mayor. Everyone came there to unwind. That night the talk turned to travel, and when Jaime spoke of Morocco I mentioned that I’d never been to North Africa. He squinted at me through the cigarette smoke and said, “Perhaps we could go there tonight, if you like.” Who could refuse an invitation like that?

Jaime lived in a nearby apartment, just a couple of rooms perched on the roof of a five-story building. “Down there is the Manzanares,” he said, pointing towards the south. I could see the river, glinting in the light of the crescent moon. “And beyond, just over the horizon, is the town of Aranjuez. The inspiration for Rodrigo’s masterpiece. Come, we’ll listen to it, and maybe you’ll see what I

mean.” He put the record on the turntable and placed the needle in the first groove.

I closed my eyes as the deep, leathery guitar notes of the first movement of Joaquín Rodrigo’s *Concierto de Aranjuez* filled the room and flooded my mind. The music had a rhythmic urgency that commanded my full attention. Suddenly, I felt the cool night air of the desert on my face, and saw a band of horses cantering towards me, shimmering out of a distant mirage, coming closer, their steady hoof beats muffled in the sand. When the violins joined the guitar, I joined the horses, riding one of them across the dunes, my white robes flowing behind me, ghostly in the moonlight.

As the second movement began, the mournful lament of the *cor anglais* found me alone in a small oasis settlement. I sat cross-legged on a rooftop in the pale light, the desert spread out around me like an ocean. Behind me the tall palms stood silhouetted against the blue-black sky. The music was clear and haunting, and filled me with nostalgia for a land I’d never known. Looking up, I wondered at the infinity of stars disappearing into the vastness of the heavens, so brilliant

here above the darkened earth. The guitar played on, now blending with the orchestra, now standing alone, echoing across this muted landscape, this desert, this timeless Sahara. Centuries ago Moorish caravans traveled through here on their way north, bringing their language, their architecture, and their music to the Iberian Peninsula. The tides of history have turned and turned again, many times since then, but the sound of the desert has never varied.

As the music ended I opened my eyes. The moon was gone and the stars were fading over the city. Jaime stood in the doorway, his face in shadow. He answered my question before I had a chance to speak: “When people asked Rodrigo what the *Concierto de Aranjuez* represented, he said it meant whatever each of us wanted it to mean.” We stepped out onto the roof. A cool breeze ruffled my hair and I turned my face to the sky. Jaime looked at me intently in the half-light of dawn, then smiled and said, “How did you like North Africa?” ★





Reading Matters for Translators

© 2001, Frank Dietz

IF YOU RECENTLY LOOKED at the magazine section of a major bookstore, you probably were astonished at the variety of titles—there are numerous specialized magazines for cat fanciers, herb gardeners, woodworkers, snowboarders, and skydivers (maybe even skydiving snowboarders). Yet where is a translator supposed to find information on his or her profession?

On the web, of course. While there are a number of printed magazines for translators, such as the *ATA Chronicle* (sent to members of the American Translators Association) or *Language International* or *Multilingual Computing and Technology*, the WWW offers a treasure trove of (free) information geared towards translators.

The *Translation Journal* (www accurapid.com/journal/) is always worth reading. It contains articles on linguistic problems, subject issues (such as chemical nomenclature), and the day-to-day life of a translator. Recently, for instance, there was an interesting article on tests sent out by translation agencies.

Tranfree is a monthly e-mail newsletter aimed at freelance translators. It contains articles on technical issues and trends in the translation industry, as well as general tips on how to become more successful as a freelancer.

You can subscribe to this free newsletter at www.tranfree.com/tranfree.html.

You should not overlook newsletters published by regional translators associations. Many of these regional groups now publish their newsletter on the Internet. While some of the content, such as the ubiquitous calls for volunteers for the Christmas party, might be of strictly local interest, these newsletters often contain articles about special fields or particular issues in a language that would be of use to readers elsewhere. Here is a selection of such newsletters:

- The Capital Translator
www.ncata.org/HTML/ct.htm
- MITA Newsletter http://users.ticnet.com/mita/newsletters_current.htm
- Proteus, the newsletter of the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators
www.najit.org/proteus/proteus.html
- SCATIA Newsletter
www.scatia.org/newsletter.htm
- MICATA Monitor www.ata-micata.org/monitor.htm

Note that some of these newsletters are in PDF format, which requires the free program Adobe Acrobat Reader, available at www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep.html.

