

# Some Resources for Emerging Translators:

a very incomplete and idiosyncratic selection by David McKay

([www.openbooktranslation.com](http://www.openbooktranslation.com)), sometimes slanted towards US-based, into-English translators

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*Many thanks to Clara Ministral for her contributions.*

version date: April 2022

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## PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

ETN mailing list

<https://emergingtranslatorsnetwork.wordpress.com/>

ELTNA mailing list

<https://emerginglittransnetworkamerica.wordpress.com/>

ALTA

<https://literarytranslators.org/>

Authors' Guild (which has a chapter for translators)

<https://www.authorsguild.org/member-services/>

ATA (American Translators Association, which has a Literary Division and a certification program)

<http://www.ata-ld.org/>

Society of Authors (which includes the UK Translators Association)

<https://www2.societyofauthors.org/join/~>

## TRANSLATION TECHNOLOGY

Order a copy of Jost Zetzsche's *The Translator's Tool Box* and subscribe to his mailing list, the *Tool Box Journal* (a year's subscription comes with the book, and you can also subscribe to a free version)

<https://www.internationalwriters.com/toolbox/>

<https://internationalwriters.com/toolkit/>

<https://youalign.com/> (a useful online tool for checking the *completeness* of translations and generating aligned versions as input for translation memories, raw material for glossaries, etc.)

## COPYRIGHT LAW, CONTRACTS, AND NEGOTIATION

<https://www.authorsguild.org/member-services/literary-translation-model-contract/> (This new model contract with commentary is the state of the art for contracts with US publishers and the best way to educate yourself about the issues that arise in contract negotiation. Study it!)

<https://hopscotchtranslation.com/2022/01/10/authors-guild-model-contract/> (Alex Zucker explains how and why the Authors Guild model contract was created and discusses how to move forward from here)

<https://hbr.org/2019/11/how-to-negotiate-as-a-freelancer>

<https://www.ceatl.eu/translators-rights/guidelines-for-fair-translation-contracts>

<https://pen.org/a-model-contract-for-literary-translations/>

[https://pen.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/translation\\_negotiators\\_checklist.pdf](https://pen.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/translation_negotiators_checklist.pdf)

[https://societyofauthors.org/News/Blogs/Before-you-Sign/January-2020-\(1\)/Before-You-Sign-Negotiating-Payment-Translators](https://societyofauthors.org/News/Blogs/Before-you-Sign/January-2020-(1)/Before-You-Sign-Negotiating-Payment-Translators) (note that the Society of Authors observed starting point for translator-publisher negotiations has recently risen to £100 per thousand words)

<https://guides.library.cornell.edu/copyright/publicdomain>

<http://translationista.com/2017/02/getting-rights-translate-work.html>

<http://translationista.com/2011/05/everything-you-always-wanted-to-know.html>

<https://pen.org/intellectual-property-workshop/>

<https://www.coursera.org/learn/negotiation-skills>

<https://www.sisubakercentre.org/2022/01/12/socio-economic-approaches-to-literary-translation/> (information on an upcoming online academic conference on June 13, 2022, about socio-economic approaches to literary translation)

*See also the recommended books below, and if you're negotiating a translation contract, don't forget to join the Author's Guild and/or the UK Society of Authors and get expert advice!*

## **TRANSLATORS ON THE COVER**

<https://www.publishersweekly.com/pw/by-topic/industry-news/publisher-news/article/87649-translators-fight-for-credit-on-their-own-book-covers.html> (an introduction to the campaign)

<https://www2.societyofauthors.org/translators-on-the-cover/> (an open letter from writers to publishers calling for cover credits for translators)

<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/11/books/literary-translation-translators-jennifer-croft.html> (a *New York Times* profile of translators Jennifer Croft that focuses on her campaign to persuade publishers to put translators' names on book covers)

<https://sydneyreviewofbooks.com/essay/anonym-translators/> (includes a discussion of the debate within the translation community -- also check out the [response](#) from Eliot Weinberger)

