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ALTA45 / 2022
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Welcome to ALTA45: Value(s)

Dear ALTA Community,

Overwhelmed by this summer’s heat and violence, I found comfort in thinking about our literary translation community. What is it that anchors and defines us at ALTA as we look ahead? Who are we and what do we do?

Who are we? There are 760 active ALTA members as I write this letter. We are freelance translators, academics teaching and studying translation, students trying translation on for size. We are publishers, editors, booksellers, book reviewers, and those who tuck their translating in around the other things they do. We are literary translation enthusiasts, and colleagues from literary translation associations around the world. We are a staff of three ALTA employees, one employee of the University of Arizona, a UA graduate student, and a host of interns. We are a board of trustees who give generously of their time and enthusiasm, fourteen UA professors who are ALTA faculty affiliates, our close colleagues in the UA College of Humanities and at the UA Poetry Center, and Caitlan Hendrickson who is on call as our Ombuds for the second year.

As to what we do, we started out almost fifty years ago—holding an annual conference and publishing a regular newsletter. Over time, we’ve added the Bilingual Reading Series, the Travel Fellowships, the National Translation Award and other awards and prizes, the Mentorship Program, the BIPOC Literary Translators Caucus, the workshops and pitch sessions with translation editors, and a wide-reaching communications network.

We have been building our momentum. This year we have a record number of mentorships—twelve! And the twelve mentees were chosen from a highly competitive 149 applications. We have inaugurated a non-language-specific BIPOC mentorship, and there are new mentorships for Japanese, prose from Québec, and Swedish. The National Translation Award for Prose received over 200 submissions this year, the NTA for Poetry, 70, while the Italian Prose in Translation Award, the Lucien Stryk Asian Translation Prize, and the new Spain-USA Foundation Translation Award each received around 20 submissions. There were also 50 applications for this year’s Virtual Travel Fellowships. Eighteen judges came together to serve on the Awards committees and to select the 2022 Virtual Travel Fellows. Our momentum is growing.

The pandemic upended our regular conference schedule and our thinking about how best to convene. In 2020, we held a year of remote panels, readings, and events, then in 2021 a hybrid year—both remote and in-person—and this year we are trying out year-round remote programming which, by the time you read this, will already be partway done. There will also be an in-person reading in Tucson by the Emerging Translator Mentees, held in collaboration with the Tucson Humanities Festival and the UA Poetry Center, as well as a performance of a translated play (our third year of collaborating with local theater Scoundrel & Scamp!) on November 5 and 6.

So this is who we are and what we do. The question is, where do we take this hard-won momentum as we move forward? Never has this question seemed quite as open as it feels today. If we hold an in-person conference in 2023, will you come? Should we sign a contract with the hosting hotel for 150 attendees? 250 attendees? 500 attendees? How do we integrate what we have learned about remote programming with our in-person activities?

Thanks to the generosity of our members and the supporting organizations, both national and local to Arizona, we have come through the last few years in better shape than we’d initially feared when the lockdown began. ALTA has been buoyed by support from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Literary Arts Emergency Fund, two PPP loans, Arizona Humanities, and the Arts Foundation for Tucson and Southern Arizona, as well as by donations from you, our generous community. In pre-pandemic times, about one third of the ALTA budget was covered by membership fees and another third by conference registrations, with further key support from charitable donations and grants. So far we have been able to meet our budget. What happens next? We’re holding our breath, gazing into crystal balls, consulting soothsayers and reading the future in the flight of birds to make sense, any sense, of what lies ahead.

Please keep an eye on the Upcoming Events page on the ALTA website for the latest panels, roundtables, and readings this fall, and keep in mind that the Mentorship Program applications for 2023 open in early September. The literary translation community is here to buoy and inspire us!

Warm regards to the ALTA community far and wide,

Ellen Elias-Bursać
ALTA Interim President
Acknowledgments

We are very pleased to acknowledge the generous support for this year's programming, provided by the following individuals and organizations:

We are also grateful for ALTA's exceptional staff: Elisabeth Jaquette (Executive Director), Kelsi Vanada (Program Manager), Rachael Daum (Communications & Awards Manager), Jessica Sue Vocatura (Secretary), and Valentina Vinokurova (Graduate Assistant). They have faced the many hurdles of the past two and a half years with creativity, dedication, patience, and grit, re-envisioning our programming (yet again!) amid unpredictable and challenging conditions.

A special note of thanks is due to Alexis Levitin for moderating the ever-popular Bilingual Readings Series, now in its 34th year. We are also pleased to thank Barbara Paschke for hosting Declamación.

We extend our gratitude to ALTA’s Past Presidents Council, the Peter K. Jansen Memorial Travel Fund, and many individual donors for their generous support of the 2022 ALTA Travel Fellows. We are also grateful to Nancy Naomi Carlson, who is serving as the 2022 Fellows Mentor.

We would be remiss in not thanking the 2022 ALTA Conference Organizing Committee, who has lent us their creativity and hard work throughout the past year: Chad Post (Chair), Bruna Dantas Lobato, Kevin Gerry Dunn, Janet Hong, Tess Lewis, Corine Tachtiris, and Katie Whittemore. Thanks are due also to the Theater Subcommittee—Neil Blackadder, Sean G. Bye, and Taylor Barrett Gaines—as well as our partners at The Scoundrel & Scamp Theatre.

We are grateful to Valentina Vinokurova for her work on this program book.

And finally, thanks are due to all of you who are joining us from around the world: you are what makes ALTA such a cherished community.
Accessibility at ALTA45

We welcome everyone to our programming and are committed to making our events accessible, and to making arrangements that allow all attendees to participate in the conversation. Please contact Program Manager Kelsi Vanada by email or by phone at (520) 775-1766 with questions about access, or to request any disability-related accommodations that will facilitate your full participation in ALTA’s programming, such as ASL interpreting, CART captioning, or captioned videos. Read more about accessibility at ALTA45 on our website.

Captions
All virtual ALTA45 sessions (panels, readings, and roundtables) will be captioned using Zoom’s automatic transcription feature. Virtual events open to the general public (our Travel Fellows Reading and Awards Ceremony) will be CART-captioned.

CART captioning for any virtual conference event is available upon request through the University of Arizona’s Disability Resource Center. Requests should be made at least two weeks in advance. To request captions, contact Kelsi Vanada by email or by phone at (520) 775-1766.

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Images
Images in this program book are accompanied by alternative text (alt text).

Recordings
All virtual panels, roundtables, bilingual readings, and special events will be recorded. Recordings will be uploaded to our Crowdcast page and captioned with Zoom’s automatic transcription. (If you would like to request a recording with more accurate captions as an accommodation, please write to Kelsi Vanada at kelsi@literarytranslators.org. ) Attendees can access event recordings through the Crowdcast link sent to your confirmation email from Eventbrite, whenever you register for an event. Please be patient as our staff edits and uploads recordings.

Texts
Organizers of roundtables that will discuss texts have been requested to circulate these to participants in advance.

In-Person Events
Please visit our web page for Arizona Translates! to view the most recent access information for in-person events in Tucson.

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Welcome

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Donations at all levels help us to continue the important work of ALTA. This list includes donations made between July 1, 2021, and June 30, 2022. If we have inadvertently omitted your name from this list of donors, or if you encounter an error, please accept our apologies. You may contact ALTA’s Executive Director Elisabeth Jaquette at elisabeth@literarytranslators.org to have your name added to the list of supporters on our website. Thank you!
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In This Member Newsletter:
• Multilingual Translation Workshops in August | Signups closing soon: July 25
• ALTA Board Nominations Open
• ALTA45: Values & Schedule Live
• ALTA45 Upcoming Events
• ALTA45 Updates at a Glance
  • Registration
  • Sign-Ups and Submissions
• Sign Up for Pitch Sessions Next Month
• Translation News & Opportunities
• Member News

Multilingual Translation Workshops in August
Signups closing soon: July 25

ALTA is excited to host multilingual translation workshops in August 2022! Signups for these summer workshops close on July 25. ALTA members receive 20% off! (Search your email for “ALTA45 Member Promo Code” to find it, or email ALTA staff.)

These workshops are small groups of translators who meet with an established translator to discuss and receive feedback on a brief excerpt of their work in translation. The summer workshops will take place August 22-27.

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Have you ever wished you could do more to support the art of literary translation? You can make a life-changing gift without changing your life by including ALTA in your estate plans. ALTA is ready to work with individuals interested in learning more about planned giving. Even donors of modest means can make a real contribution to ALTA’s future. Supporters can designate ALTA in their will or make ALTA a beneficiary of a portion of their IRA, at no tax cost to them. Donors are also eligible for additional tax benefits beyond those of a one-time donation. And, of course, ALTA can fulfill specific gift wishes and recognize a donor’s significant contribution to ensuring the organization’s future.

For more information, please contact ALTA President Ellen Elias-Bursać at (857) 928-2039.

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Do you believe in supporting translators, celebrating literary excellence in translation, and giving emerging translators the resources they need to shine in the ever-expanding world of literary translation? Please give to support ALTA’s work today—you can make a difference. Contributions may be made online at https://www.literarytranslators.org/about/giving, or by mail. Make checks payable to “The American Literary Translators Association,” with “Donation” and the name of the fund (General Operating Fund, Endowment, or Travel Fellowship Program) in the memo line, and send to the address below. Thank you for your support.

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2022 ALTA Virtual Travel Fellowships

Each year, between four and six $1,000 fellowships are awarded to emerging (unpublished or minimally published) translators to help them pay for hotel and travel expenses to the annual ALTA conference. This year, with ALTA’s programming held jointly online and in person, ten Virtual Travel Fellows, including two Peter K. Jansen Fellows, were awarded $500 each. 2022 marks the seventh year of the Peter K. Jansen Memorial Travel Fellowship, preferentially awarded to an emerging translator of color or a translator working from an underrepresented diaspora or stateless language.

This year’s winners were selected by judges Todd Portnowitz and Maureen Shaughnessy. Joyce Zonana was also a judge in the early stages. The 2022 ALTA Travel Fellowships are made possible thanks to the generous support of ALTA’s Past Presidents Council, the Peter K. Jansen Memorial Travel Fund, and numerous individual donors, including translators and other devoted supporters of the craft and art of literary translation.

ALTA will celebrate this year’s Virtual Travel Fellows with a live virtual reading at 4:00pm PT on September 20, 2022, hosted by ALTA Board Member Nancy Naomi Carlson. The reading is free and open to the public; registration is required at this link.

Congratulations to these exceptional emerging translators, chosen from among numerous applicants!
Jasmine Alexander-Greene, 2022 Peter K. Jansen Memorial Virtual Travel Fellow (Russian)

JASMINEx ALEXANDER-GRENEEx’s path to literary translation, much like her path to all things Russian-related, was a matter of happy coincidence. A language instructor at Duke University introduced her to fellow translator Dr. Carol Apollonio, who later became Jasmine’s mentor. Dr. Apollonio’s course on theory and practice served as a gateway to the translating life. Years later, with hard work and the generous assistance of colleagues, including Anne O. Fisher and Nora Favorov, she is proud to call herself part of the literary translation community.

Having no familial or cultural ties to Russia, Jasmine’s entire journey has been one of discovery. Literary translation has been an invaluable tool in getting to know her host culture(s) better—whether reading the work of forebears or producing material herself.

As an area specialist, Jasmine has examined Russia and Eurasia through many lenses—history, politics, economics, culture, and of course language and literature—and that is reflected in her projects. She is fascinated by leader cults, life-writing, magic realism, Soviet/Russian history, and folklore, and it is no coincidence that some of these subjects appear in the works she translates: her first published translation, of Ivan Shipnigov’s short story “Mausoleum” (Мавзолей), involves Lenin reanimating, escaping his mausoleum, and being shocked by the Moscow he now finds himself in.