Finally, while they are not an online magazine, the recently updated articles on “Translation as a Profession” by Roger Chriss (<http://home.earthlink.net/~rbchriss/Articles/Articles.html>) offer an excellent introduction into this field, very useful for someone considering becoming a full-time freelance translator.

Editors Note: Don't forget that The AATIA Letter is also available—in brilliant color—on the AATIA website www.aatia.org. ★

University of Arizona National Center for Interpretation Four-day Preparatory Seminars for Federal Court Interpreter Certification Oral Exam

These seminars will cover topics in both the Spanish and English portions of the exam, including intensive skills development in all three modes of interpretation:

- Simultaneous
- Consecutive
- Sight Translation

Course materials will simulate actual testing and include excerpts from past FCICE Written Exams, previously unavailable.

Locations and dates:

Tucson	Jan. 31 - Feb. 3, 2002
San Antonio	Feb. 14 - 17, 2002
Miami	Feb. 14 - 17, 2002
Los Angeles	Feb. 21 - 24, 2002

For more information visit <http://nci.arizona.edu>.

The ABCs of Active and Corresponding Membership

By Harrie Jordan, ABC hjc@texas.net

SOME QUALIFIED MEMBERS of American Translators Association (ATA) chapters and divisions, as well as regional groups, may not know about alternate routes to active and corresponding membership.

Passing an accreditation exam in a specific language pair elevates an associate member's status in two ways. One, of course, is that the member is then an Accredited member. And, second, by being accredited, he or she also becomes an Active or Corresponding member.

The process of administrative review offers other routes to Active or Corresponding member status [see sidebar]. However, associate members who become Active or Corresponding members through administrative review *are not* also accredited.

Associate members have the right to attend Association membership meetings and conferences at special membership rates and receive its regular publications free of charge, unless extra fees are paid for international postage.

In addition to those rights, Active members have the right to vote, hold Association office, and serve on the Board of Directors and all Association committees.

Corresponding members meet all qualification for Active Membership except U.S. citizenship or permanent residence. They have all rights and privileges of Active members, except the right to hold Association office and serve on the Board of Directors or standing committees.

In a recent, informal survey of some new Active and Corresponding members who followed alternate routes to those membership categories, most said they wanted to become Active or Corresponding members so that they could vote in ATA elections and referenda.

There are a number of reasons why Associate members who want to upgrade their membership status may choose an alternate route to reach that goal.

Some decide to follow this course because accreditation is not available in their language pair(s). There are those who hold accreditation or certification from other recognized organizations. Some have earned an academic degree or certificate in translation or interpretation, while others with substantial experience who are well established do not feel the need to seek accreditation as a marketing tool.

The ATA Board of Directors revised the criteria for the administrative review process in 1999. In the first two years after the new criteria were implemented, of the 130 applications submitted for Active or Correspond-

ing membership, 129 were approved.

The criteria are consistent with the ATA Bylaws requirement that voting members be "professionally engaged in translating, interpreting, or closely related work."

The Active Membership Review process is simple. After choosing the appropriate criterion, an interested Associate member completes an application form obtained from ATA Headquarters and submits it, the supporting documentation according to the selected criterion, and the \$50.00 fee to ATA Headquarters.

In its 1999 revision of the administrative review criteria and process, the Board delegated initial review of applications and supporting documentation to headquarters staff. If an application package does not clearly satisfy the criterion, headquarters will refer it to the Active Membership Review Com-

Alternate routes to ATA active or corresponding membership

Any one of the following:

1. Translators and interpreters currently accredited or certified by a member association of the Fédération Internationale des Traducteurs:
 - Proof of such accreditation or certification.
2. Translators:
 - a. Proof of a degree or certificate in translation (acceptable programs to be determined by the Training Committee) and
 - b. One letter of reference from a client or supervisor.
3. Interpreters:
 - a. Proof of a degree or certificate in interpretation (acceptable programs to be determined by the Training Committee) and
 - b. One letter of reference from a client or supervisor.
4. Translators or interpreters:
 - Evidence of at least three years' work as a translator or interpreter, which may include either of the following:
 - a. Three letters of reference from clients or supervisors; or
 - b. Copies of records of business activity such as Schedule C, corporate tax returns, 1099s, invoices, or work orders.
5. Persons professionally engaged in work closely related to translation and/or interpretation:
 - a. Evidence of at least three years' work in a closely related field, which may include either of the following:
 - b. Teaching appointment letters; or
 - c. Terminology/lexicography research studies.

