



Counterpoint
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CEATL's European Literary
Translators' E-zine

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From the editors

How to describe the world as it is, and how to change it – these struggles are the basis of the two main topics in our 8th *Counterpoint* issue.

Fifteen years ago Lars Kleberg and his colleagues began work on compiling an encyclopedia of Swedish translators – an important initiative, not only from the perspective of making the work of translators visible, but also as a contribution to translation criticism and translation history. Kleberg describes how his team went about it, and how their initiative was followed in other countries.

The importance of selection criteria for such an encyclopedia is shown by Elisabeth Gibbels, who conducted research on how translators' encyclopedias and indices represent women translators from the late 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. Her study reveals that a large number of important women have not been included at all, or that the description of their lives and works is inadequate. "Showing past contributions is vital," Gibbels concludes, and not only as "an act of reverence". It "offers an opportunity to change cultural memory". Describing the world and changing it is often closely connected.

A demand for change is also heard when it comes to the imbalance of languages on the book market. It is well-known that most translations by far are from English, followed by a few other 'big' languages. Books written in so-called 'small' languages, however, are rarely translated. The chances of them finding their way to an international readership are slim – even to the readership in neighbouring countries. The books of authors who write in the 'small' language Arabic, for example, are rarely found in Turkish bookshops. The same is true for books from Turkey's other neighbours, Greece, Bulgaria, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Iran.

Although the call for translating 'small' languages' literature into both 'big' and other 'small' languages is getting louder and the will to do so is growing, the current situation is far from ideal. One of the main challenges for redressing this imbalance is the limited number of translators for certain small languages.

Two translators describe two different approaches to overcome this problem, both from their own experience.

Danish translator Nanna Lund translated a Hebrew and a Turkish novel, both from German. Indirect translation, in other

words. Translating a translation is at least as old as the Bible and has been a common way of getting around a lack of translators, but is “mired in problems”, as Lund points out. She vowed to never again do such a translation. But despite the “extremely frustrating problems” she faced and her principal objections, she is about to start the Danish translation of Orhan Pamuk’s latest novel. From English this time. In her candid [article](#) she tells you why.

[Translation in Motion](#), a new initiative to support the professional development of literary translators working from and into the languages of the Western Balkans, tries to find a different solution to the shortage of qualified small language translators. Through intensive language education, experienced translators are trained in the shortest time possible to translate from new languages. Elizabeta Lindner, a Macedonian translator of German, English and Serbian poetry, joined one of these residencies, and [tells](#) us how she started to translate Latvian poetry while still learning the language.

Can we, for the time being, leave the situation as it is? Can we, as [Nayara Güercio](#) asks, afford to keep waiting, or is cultural richness advanced by indirect translations, even if these are far from ideal?

We are here, dear readers. And we’re happy to hear back from you.

Hanneke van der Heijden,
Anne Larchet and Juliane Wammen
editors@ceatl.eu



Hanneke van der Heijden is a literary translator and interpreter from Turkish into Dutch, and writes about [literature from Turkey](#).

Photo: Private Archive



Anne Larchet is a freelance interpreter and translator from Spanish to English.

Photo: Martin de Haan



Juliane Wammen is an award-winning literary translator from English, Norwegian and Swedish into Danish.

Photo: Tim Flohr Sørensen

Where have you been to lately?

Travelling through literature

Justyna Czechowska

Most of us have spent up to two years sitting at home, not able to travel, for either work or pleasure, due to the pandemic. And now that trains are back on track and the skies are open to planes, many of us are pondering if it's really necessary to travel, if we can't just hold a meeting on Zoom, if our home surroundings are not just as beautiful and as worth exploring as faraway places.

“Is it really necessary to travel?”

Some are worried about their financial situation. Others, like the Swedes, who invented the concept of *flygskam* are ashamed about flying for environmental reasons. Since February 2022, some of us living in Poland are wondering if donating money to Ukrainian refugees is not a more humane act than spending it on our personal vacations. Of course,

millions of Ukrainian women and children (among them translators and writers) have travelled simply because they were forced to flee for their safety.

Most Polish **literary residencies** have revised their target groups – instead of inviting artists from all over the world, they are giving shelter, a quiet, safe place, to Ukrainian writers and translators, for a week, or a month or a couple of months. The Polish Literary Translators Association, **STL**, and its sister association of Polish writers, The Literary Union, **SUL**, have created a data base of volunteers called ‘**Welcome to our colleagues from Ukraine**’ who offer assistance in various ways: help with administrative matters, looking for work, teaching Polish or simply meeting for a walk or a coffee.

“**Translators are saving the world**”, Nobel prize winner Olga Tokarczuk claimed.

So, how are they doing it?



Justyna Czechowska, at the statue of Selma Lagerlöf, Sunne, Sweden
Photo: Rafał Polkowski

Translator heroes

Aneta Kamińska, Bohdan Zadura, Michał Petryk, Marcin Gaczkowki, Katarzyna Kotyńska, Agnieszka Sowińska, Maciej Piotrowski, Walery Butewicz, Anna Korzeniowska-Bihun, Adam Pomorski, and Anna Łazar. These are all my Polish colleagues who have made their work a mission – a mission to translate as much Ukrainian literature as possible, which is in greater demand than ever before. But the mission has an even greater meaning, which is to save this literature for the world and for readers. Translating means losing something, as we all well know, but it also saves other things, which we all too often forget.

If I have managed to awaken your curiosity, have a look at some of the writing and translating

heroes at [#freeallwords](#) and at the [Russian Oppositional Arts Review](#). Another great source of information on Ukrainian literature is the web site of [Ukrainian PEN](#).

**“Translation
loses something
but also saves
other things”**

The world must be saved and although it might sound naïve, I do believe that we, and hopefully we are many, can manage to do so with literature’s help.



Justyna Czechowska is a specialist in literary studies, a cultural manager, and a translator from Swedish into Polish. She is a co-founder of the Polish Literary Translators' Association, and a co-author of the Odnalezienie w tłumaczeniu festival programme ['Found In Translation']. She was elected onto the board of CEATL in 2020.

Covers of translations
Photo: Justyna Czechowska

Travelling in literature

Where have I been to lately? To Eastern Siberia at the end of the nineteenth century – with the Norwegian writer Roy Jacobsen, his Polish translator Iwona Zimnicka and his Polish publisher, Poznanskie. In spring, I travelled to Australia and Trobriand Island with the great anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski. I spent time on the Canary Islands and in the Italian mountains, thanks to the Swedish author, Agneta Pleijel. I also stayed on the Finnish archipelago with Tove Jansson for a couple of months. In early autumn I walked through the centre of Stockholm accompanying

Therese Bohman in her latest novel *Andromeda*. Travelling in literature is absolutely wonderful, much cheaper and less tiring than the real thing. Now the only way to travel to Lviv, Charkiv, Kiev and Odessa is to have a look at the texts by Bogdan Kolomiichuk, Svitlana Taratorina, Serhiy Zhadan, Olena Pavlova, Oles Ilchenko, Hanna Kostenko, or the first Ukrainian urban novel, *The City*, by **Valerian Pydmohylny**.

So, where have you been to lately?
And where are you going to next?

Translators' dictionaries in Sweden – and Europe

Lars Kleberg

Since book production started, translations have made up approximately half of all texts available in Swedish. But in the more than 500 years that have passed, historians and literary scholars have paid scant heed to this fact. Translations, and the women and men who through their work have made world culture accessible to the Swedish reader, have remained in the shade. Only recently, has this situation started to change.