While not an activist, Jasmine seeks to contribute to a body of Russian literature that transcends stereotypes of long-windedness and difficulty. She gravitates toward works that cut across genre, high/lowlowbrow, or ideological lines. (Bonus points if they are playful and weird.) The potential for translated works to help humanize another culture—something especially critical in the present moment—is also important to her.

Jasmine is currently working on a collection of Soviet campfire tales by legendary cartoonist Askold Akishin, a graphic novella about the death of Pushkin by Vitaly Terletsky (also illustrated by Akishin), and an experimental novel by Aleksandr IlIanen. She has also completed samples from A Certain Boy, 101 microfiction stories by poet Vitaly Pukhanov, for which she was awarded a 2022 ALTA Travel Fellowship. Originally published in 2017, the “incidences” of A Certain Boy follow a gaggle of anonymous girls and boys as they wend their way through life situations, helped or hindered by equally anonymous good and evil wizards. They are at once specific and universal in scope: though there are nods here and there to Russian fatalism, literature, and historical personalities, their main task is exploring the nature of love, sobriety, good and evil, connection, art, and the individual’s place in history, among other things. Mr. Pukhanov is clear-eyed about humanity’s follies but also celebrates its triumphs, its resilience, and its boundless creativity. His microfiction is also defiantly humorous. A Certain Boy disarms the ugly aspects of the Soviet past and Russian present by poking fun at them and wraps bitter life truths in a sweet punchline.

Jasmine is grateful to ALTA for the opportunity to attend this year’s hybrid programming and share her translations of Pukhanov’s anecdotes.

Soleil David, 2022 Peter K. Jansen Memorial Virtual Travel Fellow (Filipino/Tagalog)

IT WAS IN an undergraduate writing class that I first understood the terror and thrill of true collaborative work. Each of us young writers had written one-act plays that were then staged by class volunteers. To realize quite fully that I couldn’t direct or control how the actor would say the words I had written was a terror. To hear the words I had written issue forth from somebody else’s mouth, transformed in its new inflections and rhythms, was a thrill. It was, to me, a singular experience, one that I suspect draws people to theater or other more collaborative art forms than the one I ultimately chose (poetry). But I went back to that feeling a lot in the intervening years: the heady awe I felt at the real-time transformation of words, the same and yet not the same. I didn’t find that terror-thrill again until I started translating.

I grew up in a multilingual country, but since most people spoke more or less the specific languages that I speak, I never really had to translate anything for anyone. If anything, I was usually the person who was less fluent in the languages being spoken around me, as in the case of Bikol and Ilokano, which my father and mother speak, respectively. I was always the grateful recipient of translation...
and interpretation. This feeling of not being the polyglot I should be was probably why I never applied for the yearly translation workshop that Robert Hass offered at my university, although I was very much interested. What makes me so special, reading and writing in only two languages, especially the same languages in which most Filipino writers already write? They don’t need me to translate for them; they can do it themselves if they are so inclined. I am fully aware that translation doesn’t need me, but I think I need translation. Translation is a way for me to engage deeply with one facet of my country’s literature. It’s a way to strengthen ties that feel ever-fraying, because as an immigrant, it’s impossible not to feel that every day you’re away is a day you’re losing more and more of home. So, I translate to fill a deep homesickness.

In graduate school, I finally let myself have the nerve to be a translator. I took translation workshops with Bill Johnston, which became one of the highlights of my graduate career. The workshops humored my varied translation interests and projects, which still include fabulist writings, reinterpreted Philippine mythology, graphic novels, and revolutionary poetry. There’s a modern epic by national artist Rio Alma that I started translating in that class, but I felt that my skills and my background reading in Philippine literature were still inadequate to match the work’s depth and breadth. I keep translating so that one day I can match the intensity of that epic. I keep translating so that one day I can be worthy of the great works of my country.

Michele Bantz, 2022 Virtual Travel Fellow (Spanish, Portuguese)

MICHELE BANTZ IS AN American translator who works from Spanish and Portuguese into English. She was named winner of the 2021 Granum Foundation Translation Prize for her work-in-progress translation of the Portuguese novel O Fogo Será a Tua Casa (Fire Shall Be Your Home) by Nuno Camarneiro, recipient of the Prémio LeYa, Portugal’s largest literary prize.

Set in the Middle East, O Fogo Será a Tua Casa follows an international cast of characters—including a Turkish journalist, a Portuguese writer, a US soldier, and a Greek Orthodox nun—whose very different lives suddenly converge when they are abducted abroad and forced to endure impossible circumstances together while held for ransom. A captivity diary of sorts, the novel explores religion, philosophy, and the importance of choice.

Michele’s fascination with foreign languages began at an early age and has only grown with time. She completed her undergraduate degree in Hispanic Studies at Washington College and has studied French, Latin, Portuguese, and Spanish. She learned Spanish while abroad for several years in Spain, Colombia, and Chile, and on her travels to other Spanish-speaking countries as well. Her Portuguese was honed as an undergraduate during an internship with Operation Smile in Fortaleza, Brazil, followed by subsequent stays in Rio de Janeiro and Brasilia, and later at the Middlebury Portuguese Language School as a Kathryn Davis Fellow for Peace.

After college, Michele attended the Middlebury Institute of International Studies (MIIS) at Monterey and graduated with an MA in Translation. While at MIIS, she began her career as a freelance translator working as a contract linguist for the US government. She also completed traineeships in translation at the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) in Washington, DC as a bank document translation intern and at the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) in Santiago, Chile as an associate translator.

She grew interested in literary translation after coming across Camarneiro’s work on a trip to Portugal and serendipitously learning about the Bread Loaf Translators’ Workshop on her return. With support from The Rona Jaffe Foundation, Michele attended the workshop in 2021 to learn more about the field and work on a translation of O Fogo Será a Tua Casa. She continued her work on the manuscript this past summer as a participant in the literary translation cohort of the Kenyon Review Writers Workshop.

What Michele enjoys most about translating is the mental gymnastics it involves: rearranging syntax in her mind, tackling the problem-solving aspects of word choice, and ultimately deciding on a solution to the puzzle of how to best render a phrase in a given context. She also finds the idea of helping an author reach new audiences and helping audiences gain access to a new author very rewarding. Michele is immensely grateful to ALTA for the opportunities afforded to Travel Fellows and the programming it offers its members. As a Travel Fellow, she greatly appreciates being able to share her work with the ALTA community and looks forward to meeting other literary translators.

Use the hashtag #ALTA45, and follow ALTA on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram @LitTranslate!
Yana Ellis, 2022 Virtual Travel Fellow (German, Bulgarian)

Yana Ellis found her ideal career in her middle years. However, her love affair with languages, and in particular with German, started at age of thirteen, when she entered the local language grammar school near her home in rural Bulgaria. Growing up behind the Iron Curtain, the only way to travel, to sneak invisibly through border controls and learn about the “other,” was to learn a foreign language and read translated literature. This experience has shaped Yana’s outlook on life and has affirmed her belief that the more translated literature we read, the better chance we have of understanding other people—and, in so doing, overcoming prejudices and fostering mutual awareness.

To date, Yana has worked primarily on nonfiction and academic texts; however, her passion is literary translation. As an immigrant herself, she is drawn to narratives that cross borders and bring to the conversation the voices of the marginalized and powerless, voices which are often ignored or unheard.

One such project is A Space Bounded by Shadows by Turkish-born, German-language writer, playwright, and actor Emine Sevgi Özdamar (Suhrkamp Verlag, 2021), a narrative that weaves the rich tapestry of a life lived between art, relationships, and politics. Above all, it is a narrative that provides a ray of hope born from love of literature, film, and theater. The book captured Yana immediately because it explores the role language plays in identity, and how a mother tongue and a second language can merge, leading to a new, enriched language and overcoming speechlessness in exile. A Space Bounded by Shadows straddles the border between fiction and autobiography. Complemented by photos, notes, poems, and songs, it unpicks 20th-century history from the perspective of the “eternal stranger,” of migrants who have fled authoritarian regimes and who now live, work, and write in languages without childhoods. Özdamar lets motifs drip through the languages: French, Turkish, and German. This is a piece of German literature that encourages us to look beyond the façade of established viewpoints, and which will move and deeply resonate with readers of all faiths, backgrounds, and mother tongues.

For Yana, literary translation is an act aimed at sharing a reading experience wherein the translation becomes a written reflection of the translator’s own encounter with the text. In her work, she aims to bring to her readers versions of otherness that retain the cultural identity of the original text in a language that is accessible and natural to them.

With online conferencing taking prevalence since the pandemic, it has been possible to participate in many translation events and workshops, and Yana appreciates the huge benefits of collaborating with colleagues from around the globe, along with the generous support of the translation community.

Yana wishes to express her deep thanks to ALTA and the judges for giving her the opportunity to share her work and to engage with and learn from so many great writers and translators.

Salma Harland, 2022 Virtual Travel Fellow (Arabic, English)

Born in Giza, where ancient Egyptian, Islamic, and Arab cultures entwine, Salma Harland grew up in a diverse country that historically promotes openness to dialogue between the self and the other. Salma discovered her love of language and culture at a very young age, and by the age of six, she became fully bilingual in Arabic and English, thanks to her private schooling. Her passion for languages led her to do a BA in Translation from October 6 University (2012, first-class honors with distinction) and a PGCert in Translation and Interpreting from the Arabic Studies Department at the American University of Cairo (2015, distinction). Later the same year, she received the Chancellor’s Postgraduate International Scholarship from the University of Sussex, where she obtained her MA in Literature and Philosophy (2016). She has been based in England since.

The Egyptian Revolution of 2011 and its aftermath marked a turning point in Salma’s life, influencing who she is today, both as a translator and human being. Amid all the noise and chaos, she sought meaning in poetry and philosophy, attempting to understand being and language through Derrida, Heidegger, and Gadamer, and finding a grounding anchor in Arabic poetry. The former culminated in her MA thesis, titled “Play in Hans-Georg Gadamer’s Hermeneutics of Facticity,” which has since become an influence on her translation method. The latter grew into a passionate and professional endeavor to translate key texts from pre-Nahda and (post)modern Arabic poetry that...
Michelle Mirabella, 2022 Virtual Travel Fellow (Spanish)

Michelle Mirabella is a Spanish-to-English literary translator based in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Originally from outside New York City, Michelle lived and worked in Chile for three and a half years and maintains her Chilean residency. Her first language is English and her second is Music, and although Music is no longer at the forefront of her work, being immersed in that language at such a young age undoubtedly laid the foundation for the work she does today.

Michelle’s path to literary translation was not straightforward—it rarely is. With an undergraduate degree in Professional Writing in English in addition to coursework in Spanish and Music, Michelle spent the first ten years of her career working in the education sector in both Chile and the US. Feeling that she was getting away from her interest in language, art, and intercultural exchange, Michelle began to explore translation. It was at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies that she was formally introduced to literary translation and felt she had found her place at the confluence of her prior experiences.

Michelle has most often worked with emerging women writers from Latin America, seeking to amplify their voices into the Anglophone with stories written on the backdrop of the many pressing issues of our time, including climate change and gender equity. In February 2022, Michelle published her essay, “…all the words that are running through my head” in Hopscotch Translation, exploring the intimacy of the translation act and what it means to emerge together with authors and fellow translators. The essay grew out of her curation of the Emerging Together virtual reading series hosted by Jill: A Women+ in Translation Reading Series, which spotlighted the work of emerging women translators translating emerging women authors. In her extra-translation-related extra involvements, Michelle strives to support the work of other translators and build connections in response to what can sometimes, but need not, feel like an isolating endeavor.

