

# THE TRANSLATORS AND THE LANGUAGES

## The death of children

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### ALBANIAN – FAHREDIN SHEHU



**FAHREDIN SHEHU** was born in Rahovec, south-east Kosova, in 1972. A graduate in Oriental Studies at Prishtina University, in the last thirty years he has worked as an independent scientific researcher in the fields of World Spiritual Heritage and Sacral Aesthetics. His writings have been translated into: Arabic, Bahasa,,Bengali, Bosnian, Bulgarian, Chinese, Croatian, English, French, Frisian, German, Greek, Hebrew, Italian, Macedonian, Maltese, Mongolian, Polish, Roma, Romanian, Serbian, Sicilian, Spanish, Swedish and Turkish. He has authored 20 books, including poetry, essays and novels, has published widely as a reviewer, and has edited many books and anthologies, including, for example, *World Healing World Peace* (Inner Child Press, USA, 2014), an anthology in two volumes. He is Director of the Balkan Literature section of the Kosova PEN Centre and a founder-member of the South European Literature Association (Sofia, Bulgaria). His distinctions include: the Naaji Naaman Prize for Poetry (Beirut, Lebanon, 2016); a nomination for the Pulitzer Prize (2017); and Doctor *Honoris Causa* (Universum Academy, Lugano). He is also Director of the International ‘Poetry and Wine’ Poetry Festival (Rahovec, Kosova); and Founder of the Kosovo Fund for Cultural Education and Heritage.

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### ARABIC 1 - FAREEDA HADDAD



**FAREEDA HADDAD** is a teacher of English and Arabic and a translator between these languages, with over twenty-five years of experience. Born in the culturally rich and historic city of Madaba, Jordan, she holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in English and a Diploma in Educational Sciences from the University of Jordan, Amman. In 2022, she earned a Master’s Degree in Curriculum Studies from the University of the Middle East, Amman, focusing on contemporary educational methodologies. Her Master’s dissertation centred on innovative approaches to bilingual education, blending English and Arabic learning strategies to enhance students’ linguistic

abilities in both languages. From 2011 to 2020, she taught at the Latin Patriarchate School in Madaba, worked with faculty to supervise student theses, and contributed to research published in academic journals. She has translated poetry and continues to do so.

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## ARABIC 2 – SHERIF MOHAMED



**DR SHERIF MOHAMED** is a seasoned educator specialising in Arabic language and culture, with over two decades of experience. Starting his teaching career in 1996 in Egypt, he has taught a wide range of students, from locals to expatriates. Since relocating to the UK in 2010, Sherif has continued his impactful work at renowned institutions such as King’s College London, London Metropolitan University, and the Institute of Ismaili Studies at Aga Khan University. He also contributes to the Cambridge International Assessment (CIE), helping shape Arabic language curricula. In 2020, Sherif joined the faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Cambridge, where he remains a strong advocate for multilingualism and cultural diversity, believing in the transformative power of education to bridge divides and create a more interconnected world. He adds, “The Arabic style I have chosen for the translation of ‘The death of children’ is free verse in MSA (Modern Standard Arabic).”

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## AZERBAIJANI - ALVIZ ALIYEV



**ALVIZ YUNISOGLU ALIYEV** was born in 1957 in the Gadabay region of Azerbaijan. He is both a scientist and a poet. In 1983, he graduated from the Azerbaijan Institute of Oil and Chemistry, specialising in Applied Mathematics. Since that year, he has worked as an engineer and researcher at the SibtsvetmetNIIproekt Research and Design Institute in Krasnoyarsk, Russia. He is the author of more than twenty scientific papers and articles both on mathematical modelling and on mathematical programming in programming languages. Along with this, he has published four books of poetry in Azerbaijani: *Məhəbbət yaşa baxmlr* (‘Love is submissive to all ages’, 2008), two book-length poems, *Haça qaya* (‘The Cleft’, 1980) and *Çıraq-qala* (‘Signal Fortress’, 2010), and a documentary poem *Zəfər salnaməsi* (‘Victory Epic’, 2021). Alviz Aliyev has also been a prolific literary translator, mainly from Russian into Azerbaijani, including works by Alexander

Pushkin, Bakhyt Rustemov, Konstantin Simonov and Margarita Al. His translation of Eldar Akhadov's book-length poem *Kharybulbul* is named after a rare species of orchid, found only in one region of Azerbaijan; and his version of Richard Berengarten's poem 'The death of children' was made from Eldar Akhadov's Russian version. Similarly, his translation of Berengarten's chant-poem '[Tree](#)' (2020) was made from the Russian translation by Alexander Makarov-Korotkov. He has also translated two books from Azerbaijani into Russian: Vars Elchuev's novel, entitled *Amin* and [The Cuisine of the Eravan Province](#), edited by Tahir Amiraslanov. In 2023, he was awarded the gold medal of *Literary Asia*. He is a member of the World Organization of Writers.

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## BAVARIAN AND GERMAN - VERONIKA KALLUS



**VERONIKA KALLUS** was born and bred in the village of Chamerau in Bavaria (South Germany). After studying for three degrees – European Studies at Chemnitz, Saxony (BA), English Literature and Society 1688-1900, at Edinburgh (MSc), and Literature Translation at Munich (MA) – she lived in Scotland, where she worked as Visitor Services Manager for St Giles' Cathedral, Edinburgh, for nearly ten years. She has also studied in Italy and Romania and travelled far and wide, most recently to Costa Rica. Her appetite for travel, especially for out-of-the-way places, combined with her love of languages, especially for regional and local language variants, has led her to a versatile and prolific career in translation. She has published German translations of fiction and non-fiction from both English and Scots, as well as poetry. Her versions of novels include thrillers by Patrica Gibney, Leslie Wolfe, Carol Wyer and S. E. Lynes, and she has also written non-fiction herself, for example the St Giles' Cathedral Guidebook. Her poetry translations include Bavarian and standard German versions of poems by the Scots and Shetlandic poet Christine de Luca ([Christine De Luca - Poetry Archive](#): see also Christine's Shaetlan version of 'The death of children', and notes below). Veronika now lives back in her birthplace amid the forests of Bavaria. She is founder of the translation service *Lingua Gotica*.

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### A note on the Bavarian translation by Veronika Kallus

Bavarian or Austro-Bavarian is a variety of Upper German and spoken by more than thirteen million people in the south of Germany, in Austria, and in parts of Italy and Switzerland. It is the largest of all regional variants of German, but, in

itself, is again divided into many smaller variants. The version of 'The death of children' made here by Veronika Kallus has been rendered into the tongue spoken in the very east of Bavaria, close to the border with the Czech Republic. This variety is influenced by specific local patterns spoken in Lower Bavaria and the Upper Palatine region. In addition to this Bavarian version of Richard Berengarten's poem, Veronika Kallus has also translated it into 'Standard German' (often referred to as 'Hochdeutsch' or 'High German'). See the website for both of her versions.

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## CATALAN - TÒNIA PASSOLA



**TÒNIA PASSOLA** (b. Barcelona, 1952) has a degree in the History of Art from the Universitat Autònoma of Barcelona, and teaches Catalan language and literature at a secondary school. Her books of poetry written in Catalan include: *Cel rebel* (2000), *La sensualitat silenci* (2001), *Bressol* (2005), *L'horitzó que* (2009), *Nua* (2019), and *Beuratge* (2024). Her bilingual editions include: in Catalan and French, *Margelle d'étoiles* ('Poètes des cinq Continents', Éditions Harmattan, Paris, 2013) and *Le soufflé des lettres* ('Poètes des cinq Continents', Éditions Harmattan, Paris, 2022); and in Catalan and Spanish: *Salto al espejo* (El Bardo 2021) and *Sangre imaginada* (BajAmar, 2024). Tònia has participated in numerous international festivals and has received several prizes and distinctions. Her poetry has been widely translated and published in anthologies, magazines, and online: in Albanian, Arabic, Chinese, Dutch, English, French, German, Greek, Italian, Macedonian, Persian, Romanian, Serbian, Spanish and Turkish.

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### **A note on the Catalan language by Tònia Passola**

Catalan has been an established language since at least the Middle Ages. A Romance language, derived from Latin, it both enables and reflects the linguistic and cultural unity of the regions in which it is spoken, while naturally incorporating its own regional and local varieties. Most of its geographical range today lies within Spain, including of course Catalonia itself, as well as the Valencian region and the Balearic Islands – Mallorca, Menorca and Eivissa (Ibiza). The main zones where it is spoken outside Spain include the Roussillon region in France (so-called 'Northern Catalanian'); Alghero, the city in Sardinia, belonging to Italy; and the independent Principality of Andorra, occupying a border-zone between Spain and France.

Among the most universally famous authors who have written in the Catalan language are Ramon Llull (1232/1233–1315/1316) and Ausiàs Marc (1397–1459). Despite many periods of hardship, persecution and denial, when cultural and political impositions on the part of the Spanish state have repressed, curtailed or abolished Catalanian national rights, the Catalan language has resisted, endured and survived. The language flourishes today in all aspects of speech and culture.

This rich heritage is exemplified in a continuing literary tradition. Many of the most important poets and authors writing in Catalan have been translated into numerous other languages. In the wake of Ramon Llull (philosopher, writer and poet) and Ausiàs Marc (poet), here is a small selection of significant writers across the centuries: Joanot Martorell, novelist (1405/1410–1468); Àngel Guimerà, playwright and poet (1845–1897); Jacint Verdaguer, poet (1845–1902); Narcís Oller, novelist (1846–1930); Carles Riba, poet (1893–1959); Caterina Albert i Paradís, novelist and poet, whose pen-name, significantly, was Víctor Català (1869–1966); Joan Maragall, poet (1860–1911); Josep Carner, poet (1884–1970); J. V. Foix, poet, (1893–1987); Mercè Rodoreda, novelist (1908–1983); Salvador Espriu, poet, novelist and playwright (1913–1985); and Vicent Andrés Estellés, poet (1924–1993).

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## CHINESE - BANG WANG



**BANG WANG** is a Chinese writer living in Cambridge, UK. Her work involves many genres: fiction, translation, film scripts, visual art and journalism. As a freelance columnist, she writes on social and gender issues for various Chinese media. Her publications include a collection of film reviews, several short story collections, a Manga story titled ‘Ya San’, published in French, and the film script *The Dream*, which won the award for Best Feature Drama at the NYIFF (New York, 2011). Her documentary film *University City Savages* (2009) has been screened at numerous international film festivals, and her short stories have appeared in various publications, such as *Chinese Literature Today* (University of Oklahoma Press), *Words Without Borders*, *HK Literature*, and the Guggenheim Art Museum’s *Tales of Our Time*. Her short story collection, *Journey to Absence* (July 2022) was selected as one of the top ten Chinese fiction books of the year by *Asia Weekly*. Her series of essays, *Observations of Life in the UK*, was shortlisted for the Chinese Youth Writer Award (2019). Published by Dan Du (April 2022), it

received the *One Way Street Book of the Year Award*, an independent literary prize nominated by 100 bookshops across China. By October 2023, this book had been reprinted nine times.