## **SUBMITTING TO MAGAZINES**

<https://pen.org/journals-seeking-work-in-translation/>

<http://translationista.com/2014/10/magazines-publish-translations.html>

## **COLLECTIONS OF RESOURCES**

<https://literarytranslators.org/resources>

<http://translationista.com/> (Susan Bernofsky's blog: check out both her own posts and her Blogroll)

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1zkNOXabp7qFeB2EbUblIRLlIkYe9Mo1v-uFFARmab2E/edit?fbclid=IwAR0Km81viCMgw8nHgoEer7sBzHGDbOBuUiRgVGEsGVBoDpZiYYzyNkfJ\\_2s&pli=1#gid=759331232](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1zkNOXabp7qFeB2EbUblIRLlIkYe9Mo1v-uFFARmab2E/edit?fbclid=IwAR0Km81viCMgw8nHgoEer7sBzHGDbOBuUiRgVGEsGVBoDpZiYYzyNkfJ_2s&pli=1#gid=759331232)

(About the database: <https://nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk/article/introducing-the-literary-translation-database/>)

<https://www.uea.ac.uk/groups-and-centres/british-centre-for-literary-translation/resources-and-opportunities>

<http://www.rochester.edu/college/translation/threepercent/>

<https://worldkidlit.wordpress.com/> (An amazing website about children's and YA literature in translation)

<https://www.womenintranslation.org/>

## **GENERAL TIPS FOR EMERGING TRANSLATORS**

<http://translationista.com/2017/08/tips-beginning-translators.html>

<https://www.wordswithoutborders.org/dispatches/article/becoming-a-second-career-translator-a-conversation-with-aneesa-abbas-higgin>

<https://www.wordswithoutborders.org/dispatches/article/the-emerging-literary-translator-valley-of-death-anton-hur>

(And check out the entire Words Without Borders interview archive:

<https://www.wordswithoutborders.org/dispatches/archives-by-category/category/interviews>)

Experienced literary translators present their rules for translating on the Arablit blog:

<https://arablit.org/2011/07/05/ten-rules-for-translating-humphrey-davies-and-jonathan-wright/>

<https://arablit.org/2011/07/21/20-more-rules-for-translation-arunava-sinha-allison-anderson/>

<https://arablit.org/2011/08/04/21-more-rules-for-translators-susan-bernofsky-hala-salah-eldin-hussein/>

<https://www.centerforthehumanities.org/programming/translating-the-future> (an amazing collection of online talks and conversations from 2020)

British Centre for Literary Translation talks: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCybdW5A7bUNppkB-qQdtOEA/playlists> (in particular, see the two Summer School playlists)

[https://www.llvs.lt/img/File/Translation\\_in\\_Practice\\_book.pdf](https://www.llvs.lt/img/File/Translation_in_Practice_book.pdf) (a 2009 UK-focused guide to the literary translation profession)

## REVIEWING TRANSLATIONS

<https://www.wordswithoutborders.org/dispatches/article/on-reviewing-translations-susan-bernofsky-jonathan-cohen-and-edith-grossman>

<https://www.wordswithoutborders.org/dispatches/article/new-series-how-should-we-review-books-in-translation/>

Good places to find reviews of books in translation and about translation include *Words Without Borders*, *Asymptote*, *Modern Poetry in Translation*, *World Literature Today*, [hopscotchtranslation.com](http://hopscotchtranslation.com), [www.sfintranslation.com](http://www.sfintranslation.com), [the Three Percent blog](http://the-three-percent-blog.com), the *Los Angeles Review of Books*, and the *New York Review of Books*.