An important factor that has thrown new light on Swedish translation history is a database project at Södertörn University (Huddinge, Sweden). Over the last fifteen years a group of researchers and librarians has developed a comprehensive Swedish Translators' Dictionary called *Svenskt översättarlexikon*. This is an online database of bio-bibliographical articles about Swedish and Finland-Swedish translators from the Middle Ages to the present. It can be best described as work in progress

on a 'translation history from below'.

The project had two sources of inspiration, one practical and one theoretical. In the years 1997–2012, Södertörn University ran a successful literary translation programme. It was a kind of master class series, where young translators worked on what was usually their first book under the guidance of the best literary translators in Sweden. In the seminar discussions about how translations are read and how the work of translators is traditionally evaluated, we found that translation criticism in Sweden – if it existed at all – traditionally meant only noting errors and making sweeping generalisations. We wondered: where are the positive examples? Where could we find the description of the merits of a good translation, and of the accomplishments of individual translators? A critical bio-bibliographical dictionary of translators, who usually do not appear in existing dictionaries of writers and



Celebrating the online launch of Svensk översättarlexikon, 12 May 2009. In front librarian Magnus Sandgren, Lars Kleberg and IT specialist Mats Eriksson. Far left, at the back, author Nils Håkanson
Photo: Private Archive

general encyclopedias, seemed to be the answer to these practical questions.

A comprehensive biography of the translator

Theoretical input for the Södertörn project soon came from the work of the translation studies scholar, Anthony Pym, and his article 'Humanizing Translation History' from 2009. Inspired by the discussions with our students at Södertörn and by the example of Pym, we started constructing the new dictionary in collaboration with our university library. The basic idea was simple. The technical requirements for the database were simplicity, clarity and accessibility for both academic users and the general reader. Each entry should consist of a comprehensive biography, a characterisation of the translator's work and its importance for its time and for today, a full bibliography of all the translator's published works, including performed but not printed scripts for plays, and a profile of the

person. The purpose of the dictionary was threefold: firstly, cultural policy-wise, to make the work of our colleagues visible; secondly, to try to develop a critical language for describing what a translation is and does; and thirdly, in an academic context, to lay the basis for a Swedish translation history, starting from below with the individual actors.

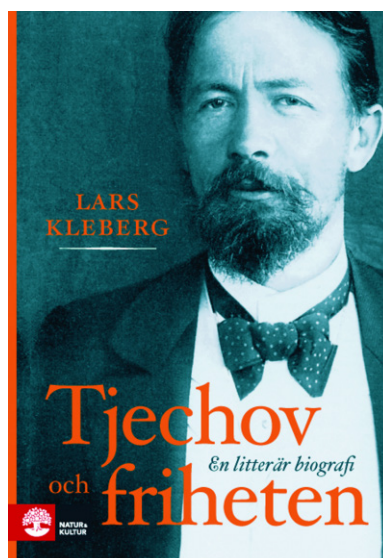
The selection and collection of entries was initially quite spontaneous. In May 2006, the future editors gathered around 20 Swedish scholars, translators, librarians, and book publishers in a colloquium to discuss the possibilities of creating a Dictionary of Swedish Translators. Every participant was asked to send a number of translators' names that should be considered for future articles. The resulting list was then enlarged with names of persons who had received the more prestigious translators' prizes in Sweden, and with new names proposed by the authors who were asked to write the first test articles.

Step by step, the list of potential names for full entries was growing. When a more stable, small group of editors was formed, ad hoc criteria for inclusion in the future Dictionary were formulated, basically saying “deceased, qualitatively or quantitatively relevant Swedish and Finnish–Swedish translators of foreign literature in the genres of fiction, children’s literature, essays, and the humanities (including also milestones in physics, mathematics, etc.).”

A second, no less important outcome of the May 2006 colloquium – actually essential for the very realization of the future project – was the technical solution for a digital on-line platform for the Dictionary, presented by Magnus Sandgren and Mats Eriksson, IT-specialists at Södertörn University Library. During the next few years, with small funding from external sponsors and the necessary support of the Library, what was to become *Svenskt översättarlexikon* was tested, revised, tested again, and presented at different seminars for feedback from specialists in the field.

Svenskt översättarlexikon went online in May 2009. Only then could the project start competing for substantial financial support from Swedish research foundations. We managed to receive grants twice from *Riksbankens Jubileumsfond*: about € 92,000 for 2012–2014 and ca. € 285,000 for 2015–2017. In 2012, the Dictionary had published its first 100 entries, all about translators into Swedish from the Middle Ages to the late 1900s, with the preliminary goal being set at 500 entries. In addition to the bio-bibliographical articles, the dictionary also had other features, such as general thematic articles, a search

option for source languages and specific periods, and lists of prizes awarded to translators into Swedish over the last 150 years. The use of the dictionary is free of charge through the national full-text digital library *Litteraturbanken*.



Cover of Kleberg’s biography of Anton Chekhov (Natur & Kultur Publishers)

Today, *Svenskt översättarlexikon* contains around 550 articles – all in Swedish – and more than 40,000 titles of searchable works (original titles and translations). It is used widely by scholars, librarians, students, journalists, book publishers, and the general public; the average number of unique users for one month at present reaching around 12.000. A sign of the impact of our project is that a book by one of the editors, Nils Håkanson, entitled *Dolda gudar: om allt som inte går förlorat i en översättning* (‘Hidden Gods: About Everything That Doesn’t Get lost in Translation’) won the national book award *Augustpriset* for nonfiction works in 2021. This could hardly have happened before our dictionary was established as a well-known source of reference.

Other countries following



SVENSKT ÖVERSÄTTARLEXIKON
ÖVERSÄTTARE TEMA PRISER KRONOLOGI SPRÅK LITTERATURBANKEN

Om Svenskt översättarlexikon

Världens författare kommer till oss via översättningar och genom enskilda översättares arbete. I *Svenskt översättarlexikon* blir översättarna – de som har skapat halva den svenska nationallitteraturen – synliga med biografi, porträtt och verkförteckning. Lexikonet utvidgas kontinuerligt med nya artiklar och är fortfarande under utveckling. I första omgången presenteras avlidna svenska och finlandssvenska översättare.

Den nya databasen har utvecklats på Södertörns högskolebibliotek under medverkan av litteraturvetare, språkhistoriker, översättare och kritiker. Eftersom översättarna är en yrkeskår som av tradition har arbetat i skymundan är artiklarna i *Svenskt översättarlexikon* ofta resultat av omfattande grundforskning.



Sigrid Elmblad, 1860–1926

Genom unika förbindelser i det europeiska musiklivet kom Sigrid Elmblad att fungera som en viktig förmedlare av Richard Wagners musik och tankevärld till Sverige. Hennes översättningar av Wagners libretton användes under

Front page of the Swedish Translators' Dictionary

in Sweden's footsteps

For obvious reasons, *Svenskt översättarlexikon* has mainly been of interest for Swedish-speaking users. However, the idea and the form of the online dictionary has slowly been spreading. Already in 2014, the first in a series of European translators' dictionaries was launched by our Danish colleagues. Their articles are still few, but of a high, essayistic level. In November 2015, a German project based in Germersheim under the guidance of Andreas F. Kelletat started publishing very comprehensive, peer-reviewed articles. Today, the *Germersheim dictionary* comprises around 100 entries but has the long-time goal of 2,000 articles. The fastest growing project its kind today is the Norwegian *Norsk Oversetterleksikon*, launched in June 2017, with (at the time of writing) around 135 published detailed articles with interesting critical evaluations of each translator's work. Not least thanks to the excellent work of the Germersheim

colleagues, other European countries have now been able to study the concept and construct of the originally Swedish project. Partly thanks to collaboration with their counterparts in Norway and the Germany, Petra Broomans of Groningen University and her colleagues in the Netherlands have recently started publishing a quickly growing *Vertalerslexicon voor het Nederlandstalig gebied*. All these projects have adopted the general structure of *Svenskt översättarlexikon*, including a list of prizes, a timeline where one can zoom in on translators active during a specific era, and a complete list of all source languages appearing in the bibliographies.