In 2021, Bang Wang started writing in English. She is one of the ten winners of the Escalator 2022 Talent Development Scheme run by the National Centre for Writing, as well as one of the four writers of colour to receive the Curtis Brown and C&W Agencies Breakthrough Writers' Scholarship (2024), both in the UK. Her translations into Chinese include a selection of poems from Peter Hughes's *Behoven* (Oystercatcher Press, 2009), and twenty selected poems from Richard Berengarten's *Changing* (Shearsman Books, 2016). Both translations were published in the literary journal *A Flower to You*, produced by Masters' students in the Literature Department at Nanjing Normal University, China. For Wang Bang's website see: [wangbang](http://wangbang.com).

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## DHOLUO - JACK OGEMBO



**JACK E. ODONGO OGEMBO** (b. 1948 , Migori, Kenya) is an Associate Professor of Literature at the University of Kabianga, Kenya, now retired. He holds the following degrees: a PhD in Literature from the University of Cape Town; an MA in Literature from the City University of New York; and a B Ed from the University of Nairobi. He has special interests in theories of literature, semiotics and general symbolism, cultural heritage and folklore in Africa, and in orality and technology. Some examples of his scholarly writings are: *Art in Ethno-Medicine: A Case Study of Juogi in Western Kenya* (Lambert Academic Publishing, Germany and USA, 2011); and, co-authored with C. Audio and B. Koduk: '[Music as a conveyor of public health messages on COVID-19 in Kenya](#)' (*Nairobi Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences* 5/1, 2021) and '[Representations of images and symbolisms in the story of Nganyi, the rain maker, as told among the Luo community of Kenya](#)' (*Research Journal in African Language* 3/1, 2022).

Jack Ogembo is currently engaged in investigating the impact of globalisation on African literary creativity. He is intrigued by literary debates in modern theories of literature, postmodernism, futurism, science fiction and general stylistics in literary texts and cultural studies. He has long and wide experience of teaching literature at many levels, and his supervision of postgraduates has covered many

themes. As leisure activities, he enjoys the African indoor game of Ajua and is addicted to Ohangla, Benga and Classical hymns. As a teenager, he loved rhumba dance and he is a lifelong reader of novels, plays and poetry. He and his wife Rachel Odongo have two sons, a daughter and two grandchildren.

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## **A note on the Dholuo language by Jack Ogembo**

Dholuo is the language of the Luo people (lit. 'mouth of the Luo'). The Luo are a Nilotic ethnic community of around five million people, who are thought to have migrated from Egypt, although some historians say they originated from Sudan. They travelled along the River Nile, settling in Sudan, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Ethiopia, the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, Chad and Eastern Nigeria. As they migrated, they left some of their people along the way. Though their language remains mutually intelligible across the landscape, different locations have evolved their own peculiar identities and local and regional varieties, so hindering total or universal intelligibility. The Luo have traditionally been fishermen and that is why they moved along the Nile River Basin and settled around large water bodies such as Lake Victoria, Lake Tanganyika and Lake Chad. Some prominent Luos include former USA President Barrack Obama (born of a Luo Father and American Mother) and Lupita Nyong'o, who became the first black African to win an International Academy Award (in 2014).

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## **KRISTIEN FRANSEN - DUTCH 1**



**KRISTIEN FRANSEN** (b. 1970) is an unpublished Belgian writer who has recently devoted herself to the world of poetry. As a child she was fascinated by languages and dreamed of becoming a translator, but life led her to a career as a soil scientist instead. The serendipitous encounter with translating this poem reignited her childhood dream. Now she aspires to translate more poetry, aiming to bridge hearts and cultures through her work. Kristien adds: "From a written text, it is often impossible to know whether the writer lives in or originates from Belgium or the Netherlands. I have translated the poem 'The death of children' into 'standard' Dutch, not making use of any specific Flemish word or expression."

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## A note on Flemish and Dutch by Kristien Fransen

The belief that Flemish (*Vlaams*) is a ‘separate language’ from Dutch (*Nederlands*) is a common misunderstanding. The simplest approach to this question is to regard Flemish as the regional variety of Dutch that is spoken in the northern part of Belgium, known as Flanders. The areas in which, over the centuries, multiple local varieties of Dutch, including Flemish, have shaded gradually and gently into one another are famous for the phenomenon known to linguists as the *dialect continuum*.

Belgium is a country known for its linguistic divisions and variations, and language rights are of huge importance in all respects. The southern part of Belgium (Wallonia) is French-speaking, and German is spoken in a smaller, eastern area. The subtle distinctions and gradations occurring among variants of Dutch, including Flemish, have deep historical roots, shaped by political, cultural and linguistic developments over centuries. For example, long periods of French rule have led to the incorporation of many French words into Flemish vocabulary.

The perception of Flemish as a separate language is influenced by regional identity and cultural pride. Flemish people now often emphasise their distinctiveness from the Dutch. Another important factor inside Belgium itself is that during the 19th and early 20th centuries, French was the dominant language and Flemish speakers were marginalised.

Differences in vocabulary and usage across the entire spectrum of Dutch, including Flemish, often lead to funny (or not-so-funny) misunderstandings, but the most striking differences are in pronunciation. Flemish tends to have a ‘softer’ sound compared to the, ‘more guttural’ Dutch that is spoken in the Netherlands. The continuing and lively existence of many local and regional language varieties means that TV programmes and films often need subtitles. However, from a written text, it is often impossible to know whether the writer lives in or originates from Belgium or the Netherlands.

I have translated the poem ‘The death of children’ into ‘standard’ Dutch, not making use of any specific Flemish words or expressions.

## DUTCH 2 - RICO SNELLER



**RICO SNELLER** has taught philosophy and ethics at Leiden University. He is currently a lecturer in philosophy and psychoanalysis/analytical psychology at Academy Depth Psychology (the Netherlands) and he has been a guest lecturer in philosophy at Al Farabi University in Almaty, Kazakhstan. His PhD thesis was dedicated to the French philosopher Jacques Derrida and his relation to negative theology and Jewish philosophy. His most recent book is *Perspectives on Synchronicity, Inspiration, and the Soul* (Cambridge Scholars, 2021). -Berengarten's poetry is often resorted to, in order to clarify the main argument. Sneller has also published two earlier essays on Berengarten's poetry: 'Spirituality as Poetry: On Richard Berengarten's Balkan Trilogy' (in *Studies in Spirituality* 29, 2019: 315-331) and 'Spirit and Word: Berengarten's *Changing* and Jewish Prophecy' (in *Under the Sign of the I Ching*, Shearsman Books Swindon, 2023: 165-183).

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## EKEGUSII AND KISWAHILI – JANE BOSIBURI MARANDO OBUCHI



**JANE BOSIBURI MARANDO OBUCHI** (b. 1970) is a prolific and versatile writer, translator, researcher, scholar, teacher, educator, and singer and musician. She was born and raised in Kisii in the west of Kenya. She has a BA in English and Kiswahili from the University of Eastern Africa, Baraton (UEAB), and an MA in Literature from the University of Kabianga. She now lives and works in the Kenyan capital, Nairobi. She is trilingual in Ekegusii, Kiswahili and English, and she writes in all three languages. As a principled cultural activist, Jane Obuchi is a strong advocate for the teaching and learning of her mother-tongue, Ekegusii, as well as for other African languages, especially with regard to the encouragement of reading and writing skills in schools, colleges and universities. She is equally active on behalf of the civil, educational, cultural and economic right of girls and women. Jane Obuchi is the first ever recognised female composer and musician to play the *obokano*. For her pioneering and innovative work with the *obokano* including key recordings and performances, see the note below.

This combination of cultural and humanistic concerns is reflected in all aspects of Jane Obuchi's writings, music and other works. For example, she is a board member of the [Ngũgĩ Wa Thiong'o Foundation](#), which aims "to empower African

languages, promote cross-cultural translations, and advance humanity”. Ngũgĩ Wa Thiong’o has been her mentor as a writer, thinker and activist, and on 22 June 2024, she composed and dedicated a song to him, which she performs accompanied by the *obokano*. In a similar spirit, Jane has also been quick in extending her support to the project to translate Richard Berengarten’s poem ‘The death of children’ into African languages. She has made versions of the poem in both Ekegusii and Kiswahili, and she has also set her Ekegusii translation to music, which she performs to the accompaniment of the *obokano*, and both her spoken and sung versions appear in this anthology.) Jane has also been proactive in introducing other writers, translators and scholars working in other languages in East Africa to this project. See for example Ngũgĩ Wa Thiong’o’s translation of ‘The Death of Children’ into Gikuyu/Kikuyu, and the note on him below, and Jack Ogembo’s version in Ogembo, and his notes, above.

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### **A note on Kiswahili by Jane Bosibori Marando Obuchi**

Kiswahili is a Bantu language originally spoken by the Swahili people, who are found primarily in Tanzania, Kenya and Mozambique. The other countries where Kiswahili is spoken include: Botswana, Burundi, Malawi, Namibia, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Zambia, the Comoros islands and, in the Middle East, Oman and Yemen. Kiswahili is among the ten most widely spoken languages in the world, with more than 200 million speakers. The exact origin of the Kiswahili language is unknown. Kiswahili has Bantu languages at its core, though Arabic also strongly influenced it by way of loanwords. In 2021, the General Conference of UNESCO adopted a resolution that proclaimed 7th July of each year as ‘World Kiswahili Language Day’. Kiswahili is the first African language to have been recognised in such a manner by the UN. It is one of the official languages of the African Union. In Kenya, Kiswahili is the national language.

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### **A note on Ekegusii by Jane Bosibori Marando Obuchi**

Ekegusii is the language of the Abagusii people of Western Kenya. The Abagusii, also known as the Kisii, are a Bantu ethnic community. According to the 2019 Kenya National Census, Ekegusii has an estimated number of 2.7 million native speakers. The Abagusii are thought to have migrated from the Congo forests through Uganda, entering through the Western part of Kenya to settle in the counties of Kisii and Nyamira. Other Bantu languages and peoples in the Western part of Kenya include Luhya, Suba and Kuria.

The Abagusii are traditionally farmers and soapstone carvers. The Abagusii believe in Engoro, also known as Nyasae, the creator of the universe and the source of all life.

The Kisii people have a rich and vibrant culture that is expressed through their music, dance and unique traditions. Their music is characterised by the use of drums, flutes, the *obokano* (see below) and other percussion instruments.

The Abagusii are bordered to the East by the Kipsigis, to the West by the Luo, and to the South by the Masai, all of whom are Nilotic speakers. Prof. Joseph Nyasani, the Kenyan scholar who broke a 300-year record by writing his PhD dissertation in Latin in 1963, was a speaker of the Ekegusii language.