The Training Committee is authorized to establish a list of programs or examinations successful completion of which is sufficient to achieve active or corresponding membership.

Approved March 19, 1999 [as amended]

mittee for evaluation and recommendation to the association's Board of Directors.

Although the alternate routes to Active and Corresponding membership do not confer accreditation, they do offer credible options for Associate members to have fuller participation in Association affairs.

These options have special significance for ATA Chapters facing a limited pool of Active members from which to recruit candidates for leadership positions. That is also true for ATA Divisions wishing to expand the pool of both Active and Corresponding members. In addition to accreditation, the alternate routes offer a range of opportunities to expand the base of Active and Corresponding membership and in turn increase participation in Association affairs at both local and national levels. ★

Harvie Jordan, ABC, hjc@texas.net was Chair of the Active Membership Review Committee for 2000–2001. Current Chair is Lee Wright lv1341204@aol.com.

Literary contest announced

A TRANSLATION COMPETITION will be sponsored for 2002 once again by the British Comparative Literature Association and the British Centre for Literary Translation (University of East Anglia). Prizes will be awarded for best unpublished literary translations from any language into English, including poetry, prose, or drama from any period; entries may be up to 25 pages long.

First prize: £350; second prize: £200; third prize: £100; other entries may receive commendations. Winning entries will be published in the annual journal *Comparative Criticism* (Cambridge University Press). Entry fee is five pounds sterling. Prize-winners will be announced in July 2002.

For further details see the BCLA website, www.bcla.org. ★

Stupid interpreter tricks

by J. Henry Phillips
www.BrazilianTranslated.com

FEELING LEFT OUT? Think translators have all the fun because of their graceful typing skills? Well cheer up. Technology has now advanced to a point where even interpreters can translate into English.

Depending on computer speed you can use Dragon NaturallySpeaking Preferred Version 4 or DNS Version 5. You must have 128 MB of RAM and some sort of sound card into which a headset with a microphone can be plugged.

It's true you have to read to the software for some 20 minutes to teach it to recognize your vocal peculiarities. Read naturally (without naming punctuation marks) and as fast as you can for best results. When you begin dictating, you'll have to tell the machine where to insert commas, periods, and other punctuation.

You'll quickly find the program can easily misinterpret what you say. Correction features are provided, and it is helpful to simply delete from the vocabulary obscure and confusing proper nouns and words which include apostrophes in their endings.

The program can play your own voice back to you, and it includes a British robot voice which reads texts in UK English. This may have something to do with the way it makes fun of a Texas drawl.

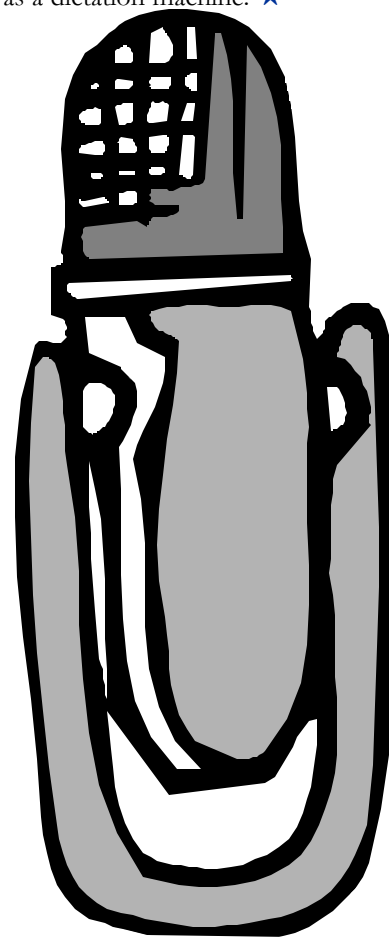
Despite such a handicap, you can reasonably expect a test-measured typing speed of 75 words per minute after one day, much faster once you learn the ropes.