Michelle will share with the ALTA community an excerpt from her translation manuscript of We Women Are All One Shadow by Chilean author Catalina Infante Beovic, an author with whom she consistently collaborates. The work is told from the perspective of a collective protagonist which can be interpreted as we women. This book is urgent—although the title speaks directly to women, inclusively defined, it has never been more important in recent history for people of all genders to bear witness to the thoughts and experiences of this narrator.

In addition to Infante Beovic, Michelle has translated work by Ecuadorian author Natalia García Freire, Mexican author Iliana Vargas, and Peruvian author Miluska Benavides, among others. A finalist for Columbia Journal’s 2022 Spring Contest in the translation category and a recent participant in the Bread Loaf Translators’ Conference, her work appears in The Arkansas International Anthology (2022), and in literary journals and magazines such as ArabLit Quarterly, Modern Poetry in Translation, Ancient Exchanges, Medievalists, Y’alla: A Texan Journal of Middle Eastern Literature, Sekka Magazine, Jadaliyya, and Turjoman. Her non-literary translations include texts on human rights, war economy, and higher education. Other translation-related extra involvements include working as a volunteer Covid-19 Crisis Arabic Translator for Migration Yorkshire (UK) between March and September 2020.

Salma’s current works-in-progress include translating selected poems by 10th-century poet Kushajim from Classical Arabic and a nonfiction book on Gadamerian hermeneutics from English.

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Nidhi Singh, 2022 Virtual Travel Fellow
(Hindi)

Nidhi Singh, a PhD student in Comparative Literature at Indiana University, Bloomington, who lives between India and the US. Her introduction to translation was through Professor Bill Johnston’s workshop in literary translation at Indiana University. Looking for her first poem to translate, she came across “Banaras” by the Hindi poet Kedarnath Singh. “Banaras” immediately drew her in with its vivid images of the ancient city that are immersed in the slowness of its rhythm. Nidhi continued to read and translate Singh's poems, noticing the recurrence of certain motifs—the most noteworthy being “dust.” Belonging to the same socio-cultural background as Singh, she could recognize the dust described in Singh's poems as one that rises from the banks of the Ganges, enters people’s homes and lives, settles on clothes, dulls the green of the trees and the wood of the furniture. Reading Singh’s poetry felt to her a little like passing by home. It imparted the mysteries and absurdities of the familiar and revealed the improbable edges of what often escaped her perception.

Translation for Nidhi, among other things, became a cure for homesickness. Reading and translating Hindi poetry helped her re-belong to her native language and reimagine the landscapes of her past. Singh’s poetry delights in colloquial diction. It has a touch of intimacy. At times, the poet gently instructs the reader to accompany him on a journey. They enter a kind of friendship as they look at the ordinary and fragile things of everyday life together anew. The animated material environment evokes the idea of space as co-created by both the poet and the reader. Syntactical links are eschewed in Singh's poems, engendering strange allusiveness and oblique associations. There is a starkness to his poetry that results from the presence of loosely tied images. These crisp, concrete images are never abstractions or symbols of a meaning that lies beyond the poem. The reader is asked to be still and also to linger within the orbit of the poetic world itself. Interpreting these images and reshaping them into English has been for Nidhi one of the most daunting and absorbing aspects of translating Singh’s poetry.

Till now, Nidhi has translated numerous poems by Kedarnath Singh and attempted to recreate a flicker of the wit, humor, and beauty of his work. Her translation of “Banaras” was published by World Literature Today in 2019.

Learning the craft of translation has been for her a source of great creative joy, and she desires to make it a lifelong pursuit. She is grateful to ALTA for giving her the opportunity to share her work with other translators.

Suzana Vuljevic, 2022 Virtual Travel Fellow (Albanian and Bosnian, Croatian, Montenegrin, Serbian)

Trained as a historian, Suzana Vuljevic’s work as a translator often dovetails with her academic research. First introduced to the craft of translation in a graduate course on modern Greek poetry, translation would later provide respite from the perils of dissertation writing. She translates modernist and experimental poetry and short prose with a special focus on women and other marginalized poets. She works from Albanian and Bosnian, Croatian, Montenegrin, Serbian (BCMS), languages that have traditionally been regarded as antithetical and irrec- oncilable for various political reasons. And while they occupy separate branches of the Indo-European family of languages, they are not inherently oppositional languages. Multilinguals of mixed communities serve as living examples of their permeability.

The daughter of ethnic Albanian immigrants from the former Yugoslavia (where Albanians constituted a minority), Suzana is interested in the spaces where languages seem to bleed into one another, evidenced in the phenomena of translanguaging and code-switching. She was raised in a trilingual household in the Midwest where Serbo-Croatian was used as the language of “secret” adult conversations that were supposed to drift past curious children’s ears, which only fueled her eagerness to learn the language more. She believes in the power of literary translation to serve as a form of cultural diplomacy, a profound mediation tool, and a means of fostering meaningful dialogue and cultural understanding among peoples.

She holds a BA in History and Comparative Literature from the University of Michigan. In 2020, Suzana earned a PhD in History and Comparative Literature from Columbia University. A historian of modern Europe who specializes in the history of Southeast European intellectual thought, her research focuses on the nexus between culture and
politics, pan-Balkan ideas and initiatives, interwar internationalism, feminism and women’s movements, peripheral modernisms, and ideas of European and Mediterranean unity. Her dissertation reconstructs the transnational networks of a largely forgotten elite group of liberal idealist intellectuals who coalesced around pan-Balkan initiatives in interwar Southeast Europe.


Throughout her work, Suzana aims to bring greater visibility to women writers who have been overlooked and understudied, and as a translator of Albanian literature in particular, she aims to bring greater visibility to the Gheg dialect of Albanian, spoken in the northern part of the country, in Kosovo, and in other pockets of the region. In 2021-22, Suzana organized and moderated a monthly series of virtual discussions with contemporary Albanian authors and translators called “Albanian Literature Today: Meditations on the Craft of Literary Translation Across Genres and Spaces,” which was hosted by DePaul University’s Albanian studies program, the first of its kind in the United States.

Suzana is currently translating work by two contemporary Balkan women writers: Montenegrin poet Marija Dragnić’s collection of conceptual poetry We, the marias (2020), a spirited and playful homage to the multitudes contained in a woman, and Kosovar poet Ervina Halili’s prize-winning Amulet (2015), a collection that employs elements of imagism and surrealism to lay bare trauma’s effects on individuals and collectives. Her work has appeared or is forthcoming in AGNI, Asymptote, Balkan Poetry Today, Eurozine, Exchanges, and Turkoslavia. Suzana is a research editor at EuropeNow.

Rebecca Weingart, 2022 Virtual Travel Fellow (Yiddish)

REBECCA WEINGART’S PATH to literary translation was circuitous, beginning in high school with her love of Greek literature in translation and her observation that editions of The Iliad were vastly different based on the translator. This fascination with the complexity and possibilities of translation led to studying Greek in college out of the desire to read the original words herself.

After graduating with a BA in Latin and Greek, Rebecca became a high school English teacher, reading the same books in translation with her students that she loved at their age. As a teacher, she introduced her students to literary translation through Poetry Inside Out, a curriculum developed by the Center for the Art of Translation, and encouraged artistic expression as a school coordinator of Poetry Out Loud and a staff advisor for the student literary magazine. While teaching, she earned an MFA in Creative Writing from the University of Missouri–St. Louis.

While working towards her MFA in poetry, Rebecca sought opportunities to practice literary translation, translating poems by the Roman poet Sulpicia and eventually taking a Spanish translation course at a neighboring university, translating poems by Pablo Neruda, Jorge Luis Borges, and Norah Lange. When she began studying and translating from Yiddish, she decided to seek an audience for her translations and applied for the Yiddish Book Center Fellowship, which she received in 2021 to support her translation of poetry by Rosshelle Weprinsky.

As an emerging translator, Rebecca is excited to learn and grow in this supportive community of translators and is equally passionate about translating poets whose writing has not been widely available in English. She is particularly interested in translating Yiddish women poets, beginning with the poetry of Rosshelle Weprinsky. Rebecca was drawn to Weprinsky’s use of unexpected imagery to describe the speaker’s solitude and intimate relationship with the natural world.

Yiddish was spoken by Rebecca’s maternal great-grandparents, who immigrated to the United States from Poland and Ukraine in the early 1900s. By her generation, Yiddish only remained in the form of a handful of phrases spoken by her mother. When she discovered and enrolled in YIVO’s Yiddish Summer Program in 2020, she felt a deep connection with the language and was compelled to play a small role in rebuilding this lost part of her culture through translation.

Rebecca will continue translating poetry as a PhD student in Comparative Literature at Washington University in St. Louis, while engaging in her favorite pastimes of running at dusk and translating Emily Dickinson’s poems into Yiddish. She is honored to be a 2022 ALTA Virtual Travel Fellow and is looking forward to sharing her work with the ALTA community.

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Hongyu Jasmine Zhu (朱弘昱), 2022 Virtual Travel Fellow (Chinese, English, Latin)

Hongyu Jasmine Zhu (朱弘昱), from Chengdu, China, attends high school at Mercersburg Academy in Pennsylvania, USA. Her practice of literary translation, the glee and aches of groping for a bridge, a salvation between two languages, seems a perfect metaphor as she navigates her own bilingualism and a life in translation.

Hongyu Jasmine was quickly perceptive to the nuances among words as a child. This natural affinity was luckily encouraged by a warm and open primary and secondary education which has, in retrospect, led her to look for music in all stories and to voice her own, written or spoken, visual or tactile.

Serendipity sparked her attention to literary translation: in the spring of 2021, Chengdu Philharmonic Choir, where Hongyu Jasmine sings alto, was working on “Rivers of Light.” She translated the lyrics into Chinese and gained much more than a finished translation to share with her choir family: the quest into the realm of diction, syntax, and cadences, searching for a “perfect”—better—rendering, got her into translating for fun. She realized that to roam within tender words is itself a blessing.

Hongyu Jasmine adapted her 4,000-word translation of Taiwanese writer Sanmao (三毛)’s short story “吹兵” into an eight-minute monologue. Among the many painstaking deliberations, one concerned the soldier whose nickname 哑巴 endearingly suggests his inability to speak or hear. Eventually, she chose the direct transliteration “Yaba” over the paraphrased term “Deafy,” with a tinge of worry that an English-speaking audience might not easily register the Chinese pronunciation. She performed the monologue at her high school’s annual Declamation in March 2022. She received many hugs afterwards and people approached her, even months after the performance, saying how they still remember Yaba and have shed tears for him. Hongyu Jasmine’s participation in Bristol Translates with tutors Jack Hargreaves and Nicky Harman has similarly granted her faith that this literary path joined by so many warm hearts will not feel lonely.

When Hongyu Jasmine is not sailing among words, she can be found playing the piano, dancing around children’s books, learning to cook, chasing after a cloud’s fluid shadow, and occasionally lapsing into a reverie, envisioning blissfully the day when she may finally retell in English the entirety of the story between the Pangcah girl Ku A-Hsia (古阿霞) and the tree-talking boy Pacilo (帕吉鲁). This is Taiwanese writer Kan Yao-Ming (甘耀明)’s novel 邦查女孩 (The Pangcah Girl), which Hongyu Jasmine is humbled to share with the ALTA family. Like A-Hsia, Hongyu Jasmine bursts out singing at times both anticipated and inopportune. She never forgets how A-Hsia and her singing have worked a miracle, sending her friends up to the highest peak of the world. She only prays that the song she sings, through her brief translation excerpt, will sing well the tale of “a sun, a moon, a river, six mountain tops” and move hearts to the beginning of a much larger miracle.
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Submissions for ALTA's book awards open in January and close in mid-April each year, and can be made exclusively on ALTA's Submittable page. ALTA is grateful to the generous sponsors and donors who make these awards possible, as well as to the stalwart judges who consider numerous submissions each year to select the award longlists, shortlists, and winners.