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### **A note on the Obokano Tradition and Innovation by Jane Bosibori Marando Obuchi**

The *obokano* is a bowl-shaped lyre that belongs to the culture of the Abagusii. It has been referred to as the ‘double bass of East Africa’. The instrument has eight reed strings that are tuned by adjusting the rope-like strings on the crossbar, a resonator hole, and a wooden bridge to elevate the strings from the wooden bowl, which is covered by cow-hide or goat-hide. The musician plays it by plucking the strings with both hands. The tension of the strings on the crossbar can be adjusted to produce different tones. Traditionally, the sound/resonator box is a hollowed out stump of the *omotembe* tree (*Erythrina abyssinica*).



In traditional Abagusii culture, only men played the *obokano*. Women were not allowed to touch the instrument in the belief that doing so would make them infertile. Thus the *obokano* has always been associated with male (masculine) power, heritage—and pleasure. The instrument was brought out at weddings and at other ceremonies such as circumcisions, and for entertainment at festivities, for example, after the harvest. Songs glorifying the dead or rain songs in times of drought were often accompanied by the *obokano* too. Even though rain songs and wedding songs have fallen into disuse since the Christianisation of the

Abagusii community, they live on in the memory. Singing accompanied by the *obokano* is still often accompanied by dancing.

Jane Bosibori Obuchi is the first and only woman to have learned the instrument. She has written scholarly articles on her innovative work with the *obokano*, for example [‘Gender biases in Kisii classical music’](#) (*Journal of Education and Practice*, Vol. 5, No. 5, 2014). Her challenge to patriarchal tradition has been widely recognised, for example in *The Daily Nation* (Kenya), March 9, 2024: [‘Feminism: Speak up, Akoko, and seize what is rightfully your own’](#). How she learned to play the *obokano* is a fascinating and heartwarming story. Jane writes:

My late paternal uncle, Simeon Ogaro Ombagi (1931-2020) was an accomplished *obokano* harpist. When I was a child growing up in my village of Bomobea, in western Kenya, I used to sit at his feet to listen, and I would often dance to his singing too. From time to time, when he wasn’t watching, I would pluck the strings. When I was fourteen years old, he discovered my interest in playing the instrument and decided to teach me to play. My father wasn’t opposed to my learning the art. But it wasn’t until I was thirty-five that I became a passionate and devoted player of the *obokano*. This deeper involvement started when I began listening to young singers from my own Abagusii community singing *Chingero* songs – our people’s folk music – but with the wrong diction and musical phrasing. So I began collecting and singing these songs to the accompaniment of the *obokano*. I owe all this to my uncle, who in retrospect I now see as the major source of my skills and inspiration as an *obokano* player.

Jane Obuchi now plays the *obokano* as an accompaniment to both Christian songs and folk music. She has set many songs and created many adaptations and she is currently teaching several schoolgirls to carry on her work. In these ways, she is an original innovator in an ancient tradition.

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## FAROESE – AGNAR JÓGVANSSON



**AGNAR JÓGVANSSON** (b. 1979) is an author, translator and grammar schoolteacher who lives in Tórshavn, Faroe Islands. His main writings to date have been short stories and allegories, in the Gothic genre, with surrealistic elements and existential and psychological themes. He started his career in translation in 1996 with poetry and short fiction. He translated about 80 verses of Dante’s *Inferno*, and these were read aloud in academic circles and published in limited circulation. In 2008, he

published a translation of a few short stories by Guy de Maupassant, and included two old translations, probably from the 1880's, by Jakob Jakobsen (1864-1918). Recently, he has been gathering more forgotten and incomplete translations that have been made into Faroese, shedding light on them and filling in gaps, because Faroese translators have been known to make unfinished translations and publish them in journals.

Agnar Jógvansson's published fiction includes *Revapassarin* ('The Fox-raiser', short stories, 2009), *Sporvognurin* ('The Tram', novella, 2011), and *Einsamøll í Lítlu Dímun* ('Lost on an Island', novel, 2015). The wide list of authors he has translated includes: William Blake, Lewis Carroll. Einar Már Guðmundsson, Johan Harstad, Franz Kafka, Einar Andreas Lund, Guy de Maupassant, Pádraic Ó Conaire, Edgar Allan: Poe, Gabriel Rosenstock, Sappho and Rabindranath Tagore, as well as the *Sepher Yetzirah*, a selection of Japanese haiku, excerpts from *The Arabian Nights* and two *Upanishads*.

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## **A note on Faroese by Agnar Jógvansson**

Faroese is a West Norse language spoken by approx. 50,000 people in the Faroe Islands and approx. 20,000 other people living in other countries. Faroese has a deep orthography and is not easy to pronounce correctly based on how it is written. It has not been replaced by some other bigger language because of the isolated geographical position of the Faroe Islands. The first published book in Faroese was *Bábelstornið* (The Tower of Babel) (1909). The first Faroese writers emerged in the 1890's and wrote classical poetry and scientific texts. The next generation wrote more accomplished fiction. Today, considering the number of native speakers, there are many writers and poets who are writing in Faroese.

The Faroe Islands have been under political Norwegian and Danish rule since the late Middle Ages, but Faroese and Scandinavian culture, tradition and language have always been kept separate. Faroese was spoken in private, while one or other Scandinavian language was spoken in schools and in church and in dealings with authorities. On December 26<sup>th</sup>, 1888, R.C. Effersøe (1857-1916), Jóannes Patursson (1866-1946) and seven other men of letters had a meeting that was the start of the Faroese National Movement, which proved to be very successful.

The first published work of fiction in Faroese was *Bábelstornið* (The Tower of Babel) (1909), by Rasmus Rasmussen (pen name: Regin í Líð) (1871-1962). The first Faroese writers emerged in the 1890's and wrote rhyming poetry, frequently

based on the rhythms of some German or Scandinavian song, as well as scientific texts, especially in the natural sciences. The following generations expanded this range, especially into more accomplished fiction. Today, considering the relatively small number of native speakers, there are many authors and poets writing in Faroese.

Here are the names of some Faroese writers who wrote between the 1890's and the 1950's: J. H. O. Djurhuus (1881-1948), Gothic poetry in intricate forms and metres; H. A. Djurhuus (1883-1951), children's poetry; Poul F. (1898-1970), love poetry and philosophical poems; Sverre Patursson (1871-1960), ornithological books; Mikkjal á Ryggi, geography, zoology and history; and Heðin Brú (1901-1987), short stories about village life in the midst of the societal changes at a time when most Faroese men became fishermen instead of farmers.

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## FRENCH - MARGARET RIGAUD



**MARGARET RIGAUD** was born into a French and American family in Montpellier, France, and grew up into a fake bilingual (or bilingual fake, depending on how you look at it). After her studies in Paris (école normale supérieure de Fontenay-aux-Roses) and Oxford, where she was awarded a DPhil, she published a monograph on the deliciously inventive French and Belgian poet Henri Michaux's search for a universal language (Oxford University Press, 2005). Her rather meandering academic career never really took off but took her to interesting places on both sides of the Atlantic (Harvard and the University of Virginia in the USA and Cambridge University in the UK) and gave her a chance to research other language dreamers, notably Guillaume Apollinaire. Realising that she was too much of a magpie for academia, she threw in the academic towel in 2011 and took the liberating but financially imprudent step of becoming a freelance translator. She set out to translate works that made her heart beat faster, but ended up settling for a varied diet of interesting work that could put food on her plate. She has now translated or co-translated over twenty academic books and museum exhibitions on subjects ranging from Édouard Manet to Roma music, Denis Diderot, Wampum beads, the 18th century industrialist and spy John Holker, torture, Nissim de Camondo's bronze collection, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and the Venetian Ghetto. While this work has been very rewarding, she misses the playfulness of poetry. Her collaborations with Richard Berengarten since 2017 have been a breath of fresh air.

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## GALEGO (GALICIAN) –

### LORETO RIVEIRO ÁLVAREZ AND FERNANDO R. LAVANDEIRA



**LORETO RIVEIRO ÁLVAREZ** (b. Caracas, 1971) is a translator from English into Spanish and Galician and a teacher of English for Special purposes (ESL). Her career has involved many roles, most of them related to the English language. She has formed a team with Fernando R. Lavandeira to make several translations of poetry into Galician.



**FERNANDO R. LAVANDEIRA** (b. 1966) is a poet and translator into Galician, and author of *Mar que evita o meu regreso* ('Sea that Avoids my Return', A Coruña, Ediciósdo Castro, 2000); *Tempo é de que saiban* (It's Time for Them to Know', author's edition, 2006); and the trilingual edition in Galician, Spanish and English *Poemas* (DePaul University, Chicago, trans. Bernardo Navia and Mark Johnston, 2007), His stories and poems in Galician have appeared in more than a dozen anthologies.

In 2007, Loreto and Fernando took part in the ninth 'Seminario Internacional de Tradución' (Auliga-UNED), with a presentation on the practical aspects of poetry translation, focusing on the project of translating a selection of poems by Richard Berengarten. This led, first, to their article, 'O voar da bolboreta azul: un intento de traducción de Richard Berengarten' ('The Flight of the Blue Butterfly: an Attempt to Translate Richard Berengarten', *Barbantia: Anuario de Estudos do Barbanza*, no. 7, 2011), followed by a bilingual selection of Berengarten's poems, *O voar da bolboreta azul* ('The Flight of the Blue Butterfly', A Coruña, edicións Espiral Maior, col. Auliga, 2015). Their other co-writings and joint publications have included *The Chair in which Women Gave Birth: catro voces femininas da poesía norteamericana actual* ('The Chair in which Women Gave Birth: Four Voices of Contemporary North American Poetry'), a Galician translation of a selection of poems by Wanda Phipps, Terry Carrion, Denise Duhamell and Beth Ann Fennel (Boiro, Anuario Barbantian 4, 2008).

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### A note on the Galician Language by Fernando R. Lavandeira

The Galician language (*galego*) is spoken mainly in Galicia, the autonomous region located in the north-west corner of the Iberian peninsula. This region, which is part of Spain, has an area of 29.575 km, with a population of nearly

2,700,00. Here Galician is one of the two officially recognised languages, along with Spanish. Galician is also spoken in some small neighbouring areas: in the principality of Asturias, in the provinces of León and Zamora, and in three smaller districts in the province of Cáceres (Extremadura).

Galician is most closely related to Portuguese. It descends from Latin, and is directly related to all the other Romance languages, such as Spanish, French, Occitan, Italian, Corsican and Romanian. In Galicia itself, the language has tended to be minoritised, because Spanish has been considered more prestigious: i.e. the language preferred by the political and economically dominant classes. Even so, in medieval times, Galician-Portuguese was highly esteemed as a literary language. But between the second half of the fifteenth century and the start of the sixteenth, the political and administrative centralization instigated by the *Reyes Católicos* (Catholic kings) of Spain resulted in Galician more or less disappearing from cultural and institutional usage. In that time, the language entered a period known as the *Séculos Escuros* (Dark Centuries), which lasted until the third quarter of the nineteenth century. Even so, both in the daily speech of the people and in the media of popular culture and writings, Galician maintained and upheld its vigour and vitality.