A very ambitious translators' dictionary is now in preparation at the Institute for Literary Studies at the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw. Ewa Kołodziejczyk is the head of the project *The Digital Lexicon of Polish Translators* which will collect and publish information about



Lars Kleberg is professor emeritus of Russian at Södertörn University, Sweden, and general editor of *Svenskt översättarlexikon*. He is also a translator and writer. He has written a biography of Anton Chekhov, *Tjechov och friheten*, published translations of Chekhov's plays and of poetic texts by Lev Rubinstein, *Tiden går*. *Texter ur Det stora kartoteket* and *Vidare och vidare*, co-translated with Johan Öberg, Kajsa Öberg Lindsten, and Dmitri Plax.

Lars Kleberg
Photo: Eva Lindblad

translators both to and from Polish. The format is strictly factographical, with all information strictly marked up so as to make possible complex searches like 'from which languages were translations into Polish made in Lviv between the years 1920–1930?' or 'which Polish translators were of Jewish origin'. The bibliographies are very detailed and include links to peritextual material (reviews, etc). Unlike the dictionaries following the Swedish model, the entries do not include critical discussions or characterizations of the included translators' work.

It is interesting that we have seen translators' dictionaries appear in peripheral rather than central literatures, to use Pascale Casanova's terminology (in *The Republic of Letters*, 2007) – Germany being the big exception. Impressive works of translation history have recently appeared in England, France, the Netherlands, and Spain (notably not in Russia), but to our knowledge no translators' dictionaries.

Eventually we might see a wider network

of European translators' dictionaries develop. As the number of entries in each dictionary grows, earlier unobserved networks, traditions and processes will become part of what Anthony Pym calls a "humanizing" translation history. It will in the future help to answer questions similar to those addressed by Peter France in his 'Introduction' to the comprehensive *Oxford Guide to Literature in English Translation* (2000):

- What has or has not been translated into a given language from the literatures of the world?
- How has translation shaped a 'canon' of world literature for a country's readers?
- How have a country's translators seen their task, and in what social context have they worked?
- Under what guise have the greater and lesser works of world literature been transferred into a language?
- What is the nature and quality of the different translations currently available to readers?

The lost case of women translators or: The case of the lost women translators?

Elisabeth Gibbels

In 2018, I published a lexicon of German women translators that contained short biographies of nearly 250 women. This had evolved from a small paper on the German translators of the penny dreadfuls that I gave for a conference in Istanbul. Many of these names came from deep digs into diverse sources, such as publishing house catalogues, women writers' lexicons, indices in translation anthologies or overview books on certain periods, for instance, the lives of nuns. Many were found by pure chance. What was striking then and now is how little these women are known and how little information can be gained from online resources like the German National Biography database ([ADB/NDB](#)). ADB/NDB, for example, lists thirteen women translators, but doesn't include Marie Herzfeld, the "ambassador for Scandinavian literature" (*Killy's Literary Lexicon*) or Else Otten, the namegiver of a translation award. Even the Germersheim online translators' lexicon, [UeLex](#), only lists six late 19th century

female translators. This contrasts sharply with my own findings. For Yiddish, Dutch, Scandinavian, Slavic and Baltic languages alone I have identified 115 women, all born between 1830 and 1875. Why are these women not known?

To illustrate the discrepancy between the achievements of women translators and their presence in cultural memory, I will focus on five: Helene Engelhardt-Pabst (1850–1910) (Russian and Latvian), Marie Herzfeld (1855–1940) (Swedish), Marie Franzos (1870–1941) (Swedish), Else Otten (1873–1931) (Dutch), and Bertha von Pappenheim (1859–1936) (Yiddish). This selection is the result of several considerations. Firstly, the translators cover a range of languages that are less prominent than English and French. Secondly, their cases make us aware of common phenomena, for example, how using a number of (pen) names obliterates part of the translator's oeuvre. Thirdly, their cases show how difficult the search for information about

their works and lives often is and how valuable information can be hidden in obscure sources. Finally, comparing translators of similar achievements and biographies may highlight mechanisms that contribute to their invisibility.

Helene von Engelhardt-Pabst (1850–1910)

This translator's work and her biography are listed under two names in the same women writers' lexicon (Sophie Pataky's *Lexikon deutscher Frauen der Feder*, 1898). Furthermore, the latter name appears with two different spellings (Papst and Pabst). The ADB/NDB does list her, but as a poet and not as a translator. Her maiden name, Engelhardt-Schnellenstein, was also her pen name, as was common practice. Nevertheless, two main indices list her under two different names: Engelhardt-Pabst (ADB/NDB), Engelhardt-Schnellenstein (Pataky). Thus, the corpus of her German translations of Latvian folksongs and Russian authors is dispersed in four different name constellations. The most comprehensive overview is provided by [EEVA](#), a project on old Estonian literature.

Marie Herzfeld (1855–1940)

Marie Anna Barbara Herzfeld published under the names H.M. Lyhne, Marianne Niederweelen, Marianne Niederweeven and Marianne Niederweiden; her first name is also given as Maria. Besides her numerous translations of Scandinavian literature, she was also active as a literary scholar who published articles on the authors she translated. The renowned German literary lexicon *Killy* called her the main “ambassador of Scandinavian literature” and the

“leading name in the rediscovery of Italian Renaissance literature”.



Marie Herzfeld

Photo: Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Bildarchiv

Furthermore, Herzfeld was vice-president of the Austrian Women Writers' Association and received the Bauernfeld Award for her literary work. All of this apparently did not suffice for her name to make the lists. Is it because she was Austrian? Is it because she translated from small languages? Let's contrast her case with that of a translator who shared much of her biography, down to her first name.

Marie Franzos (1870–1941)

Just as Marie Herzfeld, Marie Franzos, too, published under various pseudonyms (Francis Maro, F. Maro, Fr. Maro, Francis Mauro; her first name appeared as Maria, Mizi, Mizzi, 'M.'). She, too, translated from Scandinavian languages and as with her published literary criticism, she received an award for her work. She lived in the same

period and in the same country as Marie Herzfeld. But while Herzfeld is invisible in translators' indices, Franzos is not.

One factor that could explain this is the existence of a famous male relative. Franzos' uncle was the well-known Austrian author Karl Emil Franzos; her father is often mentioned, too. This is referred to in many instances but the fact that her mother, Bertha Ostersetzer, had also been a translator, is left out except in UeLex and [BiografiA](#).

Other important information on Franzos' work and life has been omitted as well. Only [regiowiki.at](#) informs us of the date Franzos began to stop using her pseudonyms (1913); only UeLex mentions a first anonymous translation (1895). Hardly any sources mention that from 1938 onward Franzos published her translations under the names of friends. Only UeLex mentions that she did not just "pass away" but took her own life after having been refused a visa to Switzerland.