## WRITING READERS' REPORTS

<https://www.new-books-in-german.com/collected-wisdom-how-to-write-a-good-readers-report/>

<https://pen.org/confessions-of-a-silent-genre/>

## RESOURCES FOR RACIALIZED TRANSLATORS

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1oPBERAj8QIDVTcFC5TzGa1PFfxKLRM0Z1b17bGu4tJg/edit#gid=0>

<https://www.wordswithoutborders.org/dispatches/article/7-resources-for-translating-blackness-race-and-racism-corine-tachtiris>

<https://literarytranslators.wordpress.com/2021/03/22/alta-statement-on-racial-equity-in-literary-translation/> (includes useful links)

## PITCHING BOOKS TO PUBLISHERS

ALTA panel discussion on pitching

<https://www.crowdcast.io/e/7o10xntt>

ALTA written materials accompanying panel discussion

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1R5DeTO8d-NWSgoNWJHvL7lwNXfGdp3ocZO7WUOiVXic/edit>

English PEN presentation on pitching

<https://www.crowdcast.io/e/m9ceeu1n/1>

Ros Schwartz on pitching for Translators Aloud

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zIM33wHkf6g&feature=youtu.be>

Sawad Hussain, 'Five tips for pitching to publishers'

<https://nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk/article/five-tips-for-pitching-to-publishers/>

ALTA guides (dated, but still interesting to skim through)

<https://literarytranslators.org/sites/default/files/imce/Publications/Guides/ProposalForABookLengthTranslation.pdf>

<https://www.literarytranslators.org/sites/default/files/imce/Publications/Guides/BreakingIntoPrint.pdf>

<https://literarytranslators.org/publishers> (an incomplete list of publishers interesting in submissions of work in translation)

The Literary Translation Database Extraordinaire (includes a tab for publishers of books in translation):

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1zkNQXabp7qFeB2EbUblIRLlkYe9Mo1v-uFFARmab2E/edit?fbclid=IwAR0Km81viCMgw8nHgoEer7sBzHGDbOBuUiRgVGEsGVBoDpZiYYzyNkfJ\\_2s&pli=1#gid=759331232](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1zkNQXabp7qFeB2EbUblIRLlkYe9Mo1v-uFFARmab2E/edit?fbclid=IwAR0Km81viCMgw8nHgoEer7sBzHGDbOBuUiRgVGEsGVBoDpZiYYzyNkfJ_2s&pli=1#gid=759331232)

Translators Aloud: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCjaq9OSpoEeohPmK8ZT-C7w> (see and hear other literary translators in action and submit your own samples of works seeking a publisher or published translations -- make sure to get permission!)

A commissioning editor's point of view: <https://cdn.booktrust.org.uk/globalassets/resources/prizes/in-other-words/2019/publishing-books-in-translation.pdf>

## GRANTS

**PEN/Heim Translation Fund grants - <https://pen.org/pen-heim-grants/>**

- grants to support 'the translation of book-length works of fiction, creative nonfiction, poetry, or drama that have not previously appeared in English in print or have appeared only in an outdated or otherwise flawed translation'
- for first-time or otherwise emerging translators
- translations-in-progress
- around \$3,000 each
- applications for this year's cycle: between 1 April and 1 June 2022

**NEA translation grants - [www.arts.gov/grants/translation-projects/eligibility](http://www.arts.gov/grants/translation-projects/eligibility)**

- grants to support 'the translation of book-length works of fiction, creative nonfiction, poetry, or drama that have not previously appeared in English in print or have appeared only in an outdated or otherwise flawed translation'
- for US citizens or permanent residents who have at least 20 published pages of translation in curated formats or book form, or one-full length play that has been presented or produced
- up to \$25,000 (usually \$12,500)
- application deadline in January

**ALTA Travel Fellowships** - <https://literarytranslators.org/awards/alta-travel-fellowships>

- awarded to emerging translators to help them participate in the annual ALTA conference
- ALTA Fellows are invited to read their translated work at the conference
- opportunity to present their translations to an audience of translators, authors, editors and publishers

**ALTA Jansen Fellowship (for an an emerging translator of color or a translator working from an underrepresented diaspora or stateless language)** <https://literarytranslators.org/awards/alta-travel-fellowships/jansen-fellowship>