Today, as one of the two officially recognised languages, Galician still has a key presence institutionally, academically and in schools, even though this is now diminishing in curricular importance. This is because Galician has gradually been losing its speakers in favour of Spanish. At the beginning of the twentieth century, an estimated 90% of the population expressed themselves wholly or mostly in Galician. In the 1970's, this proportion decreased to around 70%; and nowadays, it has shrunk further, to around 50%

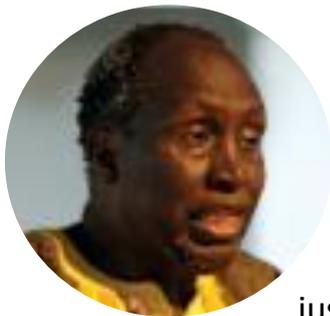
Even so, Galician is a language with significant scholarly and literary advocates, proponents and users. The great authors in the *Idade de Ouro* ('Golden Age') of Galician-Portuguese lyrical poetry include: Paio Gómez Chariño (1225-1295); the King of Castille himself, Alfonso X *El Sabio* ('Alfonso the Wise', 1221-1284); Mendiño or Medinho (13<sup>th</sup> century); and Macías *el enamorado* (1340-1370?). In more recent times, many excellent and distinguished authors have written in Galician. First among these is the poet Rosalía de Castro (1837-1885), whose work *Cantares Gallegos* ('Galician Songs', 1863) is considered to be the milestone for the *Rexurdimento*, the cultural and literary resurgence of Galicia that brought the *Séculos Escuros* to a close. In the twentieth century, the fiction writer, artist, essayist and politician Daniel R. Castelao (1896-1950) is recognised as the father of the Galician nationalist movement and author of its foundational work *Sempre en Galicia* ('Forever in Galicia', 1944). The playwright, narrator and

essayist Rafael Dieste (1899-1981) personifies the intellectual resistance against the persecution and exile suffered under the Franco dictatorship. And the poet and essayist Manuel Antonio (1900-1930) is still an obligatory reference-point today for young writers, as is as the novelist, short story writer and essayist Álvaro Cunqueiro (1911-1981)

Among a plethora of authors writing in Galician today, the foremost include: poet and short story writer Xosé Luis Méndez Ferrín (b. 1938); novelist Antón Riveiro Coello (b. 1964); playwrights Paula Carballeira (b. 1972), Santiago Cortegoso (b. 1974) and Ester Carrodegas (b. 1979); and poets Olga Novo (b. 1975), María do Cebreiro (b. 1976), Yolanda Castaño (b. 1977), Antía Otero (b. 1982) and Noelia Gómez (b. 1995).

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## GIKUYU (KIKUYU) - NGŪGĨ WA THIONG’O



**NGŪGĨ WA THIONG’O** (1938–2025) is universally acknowledged as a giant of African literature. His stature as a major writer is the outcome of a lifetime’s prolific literary achievements as a novelist, essayist, playwright, memoirist and children’s writer, all intricately integrated with his passionate dedication to human rights and justice. The context of his work across all these fields and genres has been the struggle against colonialism, racism, and political, social, cultural and linguistic oppression in his own country, Kenya, throughout Africa, and globally. For all these reasons, the influence of Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o’s writings has been monumental in his own lifetime.

For an extensive online biography and bibliography, see Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o’s [Wikipedia](#) page. For an illuminating article on his biography and personality see [‘Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o: three days with a giant of African literature’](#) by Carey Baraka (first published in *The Guardian*, UK, 13 June 2023).

Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o’s translation into Gikuyu (Kikuyu) of Richard Berengarten’s ‘The death of children’ is a signal honour to this multilingual poetry project, all the more so for the fact that Professor Thiong’o generously made his translation of this poem at the age of 87. The editors of this Poetry Archive project are immensely grateful to him for his involvement, as we are to his friend and fellow writer Jane Bosibori Obuchi for introducing the project to him. His translation of

‘The death of children’ was the last he made, and here we record our sadness that he did live to see its publication.

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### **A note on the Gikuyu language by Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o**

Gikuyu or Kikuyu, also known as Gigikuyu, is a Bantu language spoken by the Gikuyu people of Kenya. Gikuyu is mainly spoken in the areas between Nyeri, Nairobi and Nakuru. The Gikuyu are a Bantu ethnic group native to East Africa Central Kenya. With a population of 8,148,668 as of the 2019 census, the Kikuyu account for 17.13% of the total population of Kenya, making them Kenya’s largest group. The Gikuyu believe in an omnipotent creator god, Ngai, and in the continued spiritual presence of ancestors. It is believed that Ngai created and put the first man (Gikuyu) and the first woman (Mumbi) on earth. The Gikuyu were the first native ethnic group in Kenya to undertake anticolonial agitation, in the 1920’s and 1930’s. They staged the Mau Mau uprising against British rule in 1952 and spearheaded the drive towards Kenyan independence later in the decade. Jomo Kenyatta, Mwai Kibaki, and Uhuru Kenyatta, the first, third and fourth presidents of Kenya, respectively, are speakers of Gikuyu.

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**GREEK – PASCHALIS NIKOLAOU (editor), with CHRISTINA-IOANNA CHELAKI, PAVLINA GIOTOPOULOU, VERA GOUNI, EVANGELIA KARAVA, PHOEBE KATOPODI, SOFIA NTINIA, MARIA SOLOMAKOU, YIANNIS TAXAKIS AND ZANETA ZASTARTAITE**

This Greek translation of ‘The death of children’ was developed over three successive workshop sessions by students of literary translation at the Department of Foreign Languages, Translation and Interpreting, at the Ionian University, in late 2023. Both the problems in translation posed by Berengarten’s original villanelle and the responses provoked by the poem’s theme lent themselves to fruitful discussions in an academic setting. Exchanging ideas in this way resulted in significant improvements over a series of drafts. The collaborative translation process was co-ordinated by course instructor Paschalis Nikolaou, who also reads the poem in the recording.

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**PASCHALIS NIKOLAOU** is Associate Professor of Literary Translation at the Ionian University (Greece). He is the author of *The Return of Pytheas: Scenes from British and Greek Poetry in Dialogue* (Shearman Books, 2017) and of *Creative Classical Translation* (Cambridge University Press, 2023) He has also co-edited *Translating Selves: Experience and*

*Identity between Languages and Literatures* (Continuum, 2008). and edited *Encounters in Greek and Irish Literature: Creativity, Translations and Critical Perspectives* (Cambridge Scholars, 2020).

Paschalis Nikolaou is one of the leading international specialists on the oeuvre of Richard Berengarten. He has co-edited *Richard Berengarten: A Portrait in Inter-Views* and *Under the Sign of the I Ching: Essays on Richard Berengarten's 'Changing'* (Shearsman Books, 2017, 2023, respectively). He has also collaborated extensively with Richard Berengarten, most notably in co-editing and translating the *Selected Poems* of Nasos Vayenas (2010), and in co-translating *12 Greek Poems After Cavafy* (Shearsman, 2015). He has contributed essays to: *The Companion to Richard Berengarten* (2011/2016); the edition of the French journal *NU(e)* devoted to RB (no. 65, 2017); and to the critical volume on RB's writings relating to the Balkans, *Bloody Human* (ed. Ana Radović Firat and Vladimir Zorić, 2027).

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## HEBREW 1 – EDNA APHEK



**EDNA APHEK** was born in Haifa, Israel. She now lives in Sunnyvale, California. A poet and artist, she has published six books of poems for adults and children, and four books of prose, both fiction and non-fiction, for adults. Many of her poems appear in magazines and journals in Hebrew. Some of her poems have been translated into English and published in anthologies and journals, including: 'Sarah – Envy', in *Voices Within the Ark: The Modern Jewish Poets* (ed. Howard Schwarz and Anthony Rudolf, Avon Books; New York; 1980); 'How it All Began: a Feminist View', *Poetica* (Spring 2014); 'Jacob and Esau', *The Jerusalem Quarterly* (Autumn 1989); and 'How Soon a Fall Erupts', *Tsamadin Hapuch* (February 2020). This last poem has been translated into eleven languages and was read at an event dedicated to translation in Tel Aviv (September 2019). Edna is the co-editor of three Hebrew online magazines: *Tsamadin* (multicultural and multilingual poetry), *Resisim* (prose) and *Narutsa* (in the footsteps of the Bible, poetry and prose). See her [Wikipedia](#) page (in Hebrew).

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## HEBREW 2 – MIRIAM NEIGER-FLEISCHMANN



**MIRIAM NEIGER-FLEISCHMANN** ([www.miriamneiger.com](http://www.miriamneiger.com)) is a Hebrew poet, translator, literary scholar and painter. Born in 1948 in Komárno (Komárom), Slovakia, to Holocaust-survivor parents from Hungarian Jewry, she immigrated to Israel in 1949 and grew up in the Haifa area. Since 1977, she has lived in Jerusalem. As a poet, Miriam Neiger-Fleischmann has published four volumes in Hebrew: *Words in a Visual Space* (1992), *Images Reproduced* (1999), *Material in No Man's Land* (2007) and *Song for Miriam* (2018). A selection has appeared in English, *Death of the King and Other Poems* (trans. Anthony Rudolf, Shoestring Press, 2017), as well as volumes in French, Hungarian and Romanian. Her poems have appeared in *Modern Poetry in Translation*, *Stand*, *PN Review*, *Jewish Quarterly* and *The Guardian Online* ('My pity is fake') *Modern Poetry in Translation*, and variously in Albanian, Arabic, Italian, Slovak and Russian. Her scholarly monograph, *From the Abyss of Limbo, The Poetry of Avigdor Hameiri*, is forthcoming in Hebrew from the Bialik Institute, based partly on her PhD at the Hebrew University, Jerusalem. Her translation of Richard Berengarten's [Tree](#) – inspired her set of water-colour drawings, *Trees of the Mind* (both published in *Margutte*). As an artist, Miriam Neiger-Fleischmann has participated in many solo and group exhibitions and her work is stored in the permanent collections of the Israel Museum, the Haifa Museum, Ben Gurion University, the National Museum of Women in the Arts (Washington DC), and other collections, both public and private.

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## HINDI AND PUNJABI - NISHI CHAWLA



**NISHI CHAWLA** is a well-known and prolific Asian American poet, playwright, novelist, academic, editor, and independent filmmaker. She earned her doctorate in English from George Washington University, Washington DC in 1997 and did post-doctorate work at Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore MD. In 1998, she migrated with her family to Washington, DC. For twenty years, she taught English as a tenured Professor at Delhi University and, for a further twenty, she was a Faculty Member at the University of Maryland, MD, and at Thomas Edison University, NJ.