Marie Franzos

Photo: [Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Bildarchiv](#)

Else Otten (1873–1931)

Neither Otten nor the translation prize named after her are included in resources such as UeLex. What we know about her, we owe to the scholar Jaap Grave (see *Übersetzen ist Liebeswerk*, 2003), who painstakingly went through archives searching for information. He found that Otten translated most of the late 19th and early 20th century Dutch avant-garde literature. She supported and promoted 'her' authors and published articles about them. In 2000, a translation award was named after her, the Dutch–German Else Otten Translation Prize, that has been awarded ever since. Then why does she not get more attention?



Else Otten

Photo: [Huygens Instituut](#)

Is it because Otten was born into a Dutch family? Is it that Dutch is not prestigious enough in Germany? Is it because she lived in a relationship with another woman, the renowned singer Helene Siegfried, a fact that is ignored in accounts of Siegfried's life? In fact, to what extent do biographical factors play a role in the selection of translators for an index?

Bertha von Pappenheim (1859–1936)

Bertha von Pappenheim used the pseudonym P. Berthold or Paul Berthold. Some sources are uncertain about the correct form of her family name (Poppenheim). But that's only when she was indeed mentioned as a translator. In several cases she was simply ignored when books were published as "aus dem Jüdischen übers. und hrsg. von David Kaufmann (1896) and "aus dem Jiddischen übers. und hrsg. von Alfred Feilchenfeld (1913)" (translated from the Yiddish language and edited by ...).

**Bertha von Pappenheim****Photo:** *Digitales Deutsches Frauenarchiv*

In reality, Pappenheim was one of the very few translators from Yiddish. Moreover, her translation of *The Memoirs of Glucksel von Hameln*, an early Jewish businesswoman, was an important contribution to cultural memory. Pappenheim also translated Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, the version used in the German second women's movement. Apart from this, Pappenheim was Sigmund Freud's Anna O., became the subject of a novel and a play, founded and managed a Jewish orphanage, wrote against the trafficking of Ukrainian

women and founded the Austrian Jewish Women's Association. All of this did not give her visibility. Why this should be so unclear: Is it because her translations appear to have been self-commissioned? Is it because she translated from Yiddish? Is it because she founded the 'wrong' women's association? Is it because her mental health issues somehow tarnished her name?

Pen names

It was common in the 19th century for both men and women to write under pen names. However, the possibilities for names being confused in encyclopedia entries are greater for women than men as women took their husbands' family names when they married and then used their maiden name as their pen name. An encyclopedia might list women under their married name although their work might have been published under their pen/maiden name, as was the case for Engelhardt-Papbst-Schnellesstein.

What should a translators' lexicon include?

UeLex includes the following information on Marie Franzos: language biography (how she learned the languages she translated from and what her competence in these languages was), agency as a translator (what decisions and impact she had on the translation and publication process), cultural capital (her interaction



Dr. Elisabeth Gibbels teaches at Humboldt University Berlin in the Department for English and American Studies. Her main research interests in translation studies have been gender, power and censorship. Much of her recent work has focused on the history of women's translation in Germany, e.g. Lexikon der deutschen Übersetzerinnen 1200–1850 ['Lexicon of German Women Translators 1200–1850'].

Dr. Elisabeth Gibbels
Photo: Private Archive

with the authors, the award she received for her translation), genres translated, translation heritage (her mother's translation work). This comprehensive entry of her work and her background seems adequate. However, this is the exception rather than the rule.

“The corpus of her translations is dispersed in four different name constellations”

Conclusion

The five women translators that I have chosen here stand for hundreds of German women translators who, like these, contributed immensely to cultural transfer in Germany. Their individual biographies and their translation work

deserve recognition and visibility. So what can be done to give them this visibility? Projects such as the Gernersheimer lexicon, and similar translators' databases in other countries, contain clear and comprehensive information. This information is often gleaned from hard to access sources, such as journals, correspondence and publishing houses' archives. Even this information doesn't seem to impact on their inclusion in cultural memory.

However, in an age when girls and women are banned from higher education (Afghanistan) or discouraged from believing in themselves, showing past contributions is vital. Working on a women translators' lexicon is thus not only an act of reverence but also a tool of empowerment.

Therefore, even though the information we are able to find is fragmentary, retrieving the works and lives of women translators and recording their data is not a hopeless endeavour. Far from that: it offers an opportunity to change cultural memory.

OUT & ABOUT

From nowhere to somewhere:

Setting up a Slovenian translators' residency

Six questions to Tanja Petrič

In June 2021 the translators' residency Sovretov kabinet ('Sovre's Study') in Hrastnik, Slovenia, opened its doors. Tanja Petrič, one of the founders, answered Counterpoint's questions.

What was the role of the Slovenian Association of Literary Translators (DSKP) in establishing this residency?

The municipality of Hrastnik offered us an unfurnished apartment in the newly renovated upper floor in the so-called 'House of culture' in the town of Dol pri Hrastniku. It's the birthplace of Anton Sovre, an important translator from classical languages, after whom our main translation prize is named. We accepted the offer and in 2020 we started furnishing the apartment and organising the formalities for the opening.

How is the residency funded?

The residency is part funded by the Slovenian Book Agency, the Municipality of Hrastnik and DSKP funds. As we don't have to pay rent, this is considered as

a contribution from the municipality. We do, however, have to cover all the maintenance costs. We also give the residents a small grant of 200 – 300 euro per month and a lump sum of 200 euro for travel expenses.

What was the biggest surprise you experienced while setting up the translators' residency?

Since the apartment the municipality of Hrastnik gave us was not furnished, our translators' team had to acquire the furniture ourselves, which, given our



Hrastnik and surroundings
Photo: Sovretov kabinet

very limited financial resources, meant a long, difficult and sometimes very funny process. But with a lot of improvising we managed. As the manager of the whole 'decorating operation', I sometimes felt like I was in a bazaar, begging and haggling in big furniture shops to try to get the price down! In the middle of the pandemic it was very difficult to find sponsors, and meanwhile delivery periods were extended. We waited nearly 6 months for a shelf.

Another interesting experience was the shooting of a promotional video, which we did in one day. With the whole camera team we marched through the surroundings, looking for interesting angles, which would not only shed light on the residency, but also on the many villages and nature around it. While our plans grew and grew, day-light faded. But by that stage we were used to improvising...

What are the criteria for being accepted as a resident?

We offer a residency to translators of Slovenian literary works into foreign languages. This is linked to the Slovenian Book Agency's application criteria for financial support. The residency is part of the co-financed programme 'International cooperation' which focuses on the promotion of Slovenian literature abroad. Through this programme we receive funding for 4–6 residents per year who translate from Slovenian. In the remaining months the residency is open to Slovenian and foreign translators of all language combinations.

Does your translators' association have contacts with translators from Slovenian literature living abroad?

Does the residency increase the contacts between members of your association and translators of Slovenian literature living outside of Slovenia?

As I have been organising seminars on translating Slovenian literature since 2010, with the support of the Slovenian Book Agency, our association has a large network of translators of Slovenian literature. Through these seminars I continue to discover new translators, make new contacts and keep our network updated. It is hard to say if the residency itself increases contacts between foreign translators and our members, because it is not connected to Ljubljana, where most of our members live. The residency offers a quiet environment for individual work, but we do try to include the residents in local and regional cultural events and in our activities as much as possible.



Façade of the 'House of culture', which houses 'Sovre's Study'
Photo: Sovretov kabinet



Tanja Petrič is a freelance translator, literary critic, and editor. She studied comparative literature and German language and literature at University of Ljubljana and has translated many well-known Austrian, German and Swiss authors including Bertolt Brecht, Milena Michiko Flašar, Friederike Mayröcker, Robert Menasse, Eva Menasse, and Annemarie Schwarzenbach. She was editor of the *Litterae Slovenicae* from 2011 to 2022 and received the Lirikonov zlat and Rodojka Vrancic awards for translation as well as the Stritar Award for literary reviews. She is currently president of the Slovenian Association for Literary Translators (DSKP).