Please join us on October 6, 2022, from 4:00-5:15pm PT for the 2022 Awards Ceremony, held virtually, to hear the winning books announced! The event is free and open to the public; register here to receive the Zoom link.
Congratulations to the translators on the 2022 Italian Prose in Translation Award shortlist! See what judges Nerina Cocchi, Douglas Grant Heise, and Barbara Ofosu-Somuah had to say about each of the shortlisted titles (in alphabetical order by title).

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**The Book of all Books**  
By Roberto Calasso  
Translated from Italian by Tim Parks  
Farrar, Straus and Giroux

Tim Parks’s translation of Roberto Calasso’s *The Book of all Books* into English is sometimes meditative, frequently confounding, and has perhaps a stark feeling of reading the Bible. Parks renders a translation that powerfully and gently guides the reader through a text loaded with biblical tension, regardless of the reader’s familiarity with the Old Testament. In Calasso, we find the tension between an avenging God requiring obedience without question, questions of sacrifice, and so much grace. Most meaningfully, Parks’s translation masters the art of invisibility. Unless one is keenly aware that it is a translation, there are no gaps to question that it could have been originally written in English. A translation that draws you in and pushes you to ask new questions.

**Meeting in Positano**  
By Goliarda Sapienza  
Translated from Italian by Brian Robert Moore  
Other Press

Those familiar with Natalia Ginzburg’s *Family Lexicon* or the sisterly squabbles of Aldo Palazzeschi’s *Le sorelle Materassi* will find in Goliarda Sapienza’s latest volume a somewhat (excuse the repetition) familiar feeling, the portrayal of a world that once was, but is no more, and yet whose soul still permeates key strata of Italian society. Brian Robert Moore’s goldsmith-like approach to its translation carries us right to the heart of these dynamics, the way emotions are interwoven into words, social diktats embodied by family mantras, and the seemingly (yet deceptively) empty space in between them. A feast for all readers, but especially those at work on bringing women’s stories, as well as their gazes on their own movements, to the forestage of world literature.

**Nives**  
By Sacha Naspini  
Translated from Italian by Clarissa Botsford  
Europa Editions

The chickens have indeed come home to roost in this taut drama of an evening phone call that takes a series of wrong turns throughout a single night. Where is the place of desire, what is the role of sacrifice, when is it right to bottle things up, and when to let them out? These questions come brilliantly to life in Sacha Naspini’s theatrical novel, artfully translated into English by Clarissa Botsford with the same driving rhythm as the original. Nives and her precient hen Giacomina feel like Laurel and Hardy until they suddenly plunge the other characters into a Huis Clos scenario that holds you tight until the damage is done. A novel and a translation that doesn’t let up until you set the book down.
Penelope
By Silvana La Spina
Translated from Italian by Anna Chiafele and Lisa Pike
Bordighera Press

Anna Chiafele and Lisa Pike’s co-translation, which flows like an original, delivers a poignant re-elaboration of Penelope’s mythical figure. Connecting the reader to a fabric as old as time, the translators weave Silvana La Spina’s evocative tongue into a sensitive journey that turns Ulysses’s myth on its head and brings to the forefront a feminine tale whose power resides not in station or duty, but in the progressive self-discovery of one’s own inner universe and desire. A tumultuous read that gives voice to one of Western history’s most univocally told figures, and opens up our understanding of her in the style of Mary Renault or Ursula K. Le Guin.

Self-Portrait
By Carla Lonzi
Translated from Italian by Allison Grimaldi Donahue
Divided Publishing

We are all fortunate that Allison Grimaldi Donahue has given us the gift of one of those books that fall into the category of “I should have always known about this, but no one ever told me.” The dead-on translation of Carla Lonzi’s strange, challenging, and genre-bending Self-Portrait bravely fulfills the translator’s stated objective of keeping the “spoken nature of the text…to allow English to perform Italian voices,” and we hope that others will emulate Grimaldi Donahue’s enjoyment in the flexibility of language. How else could Lonzi’s revolutionary brand of art criticism be rendered? A ’60s-generation book that speaks powerfully to us today about art, power, feminism, and intellectual life has finally found its English version. Meno male!

Since 2015, the Italian Prose in Translation Award (IPTA) has recognized the importance of contemporary Italian prose and promoted the translation of Italian works into English. This prize is awarded annually to a translator of a recent work of Italian prose (fiction or literary nonfiction). Publishers are invited to submit titles for consideration at the beginning of the year. For more information, visit literarytranslators.org.
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**Broad Sea and Empty Sky**
By Xu Zhimo
Translated from Chinese by Dorothy Trench Bonett
Floating World Editions

At the centenary of Xu Zhimo’s short-lived career, Dorothy Trench Bonett gifts readers with poetry translated for today. Bonett’s radiant translation reveals Xu’s vision of poetry written “in heaven’s alphabet earth’s alphabet human writing,” all the while retaining the poems’ formal playfulness and rhetorical innovations. Recurrent natural imagery sharpens into exuberant metaphors for embracing life to the fullest, balanced by somber meditations as “disoriented in this fog / I meditate on human life.” Gracefully annotated and incisively edited, *Broad Sea and Empty Sky* offers a definitive statement on Xu’s ongoing legacy.

**Cold Candies**
By Lee Young-ju
Translated from Korean by Jae Kim
Black Ocean

Lee Young-ju’s *Cold Candies* showcases a poetics of dying, rotting, and dreaming. In these surreal prose poems, the subjects fight through their deficiencies and strive to express themselves, though in vain: dolls discuss girlhood and girls talk like dolls, without moving their lips; a dead man underwater writes everything in great detail even if the writing simply vanishes. Lee’s grotesque and fantastical yet lucid imagery looks upon its decaying subjects with extraordinary tenderness. With his bold and decisive translation, Jae Kim invites you to come “rest a bit in this loving nightmare.”

**A Naturalist’s Manor**
By Yan An
Translated from Chinese by Chen Du and Xisheng Chen
Chax Press

*A Naturalist’s Manor* by Yan An, beautifully translated by Chen Du and Xisheng Chen, is a collection of rich observations about the wildness and wilderness that is life itself. The poems are full of unexpected transformations and declarations, such as the image of fallen butterflies merging with the image of a plane crash. Such layering of natural and human tragedies has the simultaneous effect of producing fantastical or surrealist backdrops and showing that the world with all its landscapes is one in its strangeness and destructiveness. By making nature and human life equal metaphors for each other, the poet does not turn to nature to escape the terrors of human life but to be reminded, to keep confronting the shocks of “death and love” in its myriad forms. The translators should be celebrated for crafting English-language poems that are at once lucid and mysterious.
Ordinary People
By Tanikawa Shuntarō
Translated from Japanese by Takako Lento
Vagabond Press

Ordinary People by Tanikawa Shuntarō is a friendly invitation to people-watch. Weaving in and out of first- and third-person speakers, the poems offer glimpses into personal, everyday moments, with a few delightful pockets of absurdity. In one poem, someone washes his briefs and thinks he will not die. In another, someone imagines the dusk of Mars. The poems are a result of empathetic observation which hints at the interior lives of its subjects, encouraging us to fill in the rest. The down-to-earth translation by Takako Lento is expertly transparent, allowing the poet’s warm glance to come through without pretense.

Since 2009, the Lucien Stryk Asian Translation Prize has awarded book-length translations into English of Asian poetry, or of source texts from Zen Buddhism (which must not consist solely of commentaries) translated from Chinese, Hindi, Japanese, Kannada, Korean, Sanskrit, Tamil, Thai, or Vietnamese into English, published anywhere in the world in the previous calendar year. Publishers and translators are invited to submit titles for consideration at the beginning of the year. For more information, visit www.literarytranslators.org.
International works of cultural significance translated for English readers
Congratulations to the translators on the inaugural Spain-USA Foundation Translation Award shortlist! See what judges Peter Bush, Kevin Gerry Dunn, and Amaia Gabantxo had to say about each of the shortlisted titles (in alphabetical order by title). Purchase these titles at the ALTA45 Virtual Bookfair.

Above the Rain
By Víctor del Árbol
Translated from Spanish by Lisa Dillman
Other Press
Just as Víctor del Árbol proves that noir fiction can be literary and even philosophical, with her translation of Above the Rain, Lisa Dillman demonstrates that translated prose can be edge-of-your-seat exhilarating. Shame, generational trauma, fidelity and infidelity, war and politics, the indignities of old age in western capitalism, and the turbulent histories of Europe and Morocco coalesce in one of the most emotionally charged works translated into English in recent memory. The deep humanity of every character shines through in Dillman’s unflagging prose, which achieves a seamless and agile rhythm in English without compromising the cultural specificity that is so fundamental to del Árbol’s novel.

The Adventures and Misadventures of the Extraordinary and Admirable Joan Orpí, Conquistador and Founder of New Catalonia
By Max Besora
Translated from Catalan by Mara Faye Lethem
Open Letter Books
Mara Faye Lethem inventively trawls multiple registers of English, literary and streetwise, to recreate the verbal comedy of Besora’s anarchic Cervantine parody of the chronicles of the Conquest. It is a translator’s imaginative transformation of the highest order. The farcical humor and subtle wit of Besora’s Catalan are maintained with narrative verve and playful dialogues that constantly delight and surprise the reader. Lethem identifies every literary nuance and satirical barb in this superb mocking of imperial dreams and barbarism and provokes laughs and rueful reflection on every page.

Among the Hedges
By Sara Mesa
Translated from Spanish by Megan McDowell
Open Letter Books
The brooding, threatening atmosphere in this tightly crafted novel where Old Man and Soon (soon to be thirteen) meet up regularly in a hideout among the hedges of a park is beautifully captured by Megan McDowell’s translation that is ever alert to the way Sara Mesa plays with readers’ expectations and tailors the unexpected. McDowell creates an absorbing English narrative of a tentative, yet intense, relationship. The reader feels impelled to read the book in one sitting to discover what will become of an adolescent girl skipping classes and a shabbily elegant, veteran ornithologist. How will society and school react? How will two such different mental states continue to interreact?
Cremation

By Rafael Chirbes
Translated from Spanish by Valerie Miles
New Directions

In a monumental display of translator dedication, Valerie Miles transforms Rafael Chirbes’s relentless Spanish monologues into impressive blocks of English stream of consciousness that are every bit as engaging and idiomatic as the original. Despite the varied tone, register, and jargon of these thirteen single-paragraph chapters, Miles manages to give each narrator a distinct voice as they expound on topics as heterogenous as art restoration, aging, drugs, real estate speculation, capitalism, and post-Franco Spain. Like the translators of Anna Karenina, 2666, and One Hundred Years of Solitude, Miles highlights the universal embedded within the regional and presents us with a challenging novel from which no reader emerges the same as they went in.