Nishi Chawla has published 7 collections of poetry, ten plays, four feature films, and two novels. The broad and magnanimous themes of her work across these multiple genres reflect her passionate concern to address social, cultural and political issues and also, crucially, to explore the subtle ways in which these intertwine with the personal experiences, histories and inner worlds of individuals. In her poetry she explores the rich psychogeography and myths of India, including the Himalayas and the Ganges, and the ways in which traditions and myths of gods and goddesses intertwine with the lives, characters and beliefs of modern men and women. Unsurprisingly, Nishi Chawla's writings are also situated within the most pressing concerns of our contemporary world, including: climate change, pandemics, the global refugee crisis; ethnic, religious and gender biases and oppressions; war and peace, violence and non-violence; and myth, tradition and locality. Her novels, plays and films aim not only to analyse and dissect social and cultural issues, but also to address psychological complexities and contradictions and to re-examine the needs and nuances that conflict and crisis precipitate in human lives.

Nishi Chawla is honored to have been only the third Indian poet ever to have been invited to the 'The Poet and the Poem' program organised by the US Library of Congress. Her poetry reading at the US Library of Congress can be heard. She is among the very few South Asian dramatists whose plays have been staged off Broadway in New York, with *Kasturba versus Gandhi* in June 2024.

Nishi Chawla's has been a featured poet at many poetry forums, readings and festivals in both India and USA. Her appearance at events in India include: the Jaipur Literary Festival; the Kerala Literary Festival; the Goa and Hyderabad Literary Festivals; and the Sahitya Akademi and Literary Forum in New Delhi. Her appearances in the USA include: the Indo-American Arts Council Literary Festival in New York; the Montana Book Festival in Missoula; and the Writer's Center in Bethesda, Maryland. In Washington DC, where she lives, she has appeared at: the Asia Society, the Asian American Forum, the Gandhi Center, and on the *Who's Who* TV Show on the Capital Forum. Her poems are published regularly in American literary journals and her writings have been reviewed in major Indian and American journals and newspapers. In 2018, she received a citation from the State of Maryland in recognition of her dedication to the arts and to theatre. She is a member of the American Association of Poets and Writers and of the American Academy of Poets, and she has served on the board of the Actors' Center in Washington DC.

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## IRISH - GABRIEL ROSENSTOCK



**GABRIEL ROSENSTOCK** was born in Kilfinane, County Limerick, in postcolonial Ireland, 1949. A dedicated internationalist, and tireless peace activist and defender of language rights, he is a bilingual poet, haikuist, tankaist, novelist, translator, short story writer, children's novelist, essayist, playwright, author and critic. Dozens of his titles are available online.

He is author/translator of over 400 books, mostly in Irish, a member of *Aosdána* (*Irish Academy of Arts and Letters*), Lineage Holder of Celtic Buddhism; and former Chairman of *Poetry Ireland/Éigse Éireann*. He has taught haiku at the *Schule für Dichtung* (*Poetry Academy*), Vienna, and at the *Hyderabad Literary Festival*. He is a prolific translator into Irish of international poetry (by, among others, Ko Un, Seamus Heaney, K. Satchidanandan, Rabindranath Tagore, Muhammad Iqbal, Hilde Domin, Peter Huchel and Richard Berengarten); of plays (by Samuel Beckett, Max Frisch and W. B. Yeats); and of songs (by Bob Dylan, Kate Bush, The Pogues, Leonard Cohen, Bob Marley, Van Morrison, Joni Mitchell, David Bowie, Bruce Springsteen, Nick Drake, John Prine and Taylor Swift, as well as various *Kunstlieder*).

Gabriel Rosenstock's previous translations of poems by Richard Berengarten include: *Volta* (*International Literary Quarterly*, 2009); and the 365-line chant-poem [Tree](#) (*Margutte*, 2016). For the interwoven readings of this poem in Irish and English by Gabriel and Richard, against the text of the Silvia Pio's Italian version, see Geneviève Guetemme's [Tree: A Video](#) (2017); and for the filmed musical composition based on Gabriel's Irish transcreation by composer Nick Roth, see [Crann](#), performed at *IMRAM* (*Irish Language Litfest*, 2020).

Rosenstock also writes and translates both poetry and prose for children, is a recipient of the *Judges' Award* (*Irish Children's Book Awards*) for a haiku manual which was also chosen by the *Museum of Irish Literature* (*MOLI*) in the series *Books That Changed Us*. He has recorded his translations for Walker Éireann children's books on Soundcloud. Gabriel has translated widely acclaimed series of books for *Dalen Éireann*, including the Tintin and Asterix series, and he won the *Irish Children's Books Award* in 2023 for 'revolutionising poetry for children'. He was awarded a Bursary by the Arts Council of Ireland in 2024. For further details, see his [Wikipedia page](#).

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## ITALIAN - SILVIA PIO



**SILVIA PIO** is an Italian poet and translator. Her poetry has appeared in Italian magazines and online. She has had several poetry books published, and has received many literary and poetry awards in Italy, including the prestigious 'Cesare Pavese' prize for unpublished poetry. She co-founded the literary online magazine Margutte, which she co-edits. Since 2014, Her collaborations with Richard Berengarten have been extensive, especially in curating the online eco-poetic Albero Project (since 2017, and in the presentation of his writings in the Italian magazine *Poesia* in the same year (March, no. 324,). She has been organising poetry readings and literary events for many years.

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## JAPANESE - SHIHO MAIN



**DR. SHIHO MAIN** is an associate lecturer at the Open University, UK, teaching Childhood and Youth Studies to undergraduates and postgraduates. She is also a Fellow at the Department of Psychosocial and Psychoanalytic Studies at the University of Essex, where she has taught on the MA Jung and Post-Jungian Studies for over twenty years. She is the author of *Childhood Reimagined: Images and Narratives of Development in Analytical Psychology* (Routledge, 2008), and she has also published several papers in this area, including: "Recapitulation" and "Development" in Analytical Psychology' (under her maiden name S. Miyagi, in *Harvest: Journal for Jungian Studies*, 2000, no. 46/2: 7-32); 'Re-imagining the child: challenging social constructionist views of childhood', in *Dreaming the Myth Onwards: New Directions in Jungian Therapy and Thought* (ed. L Huskinson, Routledge, 2008: 168-180); and "The Other Half" of Education: Unconscious Education of Children' (2012, *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 2012, 44/1: 82-95). She lives in Colchester, UK, with her husband Roderick and two children.

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## MACEDONIAN - KATICA KULAVKOVA



**KATICA KULAVKOVA** (b. 1951) is a Macedonian poet, fiction-writer, playwright, and literary-cultural critic and theorist. Her works combine profound involvement in her own Macedonian and literary and cultural heritage with a firm commitment to internationalist perspectives, and a scrupulous attentiveness to both. Her first book of poems appeared in 1975, when she was twenty-three. Since then,

she has published more than thirty-five collections of poetry in Macedonian and translation into other languages, including English, French, Italian, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Turkish and Albanian, as well as Bulgarian, Croatian, Montenegrin, Serbian and Slovene. Among her recent collections in Macedonian are *My Passions, My Sufferings* (2019), *On the tip of the tongue* (2023), her *Collected Poems 1975-2022*, (two vols., 2023) and *The Sky is at Home* (2024).<sup>1</sup> Her dream-diary, *Dreaming Is Living: 1001 Dream Fictions* (2014) is richly influenced by her readings in C. G. Jung. Sofija Popovska writes: “Her poetry is rich with mythical and literary references, as well as images of femininity, eroticism, and passion; in her distinctive voice – terse, tidal, oracular – she captures moments of longing, loss, pleasure, and desperation, allowing them their multivalence, unflinching in the face of vulnerability”.

Katica Kulavkova’s prolific oeuvre as an imaginative writer is richly paralleled by her work as a scholar, theoretician, critic and historian. Her many essays, papers and monographs have appeared in collections of her own, in volumes she has edited, and in Macedonian and international anthologies and journals. The range and depth they cover is extensive: from Homeric epic to contemporary poetry and poetics, from Feminist theory to semiotics, from cultural and linguistic studies of Balkan and Slavic themes to international modernism and post-modernism. Her first scholarly work was *Figurative Speech in Macedonian Poetry* (1984). Among her more recent books are *The Demon of Interpretation* (2009), *Balkan Code: A Scandal in Culture* (2015), *Open Poetics* (2016), *Balkan Narratives* (2018), *Quest For Freedom: Interpretative Syncretism* (2019) and *Conversation and Memory: a Dialogic Narrative Contextualisation of Liminal Identity* (2020).

Katica Kulavkova studied General and Comparative Literature at the University of Saints Cyril and Methodius (UCM) in Skopje, at the Sorbonne in Paris, and at the University of Zagreb, where she was awarded her PhD in Literary Theory. Between 1986 and 2012, she taught Literary Theory, Methodology and

Hermeneutics and Creative Writing at UCM. She has been a full Fellow of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts (MANU) since 2003; a Vice-President of International PEN since 2008; a member of the European Academy of Sciences and Arts (Salzburg) since 2014, and since 2019, an executive committee member of the International Association for Semiotic Studies. In Skopje in 2003, under the auspices of PEN, she founded the international publishing house *Diversity*, and edited the series until 2015, and since 2024 she has been director of the Božidar Vidoeski Centre of Linguistics of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts. Her literary and scholarly prizes include: the *11 October Prize* (a lifetime achievement award, Macedonia, 2014), the *Tudor Arghezi Prize* (Romania, 2016), Albanian PEN Prize, 2018), and *Officier de l'ordre des arts et des lettres* (France, 2021).

Katica Kúlavkova has been in active dialogue with Richard Berengarten since 2005. He has co-edited a collection of her haiku in Macedonian and four other languages (*Golo Oka / Naked Eye*, 2010), and she has edited the Macedonian edition of his book-length poem, *In a Time of Drought (Vo Breme Suša*, 2013) Katica Kúlavkova's essay on this work, 'A Poetic Ritual Invoking Rain and Well-Being' appears in *Bloody Human*, a collection of essays on Richard Berengarten's Balkan writings (ed. Ana Radović Firat and Vladimir Zorić, Shearsman Books 2026-7).

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## MASSAFRESE – COSIMO BRUNO



**COSIMA BRUNO** was born in Massafra, a small town in the province of Taranto, in the region of Puglia, Italy. At the age of eighteen, Cosima left Massafra to study Chinese Language and Literature at Ca' Foscari University in Venice and at *Beijing Shifan Daxue* ('Beijing Normal University'), China. After about ten years living in Venice, she moved to Milan to work as a translator and interpreter from Chinese into Italian. At the turn of the millennium, she arrived at SOAS (School of Oriental and African Studies), University of London, to start doctoral research on the translation of contemporary Chinese poetry. After obtaining her PhD degree, she worked for few months in Edinburgh University before returning to London, where she currently works and lives.

Cosima has published essays in article and book form, and translations of Chinese poems into Italian and English. Her publications are listed on [Google Scholar](#). Her research interests span contemporary Chinese and multilingual poetry, translation studies, ecopoetics, sound studies, and intermedial translation.