Tanja Petrič
Photo: Matej Pušnik

We also interview them for the prominent Slovenian online magazine *Literatura*, which increases the visibility of the residency and its guests.

What is the position of literary translators in Slovenia?

Literary translators in Slovenia are well regarded. It is a respected profession, with significant visibility, news on translation prizes and interviews with translators appear in the mainstream media. Translators have received the highest state award (Prešeren Prize) for their achievement in the arts and culture. The economic status of literary translators is, however, getting worse and worse. Some publishers of translated literature have closed down, and others have cancelled their translation programmes. The government still subsidises translated literature, but unsubsidised fees are very low and don't reflect the current cost of living, nor did they before. The number of young translators appears to be dropping in recent times.

Sovreto v kabinet

The promotional video of the residency (with English or Slovenian subtitles) can be watched [here](#).

Residencies have a maximum length of one month. If the resident is accepted through the application procedure the residency is free.

A folder with more information on the *Sovreto v kabinet* can be found [here](#). [Hrastnik](#) offers more information on the municipality (in Slovenian); click [here](#) for information in English.

What's in a name?

Indirect translation

Nayara Güércio

If something is lost in translation, then something is doubly lost in indirect translation. This seems to be the general assumption. But what is indirect translation (ITr) exactly? In a broad sense, it is the process of translating translations. One might go on to ask whether ITr is the same as relay or pivot translation. Authors such as Assis Rosa, Pięta and Bueno Maia would argue that indirect translation is a better term than relay or pivot, not only because it has a straightforward antonym (direct translation), but also because it is a convenient umbrella term to encompass several hyponyms. However, there is little consensus among researchers. Cay Dollerup, for instance, suggests that relay and indirect translations mean two different things. For him, relayed texts are intermediary realizations rendered for the public, whereas indirect texts are not made for any audience other than the subsequent translator. I am, however, tempted to question whether this distinction would have any real consequence for a translator's work. Would they shift their translation strategy if they knew beforehand that their texts were only meant to be steppingstones between the source and the ultimate target text?

Twenty-two years have passed since Dollerup made this distinction between the terms *relay* and *indirect* and yet, there is still no general agreement as to what terminology best describes the phenomenon. Terminology is always an important issue when doing research, but it does not seem to have much effect on ITr as a practice. *Relay* seems to be the preferred term for interpreters, whereas subtitlers tend to use *pivot*. Other terms such as *double*, *eclectic*, *intermediate*, *mediated* and even *second hand* have been used interchangeably with indirect translation in various contexts.

“Indirect translations are seldom identified as such”

As well as the previously mentioned authors, others have tried to differentiate *indirect translation* from other terms. Yves Gambier, for instance, distinguishes *indirect translation* from *back translation* and *retranslation*. Geraldine Brodie puts forward the term *literal translation*

when detailing the process of translating indirectly for the stage.

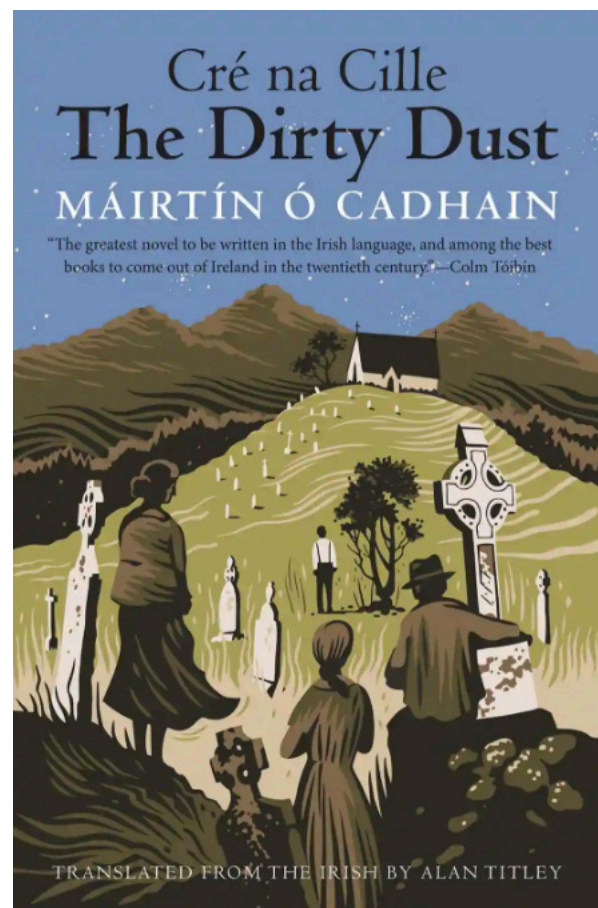
Terminological discussions aside, it is fair to assume that indirect translation comes with particular challenges and, thus, requires specific competences according to Ester Torres-Simón. When two languages or cultures come into contact, indirect translation can be one of the means by which they communicate, adds Laura Ivaska. In contexts like these, it is easy to predict that details may be lost. In some countries, policy makers can actively discourage indirect translation, by not providing grants for such translation, a subject covered by the Swedish academic, Cecilia Alvstad. Possibly as a consequence, indirect translations are seldom identified as such.

Challenges and gains

Historically, indirect translation has been a common practice in film, TV, science, the news and especially in the literary world. One exceptionally famous indirect translation, in particular, stands out as having been exceedingly popular for centuries: the Bible.

Originally written in Aramaic, Greek and Hebrew, the Bible was translated into Latin from which it has been translated into multiple other languages. As explained by Torres-Simón, the indirect route was the standard procedure for Bible translation until the early twentieth century. Even though indirect translation was common practice in this context, questions about Bible translations and their faithfulness have always been around. Alongside the challenges, there are also some gains.

It is, for instance, worth remembering that without indirect translation, Google Translate as we know it would be substantially more limited. There is simply not enough data for the software to perform direct translations from every language into every other language. In practice, Google Translate tends to translate the so-called minor languages into more major languages, and from there, translate them again into other minor languages. Since we entered the digital age, it has become almost impossible to envisage travelling in interlingual contexts without being able to resort to Google Translate, should the need arise.



Máirtín Ó Cadhain's *The Dirty Dust* (*Cré na Cille*) translated by Alan Titley
Cover: Yale University Press



Nayara Güércio is a PhD candidate conducting a meta-analytical project on the rapidly developing sub-field of Indirect Translation Studies at the Trinity Centre for Literary and Cultural Translation. The main aim of her project is to provide a basis for understanding the current state of the art of research in Indirect Translation, as well as how this research might develop over the coming years. Güércio's work is funded by the Haddad Foundation. She has an MA from the University of Brasilia and an MPhil from TCD.

Nayara Güércio

Photo: Cristina Barroso

Also worthy of note is that without indirect translation there would be far fewer translations of work by authors in arguably peripheral languages like Irish. A good example is Máirtín Ó Cadhain's *Cré na Cille* (*The Dirty Dust*; 1949), which is considered by many to be one of the best Irish-language books ever written. It has been translated into over fourteen languages to date, including Greek, Tamil and Turkish, though almost all appeared after the publication of two English translations in 2016, on which most subsequent translations have been based. One could argue that these translations would have come into existence eventually – but the fact is that *Cré na Cille* waited over half a century.