**ICM Global South Translation Awards** - <https://icm.as.cornell.edu/application-cycle-open-icm-global-south-translation-fellowships-2022>

- for translations of works from the Global South (Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean, etc) into English
- awards range from \$1,000 to \$5,000
- submit a four to five-page sample (plus a CV, an accompanying narrative, and an explanation of copyright status)
- previous winners include emerging translators
- may be retranlations of old, classic texts, or previously untranslated works, collections of poetry, prose, or critical theory
- the project may be a work-in-process, or a new project manageable within the scope of the award
- a contract with a publisher is not required, but you do commit to translating the entire work

## COMPETITIONS AND AWARDS

**John Dryden Translation Competition** - <https://bcla.org/prizes-awards/john-dryden-translation-competition/>

- Translations into English from any language
- Text chosen by the entrant
- Extracts from literary works (prose, poetry, drama). 3,000–7,000 words for prose, up to 20 pages for poetry and drama
- No limitations with respect to age, nationality, place of residence or professional status

- Submission: translated text + source text + entry form + fee (£10 for one entry, £15 for two, £20 for three)

#### **Harvill Secker Young Translators' Prize**

- Set text
- Focuses on a different language each year (so far, Spanish, Arabic, Chinese, Portuguese, German, Polish, Norwegian, Korean, Bengali, French, Japanese)
- Entrants: 18-34 years old, no more than one full-length translation published, no restriction on country of residence
- Prize: £1000 + selection of Vintage titles + mentorship with an experienced literary translator

#### **Peirene Stevns Translation Prize - <https://www.peirenepress.com/prize/>**

- Set text (extract from a novella that Peirene will publish)
- Different language each year (so far, Italian, Swedish, Spanish and Portuguese)
- No restrictions on age or nationality
- For emerging translators with no full-length works published
- Submission: translation of the extract + commentary + CV + fee (Peirene subscribers are exempt)
- Prize: commission to translate the book (for a fee) + translation retreat in the French Pyrenees + mentorship with established translator

#### **Gabo Prize for Literature in Translation & Multilingual Texts (Lunch Ticket)**

<https://lunchticket.org/contests/gabo/>

- Translation into English from any language (up to 3500 words)
- Text chosen by the entrant
- Submission: translated piece + source text + translator's statement
- Prize: \$200 + publication in Lunch Ticket

#### **World Literature Today Student Translation Prize**

<https://www.worldliteraturetoday.org/translation-prize>

- Open to students enrolled in translation studies programs worldwide
- Prose piece of up to 1,000 words or up to three poems translated into English from any language
- Submission: translation + source text + cover letter (including name of a sponsoring faculty member) + \$10 fee
- Prize: \$200 each for best poetry translation and best prose translation
- One-year digital subscription to WLT for all contestants

#### **Eurodram call for European plays in English translation**

<https://eurodramenglish.wordpress.com/>

- Open to all
- European plays translated from their original language into English
- Once every two years; the next round will be open in October/November 2022 with a deadline in early January 2022.
- Winning plays will be promoted by the Eurodram committee

## MENTORSHIPS

NCW Emerging Translator Mentorship programme

<https://nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk/emerging-translator-mentorships/>

ALTA Emerging Translator Mentorship Program

<https://literarytranslators.org/mentorships>

ITIA Mentoring Programme

<https://www.translatorsassociation.ie/mentoring-programme/>

The Stinging Fly New Translator's Bursary

<https://stingingfly.org/news/announcing-new-translators-bursary-recipient/>

Foreign Affairs Theatre Translation Mentorship

<http://www.foreignaffairs.org.uk/training/mentorship-programme/>

## PODCASTS

The Three Percent Podcast (international literature and the literary translation scene)

<http://www.rochester.edu/College/translation/threepercent/category/three-percent-podcast/>

*These other three podcasts don't focus on literary translation in particular, but they are full of relevant information.*

Marketing Tips for Translators: <https://marketingtipsfortranslators.com/freelance-translator-podcast/page/2/>