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### ***Massafrese: Notes on the translation and on the Massafra dialetto*** **by Cosimo Bruno**

This must be the first time I've ever translated a poem into the dialect of my birthplace, Massafra, a town in Puglia in Southern Italy. I've lived far away from Massafra for most of my life and am not entirely sure why I decided to translate Richard Berengarten's poem into Massafrese. Most probably it was because when he first shared this poem with me, I was thinking about some contemporary poetry written in Yi-Nuosu, one among many of the local languages of China, and was writing about the conception of the mother tongue in that context.

Whatever the reason, it was an interesting experience to render 'The death of children' into Massafrese, especially because the act of translating a text into a dialect implicitly positions itself in contrast to translating it into a national language. A translation into dialect calls specific attention to a cultural context that otherwise would most probably remain in the shadow. And thus, given the unequal relationship between the language of the original and that of the translation, I felt that translating into Massafrese called for more flexing and stretching of the original than doing so into Italian would. Turns of phrase are inflected by traditional oral expressions and rhetorical effects. My version needed to modify some words and constructions of the original, because even when English words had their near-literal equivalents in Massafrese, some of them just didn't reflect the speech habits or poetic imagination of a Massafrese speaker.

This is why my translation varies the wording in the villanelle's repeat-lines. For example, the original word *offends* in the punch-line works really well in English, but in Massafrese I had to choose *dole* ('hurts, gives pain') for its first occurrence. Later, *offends* became *šcusä* ('can't be overlooked/forgiven') and then, at the very end, *scuntà* ('can't be repaired'). I mulled over these variants for some time, but keeping the same word in my translation simply wouldn't work. I decided, too, that the image in the fifth stanza would match the local imagination more effectively if I worked from Silvia Po's Italian version: *calare le*

*tende* ('draw the curtains') and *piangono I genitori davanti alla porta chiusa* ('the parents cry in front of the closed door'). In my version, the image became *mjen a cuvèrte sùs alli piccìnn* ('cover the body of the children with a blanket') and *réte alli scùr ammarräte, a mamme e l'attane chianjen* ('behind closed shutters, the mother and the father cry').

So, the voices in this translation are several, not just the poet's, or just mine, but also that of the Italian translator, and of all the people of my hometown who speak the local tongue of my childhood.

Luckily, I was also able to work on this version during a summer's visit back to Massafra, where I had the benefit and pleasure of being surrounded by living voices conversing in local speech. When I read back my first completed draft to myself, I was genuinely surprised to discover that my version had a definite rhythm and a diction of its own.

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What Italians call *dialetti* (lit. 'dialects') are local languages spoken in Italy. But these are not *dialects* of Italian, as this word is usually understood in English: that is, they are not 'regional variations' of the national language.

Massafrese is a language that has independently developed from Latin, in just the same way as Catalan, French, Galician, Italian, Portuguese, Romanian and Spanish. In Italy, there are hundreds of these *dialetti*, and definitions of their identities will always depend on how closely-grained a linguist's attention is, especially with regard to differentiations based on geographical boundaries ('dialect-continua').

These days, Massafrese is no longer widely or frequently spoken by younger people. Older people still speak it, although not exclusively, often mixing it with Italian. I'm old enough to have learned it from the members of my first community. It's a language I've always enjoyed speaking because it is witty and poetic, and resounds with the voices of people I know, and used to know.

Since Massafrese is first and foremost a spoken language, for its phonetic transcription I've referred to Roberto Caprara's two-volume *Dizionario etimologico e grammatic del dialetto Parlato a Massafra e dei dialetti dell'Arco jonico delle Gravine* ('Etymological Dictionary and Grammar of the Spoken Dialect of Massafra and of the Dialects of the Ionic Arch of the Gravines'): Massafra, Antonio Dellisanti Editore, 2013. (The 'Ionic Arch' is a subregion of Puglia that extends from the Murgia in the north to the north-western Salento, along the coastal strip of the Ionian Sea).

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## NORWEGIAN (BOKMÅL) – GEOFFREY DEARSON



**GEOFFREY DEARSON** was born in Brixham, Devon, and grew up in the South Hams. Currently living in Norway, he is the author of the Devonshire Dialect Dictionary, hosted by the Devonshire Association. His study of the stylistic character of Boris Vian's six novels has achieved a certain status in France. Geoffrey's interest in poetry was catalysed by his early study of Parnassian poetry as a pupil/student at Churston Ferrers

Grammar school: at that time, in the early 1960s, a civil parish in the district of Totnes. Between the age of 19 and 25, he produced over two hundred poems. Thanks in no small measure to Yvonne Hoggan (*née* Niort), his lecturer in 16<sup>th</sup> century French literature at Aberystwyth University, he fell under the spell of such Pléiade poets as Ronsard and Du Bellay, and subsequently with the whole gamut of French poetry.

Immediately prior to his retirement as Head of Languages at the International School of Stavanger in 2012, he was responsible for introducing the new syllabus, examination papers, mark-schemes and teaching-notes for the International Baccalaureate's *French as a Foreign Language*. During his twenty years at ISS, he compiled French-English, English-French dictionaries for both IGCSE and IB students, for in-house use only, in addition to many linguistic studies which have never graced a publisher's desk.

Since retirement from teaching, he has produced a huge study of Devonshire place-names, declined by the Devonshire Association, and doubtless consigned to posterity, *pace* Oscar Wilde.

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### Norwegian (bokmål): a note on the translation by Geoffrey Dearson

I have translated Richard's poem into Norwegian *bokmål*, principally because it is spoken by 90% of the population and has a nationwide distribution, as the map below shows (blue area).

See also and listen to the translation into Norwegian *nynorsk* by Jostein Sæbøe, and more notes on the two main varieties of the language below.

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## NORWEGIAN (NYNORSK) – JOSTEIN SÆBØE



**JOSTEIN SÆBØE** is a Norwegian teacher, translator, journalist and literary critic. Born in 1942 in the village of Voss near Bergen on the west coast of Norway, he has been a prolific translator of books of poetry into Norwegian. Works he has translated from English include: *Korte dagar, endelause netter* (lit. 'Short days, endless nights', 2011), selected from *Mean Time* by Carol Ann Duffy; *For øyane syng eg* ( lit. 'For the islands I sing', 2015), a selection of George Mackay Brown's poems; and *Slik går det med kjærleiken* (lit. 'That's how it goes with love', 2022), from *What Love Comes To*, by Ruth Stone. His many translations from other languages include: *Eit ord i ei stjerne* (lit. 'A word in a star', 2012), poems by the Dutch poet Hannie Rouweler; and *Eit hjørne på jorda*(lit. 'A Corner of the Earth', 2018), poems by the Mongolian poet and editor Hadaa Sendoo.

As a literary critic, Jostein Sæbøe has published reviews in newspapers and magazines for more than sixty years. In 1999, he published *Litteraturen i Romsdal*, a comprehensive history of literature for the Romsdal region. Between 1980 and 2010, he gave numerous public lectures on Norwegian writers. He has also worked as a journalist for NRK Radio (the Norwegian National Broadcasting Company) and on the regional paper *Romsdals Budstikke*. He is one of the founders of the Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson International Festival of Literature in Molde (1992), named after the Norwegian poet who won the 1903 Nobel Prize for Literature. From 2003 to 2009, he was a Board Member of the Bjornson Akademie and he is the Deputy Chair of the Gunnar Haukebo Art Collection Association both in Molde.

In 1971, Jostein Sæbøe graduated in Nordic and English Language and Literature (M.A.) from the University of Bergen, and from that year until 2005 he taught Nordic and English languages and literatures at Molde Grammar School. Then, from 2005 to 2014, he taught Norwegian for foreigners: mainly to medical staff from other countries working in Norwegian hospitals.

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### Norwegian (nynorsk) : a note on language and translation by Jostein Sæbøe

Translating texts into Norwegian means that one must choose between two official varieties of written Norwegian: *bokmål*, 'Book Norwegian' or *nynorsk*, 'New Norwegian'. In many respects, today, these two varieties overlap to the

point of being indistinguishable. But many formal differences in both grammar and vocabulary do exist. Historically, during the long period in which Norway was ruled by Denmark (1380-1814), *bokmål* developed out of and away from written Danish. *Nynorsk*, on the other hand, is a reconstructed independent national language, based on dialects and on Old Norse (*norrønt*). The endeavour to create *Nynorsk* began around 1850 and was carried out over several years by the self-taught linguist Ivar Aasen. Today, *nynorsk* is a minority written language, which is most widely used in the western parts of Norway, whereas *bokmål* is the dominant written form in the east. But these days, both *bokmål* and *Nynorsk* are used as standard written Norwegian all over the country. Spoken Norwegian, on the other hand, consists of a great variety of dialects which are more or less influenced by the two written forms.

All the writings of Jostein Sæbøe are in *nynorsk*. As an example, you may listen to 'Når barn dør', which is his translation of 'The death of children' by Richard Berengarten. See also and listen to the translation into Norwegian *bokmål* by Geoffrey Dearson, and his notes on translation above.

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## PORTUGUESE – HELENA CARDOSO



**HELENA CARDOSO** was born in Lisbon in 1947. She graduated from Lisbon University with a degree in German and English philology. Then, in her twenties, she travelled the world. She is a translator and a photographer, having also studied photography in 1976, at ArCO, Lisbon. She has been a prolific translator of works into Portuguese by many English, Irish and American novelists and poets, including: W. B. Yeats, Lawrence Durrell, Julian Barnes, David Lodge, Bruce Chatwin, Fred d'Aguiar and Miranda July, and she has translated French poets such as Rimbaud, as well as several works on contemporary art from English and French for the Gulbenkian Foundation and the Descobertas Foundation. She has also translated another poem by Richard Berengarten for a previous multilingual poetry project, '[Volta](#)'.

Extensive information on Helena's work can be found on her blog. She has two children and two grandchildren.

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## Romanian - Olimpia Jacob



**OLIMPIA IACOB** (1953–2025) was a prolific and accomplished literary translator who lived in Romania. She graduated from the Faculty of Letters at Al. I. Cuz University in Iași, from which she earned a PhD in 2000, with a dissertation entitled *Translation Theory Applied to the Poetry of Nichita Stănescu*. She was an Associate Professor in Modern Languages at Vasile Goldis West University of Arad, Romania and a member of the Writers' Union of Romania. Her book-length translations include works of prose and poetry by Cassian Maria Spiridon, Gabriel Stănescu, Gheorghe Grigurcu, Mircea Petean, Marius Chelaru, Carolina Ilica, Daniel Corbu, Aura Christy, Lucian Vasiliu, and George Vulturescu, among others. Modern poets whose writings she translated into Romanian include A.R. Ammons, Robert Creeley, John Deane, Allen Ginsberg, Louise Gluck, David Ignatow, Randall Jarrell, Derek Mahon, W. S. Merwin, Madison Morrison, Frank O'Hara, Marge Piercy, Kenneth Rexroth, Ann Sexton, Charles Simic, Louis Simpson, Wallace Stevens, Mark Strand, James Wright, and Elinor Wylie. Her translation of 'The death of children' was among last she made, and here we record our sadness that she did live to see its publication.