Can we afford to keep waiting?

Not waiting gave us Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* in Hebrew after having gone through German and Russian. Brazilians were able to read Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*, after its indirect translation from Russian into French and then from French into Portuguese. The *Arabian Nights* made its way to Russian readers through its French translation.

Indirect translation is, in essence, a way of granting people access to culture, history and entertainment that would otherwise remain beyond their reach. The real question is if we would have been culturally richer had we avoided indirect translation and accepted the wait instead. I am not sure.

A game of Chinese whispers?

Thoughts on relay translation

Nanna Lund

I have had the mixed pleasure of having to do a relay translation a couple of times in my professional life. The first was Nir Baram's novel *מלוע לצ* (*World Shadow*), written in Hebrew but translated into Danish from the German version, the second Orhan Pamuk's debut novel, *Cevdet Bey ve Oğulları* ['Mr Cevdet and his Sons'], written in Turkish but translated into Danish also from the German version. I have next to no knowledge of either Hebrew or Turkish. Both times the process of translating the works presented me with several extremely frustrating problems, and both times I vowed never to do it again.

Nevertheless, I have just signed a contract to do a relay translation of Orhan Pamuk again: *Veba Geceleri*. This time from the English version, *Nights of Plague*.

Riddled with problems

So what is relay translation anyway? Simply put, it's translating a translation: translating one text into another language by way of a third language-version of said text. Yes, it sounds like a

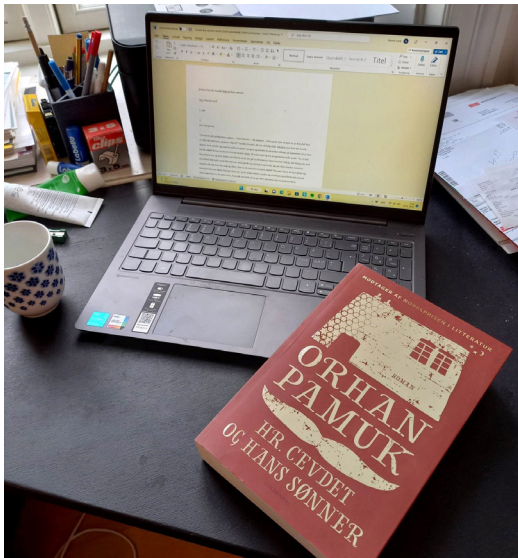
really bad idea, and yes, the process is, as I mentioned, riddled with problems.

If you are a translator of literature, you immediately balk at the idea of not having direct access to the original text. You sit there with a text, originally written in some language you don't understand, trying to get at the style, the phrasing, the melody and meaning of it, all the while knowing full well that you cannot be sure of it. Not entirely. You are reading it through the lens of another language, and who knows what might be lost in translation?

A children's game comes into mind: Chinese whispers. What is said at one end of the line – by the author – might be unrecognizable when it reaches the far end of the line, the relay translator.

Translators of literature are specialists, be it in a certain foreign language, a certain style or genre or period, or a certain author or group of authors. But what mostly defines us is our deep knowledge of the language(s) from which we translate. It is this knowledge

that gives us the unique access to the meaning of the text that in turn allows us to correctly (as correctly as possible, that is) translate that meaning into our mother tongue. Being able to read and understand the author's own mother tongue is a *sine qua non* when it comes to literary translations – it's what we do, and we couldn't imagine not being able to do it. It would feel so wrong.



Danish translation of 'Mr. Cevdet and his Sons'

Photo: Nanna Lund

Cover: Gyldendal Publishers

Pragmatism in the publishing world

Sometimes, though, our business is a lot less idealistic than you'd like it to be. Relay translations abound. I come from a small country, Denmark. There are only so many literary translators from Hebrew, or Korean, or even Chinese. And sometimes there are none at all, whether it's because they're just not there, or the ones still here are busy doing other things (making a living, for instance), or because there is a hiatus between the one who has now retired and his/her fledgling successor who might not yet be up to

the task of translating this or that (very) foreign language Nobel Prize winner. For literature, this situation is a bit of a nightmare. Relay translations are mired in problems, all too easily imaginable if you are a translator of literary fiction. Every time you encounter something in the text that you are not quite sure of – which you do all the time, even when translating an author in the original language – you ask yourself whether this uncertainty is on the part of the author or the translator that lies between yourself and the original.

Sometimes these uncertainties leave you in a situation so grotesque it's laughable: relay translating Pamuk from the German version I once encountered a place in the text where I was unsure of the gender of the person speaking. I consulted the Swedish and Norwegian versions – and where one version said 'he', the other said 'she'. Luckily, I had a Turkish-Danish friend who could tell me what Pamuk himself had actually written ... This happens all the time. And of course, there is a lot you can do: asking the other translators, reaching out to the author, etc.

I know that most publishing houses in Denmark that publish foreign literary fiction (and we do have quite a few, I'm proud to say, even though the market is small and the chances of making a profit therefore also small, verging on non-existent) all try their best to find translators that can translate the work directly. This is always the first option. Sometimes they can't and have to opt for something else. But sometimes, when they might have been able to find the right person, they still opt for



Nanna Lund translates from English, German, Norwegian and Swedish into Danish, and also works as a freelance editor. She has translated almost 50 works since 2013. Furthermore, she is an active member of the board of the **Danish Translators' Association**, dealing mainly with contractual issues and the financial and legal circumstances of the trade.

Nanna Lund
Photo: Sara Koch

something else. They might not have the professional network. They might not have the time to go look or to train, help, and support a newbie. Or they might not take the trouble for less honourable reasons: Finding the right translator takes time, and time is money, so they just go with someone they know and ask this person to do a relay translation.

So couldn't the author (or the agent) just insist? Well, they know what it's like out there. They just want to be published. In my own case they have been very helpful in pointing out another translation of their work that they trusted.

Often, I suspect, this 'time-is-money' argument plays a rather large part. When I was asked to do the relay translation of Orhan Pamuk's debut novel, the argument I heard was that there simply weren't any Danish translators from Turkish that were up to the task. I later found out this wasn't entirely true and was mortified that I had taken it on and might thus have deprived someone better suited of the job.

The issue of solidarity

This highlights another problem: doing relay translations also puts you in a moral bind. It's hard enough to make a living as a translator of literary fiction even when you translate from English, German, Swedish, and Norwegian, as I do. If you only translate from Turkish it must be almost impossible. As a relay translator you have to consider the issue of solidarity.

When I was recently asked to do another relay translation of Pamuk I tried to take this into account. I made a point of asking the publisher to really search for someone who might actually be able to translate directly from the Turkish version. I had at least three names ready for them from my own professional network. I don't know exactly how hard the publisher tried, but in the end, nothing came of it.

So here I am, about to do another one of those horrible relay translations. I'm grateful for the opportunity, and I promise I won't make a muck of it. But strictly speaking, I'm not the right one for the job.

NOTES FROM AROUND EUROPE: CZECH REPUBLIC

Get to know your translator

Anna Tkáčová

We at the [Association of Translators, Obec Překladatelů](#), of the Czech Republic have long been considering how to bring about a change in the situation of the literary translator, even if only in a small way. Despite their pivotal role in the very existence of foreign literature, translators are still too often anonymous, and for the most part readers are unaware of the work involved in enabling them to read their favourite foreign author in our language. This is especially true here, since Czech is a small linguistic region where translations account for the majority of the annual book production.