Smart Habits for Translators: <https://smarthabitsfortranslators.com/>

Speaking of Translation (no longer producing new episodes): <https://speakingoftranslation.com/>

## BOOKS

### Some books by literary translators about translation

*Catching Fire: A Translation Diary* by Daniel Hahn

*Translation as Transhumance* by Mireille Gansel, trans. Ros Schwartz

*In Translation: Translators on Their Work and What It Means*, ed. Esther Allen & Susan Bernofsky

*Why Translation Matters* by Edith Grossman

*This Little Art* by Kate Briggs

*Sympathy for the Traitor* by Mark Polizzotti

*Is That a Fish in Your Ear?* by David Bellos

*If This Be Treason* by Gregory Rabassa

*Kitchen Table Translation*, ed. Madhu Kaza

*Translation and the Making of Originals* by Karen Emmerich

### Recommended books about style and craft

*Reading Like a Writer* by Francine Prose (not aimed at translators, but exemplifies the way a good translator reads literature—very instructive)

*The Art of Fiction* by David Lodge (an exceptionally clear, entertaining, hands-on approach to basic aspects of literary writing—not aimed at literary translators, but these are kinds of things that we need to understand)

*How Fiction Works* by James Wood (The opening section, which discusses the typical narrator's voice, is especially useful.)

*Translating Style* by Tim Parks (This is very good in general, but parts of it are more academic in tone and emphasis. The chapter on translations of D.H. Lawrence is extremely valuable, and the introduction is interesting and entertaining too.)

*The Sense of Style* by Steven Pinker (what psychology and linguistics tell us about good style)

*Nabokov's Favorite Word is Mauve* by Ben Blatt (an entertaining read about informal applications of statistics to literary style -- some parts are sloppy or questionable, but he makes a lot of good points, and the chapter about adverbs is a real eye-opener)

*Analyzing Prose* by Richard A. Lanham (a more challenging read but well worth it)

*Expectations* and *The Sense of Style* by George Gopen (who also has lots of resources on his website, [georgegopen.com](http://georgegopen.com), and can be found explaining his approach on YouTube)

*Clear and Simple as the Truth* by Francis-Noël Thomas and Mark Turner (goes deeply into one popular style, the type you see in non-fiction *New Yorker* pieces, and compares it to other styles, in order to explain what a style really is and how it works)

*Artful Sentences: Syntax as Style* by Virginia Tufte (a great book for translators to browse through -- she shows how various linguistic constructions can be used effectively in good English writing, mainly through lots and lots of examples from excellent writers)

Helen Sword's books are also great, especially if you translate academic prose or other non-fiction.

## Other recommended reading

*Who We're Reading When We're Reading Murakami* by David Karashima (talks more about the editorial and publishing process than most of these books)

*The Little Book of Talent* by Daniel Coyle (tips for improving your professional skills based on studies of athletes and performers)

*Getting to Yes* by Roger Fisher and William Ury (the classic guide to negotiation skills)

*Never Split the Difference* by Chris Voss (on tactical empathy in negotiations)

*Just Listen* by Mark Goulston (how to have better business relationships by being a good listener)

*Rest* by Alex Pang (a guide to work-life balance, well suited to creative freelance types)

*The Prosperous Translator*, ed. Chris Durban (collection of Q&A columns on business practices for translators, not specifically literary, covering the 1998-2010 period -- not super recent, but full of great advice)

*The Checklist Manifesto* by Atul Gawande

## Thesauruses

I use free online thesauruses, but some thesauruses in book form still give you an edge over the online versions. *The Oxford American Writer's Thesaurus* and *Roget's International Thesaurus, 7th edition* (not the 8th edition!) are especially worthwhile. Some specialized thesauruses for writers, such as *The Emotion Thesaurus* by Angela Ackerman & Becca Puglisi, are also worth a look. The paper versions of thesauruses tend to be easier to use than the e-books. Finding a vintage edition of Roget's can also be very useful if you're translating a novel written or set in the nineteenth or early twentieth century.