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## RUSSIAN 1 - ELDAR AKHADOV



**ELDAR AKHADOV** is a poet, prose writer and literary researcher. Author and translator of ninety-five books of poetry, prose and literary studies in Azerbaijani, English, Spanish, Italian, Chinese, Russian and Serbian, he was born and raised in Azerbaijan and lives in Eastern Siberia. He is co-chairman of the Literary Council of the Assembly of the Peoples of Eurasia and Africa, an honorary member of the Union of Writers of Azerbaijan, and chairman of the Coordinating Council of the World Writers' Organization. He is also a member of: the Russian branch of international PEN, the Union of Russian Writers, the Union of Writers of Southern Russia, and the Russian Geographical Society. There is information about him in the Great Russian Encyclopedia, as well as on *Wikipedia* in Russian, Azerbaijani and other languages. His works are stored in the United States Library of Congress, the British Library, the Library of Alexandria, the National Library of Azerbaijan, and all major libraries in Russia.

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## RUSSIAN 2 - OLGA ALEXANDROVNA MARKELOVA



**OLGA ALEXANDROVNA MARKELOVA** is a writer and literary scholar. Since 2001, her life has been closely connected with the languages, literature and cultures of Iceland and the Faroe Islands. Born in Moscow, she obtained her B.Phil. (Sl. (*Baccalaureus philologiae Islandicae*) from the University of Iceland (2004), and her Ph.D. in Scandinavian Literature from Moscow State University (2005). Her topic was *The Emergence of a Faroese National Literature and the Formation of National Consciousness in the Faroe Islands*. Published in 2006, this book was the first research into Faroese literature ever to have appeared in Russia. Olga A. Markelova writes poems in Russian, Icelandic and Danish, and prose in Russian and Icelandic. Most of these can be found on her website.

She has also translated many texts of prose and poetry from Icelandic, Faroese and Danish into Russian: by, among others, Hallgrímur Helgason, Sigurður Pálsson, Svava Jakobsdóttir, Gerður Kristný, Jónas Hallgrímsson, from Icelandic; and from Faroese and Danish, Jens Hendrik Oliver Djurhuus, Christian Matras, William Heinesen, Lydia Dideriksen and Gunnar Hoydal. Her poems, stories, translations and research articles appear frequently in magazines and journals in Russia and Iceland. As a hobby, Olga makes original dolls. These are often based on the characters in the Icelandic novels that she translates into Russian and, in turn, they give her inspiration for new writing.

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## SERBIAN- VERA V. RADOJEVIĆ



**VERA V. RADOJEVIĆ** has been translating Richard Berengarten's poetry into Serbian since 1980, including his *Balkan Trilogy*. Her translation of *In a Time of Drought* (*U vreme suše*, RAD, Belgrade, 2004), which was published before the original text appeared in English, was awarded the international *Morava Charter* prize. Her translation of *The Blue Butterfly* (*Plavi leptir*, Plava tačka, Belgrade, 2008) received the Kragujevac *Veliki školski čas* (Great School Lesson) award, and extracts from the Serbian text were performed as an open-air oratorio at Šumarice on October 21, 2008, in commemoration of the victims of the 1941 Nazi massacre there. She followed this with the selection, *The Dance of the Blue Butterfly / Igra plavog leptira* (

Meridijani, Smederevo, 2017), and *Under Black Light (Pod balkanskim svetlom*, Serbian Writers Association, Belgrade, 2021). She has also translated RB's *Black Light (Crna svetlost*, KOV, Vršac, 2013) and *Tree* (2019), and she has made English translations of essays on RB's writings by several Serbian writers, including Aleksandar Petrov and Petrov and Slobodan Rakitić (*Companion to Richard Berengarten*, Salt Publishing, Cambridge, 2011, and Shearsman Books, Bristol, 2017). With RB, she has also co-translated four books by Serbian poets: *I Wear My Shadow Inside Me* by Duška Vrhovac (Forest Books, Chingford, 1991); *Let Peace be the Name of the Centuries* by Slobodan Pavićević (Oktober Park, Kragujevac, 2010) and by the same author. *Dreams of Hilandar* (Koraci, Kragujevac 2024); and the bilingual Serbian / English *Izabrane pesme / Selected Poems* by Petar Pajić (Meridijani, Smederevo, 2017). Vera V. Radojević lives in Belgrade.

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## SHAETLAN (SHETLANDIC) - CHRISTINE DE LUCA



**CHRISTINE DE LUCA** is a Scottish poet and novelist who writes in English and in Shaetlan (Shetlandic). From 2014 to 2017, she was Edinburgh Makar (Poet Laureate for the City of Edinburgh). She is widely translated and has been involved in numerous translation activities. She is also an active collaborator with musicians and visual artists. For her website, see [Christine De Luca, Scottish Poet](#). See also [Christine De Luca - Poetry Archive](#) for her page.

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### A note on the Shaetlan translation and language by Christine De Luca

The poem is a translation of Richard Berengarten's poem 'The death of children'. His poem is a villanelle, a demanding poetic structure incorporating repeated lines and having a strict *aba* rhyme-scheme. This was a challenge to translate into Shaetlan, which is a very 'minority' tongue with a relatively small vocabulary.

Shaetlan (or Shetlandic) is spoken in the Shetland Isles, the most northerly part of the UK. Recently it has been described by linguists as a 'contact' or 'mixed' language rather than as a 'dialect'. This particular linguistic blend reflects its historic evolution from Scandinavian roots from around the 9<sup>th</sup> century (and the associated Norn language) until 1469, when Shetland became part of Scotland through a marriage alliance between a Danish princess and a Scottish prince.

Norn was gradually pushed to the periphery by the Scots tongue, which was the language of domination: the courts, the church and the new land-owners. However, while Shetland Norn had died out completely by the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, much of it was incorporated into the local variant of Scots which we call Shaetlan. It could be described as a blend of Old Scots and Norn.

Jakob Jakobsen, a Faroese scholar, visited Shetland to do fieldwork in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and his resulting *Etymological Dictionary of the Norn Language in Shetland* (with over 10,000 words) was published in Danish (in four volumes, 1908-21) and later in two volumes in English in 1928 and 1932. Many of these words are still in use. Contemporary linguists still seem to find Shaetlan a fascinating subject of study – Peter Sundkvist and Viveka Velupillai, to name but two, have both published extensively on the subject.

Shaetlan differs from Standard English in grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation and is arguably the most distinctive variant of Scots today, being particularly rich and onomatopoeic. Despite a sizeable and growing incomer population, Shaetlan is still spoken by probably about half the population. The total population in Shetland is approx. 20,000, all of whom speak English, since that remains the language of the classroom. Many now speak only English, especially incomers; and while they may come to understand spoken Shaetlan, they neither speak nor write it. Many of the older diaspora speak Shaetlan.

In Shetland there has been more of a tradition of writing poetry than prose, possibly reflecting an oral ballad tradition. Early writers were James Stout Angus (1830–1923), Basil Anderson (1861–1888) and J. J. Haldane Burgess (1862–1927). They all chose to write in Shaetlan, although their education was in English. The 20<sup>th</sup> century gave us, among others: brother and sister, Jack Peterson (1895–1972) and Emily Milne (1904 –1970); T. A. Robertson (pen-name, Vagaland, 1909–1973); William Tait (1918-1992); Jack Renwick (1924–2010); Stella Sutherland (1924–2015); and Rhoda Bulter (1929–1994). There are many contemporary poets. Those writing in Shaetlan, and published beyond Shetland, include Christine De Luca (b. 1947), Robert Alan Jamieson (b. 1958) Roseanne Watt (b. 1991). Themes, though often displaying their Shetland roots, range widely from the personal to the philosophical, the local to the universal.

Shetland has a relatively small but growing literature, much of it written in Shaetlan, and this is encouraging others to use it in their writing and messaging too. While the written form is still not uniform or agreed, it appears to be gradually standardising.

## SPANISH - MIGUEL TERUEL



**MIGUEL TERUEL** is a Senior lecturer in English literature at the University of Valencia, Spain. His fields of interest include poetry, theatre, translation and intertextuality. His critical works include *Tom Stoppard: La escritura de la parodia* (1994), *A Guide to the Shakespearean Scene* (1994) and *Cruzando la Frontera*, a collection of critical essays co-edited with A. R. Calero and Domingo Pujante (2007). As a translator into Spanish, he has published works by Thomas de Quincey (*Confesiones de un inglés comedor de opio*, 1997), Timberlake Wertenbaker (*El amor del ruiseñor*, with Jorge Picó, 2006), John Keats (*Poemas escogidos*, with J. V. Martínez and P. Nicolás, 1997), Lord Byron (*Don Juan*, with J. V. Martínez and M. J. Coperías, 1994), Tom Stoppard (*Arcadia*, 2000, and *Rosencrantz y Guildenstern están muertos*, 2003, with Jorge Picó) and William Shakespeare (*Macbeth*, *Romeo y Julieta*, *Noche de Reyes*, *Hamlet*, *Antonio y Cleopatra*, *La tempestad*, and *Bien está lo que bien acaba*), from 1987 to the present, in collaboration with The Shakespeare Foundation of Spain. Together with Paul S. Derrick, he has published a small selection of Richard Berengarten's poems in Spanish translation, *Las manos y la luz* [Hands and Light] (2008) and *Black Light/Luz negra*.

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## TELUGU - NELLUTLA VENUGOPAL



**NELLUTLA VENUGOPAL** (b. 1961) is a prolific author who works in and across many genres and fields. He lives in Hyderabad, in the south Indian state of Telangana. He is a poet, essayist, literary critic, historian, socio-political-economic analyst, journalist, reviewer and public speaker who writes in both Telugu and English, and translates both ways between these languages. A trained economist, he has been involved in literature and the arts since his teenage years, as his maternal uncle, the renowned Telugu poet, Varavara Rao, used to run a highly-respected Telugu literary monthly, *Srjana* ('Creation') in which he became involved.

Nellutla Venugopal began to publish his own poems when he was thirteen years old and in his twenties he became a well-known translator and literary critic. Since his thirties, he has been a much sought-after public speaker. Over the last three decades of publications, he has published thirty original books in Telugu and English, as well as around twenty-five books of translations from

English into Telugu, including poetry, short stories, novels, literary criticism, and works on economics, history, politics and Marxism. In addition, many of his uncollected writings have appeared in journals, magazines, and newspapers. Since 2005 he has edited the Telugu monthly journal on social, political and economic matters *Veekshanam* ([www.veekshanam.wordpress.com](http://www.veekshanam.wordpress.com)).