With this in mind, we have launched a long-term project called [Poznejte svého překladatele](#) ('Get to know your translator') in partnership with the Czech public and scientific libraries. Our goal is to make the profession known to the general public and thus to make readers aware not only of the name of a book's author, but also the name of the translator. In an ideal scenario, readers would be able to choose a book according to their favourite translator. What we are trying to demonstrate is that a foreign work does not make its way to the bookshop shelves all by itself: a translator will have read the original work, translated it, undertaken the

meticulous task of editing and correcting the text, sometimes writing the blurb on the cover, and, finally they may even have been involved in promoting the book through public readings, which are often given free of charge.



*'Get to know your translator' event at (A)void Café, Prague, February 2022
Photo: Filip Štoidl*

[Collaboration with libraries](#)

Our project was conceived just before the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, which meant that a large number of meetings had to be cancelled: of the forty or so scheduled, only half actually took place in 2020 and 2021, with audiences of variable size. Some of the meetings were held in schools, as part of a course of literature classes. Of those held in libraries, one of them was so successful that a second had to be organised with another translator. The library used actors from the town's municipal theatre

to read the extracts. Generally speaking, attendance is better in small towns and libraries, where people appreciate even the smallest cultural event, whereas in large towns with a wide range of cultural events on offer, the number of attendees tends to be relatively small.



(A)void Café in Prague, February 2022
Photo: Filip Štoidl

Cooperation with municipal librarians, who are usually enthusiastic readers themselves (in the Czech Republic, the profession is still largely female), has been excellent. They often set up a small exhibition of the speaker's translated books, allowing the audience to become acquainted with their work before actually meeting him/her. In some cases, advertisements in the local press include an original poster. Some libraries asked for a translator of genre literature (e.g. science fiction), others wanted a translator of a specific language field, and one library specifically asked for a translator of young adult literature.

Our association is in charge of sourcing the speakers, while the libraries take care of organising the gathering. A member of our committee liaises with them and provides the necessary material. Together we look after advertising and promoting the event on social networks: the libraries announce it in their newsletters, in the local press and on their own networks, and we do the same. We also publish photos

of the meetings on our association's Facebook page: we believe that a report on one meeting can attract people to subsequent events. The meetings are quite informal and the photos succeed in capturing the relaxed, friendly and pleasant atmosphere that translators create in their discussions with their readers. We have also received positive, enthusiastic and flattering feedback from librarians, some of whom have reported that they only became aware of the full implications of literary translation as a result of these meetings. So, in addition to the reading public, our story also resonates with library professionals.

As our association still lacks sufficient resources to host such events on our own, we have arranged with the libraries to provide a fee for the translator, while our association pays for their transport. However, libraries are not exactly flush with cash either, so in many cases the translators do the event for free or for a nominal fee. We hope to eventually obtain state funding, which would allow us to pay for the speakers' travel expenses as well as for the presentations.

The speakers are usually chosen from among our members, but we sometimes contact external translators.



Stefan Hertmans' Konvertitka, translated from the Dutch by Radka Smejkalová
Photo: Filip Štoidl
Cover: Garamond Publishers



Anna Tkáčová is a Hispanist, Spanish translator, editor and member of the Czech Translators' Association (OP). She specialises in the translation of Spanish and Mexican essayists such as José Jiménez Lozano, Fernando García de Cortázar, Carlos Fuentes, Octavio Paz, Sergio Pitlor, Elena Poniatowska etc.

Anna Tkáčová
Photo: Jan Tichý

This is a way of attracting their interest in our association and encouraging further cooperation and perhaps even membership. Indeed, it is not uncommon for a speaker to apply for membership of our association shortly afterwards. The project is proving to be a great success not only with librarians, but also, and above all, with the translators themselves, who see it as a unique opportunity to present their texts, take a break from the computer, and get direct feedback on their work, with comments from the members of the audience, instead of articles in the press or literary magazines.

Readings on a boat

For Prague audiences, we found a place on a boat permanently moored on the Vltava River, which belongs to the cultural association (A)void Floating Gallery. During the winter, meetings are held in the hold in front of a wood-burning stove; then, when the weather is clement, we sit out on the deck and enjoy the views of Hradšchin Castle while listening to our favourite author. The translation evenings held here, every first Tuesday of the month, share the same goal as the library meetings: to

make the translator better known and more visible. Music is an integral part of the programme, and this is often followed by an informal discussion with the audience. A first meeting took place in October 2021 which was attended by just four people; the last two meetings saw forty curious people who had come to listen to the translator.

(A)void Floating Gallery's boat meetings continued throughout the pandemic, although cooperation with the libraries was interrupted. In autumn 2021 and spring 2022, we managed to catch up on some of the meetings originally scheduled for 2020. Now the initiative is back on track and our plan is to continue with our programme which has turned out to be so successful. After all, why should debates and meetings with readers be reserved for writers only? Especially since the Czech Republic boasts one of the densest public library networks in Europe! As we all know, translators are also authors.

Translated from Czech into French by Hana Fořtová, from the French into English by Penelope Eades-Alvarez

SMALL TO SMALL

Learning Latvian by translating its poetry:

Experiences from the Translation in Motion project

Elizabeta Lindner

Poetry is an art form that not everyone is very willing to access. It can be a real challenge for readers, and for translators. From that point of view the approach of the [Translation in Motion project](#) that I recently took part in can be considered truly unusual: translating poems from a language I wasn't familiar with yet: Latvian.

I'm an editor, publisher and also an experienced translator of poetry. My mother tongue is Macedonian but as I was born in Macedonia in Yugoslavian times, this meant being bilingual (Macedonian and so-called Serbo-Croatian), which made my path to learning other languages a bit easier. I studied German and Slavic languages (Russian, Slovak and later Slovenian) and literatures, and I learned English as a 'natural' connector to the world

through the internet which made my work as a translator 'easier'. [Translation in Motion](#) is an "initiative to support the professional development of literary translators working from and into the languages of the Western Balkans", or, as I see it, a project with a goal to enable contact between EU countries by way of literary translation. For many language combinations there are only very few translators, or none at all, as is the case for Latvian to Macedonian. Instead of turning to indirect translation to solve this problem, the project offers a programme to get experienced literary translators from other language combinations in a short period ready for translating 'uncovered' language pairs, such as Latvian into Macedonian. As an experienced translator and linguist, I was offered the opportunity to apply

and take part in the project and was excited and open to embarking on this new and unusual ‘translation trip’.

“It was the first time I translated poetry from a language I was still learning”

Understanding the heart of the language

Latvian is very different from the other languages I work with, and I also started learning it in a totally different way – through translating poetry. In fact, it was the first time I translated poetry from a language I was still learning without learning to speak it.

Before I started, I first chose a few authors and poems, after reading the English or Russian translation. Then I slowly started working on the translation while learning Latvian. The process included in-depth grammatical and linguistical research and analyses of the original, diving into words and sentences, trying to understand and ‘define’ them in my mind, so I could then transmit them into the Macedonian translation. For my research I was able to use excellent online lexicons and dictionaries – English, German and sometimes Russian. I’m used to researching words and expressions through English. As a translator of several so-called small languages (my mother tongue, Macedonian, being

one of them), it is not always possible to find good dictionaries for these less frequent language combinations.

I started gathering questions about the grammatical and linguistic rules related to the translation and my excellent teacher of Latvian helped me understand the ‘heart’ of the language. I began to analyse the poems in the original, working slowly and intensely with every word and expression, considering poetical sound and other characteristics, like alliteration.