Memoirs of a Village Boy

By Xosé Neira Vilas
Translated from Galician by John Rutherford
Small Stations Press

Candid, melancholy, and impactful, Memoirs of a Village Boy is a classic of Galician literature that packs subtle punches. A post-war novel combining the innocence of a child’s inquiring perspective on nature and people with the emotional depth and distance of a hardened old man, it weaves together a simple but profoundly attuned narrative about the unjust conditions of Galician rural life during Francoist times. This 1961 novel, published by the author while exiled in Argentina, gave voice to a whole set of characters, a culture, and a language that were missing from the literary landscapes of Spain, which makes it a key element in that canon. John Rutherford’s well-observed translation is imbued with the rhythms and emotive heartbeat of Memorias dun neno labrego, its Galician sense of mists and morrña.

The Spain-USA Foundation Translation Award (SUFTA), inaugurated in 2022, is offered by the American Literary Translators Association in conjunction with the Spain-USA Foundation. The award recognizes translations into English of literary prose works written originally by authors of Spanish (Spain) nationality. The source language of the original text may be Spanish, Catalan, Basque, or Galician. The winner of the SUFTA will be awarded a $5,000 prize. Both translators and publishers are invited to submit titles. For more information, visit www.literarytranslators.org.
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The Assommoir
By Émile Zola
Translated from French by Brian Nelson
Oxford University Press
Zola’s finely crafted 19th-century classic, published by Oxford UP, is a “landmark” of world literature not only because of its original significance, but because this story of a woman’s struggle with alcoholism in the context of poverty, a masterpiece of Naturalism, maintains its social impact in today’s troubled world. A huge translation challenge because of the predominance of local slang, L’Assommoir’s first English translator focused on recreating the flavor of the original period. Brian Nelson, a great translator and Zola scholar, does a superb rendering, a veritable co-creation in contemporary slang to bring the book into the 21st century.

Billy Wilder on Assignment: Dispatches from Weimar Berlin and Interwar Vienna
By Billy Wilder
Translated from German by Shelley Frisch
Princeton University Press
A unique glimpse into how the Billy Wilder of Vienna and Berlin evolved into the Billy Wilder of Hollywood. Translator Frisch writes that “Wilder’s prose is wilder”: where else would she “get to write about a smoker whose cigar saunters from one corner of his mouth to the other?” or to translate bons mots like “Coffeeshouses have something in common with well-played violins.” This lively translation of Wilder’s early journalism places in context the genius of one of our greatest filmmakers, who brought us Some Like It Hot, Ace in the Hole, and Double Indemnity. What leaps out of these vivid “dispatches” is Wilder’s power of observation that sheds light and laughter on the human condition.

A Long Way From Douala
By Max Lobe
Translated from French by Ros Schwartz
Other Press
“Yes, guys! Our Roger Milla is go, he is, to Mbeng! He told me he wanted boza: that he was going to walk all the way to Europe.” Max Lobe’s A Long Way From Douala, where “a funeral is also a party” is a rollicking ride (literally, being something of a road novel) through modern-day Cameroon, where the heaviness of contemporary realities is dealt with a light hand. The language, studded as it is with Camfranglais—a combination of French and flavors of English used in Cameroon—poses a translation challenge that Ros Schwartz takes head-on with elan to create an “Englished” version that dynamically echoes the original text.

Congratulations to all the translators selected for the longlist for this year’s National Translation Award in Prose! Featuring authors writing in eleven different languages, this year’s longlist continues the prize’s dedication to literary diversity in English. Please note that these titles did not proceed to the shortlist. See what judges Suzanne Jill Levine, Arunava Sinha, and Annie Tucker have to say about each of the longlisted titles, chosen from among over 200 submissions, below (in alphabetical order by title).

Purchase these titles at the ALTA45 Virtual Bookfair.
Moshkeleh the Thief: A Rediscovered Novel
By Sholom Aleichem
Translated from Yiddish by Curt Leviant
The Jewish Publication Society, University of Nebraska Press

This first English translation of Sholom Aleichem’s rediscovered novel *Moshkeleh the Thief*, published after his death, is a keen vision and raw portrayal of the underside of Jewish life in Eastern Europe. Funny, touching, biting, the stories invite us into the characters’ emotional lives, uncovering complicated power structures. This groundbreaking work paved the way for a more inclusive, more realistic, and less-sentimental approach to describing Jews in Eastern Europe, including their interaction with non-Jews. A great translator of Jewish literature, Curt Leviant has done a remarkable job with the English translation, aptly capturing the pungent colloquial character of the Yiddish.

On Time and Water
By Andri Snær Magnason
Translated from Icelandic by Lytton Smith
Biblioasis / Open Letter Books

While the devastations of our climate crisis are measurable, statistics have failed to adequately motivate change. An acclaimed writer and environmental activist makes its scale and scope tangible by sharing tales of his grandparents, Icelandic citizen scientists whose honeymoon was spent surveying the Vatnajökull glacier, when “glaciers were a symbol of something great and eternal, like oceans, mountains, and clouds.” Now Vatnajökull is dying. Weaving together family history, folklore, and glaciology, the book attempts a “mythology of the present” that might inspire the action required to deflect the most horrific Anthropocene destruction. Ably translated by Lytton Smith, Magnason follows his role models, the Dalai Lama and conservationist John Thorbjarnarson, in communicating perilous urgency with unflagging friendliness.

The Tale of Princess Fatima, Warrior Woman: The Arabic Epic of Dhat Al-Himma
Unattributed Epic
Translated from Arabic by Melanie Magidow
Penguin Classics

“No one lies at my side but my sword.”

The longest extant medieval Arabic epic, and the only one named for a woman, tells of Fatima, “She of Noble Ambition.” Captured during a raid and raised in servitude, this adept strategist and fierce fighter nevertheless resists marriage and rises to lead armies across Arabian borderlands with her dark-skinned son. Melanie Magidow’s work here marks a significant achievement in not only translation but scholarship, curation, and adaptation; in bringing this notable but heretofore lesser-known epic forward, she has highlighted the tale’s prescience to major contemporary conversations on race, gender, and sexual violence, and secured a spot for this heroine in the canon of women warriors.
Congratulations to all the translators selected for the longlist for this year’s National Translation Award in Poetry! Featuring authors writing in nine different languages, this year’s longlist continues the prize’s dedication to literary diversity in English. Please note that these titles did not proceed to the shortlist. See what judges Hélène Cardona, Boris Dralyuk, and Archana Venkatesan have to say about each of the longlisted titles, chosen from among 70 submissions, below (in alphabetical order by title).

Purchase these titles at the ALTA45 Virtual Bookfair.

**Another Life**
By Daniel Lipara
Translated from Spanish by Robin Myers
Eulalia Books

Steeped in mythology, *Another Life*, the breathtaking debut of poet and translator Daniel Lipara, chronicles a series of events in the history of a family grappling with death. A deeply moving, intimate epic in fifteen parts, free of punctuation, both autobiographical and polyphonic, it is a haunting meditation on love, the sacred, place, memory, hope, and loss. Skillfully captured in Robin Myers’s extraordinary translation, it leaves readers awe-struck, like a “soundless cobra with cosmos printed on its neck.”

**The Flowers of Evil**
By Charles Baudelaire
Transcribed from French by Aaron Poochigian
Liveright Publishing Corporation, W. W. Norton & Company

Despite his brazen, trail-blazing embrace of modernity in all its manifestations, and his experiments in poetic prose, Charles Baudelaire remained a steadfastly traditional versifier. Yet the fact that his flowers of evil are arranged in well-wrought urns only accentuates the frissons of which he is the master. Aaron Poochigian has a gift for making rhymed, metrical lines sound as natural as the seductive banter of a seasoned roué. His elegant Baudelaire beguiles contemporary readers, tempting us with hideous “charms the ancient peoples never knew.”

**The Science of Departures**
By Adalber Salas Hernández
Translated from Spanish by Robin Myers
Kenning Editions

Intimate and conversational, Adalber Salas Hernández’s *The Science of Departures* is a timely meditation on borders, loss, and exile. At times haunting and haunted, at others infused with a dark humor, these long, descriptive narrative poems remake the familiar into the unfamiliar and render recognizable that which is unknowable to many. Modulating between the poems’ different pitches, their staccato rhythms, and artful cadences, Robin Myers has produced a deft translation of a memorable poetry collection.

Books eligible for the 2022 National Translation Awards in Poetry and Prose were titles published anywhere in the world in the previous calendar year (2021) in English translation. Publishers are invited to submit titles for consideration at the beginning of the year; book selection is based on the quality of the finished book in English, and the quality of the translation is evaluated by a team of expert readers. For more information, visit www.literarytranslators.org.
Congratulations to all the translators selected for the shortlist for this year’s National Translation Award in Prose! See what judges Suzanne Jill Levine, Arunava Sinha, and Annie Tucker have to say about each of the shortlisted titles, below (in alphabetical order by title). Purchase these titles at the ALTA45 Virtual Bookfair.

Harsh Times
By Mario Vargas Llosa
Translated from Spanish by Adrian Nathan West
Farrar, Straus and Giroux

In his latest novel, Mario Vargas Llosa, a master of fiction whose works often explore political landscapes, turns his attention to upheavals in Guatemala. Brimming with the frenzy of storytelling, Harsh Times looks at a nation’s history through the inner lives of individuals even as they play their larger roles involving power, politics, death, and love. “Miss Guatemala’s mother, Marta Parra de Borrero, got little joy from her daughter, the only one of her children to survive. Not because she died soon afterward—no, she would live to ninety and end her days in a nursing home with little idea of what was going on around her...” Adrian Nathan West’s fine translation is both elegant and uncompromising.

Here in Our Auschwitz and Other Stories
By Tadeusz Borowski
Translated from Polish by Madeline G. Levine
Yale University Press

“We are as insensitive as trees, as stones. And we remain silent like felled trees, like split stones.” Thanks to Madeline G. Levine’s magnificent translation from the Polish, we have Here in Our Auschwitz and Other Stories by the most important Polish writer of the first half of the 20th century. “This Way to the Gas, Ladies and Gentleman” is the best known, but “Farewell to Maria” was originally the volume’s title story, a long letter to the poet’s beloved. Tadeusz Borowski, born of Ukrainian parents who were imprisoned in gulags in the early years of the USSR, was a concentration camp prisoner during WWII, who, in 1951, died by his own hand from gas fumes at the age of 28. After the Holocaust, the poet Borowski could write only prose, a shocking affectless prose, a “Crematorium Esperanto” that not only resurrects the unspeakable but warns us that “Dehumanization is a human process.”

In Case of Emergency
By Mahsa Mohebali
Translated from Farsi/Persian by Mariam Rahmani
The Feminist Press

Mahsa Mohebali’s Tehran novel is hard to place. Is it a dark-almost-black satire of life in the capital of Iran, or a realistic depiction of a wild parallel universe in a city associated with a repressive culture? A manic mode of living bursts out of this original work, challenging established norms of authoritarianism, gender definition, and big business. Mariam Rahmani’s translation—“Mouth full, he’s churning out manifestos as he chews: ‘This city’s ours now, baby. All the motherfucking cowards are making a break for it.’”—is both inventive and urgent, as the use of street language and other non-literary forms of expression demand, taking In Case of Emergency to the global audience it deserves.
Inspired by a true story, David Grossman weaves a powerful narrative of a family's suffering, love, and healing through the lives of three generations of women. "Rafael...stood apart from the others and pulled the hood of his sweatshirt over his eyes so that no one would know he wasn't crying. He thought: Now that she's dead, she can see all the things I thought of her." Memory, history, geopolitics, and personal trajectories of trauma unfold in nested narratives alongside episodes of large-scale violence in More Than I Love My Life, translated by Jessica Cohen. Her skillful recreation of shifting voices and tonalities which tease out layered complexities make this work a triumph of translation.

