

From the editors

“Oh East is East and West is West and never the twain shall meet” said Rudyard Kipling in his ballad of 1889. The 7th issue of *Counterpoint/Contrepoint* aims to contradict this stance by turning our gaze in both directions, with the furthest point being Japan. In his article, James Hadley gives a detailed account on the intricacies of translating Japanese poetry. Most interestingly, he embarked on a collective journey with an Irish poet, Nell Regan, who knows no Japanese.

Yana Genova, recently appointed chair of RECIT, the European Network of International Centres for Literary Translation, and her colleagues Monica Dimitrova and Neva Micheva have written about the *Translation in Motion* project. Launched in 2020 in partnership with translation centres from eight West Balkan countries, these new translator residencies support the ‘small’ languages of the Western Balkans. ‘Rooms of their own’ looks at the importance of a space where literary translators can not only be alone but can also be amongst likeminded people.

Vesna Velkovich Bukilica writes a very personal and moving account of the importance of translating into one of the ‘small’ languages of Europe,

Slovenian, a distinct language since the 10th century. Slovenia has two additional official languages, Italian and Hungarian, which, alongside having been part of the multilingual Austro-Hungarian Empire, makes for considerable linguistic diversity. “A precious asset” in Bukilica’s view.

Three further articles showcase the continuous work being carried out by translators for translators. Firstly, Iztok Ilc and the CEATL team have compiled the marvellous *CEATL Companion for Literary Translators’ Associations*, probably the first go-to source for any translators’ association. Conceived by CEATL’s Best Practices working group in 2018 in Bucharest, it has been developed as a freely accessible resource tool for those proposing to form a literary translators’ association. Chock-a-block with practical advice, we exhort readers to check it out.

Secondly, Gesine Schröder and her team, Johanna Steiner and Martin Neusiedl, have spent many hours setting up a veritable bank of literary translator knowledge for the translation community on the new online platform, Babelwerk. Another not-to-be missed resource.

And then, from the west of the continent, Ros Schwartz, honorary CEATL member, asks us the perennially thorny question – Can literary translation be taught? She very cogently argues that there is in fact a role for training literary translators to develop their skills.

Counterpoint editor Juliane Wammen, covers the main points in the recently published EU report, *Translators on the Cover*. Fingers crossed all this work, and the recommendations, will translate into improved conditions for literary translators.

Any look towards Eastern Europe cannot but face the atrocities being carried out on a daily basis in Ukraine. First-hand accounts of how this war is affecting our colleagues was heard at the CEATL AGM held from 18–21 May in Sofia, Bulgaria. Ostap Slyvynsky, vice-president of PEN Ukraine and Natalia Pavliuk, president of the Ukrainian Association of Translators and Interpreters (UATI) addressed the delegates via Zoom. Ukrainian translator Oksana Stoianova, who fled to Bulgaria, attended the meeting in person.

Many of us were so mistakenly convinced that another war in Europe could never happen in our lifetime in this 21st century. What this unfolding tragedy sadly serves to highlight is how very fragile democracy is. All the more reason for our community of translators to add our grain of salt and continue to open and disseminate our cultures by translating literature into and out of every possible language.

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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