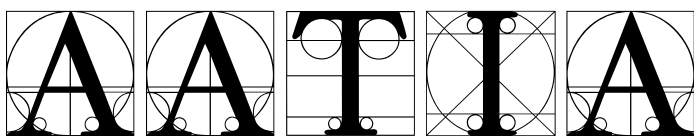
You can expect to pay less than \$100 for the software. As a bonus, you'll acquire considerable skill at reinstalling your entire operating system more often than ever before. Dragon software is unstable—much like powerful game programs—and resents

sharing RAM. The huge speech files and their handlers are easily corrupted for no apparent reason, but are usually quickly repaired with the original installation CD. The repairs will not destroy your speech files nor overwrite your modified vocabulary list.

There are no dongles to install, but for those who insist on paying an extra \$300 or \$400, specialized Professional versions can be had. DNS works in Word, Excel, and PowerPoint without ruining the original file formats.

If you are accustomed to translating 3000 words in an average day, you will be delighted to discover that you can dictate at twice that rate without developing tense shoulder pains. Now, 53 years after Winston Smith whispered into his speakwrite in George Orwell's novel *1984*, interpreters and translators may find that it makes perfect economic sense to dedicate a fast computer and operating system to use as a dictation machine. ★





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AATIA welcomes visitors to the Austin History Center (AHC) at 9th & Guadalupe on the 2nd Saturday of odd-numbered months for general meetings and even-numbered months for board meetings.

EVENTS IN AUSTIN

- Jan 12 10 a.m. SpanSIG meeting, AHC
1–4 p.m. AATIA regular meeting, AHC
Jan 19 1–3 p.m. LitSIG meeting,
Feb 9 10–12 noon. MCISIG meeting, AHC
12 noon. MCISIG networking lunch
1–4 p.m. AATIA board meeting, AHC
7 p.m. Party, see website for details
Mar 9 AATIA regular meeting and SpanSIG meeting
Apr 20 SpanSIG regional conference

Legal Seminar Set for Houston

INTERMARK LANGUAGE SERVICES will offer its legal translation seminar “A Civil Lawsuit in the United States and Latin America” in Houston, February 15-16, 2002. The nine-hour legal translation seminar designed for Spanish-English/English-Spanish translators and interpreters will be taught by attorneys Tom West (J.D., University of Virginia School of Law) and Daniel Giglio (J.D., Universidad de Buenos Aires). Topics will include phases of a civil trial, documents typically filed with courts, and procedural terminology. There will be a number of hands-on exercises.

Registration fees are \$150 early-bird (by Jan. 15), \$175 regular (by Feb. 1), and \$100 student. Visit www.intermark-languages.com for more details or call 770/444-3055. ★

See it, say it, in Nahuatl

THE NAME DERIVES FROM THE AZTEC word *ahnacacuahatl* that means “testicle tree.” Before your imagination goes wild, you should know that they hang in pairs from the tree. ★

Takvorian trio becomes quintet

ALEXIS AND MOLLY TAKVORIAN happily announce the arrival of twins Melina Rose and Sophia Chesnut. Brother Aris also welcomed the family additions. Alexis says that the name Melina derives from the Greek for “honey” and can be interpreted as sweet or “gentle,” and Rose is from Molly's mother's name (Rosemary). Sophia means “wisdom” in Greek, and Chesnut is a name from Molly's father's side of the family. ★

More about @

Several months ago The Letter asked readers to supply the word for the symbol @ in their working languages. The response was not overwhelming, but a couple of members did respond.

Efrat Schwartz reported that in Hebrew, the @ symbol is nicknamed “strudel,” pronounced “shtrudel,” a German word for a swirly pastry.

Rather than giving only the German term for this symbol, Frank Dietz found several website links that cover many languages. The Linguist List asked a similar question and tabulated replies from 105 readers at www.linguistlist.org/issues/7/7-968.html. A German page *Woher kommt der klammeraffe?* and its English translation offers some historical notes on usage at http://home.t-online.de/home/Hanno_Kuehnert/klaffe.htm. ★