Knausgaard’s newest novel layers slow-burning suspense over his signature description and introspection. A cast of rotating narrators is muddling through—addiction, failed marriages, fumbling parenthood—when a huge, hot star appears in the sky. Their confrontations with this and other portents of death and rupture reference the looming dreads of our time. Still, fluidly rendered by a master translator of Scandinavian literature, the language cherishes the sensuous vitality still present even in the most ambivalent and imperfect lives: "[T]he blood streaming, the heart beating, and the emotions too, likewise of such simple beauty [...] moving more like shadows on the ground when the sun passed behind a cloud, suddenly to re-emerge, flooding everything first in one way, which was joy, then in another, which was sadness."

Beneath the Bell and Drum Towers, a family prepares for a wedding. Who is the most anxious? When first published in 1985, The Wedding Party was a critically acclaimed bestseller. Authored by a versatile writer, editor, and scholar who launched the “scar literature” genre, the book is culturally and historically rich, satirical yet big-hearted, and wildly entertaining. Translated with nimble delight by Jeremy Tiang, the story still feels fresh as the dwellers of a siheyuan, a traditional quadrangle of homes, interact over the course of a beloved nephew’s wedding day. Moments of incisive detail, bittersweet empathy, and laugh-out-loud humor accumulate into a sweeping portrait of everyday Beijingers in the tumultuous years after the Cultural Revolution.
Congratulations to all the translators selected for the shortlist for this year’s National Translation Award in Poetry! See what judges Hélène Cardona, Boris Dralyuk, and Archana Venkatesan have to say about each of the shortlisted titles, below (in alphabetical order by title). Purchase these titles at the ALTA45 Virtual Bookfair.

**Black Earth: Selected Poems and Prose**
By Osip Mandelstam
Translated from Russian by Peter France
New Directions

Many Anglophone readers would readily rank Osip Mandelstam among the most original and influential poets of the 20th century, yet the versions in which his work has reached us have been, by and large, either dispiritingly lax or disquietingly rigid. Peter France’s impeccable selection of poems and prose—the fruit of a lifetime’s engagement—conveys in every line the subtlety and suppleness of this most sonically sensitive of poets. Time and again, to borrow an image from one of Mandelstam’s early masterpieces, France’s translations “draw from reeds the wealth of a full note.”

**Eccentric Days of Hope and Sorrow**
By Natalka Bilotserkivets
Translated from Ukrainian by Ali Kinsella and Dzvinia Orlowsky
Lost Horse Press

“A pulsing, powerful, elastic rhythm” surges through *Eccentric Days of Hope and Sorrow*, a selection of Natalka Bilotserkivets’s poetry written over the last four decades. Masterfully and boldly translated by Ali Kinsella and Dzvinia Orlowsky, these spiritual, lyrical, and narrative poems interweave themes of geography and identity, motherly and romantic love, tragedy and loss, memory and literature. A keen observer, whose spare writing moves from acceptance to self-transcendence, Bilotserkivets takes the reader on a journey of grief and wonder.

**Exhausted on the Cross**
By Najwan Darwish
Translated from Arabic by Kareem James Abu-Zeid
NYRB Poets

*Exhausted on the Cross*, Najwan Darwish’s second volume of poetry, is poignant, raw, unflinching, and deeply humane, infusing the sorrow and suffering of occupation and the human condition with a startling lyricism. Kareem James Abu-Zeid’s unforgettable translation in its stark, clean, yet melodic register, invites us into the complexity of Darwish’s poetry, the suppleness of his Arabic, and the uncompromising vision of resistance in the face of oppression that beats at the heart of this marvelous book.
Purgatorio
By Dante Alighieri
Translated from Italian by D. M. Black
NYRB Classics

There is nothing middle-of-the-road about D. M. Black’s version of the middle book of Dante’s Divine Comedy. The translator’s every step is sure, evincing not only his sensitive ear for the cadences of blank verse, but also his profound insight into the psychology of the poet as well as of his shades. Black shows great respect for Dante as both a craftsman and a thinker, and in so doing serves the reader as a uniquely competent guide to “that Mountain where the blade of Reason probes us.”
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**NATIONAL TRANSLATION AWARD SHORTLIST, 2021**

**Impostures**
by al-Ḥarīrī
Translated by Michael Cooperson
Foreword by Abdelfattah Kilito

“An important translation of a criminally neglected work of world literature.”
—Mada Masr

**Kalilah and Dimnah**
Fables of Virtue and Vice
by Ibn al-Muqaffa‘
Edited by Michael Fishbein
Translated by Michael Fishbein and James E. Montgomery

Timeless fables of loyalty and betrayal

“An unusual glimpse into the street life of medieval Islamic societies rarely captured in more elevated Arabic literary sources.”
—NYRB

**The Book of Travels**
by Ḥannā Diyāb
Translated by Elias Muhanna
Foreword by Yasmine Seale
Afterword by Paulo Lemos Horta

“A mixture of clear-eyed observation and wide-eyed innocence, nicely captured by Muhanna’s lucid yet folksy English version.”
—NYRB

**The Book of Charlatans**
by Jamāl al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Raḥīm al-Jawbarī
Translated by Humphrey Davies
Foreword by S. A. Chakraborty

“An important translation of a criminally neglected work of world literature.”
—Mada Masr

**Impostures**
by al-Ḥarīrī
Translated by Michael Cooperson
Foreword by Abdelfattah Kilito

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No Way in the Skin without This Bloody Embrace // Jean D’Amérique // tr. Conor Bracken

adjacent islands // Nicole Cecilia Delgado // tr. Urayoán Noel

New Hull // Mikhail Kuzmin // tr. Simona Schneider

Exilium // María Negroni // tr. Michelle Gil-Montero

and the 2022 Señal Series:
lunduzinho // Tatiana Nascimento // tr. Natália Affonso

Song of the Absent Brook // Sabrina Ramos Rubén // tr. S. Yates Gibson

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FALL ADMISSION: APPLY BY JANUARY 15

The American-Scandinavian Foundation annually awards three translation prizes for outstanding translations of poetry, fiction, drama, or literary prose written by a Scandinavian author born after 1900. The Nadia Christensen Prize is awarded for the best entry and the Leif and Inger Sjöberg Prize to an individual whose literary translations from a Nordic language have not previously been published. The Wigeland Prize is awarded to the best translation from Norwegian by a resident of Norway.
2022 ALTA Emerging Translator Mentorships

2022 marked the seventh year of ALTA’s mentorship program for emerging translators, and our largest cohort to date. The ALTA Emerging Translator Mentorship Program was founded by former ALTA Board Member Allison M. Charette and is designed to establish and facilitate a close working relationship between an experienced translator and an emerging translator on a book-length project selected by the emerging translator. This year, ALTA offered mentorships in Catalan, Japanese, Korean poetry and prose, Polish, Singaporean literature (translated from Malay, Mandarin Chinese, or Tamil), Swedish, Taiwanese literature, and prose from Québec, as well as one non-language-specific, non-genre-specific mentorship, and a non-language-specific mentorship for an emerging BIPOC translator.

Congratulations to the 2022 emerging translators, listed in alphabetical order below!

Please join us for “Read the World: A Kaleidoscope of Translated Literature,” an in-person reading in Tucson, Arizona on November 5, 2022, at 7:00pm PT, in partnership with the Tucson Humanities Festival at the University of Arizona College of Humanities. The reading will be hosted by ALTA Interim President Ellen Elias-Bursać and will celebrate the work of these emerging translators as their mentorship year draws to a close. The reading is free and open to the public and will be held in the University of Arizona Poetry Center’s Rubel Room; a livestream will also be available to watch online at this link. Join us before the reading at 6:00pm PT for a reception honoring the 2022 mentees! Read more about the event on our website. Mentors for the 2022 mentorships were Mara Faye Lethem (Catalan), David Boyd (Japanese), Katrina Dodson (non-language-specific BIPOC translator mentorship), Kareem James Abu-Zeid (non-language specific, non-genre-specific), Jack Jung (Korean poetry), Janet Hong (Korean prose), Bill Johnston (Polish), Julia Sanches (literature from Singapore, for Singaporean nationals), Khairani Barokka (literature from Singapore), Kira Josefsson (Swedish), Steve Bradbury (literature from Taiwan), and Linda Gaboriau (prose from Québec).

These mentorships were offered by ALTA in partnership with Amazon Crossing, generous individual donors, the Insitut Ramon Llull, the Literature Translation Institute of Korea, the National Arts Council Singapore, the Polish Cultural Institute New York, the Swedish Arts Council, Taiwan’s Ministry of Culture and Taiwan Academy of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Los Angeles (TECO-LA), the Québec Government Office in New York, and the Yanai Initiative. Details about the program are available at www.literarytranslators.org/mentorships.

Use the hashtag #ALTA45, and follow ALTA on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram @LitTranslate!
Sandra Chen is translating essays from the collection *Parting Gaze* (目送) by Taiwanese writer Lung Ying-tai.

Sandra Chen was born and raised in the San Francisco Bay Area. She is currently an undergraduate student at Princeton University, where she is pursuing a concentration in Comparative Literature and a certificate in Translation and Intercultural Communication.

Sandra’s journey into translation really began during her COVID-induced gap year. Though she grew up in a bilingual home with two immigrant parents, she had a somewhat contentious relationship with her heritage tongue of Chinese. Upon being forced to return and stay home for well over a year, she took quarantine as an opportunity to reconnect with her Chinese language and culture. Her first direct experience with translation came through a streaming site called Viki, for which she spent many hours subtitling Chinese drama episodes into English and sometimes into French, a language she has studied in school for over six years. After returning to Princeton, Sandra took an introductory translation studies course taught by Professor David Bellos, as well as a literary translation workshop led by Professor Rowan Ricardo.

For the ALTA Mentorship Program, Sandra worked on translating from *Parting Gaze* (目送), a collection of personal essays by Taiwanese writer Lung Ying-tai (龍應台). Lung is a leading figure in Taiwan’s literary landscape with a broad readership across Asia, known for championing socio-political reform and transformation. Her stories in this collection are intimately personal and her observations infinitesimally precise, yet her themes of compassion, mercy, and love are utterly universal. Sandra believes that Lung’s piercing honesty, radical empathy, and delicate prose have much to offer an English-language readership.

Sandra gained so much from working with Steve Bradbury and is deeply grateful to ALTA for this opportunity. As someone very new to the art of translation, she benefited greatly from her mentor’s detailed feedback and suggestions, as well as his generosity in connecting her with editors and other translation projects. In the future, Sandra hopes to continue advancing her goal of making more Chinese-language literature and media available to English-speaking readers.

Angelina Coronado is translating Cape Verdean writer Orlanda Amarilis’ collection of stories *Cais-do-Sodré to Salamansa*.

Angelina Coronado is a translator and scholar focusing on literature in the Portuguese language. As a Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellow at The City College of New York, she began reading the works of writers of the Portuguese-speaking world who explore the themes of interiority, race, and imperialism. She is currently a doctoral student in the Latin American and Iberian Cultures program at Columbia University.

Her first book-length translation will be of Orlanda Amarilis’s *Cais-do-Sodré to Salamansa*, a distinctly foundational work in Afro-Portuguese, Black European, and Cape Verdean letters. *Cais-do-Sodré to Salamansa* continues to be pertinent beyond the time in which it was published in April 1974—just a year before Cape Verdean independence from Portugal and weeks before the end of the oppressive Estado Novo regime in Portugal. At this very moment, activists, artists, and intellectuals in Portugal continue to address imperialist and racist rhetoric in the nation in the face of dismissal and a persistence of colonial nostalgia. *Cais-do-Sodré to Salamansa* is a precursor to these contemporary conversations, as it candidly presents the everyday lives of Afro-Portuguese immigrants and challenges the image of the Portuguese-speaking world, and Europe more broadly, as racial paradises.

