

## Using your mobile phone to read *Lute News* (or any printed text) in any language—and to hear music clips and films using QR codes

This little essay is inspired by the sad story of a French member of the Lute Society who terminated his membership because he said it was too difficult to read so much in English. If only he had waited for the dawn of some of today's new technologies! Young people will read nothing here they do not already know, but some of us older ones may find the following useful.

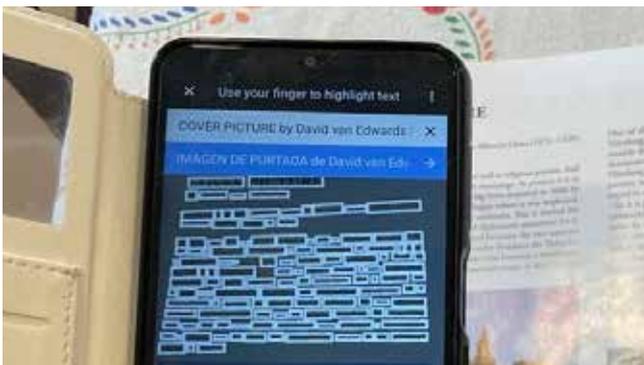
If you read your *Lute News* as PDF there are various on-screen translation options (perhaps one day we will produce a Kindle version . . .) but if you like to sit in a comfortable armchair with a nice cup of coffee or a glass of wine to read it, then the following may prove useful.

You can now use the camera on your mobile phone to translate *Lute News*, or any written text, to any one of a great many languages. There are tutorials on Youtube explaining how to do this, for instance 'Live Translate any Language with Phone Camera' at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2E4t75uF6JI> or at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g6qi\\_1EYB7](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g6qi_1EYB7) 'How To Translate Documents Instantly Using Phone's Camera?—Google Translate App For Android', but briefly what you do is as follows.

For an Android device, you go the Playstore and download Googletranslate, which is a free App. On an iPhone you can find it in the App store, and you may have to download the languages you want as a separate task. When you use it click on the camera icon, and the legend 'aim at text' or 'align text' will appear in the middle of the 'viewfinder' screen. At the top of the screen are the options for choosing the original document language and the target language. In the iPhone version a little eye icon gives you the choice of instant translation.



Don't be put off by the way the text dances around on the screen; instead press 'scan' (or tap on the camera icon in the iPhone version) and the camera will save a fixed image of a block of text. There will be a square around each word that the camera has understood—try again if lots of the text has not registered.



Click on 'select all' and then click on the prompts at the top of the screen: one text will be the original language, and below that (on a blue background) the target language—Spanish in this case.



Read the translation and repeat the process for the next bit you want to read. Hold the camera as steady as you can; and it will help to rest the magazine on a flat surface in a reasonably good light. In the case of *Lute News*, I find I can translate half a text column at a time. The technology isn't perfect—Taro Takeuchi (who kindly took these photos) tells me that the Japanese translations resulting are no more than intelligible, but the European translations can be remarkably fluent. The key is holding the camera still to get a good image.

And there's more! From now on in *Lute News* you will see QR codes—which are just a form of web address your camera can read. If you read *Lute News* on screen, you won't need these because you can click on live links in the text anyway, but 70% of subscribers ask for the paper version, and using these you can hear music clips from the CD reviews section, or Youtube films that illustrate an article, on your mobile phone, as you sit in the aforementioned comfy armchair.

To use these you just need to a QR scanner app to your phone—a very common and basic free app. (QR code generators are also a free app.) To get started, here are the Youtube videos mentioned above, and to whet your appetite further, two rather funny videos, one about the annual Italian lute string harvest . . . and the other about the growing problem of urban minstrelsy.



Youtube tutorials on use of camera-phone for instant translation



Italian Lute String Harvest



The Lute and the Fury