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## TRIESTINO – TONI PICCINI



**TONI PICCINI** was born in Trieste, Italy. He is a poet, artist and photographer. His special interests are writing *haiku* and composing *haiga* (combining his haiku texts with his own photos). He has been working in these two related genres since 2003. His books include: *Haiku apocrifi – Apocryphal haiku* (in Italian and English, Albalibri editions, 2007); *Medithaiku* (Italian, Rupe Mutevole editions, 2010), *Poesiazze* (poems in Triestino and Italian, Rupe Mutevole editions, 2010); *No Password* (in Italian and English, Terra d’Ulivi editions, 2014); *Auschwitz e simili - Auschwitz and the like* (in Italian, English, Hebrew and German, Red Moon Press, USA, 2018); and *La corona rovesciata* (‘The overthrown crown’, in Italian, eBook, 2020). His haiku have also appeared in the following collections, among many others: *The Sleepless Night* (Modern Haiku Association, Tokyo, 2018); *a hole in the light: The Red Moon Anthology of English-Language Haiku 2018* (Red Moon Press, USA, 2019); and *Örömutazás* (ed. Judit Vihar, Napkut editions, Budapest, 2023).

The major international poetry events that he has attended include: the Genoa International Festival (2005, 2007); the first Tokyo Poetry Festival (2008); and events at Pécs and Budapest (2010), Parma (2018) and Vienna (2019). As a *haiga* artist, at the Genoa Poetry Festival of 2007, he presented the first ever *haiga* exhibition in Italy, and similarly, the first ever in Hungary, at Pécs in 2010. The World Haiku Association (Japan) has recognised him with the distinctions of *Award of Excellence* (2015) and *Master Haiga Artist* (2017). Since 2017, he has exhibited his work in the [Haiga Galleries](#) (the Haiku Foundation, USA). In this document, he writes of his *haiga* work: “I strive to reach a point at which text, image and font (with its variables) give birth to a harmonious ensemble, where the result is a total fusion of the three elements, which still retain their own particularities.” Since 2020, he has also exhibited his work in the [HaikuLife Film Festival](#). He has conducted workshops and given classes and talks at all levels from primary school to university. Toni Piccini and Richard Berengarten met in Tokyo in 2008. His translation of RB’s poem ‘Volta’ into Triestino appears in [The International Literary Quarterly](#).

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## **A Note on Triestino (Triestin) by Toni Piccini**

The language known today as Triestino or Triestin originates mainly from the language of the Venetian region (the Veneto). Because of Trieste's geographical position on the borders of three distinct linguistic zones (Italian, Germanic and Slavonic), Triestino has integrated all of these linguistic strands.

From the late fourteenth century to 1918, Trieste was ruled by the Habsburgs. During the thirty-year rule of the Habsburg Empress Maria Theresa (1740–1770), and thanks to innovations directed by her government, the city underwent major changes. Crucially, the port was developed for international maritime trade: Trieste became a free port and the centre of a thriving shipping industry. This led to a population boom and huge social changes. With the increase in work opportunities, the city particularly attracted immigrants from the Veneto, the wider region of Friuli, and from Istria and Dalmatia. As a result, immigration became a crucial factor in the life of the city and several distinct linguistic communities established themselves, each of which naturally had its own influence on the communal language. Among these, the major influences were from the Veneto. Until this period, the language spoken was known as Tergestino. From then on, it was called Triestin or Triestino.

In this way, by the beginning of the twentieth century, Triestino had become enriched with a burgeoning vocabulary, originating from a variety of languages, with words occurring either in identical forms or through clearly evident derivations. Apart from the predominant Venetian influence, the other main ones were from German, especially its Austrian varieties, and Slovene. In addition, Croatian, Serbian (or Serbo-Croatian) and the varieties of Venetian spoken in Istria and Dalmatia had significant parts to play, with other languages such as French taking minor roles. Greek and Yiddish were also spoken.

Unsurprisingly, Trieste's character by that time was composite, cosmopolitan and markedly secular, as it still is today. Broadly speaking, the city had come to epitomise religious as well as cultural and linguistic tolerance: Catholics, Protestants, Jews, Eastern Greeks, Serbian Orthodox lived alongside one another – evidence for which is confirmed by the presence of cemeteries for all these faiths. Besides these, there is a Muslim cemetery, and another for men who had died fighting for the Austro-Hungarian Empire in the First World War.

However, Italian irredentismo, a movement that had started in the late nineteenth century, evolved to include the aim of making Trieste Italian

‘through-and-through’. The persecution of Slovenes began in 1920, even before the Fascists came to power in 1922. In 1938, Mussolini, chose Trieste as the location to announce his anti-Jewish racial laws. Immediate and drastic persecution followed, both racial and linguistic, including the enforced closure of Slovene and Croatian-speaking schools. The prohibition of these languages was absolute, on pain of harsh punishment. This, combined with other forms of continuous oppression and discrimination, contributed towards a strong Slovene nationalistic movement.

Due to its geographical location, Trieste had a particular and complex history during and after the Second World, falling under German military administration, direction and command from September 1943. From 1947 until 1957, the so-called Free Territory of Trieste became an independent territory. This was de facto dissolved in 1954 and its two zones were divided between Italy and Yugoslavia. This created a border dispute which was not settled until twenty years later. The port city went to Italy.

The present-day population of the city is approximately 200,000, of whom the majority speak Triestino, though there remain few speakers who are monolingual. There is a Slovene-speaking minority. Today, most citizens speak Italian too.

Important poets who have written in Triestino include Virgilio Giotti (1885–1957) and Carolus Cergoly (1908–1987). The former derived his pseudonym from his mother’s maiden-name, Ghiotto. His birth-name was Virgil Schönbeck. The two most famous modern writers of Trieste, both of whom were Jewish, wrote in Italian: the poet Umberto Saba (1883-1957); and, a generation before him, the novelist Italo Svevo (1861-1928), whose birth-name was Ettore Schmitz. This writer’s pen-name may well be said to embody Trieste’s composite, cosmopolitan character: Italo – Italian; Svevo – Swabian. In addition to local writers and poets, James Joyce lived in Trieste between 1904 and 1920 and began writing *Ulysses* in the city. Between 1911 and 1912, Rainer Maria Rilke was a guest at the Castle of Duino, the residence of the Thurn und Taxis family, where he began work on his *Duino Elegies*. The best known contemporary writer is the novelist, essayist and Germanist, Claudio Magris (b. 1939).

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## UKRAINIAN – TETIANA SAVCHYNSKA



**TETIANA SAVCHYNSKA** is a literary translator working between Ukrainian and English, and a faculty member at the Ukrainian Catholic University, where she teaches translation and interpreting. Her translations of Ukrainian authors have been published by Northwestern University Press and Academic Studies Press, as well as in numerous anthologies, journals, and magazines, including *The Los Angeles Review of Books*, *Asymptote*, *Apofenie*, and others.. She holds an MA degree in Comparative Literature from Dartmouth College, NH, where she was a Fulbright scholar. She has also been also a 2024 ALTA Travel Fellow, a 2023 resident at the Art Omi Writers: Translation Lab in Ghent, NY, and a 2019 resident at the Banff International Literary Translation Centre in Canada.

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## UYGHUR - MUKAIDAI SA MUHATAER



**MUKAIDAI SA MUHATAER** is a Uyghur anthropologist whose work focuses on rural communities in Northwest China and Central Asia. Her current book project investigates how variations in state power have led to changes in types of social status and symbolic capital, how people's livelihood strategies have been affected, and the responses of these communities in Northwest China.

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## YORÙBÁ - KÒLÁ TUBỌSUN



**KÒLÁ TÚBỌSÚN** (b. 1981, Ìbàdàn) is a Nigerian poet, literary critic, linguist, editor, filmmaker, and publisher of an art and culture publication at [Olongo.Africa.com](http://Olongo.Africa.com). He's the author of *Edwardsville by Heart* (2018), *Ìgbà Èwè: Translated Poems of Emily R. Grosholz* (2021), and the forthcoming *Èṣù at the Library & Other Poems* (2024). He writes in both English and Yorùbá and translates between the two. While Yorùbá and English are his first languages, he also has competence in French and Nigerian Pidgin and a smattering of Korean. He currently lives between Lagos, Nigeria and Minnesota, USA.

Kólá Túbòsún studied at the University of Ìbàdàn (2000-2005) and at Southern Illinois University (2010-2012), where he was also a Fulbright scholar (2009). More recently, he has been a Miles Morland Writing Fellow (2018) and a Chevening Research Fellow at the British Library (2019-2020). His poetry, literary criticism and translations have been widely published in journals and anthologies, for example: in *African Writer*, *Aké Review*, *Brittle Paper*, the *International Literary Quarterly*, *PEN Transmissions*, *Enkare Review*, *Maple Tree Literary Supplement*, *Jalada*, *Popula*, *Saraba Magazine* and *World Literature Today*, among others. He has translated the works of Chimamanda Adichie, Haruki Murakami, Ngugi wa Thiong’o, Wole Soyinka, James Baldwin, Sarah Ladipo-Manyika, Cervantes, and others between English and Yorùbá. He translated Richard Berengarten’s poem ‘[Volta](#)’ into Yorùbá (2009). His work in language advocacy earned him the *Premio Ostana Special Prize* in Cuneo, Italy in 2016. In 2024, he produced a documentary film on Wole Şóyínká, entitled [Ebrohimie Road: A Museum of Memory](#).

Kólá Túbòsún adds: “I am drawn to nonfiction and poetry as the best vehicles for the interrogation of history and memory.” For fuller information about his poetry, his translations, and his essays and scholarly writings, see his [Website](#), his pages at [OlongoAfrica.com](#), and his [Wikipedia](#) page.

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## A note on the Yorùbá language by Kólá Túbòsún

Yorùbá is spoken mostly in South-western Nigeria, parts of Benin, Togo and Ghana and, in the New World, in Cuba, Brazil and the Caribbean. It is a tonal language in the Niger-Congo family, with around 50 million speakers around the world, although details are not very exact.<sup>1</sup> Most speakers of Yorùbá also speak other languages, with varying degrees of competence: English, Spanish and Portuguese, among others, depending on where they live. The language has an extensive literature and has been used in writing since as early as the 17th Century.

Prominent writers of Yorùbá language origin include [Wole Soyinka](#), who won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1986, becoming the first African so honoured. And although Soyinka didn’t write in the language, the idioms and ideas in his plays are taken from Yorùbá culture, lore and cosmology. The most prominent writer

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<sup>1</sup> Other large languages in the Niger-Congo family include: Akan, Ewe, Fon, Fula, Ga-Dangme, Igbo, Lingala, Mooré, Sesotho, Shona, Xhosa and Zulu.

in Yorùbá is [D. O. Fágúnwà](#). He wrote what is widely considered the ‘Pentateuch’ of Yorùbá literature: five great novels that draw heavily on folktale traditions and idioms, including many supernatural elements.

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Richard Berengarten  
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