

The world of artificial intelligence is divisive as well as provides a great deal of assistance to the world of public history, specifically in the world of archivists. Artificial intelligence can be used for translation, interpretation, and transcription and put those abilities into the hands of more people than ever as well as speed the process up. For example, the translation of the Bible, as some people believe that a machine-translated version of the Bible would be a more accurate translation than the same work done by a human. The issue is that translators do more than translate; there is also a level of interpretation at play that needs to be taken into account when doing a translation to assess accuracy. Professional public historians have a duty to the public to ensure that their work is as accurate as possible, and one-to-one translations, or transcriptions in general, remove the context and other vital portions of information, such as other writing or markings on pages. Artificial intelligence could also serve as a way that archival sites could expand and make it easier for people to get information from them, which is being experimented with at the National Archives. They speak about how this technology could also be used to redact information from some records, but, again, it runs into issues of interpretation, as the AI would be the one deciding what is sensitive, which may not align with what a human would consider sensitive and could restrict access to information. The main goals of public history should be to provide an interpretation of information that is tailored to a specific topic and allow that interpretation to be easier to access, and while in theory this technology could assist in this goal. The reality is that it would cause interpretations to lack real interpretation and restrict access both by possibly not allowing some information to be seen and by creating interpretations that follow similar patterns instead of allowing information to flow from all sources, which helps to better understand the purpose of public history in general.

#### Sources:

“Museum of the Bible, Generating Wisdom: Artificial Intelligence and the Bible Conference Recap”

“Inventory of NARA Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use Cases”



Text from an old Bible



Small portion of material in the National Archives