Angelina is grateful to receive the support of the American Literary Translators Association to develop this translation with the guidance of Katrina Dodson. Through this opportunity, she has learned about the art of translation and has developed her scholarly commitment to Afro-Portuguese literature.

My path to translation feels as winding as it does natural. My very first translations occurred in the context of a year of Old Norse, the first of many “dead” language courses I took as an undergraduate majoring in German, Scandinavian, & Dutch and minoring in Linguistics and Medieval Studies at the University of Minnesota. Not the most likely areas for a first-generation student from the farm! While my academic interests have since shifted entirely, this early training was foundational to my work as a translator-writer-scholar (I find it challenging to separate these identities). While on the surface it was a matter of learning sound changes, etymology, grammatical rules and paradigms, what remains to this day is a kind of linguistic intuition. This intuition is always expanding and developing—each text creates its own conditions for translation—but I’m nonetheless grateful for the rigor that my Soviet-trained, octogenarian professor gently yet incessantly enforced as we translated thousands of lines from Old Norse, Old English, Middle High German, and Gothic. Even though it’s rare that I have to dig out an etymological dictionary, an appreciation of the multifaceted depth of any given word lingers.

As I began to move beyond philology proper and into learning all the Scandinavian languages and German—and into the 1900s, now my “main century”—I carried these experiences with me, even into my current gig as a PhD student at Johns Hopkins studying mainly German and Scandinavian Literature and Philosophy. My time spent pulling words apart and stretching my mind around and in between their letters has persisted and influenced what authors I gravitate towards, as a scholar, reader, and translator. I find myself drawn toward works that formally or poetically defamiliarize the world, that dig in underneath the surface of language itself and what it builds via the imagination. All literature is existential to some degree or another, but I find myself attracted to works that bring this to the fore, work that straddles the balance of literature and philosophy. I started grappling with this in my MA thesis on Swedish poet Katarina Frostenson, whose work, when I translate it, reminds me the most of those earlier days of relying on linguistic intuition and etymology, even if her poems require a different mental space than skaldic poetry. If the space of literature is an endless periphery of possibility, then perhaps the space of translation is the many bridges that span in every direction, at every level, in every dimension.

Perhaps that’s why I’m averse to the phrase “lost in translation,” not only because it’s too-often used, but because it gives neither the original author nor the translator enough credit. If translation is (re)creation, and creation evolves from possibility, why does mention of translation tend towards depletion rather than discovery? In his words of acceptance upon receiving the Neustadt International Prize for Literature, Tomas Tranströmer said, “Theoretically we can, to some extent justly, look at poetry translation as an absurdity. But in practice we must believe in poetry translation, if we want to believe in World Literature.” To read literature is to be vulnerable, to extend yourself into another world and the world of another. To translate literature, then, must be to be a guide through this marvelous imaginary space that exists alongside the words on the page. Readers depend on it.

Tamina Hauser is translating Bak Solmay’s Taking a Stroll in the Future (미래 산책 연습) from Korean.

Tamina Hauser was born in Vienna, Austria, and has always been fascinated by languages and literature. She first began her foray into the world of translation when she pursued a double major in Cross-Cultural Communication (for the languages German, English, and Chinese) and Korean Studies at the University of Vienna.

She became enamored with the Chinese language after watching Taiwanese dramas, and later went on to do an exchange semester at the Chinese Culture University in Taipei. She has long been fascinated by Chinese characters, especially the four-character idioms called “Chengyu,” which always carry more meaning than might be discernible at first glance.

The realization that learning a new language can open up a whole new world of knowledge led her to take up Korean as well. While knowing Chinese characters—Hanja

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in Korean language use—sometimes proved helpful, the wide differences in grammar and Korean's unique writing system turned the learning experience into an intriguing challenge.

Tamina’s first experience with literary translation came during her MA studies in Translation at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. As part of a graduation project titled “HK Literature in Translation,” she was involved in translating and editing stories by Hong Kong writers, including Xi Xi and Liu Yichang, among others. This project lit the spark for her interest in literary translation, although she did not pursue it until a few years later.

Following graduation, she decided to stay in Hong Kong and worked as an editor in the English Language Teaching Department at Oxford University Press. This experience was instrumental in refining her linguistic skills and helping her get a deeper understanding of the publishing industry. In addition, it rekindled her fascination with languages and fueled her desire to take up translation again, in the hopes of someday finding her own name printed on the cover of a book.

Prompted by this desire, Tamina submitted an entry for the LTI Korea Award for Aspiring Translators in 2020. She won with her German translation of the short story 파묘 (German: “Grabauflösung” [Gravedig]). Encouraged by this result, she applied for and was accepted into the Regular Course at the LTI Korea Translation Academy in 2021. During her first semester there, she translated a short story by Bak Solmay and became interested in the author’s other works. Under the guidance of the experienced translator Janet Hong, Tamina is working on a translation of Bak Solmay’s full-length novel Taking a Stroll in the Future, which deals with the past, present, and future of the main protagonist, connecting them through narrative strings running parallel to each other. She is grateful for this opportunity to refine her translation skills and introduce a noteworthy piece of Korean prose to a global audience.

**Sean LaRiche** is translating Jakub Kornhauser’s *The Yeast Works (Drożdżownia)* from Polish.

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**SEAN LARICHE** is a clinical social worker and works as a psychotherapist with children and adolescents on an inpatient psychiatric unit at a hospital in Charlotte, North Carolina. He is originally from Cleveland, Ohio, where ill-fated attempts to learn Spanish in middle and high school convinced him to never study a foreign language again. Yet, after several fascinating classes in Russian Literature and Culture with Joanna Hubbs at Hampshire College, he began to study Russian. His studies focused on history and foreign policy, but he stubbornly continued to study the language. In his final semester, he was introduced to the process of translation while taking Joseph Brodsky’s course on 19th-century Russian poets. The poet would translate the poems of his predecessors in front of the class, haloed in cigarette smoke, digressing on word choices, the structures of the poems, and the lives of the poets, making it seem as if nothing were more vital than bringing these poets’s words across time and into that room. It was a profound, humbling experience.

In the mid-1990s, Sean began teaching English at a public school in Kaliningrad, Russia, and traveled to Poland often. On a trip to Krakow, he bought Czeslaw Milosz’s *Collected Poems* and was drawn deeply into the enchanting translations. He was spurred by these readings to move to Poland and learn Polish. This led to a year of living and teaching in the mountains of southern Poland followed by several years in Warsaw, where he was able to see Milosz read his poems. At another poetry reading in Warsaw (the wonderful Edwin Morgan with Piotr Sommer reading translations), he met his wife. After returning to the United States, he taught English as a Second Language at a large public high school in Charlotte while completing a Master’s thesis in English Literature about the influence of Poe, Hawthorne, Melville, and James on the work of the Polish writer Gustaw Herling-Grudziński. While translating passages from Herling-Grudziński’s journal and stories, Sean realized he enjoyed translating more than academic writing. Several years later, with three children and while training as a social worker, he began to translate some poetry and essays, short pieces he discovered in the journal *Zeszyty Literackie*, and he published translations of essays by the Polish neurologist Adam Szczuciński in the journal *Agni*.

More recently, he has been working on several projects, including a translation of a collection of prose poems by Jakub Kornhauser called *The Yeast Works (Drożdżownia)* which he plans to complete during the ALTA mentorship with Bill Johnston. These poems, somewhat cubist in their structure, colored by the paintings of Soutine, Malevich, Klee, Ensor, and Schiele (that give many of them their titles), evoke the atmospheres of old
villages, buildings, and homes and the vanished lives of their Jewish community, often through the movement of children through these peculiar landscapes and layers of time. It has been a welcome transport from work in the hospital during the pandemic for Sean to walk out to his car, remove his masks, and read one of these poems while jotting down a few notes towards the next translation as he eats lunch. Sean feels a deep debt to Polish literature, to the role it has played in his life, and would like to honor this by continuing and expanding his translation work over the coming years.

Archana Madhaven is translating poems from Lee Jenny’s 아마다 아프리카 (Maybe Africa) from Korean.

Archana Madhaven is an Indian American translator from Korean into English, who fell into literary translation quite by accident. She has a background in molecular biology and immunology research and now works at a software company by day. Her whole life, she grew up with a deep love for language, writing, and storytelling, but assumed it would be something she’d explore as a hobby—that is, until she started learning Korean.

Archana grew up multilingual, speaking Marathi (her home language) and eavesdropping in Tamil. She further nurtured her interest in languages by studying French and Japanese in school; in 2010, she started teaching herself Korean on a whim after watching a film and being struck by the sounds of the language. For many years, she was perfectly content reading Korean literature in the source language, but she first became interested in the craft of translation after reading an essay by Deborah Smith (translator of Han Kang’s The Vegetarian) in the LA Review of Books in 2018.

In 2020, Archana published her first translation of Korean literature, “The Man Who Became a Flamingo” by Oh Han Ki, for Nabillera. As she continued to attend craft workshops and readings by literary translators, Archana worked as a part-time translator translating webtoons into English. That year, she was also offered the opportunity to collaborate with Suhyun J. Ahn, Nabillera’s then editor-in-chief, to co-translate Kim Hyun’s collection Glory Hole (Seagull Books, June 2022).

As part of the ALTA Emerging Translator Mentorship Program, Archana translated poems from acclaimed South Korean poet Lee Jenny’s debut collection 아마도 아프리카 (Maybe Africa, Changbi, 2010) under the mentorship of Jack Jung.

Archana was first introduced to Lee Jenny’s work through chogwa, a quarterly webzine that publishes multiple English translations of one Korean poem. She was immediately struck by the rhythms, sounds, and wordplay in Lee Jenny’s work, and the way it captures so much of what Archana loves about the Korean language. Reading Lee Jenny’s work out loud feels like a prayer and meditation to her; she found herself mesmerized by the surreal imagery and repetition so prominent in Lee’s work. When she participated in Modern Poetry In Translation’s Korean workshop, she translated the concrete poem “Spaceboy Wearing A Skirt” from Lee’s Maybe Africa and was wholly captivated. She found the juxtaposition of sound and shape, playfulness and poignancy delightful. That’s when she knew she wanted to reinvent Lee’s work in English.

During her mentorship, she was grateful to Jack Jung for offering thoughtful feedback on her first drafts of several poems. He encouraged her to stretch her creativity and test the elasticity of language. Jack’s own work was also a continuous source of inspiration.

Archana’s translations of Lee Jenny have appeared in or are forthcoming from The Puritan, Columbia Journal, Washington Square Review, and elsewhere. She plans to continue translating the entirety of Lee Jenny’s Maybe Africa and hopes to be able to publish the full translation in the future.

Samantha Mateo is translating Antònia Font’s 39 Degrees in the Shade (39 graus a l’ombra) from Catalan.

Samantha Mateo is a Chicago-raised translator. Born to Mexican and Puerto Rican parents, she has always been interested in literature and language, and was raised speaking English, Spanish, and Spanglish. She earned a BA in Linguistics from Columbia University in 2017. She wrote her thesis on Zazaki, an Indo-Iranian language spoken by Alevi Kurds in Eastern Turkey. Throughout her undergraduate career, she dabbled in the study of a number of languages. In her final semester of undergrad,
Priyamvada Ramkumar is translating B. Jeyamohan’s novel Vellai Yaanai from Tamil.