Thus, I learned Latvian by *doing*, using my experiences as a translator, bilingual poet and linguist. And for me it worked well as the process resulted in Macedonian (and a few German) translations of several Latvian poems, which I was happy with. Below an excerpt of a Latvian poem (‘Esterei’ [‘For Esther’] by Edvīns Raups). Its English translation is by Margita Gailitis, followed by my Macedonian and German translations:



**Edvīns Raups and Elizabeta Lindner,
Riga 2021
Photo: Ieva Balode**

uz brīdi iestājas laiks

un vējš kā dabūjis spērienu
ar nāvīgu tukšumu krūtīs
piestāj paelsoot
parkā

for a moment time stops

and the wind as if struck
with a deathly emptiness in its breast
pauses to sob
in a park

за момент се сопира времето

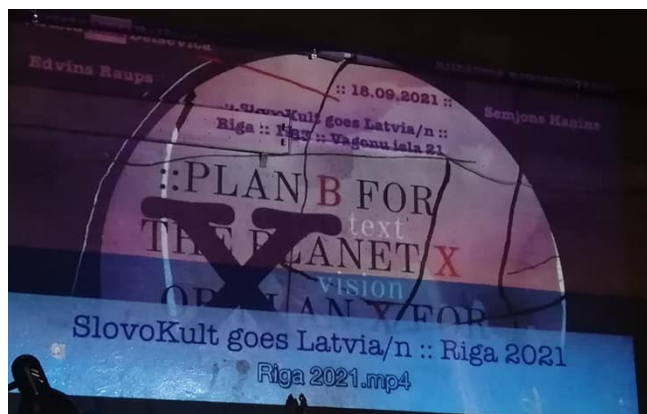
а ветрот небаре е клоца
со смртна празнина во градите
запира да земе здив
во паркот

für einen Augenblick hält die Zeit an

und der Wind als wäre er ein Tritt
mit tödlicher Leere in der Brust
verweilt im Park
um zu verschnaufen

Multilingual polyphony

Since every good poem well translated also sounds beautiful in other languages and transmits the same picture and feeling, poetry translations were an essential part of the interdisciplinary art festival SlovoKult :: literARTour that I initiated in 2018, and am still developing with colleagues and friends. In 2020 I wanted to present the texts at the festival in Skopje and Berlin in multilingual polyphony, i.e. a parallel reading of a poem in 2 or 3 languages



SlovoKult in Riga 2021

Photo: Ieva Balode

with a small pause between languages. I did that first ‘experiment’ with the recordings of the reading voices of the authors and the translator(s). The audio/video poems and the performances can be watched in this [art video](#) on the poem ‘Crepusculum’ by Crauss in German, English (by Mark Kanak) and Macedonian by me in a 2020 live stream video from the ACUD Theatre in Berlin, from Crauss – [Mehr + Blumen](#), and in an [art video](#) of the poem ‘Pogodi’ by Semjon Hanin – in Russian, Macedonian, Croatian, Latvian and German.

**“I learned Latvian
by doing, using
my experiences
as a translator,
bilingual poet
and linguist”**

Our planned event to present the poetry/text and translations in multilingual polyphony live in Berlin couldn’t take



Elizabeta Lindner is an award-winning literary translator, mainly from German into Macedonian and vice versa, but also from English and Serbian. She is founder and editor of the multilingual onlinemagazine *SlovoKult :: Literatur/a*, publisher at the eponymous small press and founder and artistic director of the contemporary arts biennial *SlovoKult :: literARTour*. Lindner studied German and Slavic Philology and has translated around 30 books from German into Macedonian (Thomas Bernhard, Rainer Maria Rilke and Paul Celan amongst others).

Elizabeta Lindner in Brotfabrik Berlin
Photo: Silvia Lorenz

place due to the worldwide Covid restrictions in 2020, since not all the participants were available for streaming. However, in the framework of the Translation in Motion project and with the support of *Ventspils House*, we were lucky enough to be able to present them live in Riga in 2021. Both the participating poets and the audience enjoyed the performance.

Hopefully, we can present Latvian authors in a similar multilingual polyphony in Skopje and Berlin 2023 for the third edition of the postponed festival. A short anthology of Latvian poetry translated into Macedonian and German is also being planned.

CEATL's Click List

Links to the world of translation

Free all words

#FreeAllWords is an international project organised under the umbrella of the [European Writers' Council](#) (EWC) with the aim of funding the translation of works by censored authors from Belarus and Ukraine into as many languages as possible. EWC has 46 member organisations from 30 countries. The project was initiated earlier this year by Authors of Switzerland (A*dS), Forfatterforbundet (Norway) and the Community of Belarusian Writers (Belarus). It is also supported by CEATL. The Lithuanian Writers' Union became a new partner recently. The authors' fees are paid from the #FreeAllWords fund and the goal is one million published words for peace and freedom of expression. #FreeAllWords has made a series of short videos to introduce the participating authors, e.g. Ukrainian author Svetlana Lavochkina. Click [here](#) to see her introduction.

Translating the untranslatable

On the occasion of International Translation Day (30 September) CEATL members all over Europe joined forces to create a short video to celebrate translators' passion for literature, even when it's considered to be 'untranslatable'.

In [the video](#) thirteen translators from thirteen European countries each read a short passage from James Joyce's *Ulysses*:

Punkt

*Leftherhis
Secondbest*

*Leftherhis
Bestabed*

*Secabest
Leftabed.*

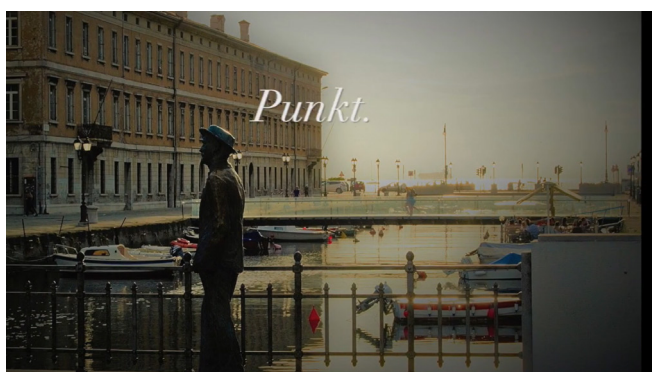
Woa!

(Chapter 9, *Scylla and Charybdis*, lines 700–707)

~~#FREEALLWORDS~~

The video was produced by CEATL's Working Group on Visibility, which collects data on translators' cultural visibility, and coordinates pan-European visibility initiatives such as those for International Translation Day. CEATL considers improving translators' visibility key to achieving a better socio-economic position of translators.

'Translating the Untranslatable' can also be viewed on [Vimeo](#).



Screenshot from 'Translating the Untranslatable'

Translating the future

'Untranslating the classics', 'A case study of publishing literary translation', 'Motherless tongues and multiple belongings', 'Children's literature in translation', 'Subtitling subtleties', 'Language as polis' and 'Democracy and translation' are just a few of the titles of a series of inspiring, one-hour talks between renowned translators that took place from May–September 2020. The conversations were organised and recorded by translators and researchers Esther Allen and Allison Markin Powell (both associated

with City University of New York) to commemorate PEN's 1970's 'World of Translation' conference and carry the work forward. A symposium on the translation of Olga Tokarczuk's work, with the contribution of many of her translators, was one of the larger events concluding the programme.

All talks can be watched [here](#).



Poster of 'Translating the future'

French authors against machine translation

In November, the newly founded STAA ('Union of Artist–Authors') in France, issued a manifest against the "automation of arts professions". The text gives a detailed outline of the problems around machine translation, and concludes with a call. The manifest can be read [here](#).

Colophon

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