**Vellai Yaanai (White Elephant)**, as part of the ALTA Emerging Translator Mentorship Program. Set in the late 1800s against the backdrop of the great famines in British India, **White Elephant** presents a fictionalized account of an early Dalit uprising in the country. Though a short-lived strike that was quashed within two days, it galvanized three hundred otherwise-mute laborers into a unified action of protest. It records the story of the “first fist raised by the slave against a history of oppression” in India.

**White Elephant** is a critically acclaimed work that layers the history of a people, the history of a city, and the histories of nations to form a complex narrative that stirs our conscience. As a novel documenting the lives of the subaltern in the most testing of times and as an alternative, yet balanced view of colonialism, it is critical that this work reaches a wider audience through translation. Priyamvada is grateful to have had the opportunity to translate such a landmark novel with an experienced and immensely giving mentor and feels that she has become more adept at balancing fidelity to text and reading pleasure.

Her endeavors in translation are sustained by her work as an impact investment professional, through which she invests in socially responsible businesses that promote financial inclusion, democratize access to healthcare, and improve farm-based livelihoods in India. Outside of literature and translation, she enjoys trekking in the Himalayas and has successfully completed three high-altitude treks, as well as a course in basic mountaineering.
Emma Roy is translating *Le danseur de La Macaza* by Anne-Élaine Cliche from Québec French.

Emma Roy is a queer emerging translator and writer living on the unceded indigenous lands of Tiohtià:ke/Montreal. She currently translates from French, but plans to work from Spanish, her second language, in the future as well.

Emma was born by the ocean on Canada’s west coast and grew up in a small prairie city by a sandy green river. Her first experience with literary translation was in 2015, when she moved to Montreal and began learning French. She picked up a French-Spanish copy of Neruda’s sonnets and decided to practice her French by translating one of the poems (“Matilde, name of plant or stone or wine…”). The experience was a bit of a revelation—the intimacy of inhabiting the words, the delicious and unsolvable puzzle of trying to bring them into English, was captivating. The poem came alive in a completely new way. She was immediately hooked.

In the spring of 2021, Emma graduated with a BA in Translation and Creative Writing from Concordia University in Montreal. As part of her studies, she translated a collection of poetry by Franco-Ontarian Chloé LaDuchesse, *Furies*, as well as poetry by Innu poet Natasha Kanapé Fontaine. She was twice named a finalist for the school’s Irving Layton Award for Creative Writing, and upon graduation received the Prix de Paul Hollander, awarded to the top graduating student in the Études françaises Department.

Although Emma’s degree was focused primarily on technical translation, she worked hard to bend it towards her passions for literary work, including replacing a discontinued course with a Masters-level literary translation class. In 2020, Emma also participated in the British Centre for Literary Translation’s online Summer School intensive.

Since graduating, Emma has translated articles, essays, and a short story for *Tenou’a – Atelier de pensée(s) Juive(s)*, and also recently translated three children’s books for self-published French author Emma Paidge.

Emma’s mentorship project will be her first full-length work. She feels honored to be working with mentor Linda Gaboriau to translate Québec author Anne-Élaine Cliche’s *Le danseur de La Macaza*, which is a breathless dive into memory, fantasy, rumor, and myth. Written in a headlong, stream-of-consciousness narration, with page-long sentences, brimming with tangents, repetitions, and minute detail, the novel promises to be a fascinating challenge to translate. She is grateful to ALTA organizers, and to Linda, for this opportunity.

In her spare time, Emma and her wife organize a cooperative woodworking shop in Pointe-Saint-Charles, a neighborhood of Montreal that lies between train tracks, a glass factory, and the banks of the St Lawrence. Emma is a mother to a two-and-a-half-year-old, who more often than not is pretending to be a cat named Thermometer; as well as to a ten-year-old dog named Zephyr, who is, in fact, a dog.

Shanna Tan is translating Singapore Literature Prize-winning author Wong Koi Tet’s *Dakota* (达哥打) from Chinese.

Shanna Tan is a Singaporean translator working from Korean, Chinese, and Japanese into English (and occasionally into Chinese).

Shanna was selected as the Korean prose mentee for the National Centre for Writing’s 2022 Emerging Translator Mentorship; under the guidance of mentor Anton Hur, she worked on translating the Korean bestseller *The Inconvenience Store* by Kim Ho-yeon.

Her interest in languages, literature, and literary translation only started in adulthood. In recent years, she has also discovered a love for homegrown Singapore literature and would like to be more active in introducing SingLit to a wider audience, both in Singapore and globally. In particular, she hopes to engage with more local Chinese...
works, where a literary treasure trove awaits discovery by English readers.

For the past months, she has been translating Wong Koi Tet’s *Dakota* (达哥打), a collection of short essays and vignettes drawing from the author’s memories of growing up in the 1970s in Dakota Crescent, one of the oldest public housing estates in Singapore, which has since been almost entirely torn down for redevelopment. *Dakota* is not only a deeply personal work, but also a collective memory of Singapore’s history and the life of ordinary Singaporeans in the 1970s and ‘80s. *Dakota* is a strong reminder that preserving history and culture is just as important in anchoring our identity. Two excerpts from Shanna’s translation of *Dakota* will be forthcoming in literary magazines this fall, and she has faith that the project will find its publisher.

She is extremely grateful to her mentor, the brilliant Julia Sanches, whose advice and insights have always been incisive and inspiring. Shanna has benefited immensely from Julia’s guidance, and what she has learned about the craft of translation and the publishing industry can be applied no matter which language she is translating from. She is humbled to be welcomed into the amazing ALTA community and would like to thank ALTA and National Arts Council Singapore for making this mentorship possible.

Alisa Yamasaki is translating Haneko Takayama’s novella *Ikasama* from Japanese.

ALISA YAMASAKI is a freelance translator and journalist from Tokyo, currently based in New York City. Born to a Japanese father and an American mother, Alisa spent much of her life in Japan before moving to the United States for university. She obtained her MA in Media, Culture, and Communication from New York University after studying Comparative Literature at Oberlin College.

Alisa’s interest in language and translation developed at an early age, as she often found herself having to translate and interpret for her mother living in Japan. Through her upbringing in two cultures and languages, Alisa became keenly aware of the many peculiarities found across popular translations, particularly in film and television subtitles. For her undergraduate thesis, she examined the puzzling, yet common practice among Japanese subtitle translators to translate English dialogue into a heavily gendered, outdated style of Japanese. While she continued to practice translation after graduation, Alisa decided to apply her skills towards journalism and advertising in Japan, both fields that call for deep sociocultural knowledge as well as linguistic expertise. Writing articles about feminist movements and underground music scenes for outlets such as *The Japan Times* proved to be just as fascinating as localizing campaigns for global brands trying to appeal to the Japanese market.

In time, however, Alisa has come to realize that her love of translation might have outgrown the limitations inherent in these fields. Seeking to scratch her itch for creativity and experimentation in translation, she has decided to challenge herself in the field of literature. Fortunately for her, this pivot came in the same year that ALTA announced a mentorship opportunity in Japanese with translator David Boyd. Under his guidance, Alisa has translated Akutagawa Prize-winning author Haneko Takayama’s novella *Ikasama*. Taking place in postwar Japan, the novella explores the unstable nature of identity and authenticity, as well as the power of trauma in shaping the self.

Alisa is honored to be awarded a spot in this year’s Emerging Translator Mentorship Program and is grateful for the support of ALTA and the Yanai Initiative for Globalizing Japanese Humanities. Connecting international audiences to contemporary Japanese stories has always been a major focus for her, and she is delighted to be able to build upon her lifelong passion alongside a brilliant cohort of young translators.

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Kenny Sui-Fung Yim has undertaken a translation of a war diary by 谭显炎 (Tham Xien Yen), published by his daughter, 尤今 (You Jin), from Singaporean Chinese to English.

Kenny Sui-Fung Yim is a multi-faceted wordsmith. He has received scholarships to study at the Bread Loaf School of English and Grub Street. His writing has appeared in *Sampan*, the only bilingual Chinese-English newspaper in New England. He is studying Library and Information Science and has been at the Public Library of Brookline in Massachusetts for eight continuous years. Before that, he worked as an English teacher for dim sum cooks at a restaurant in Boston Chinatown. Before that, he lived in Hong Kong and southern China for two years. In 2009, he received a BA from Williams College, tucked away in the beautiful, but very secluded, Purple Valley in Western Mass.

For his mentorship year, Kenny undertook a translation of Singaporean literature, 战地日记与父亲 (War Diary and Father), published by Guangxi Normal University Press. The father’s name is 谭显炎 (Tham Xien Yen), and it was his daughter, 尤今 (You Jin), who brought his diary to the world’s attention. Kenny hopes that an English translation of the diary will reverse the Euro-American gaze, by offering a different viewpoint of war, from the perspective of an Asian citizen. He has enjoyed sharing words with his mentor Khairani Barokka, as they pondered and clarified, at times obfuscated, and then re-clarified.

Kenny enjoys the intellectual challenges that translation provides, which began when he studied with Albanian poet, Ani Gjika, who noted in the margin of Kenny’s Sappho translation that “this one dances.” In 2019, under the tutelage of Oxford don Jeri Johnson, Kenny went on to translate parts of Virginia Woolf’s *Jacob’s Room* into Cantonese. It's a novel based on the life of a soldier. In 2020, Kenny took part in Tolstoy Together, hosted by Yiyun Li, by reading *War and Peace* in 85 days during the pandemic. His tweets, along with thousands of others, were published in a book by A Public Space.

For the future, Kenny’s modest aspirations include helping bridge the gap between various parts of society, through words. He lives by the motto, “Watch your thoughts, because they become your words. Watch your words, because they become your actions. Watch your actions, because they become your habits. Watch your habits, because they become your character. Watch your character, because it becomes your destiny.” There is so much information inequity, and as a beneficiary of educational opportunities made available for low-income, high-achieving individuals, Kenny feels drawn to help others thrive. He suspects this could be a life-long project.
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ALTA’S EMERGING TRANSLATOR Mentorship Program is designed to establish and facilitate a close working relationship between an experienced translator and an emerging translator on a project selected by the emerging translator. The goal of the program is for mentors to walk alongside their mentee and provide support as the mentee creates a literary translation of high caliber.

Since its inception in 2015, the program has supported 47 translators working from seventeen languages, including Arabic, Catalan, Chinese, Dutch, French, Greek, Indonesian, Japanese, Kazakh, Korean, Norwegian, Occitan, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Swedish, and Tamil. Our non-language-specific mentorships are preferentially awarded to translators working from underrepresented or underfunded languages. ALTA mentees have gone on to publish numerous translations and win awards and residencies.

Next year’s mentorship lasts from February to November 2023, and will conclude with a presentation at the 2023 ALTA conference in Tucson, AZ. The award covers ALTA46 conference registration, as well as travel to the conference location and on-site accommodations, up to $1,500.

The program is open to emerging translators (someone who has published no more than one full-length work of translation) at no cost to them. While ALTA’s Mentorship Program is open to all applicants, we especially encourage applications from translators of color, translators with disabilities, LGBTQ+ writers, and those who do not have an MFA or some other equivalent type of training. Non-language-specific mentorships are preferentially awarded to translators working from underrepresented or underfunded languages. Though English is the target language, the emerging translator need not live in the United States.

“...about my Emerging Translator Mentorship was joining the ALTA community and growing as a translator.”

–Jenna Tang, 2021 Mentee (Prose from Taiwan)
2023 Emerging Translator Mentorship Program

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- Non-language-specific, non-genre-specific, with mentor Bill Johnston
- Swedish, with mentor Kira Josefsson
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