

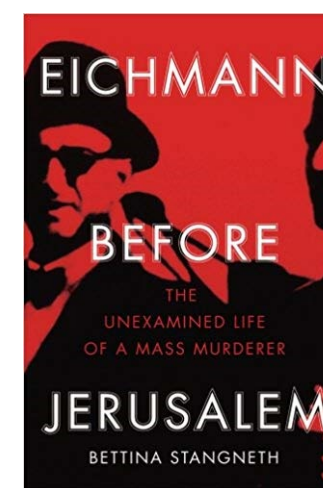
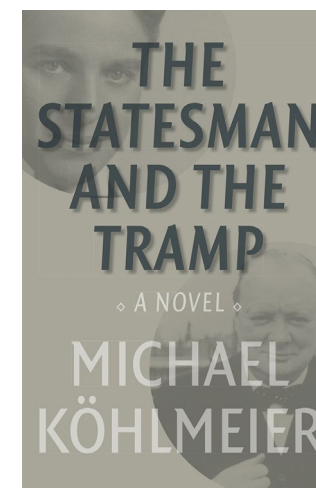
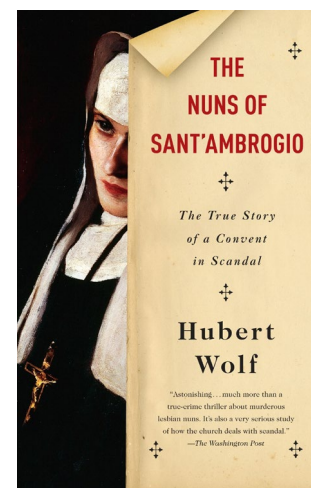
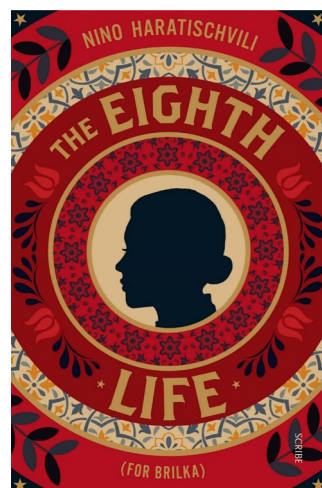
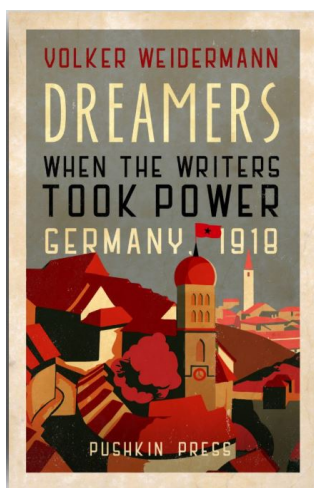
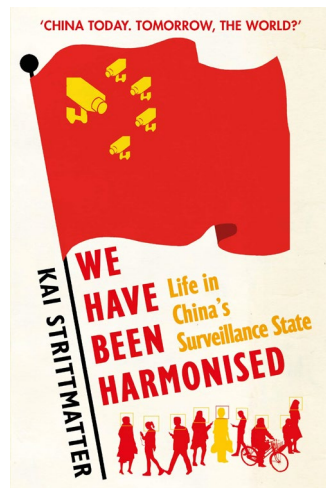
Moving sideways: breaking into book translation and working with publishers





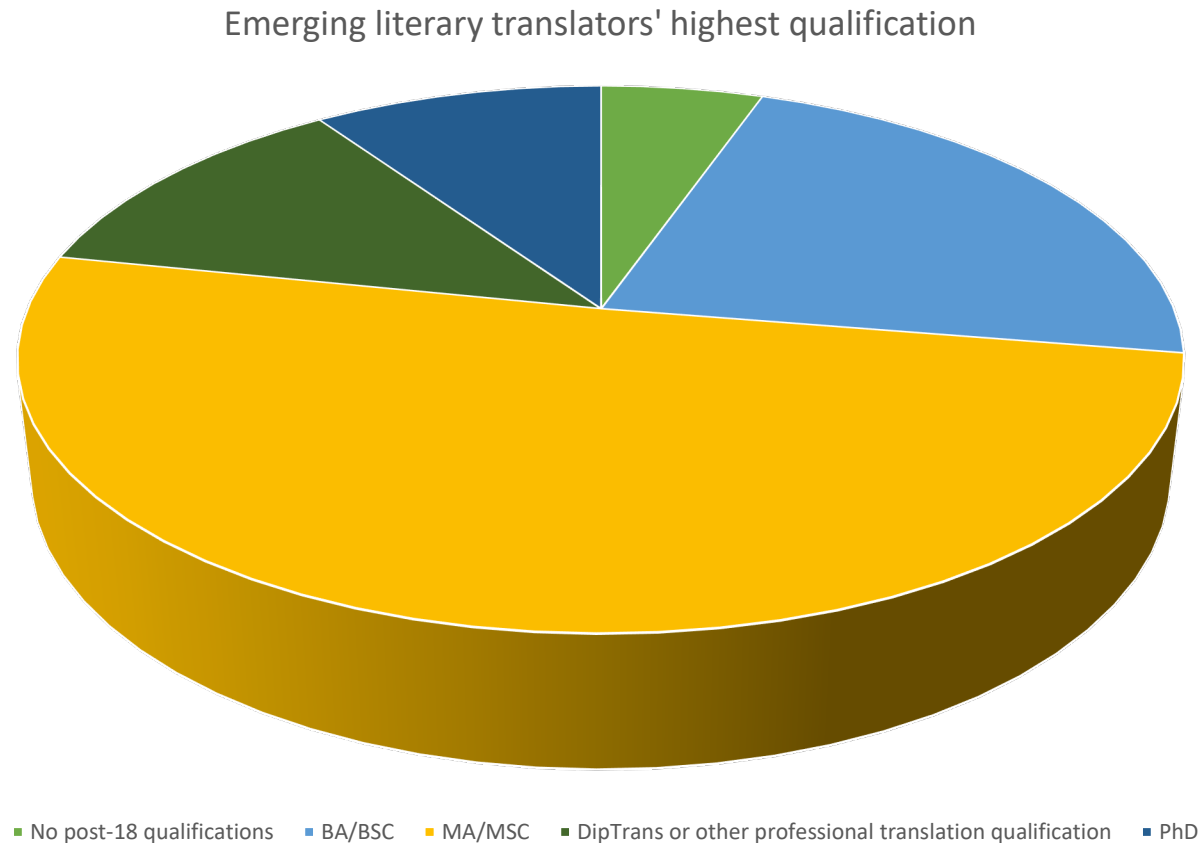
Ruth Martin

Co-chair:

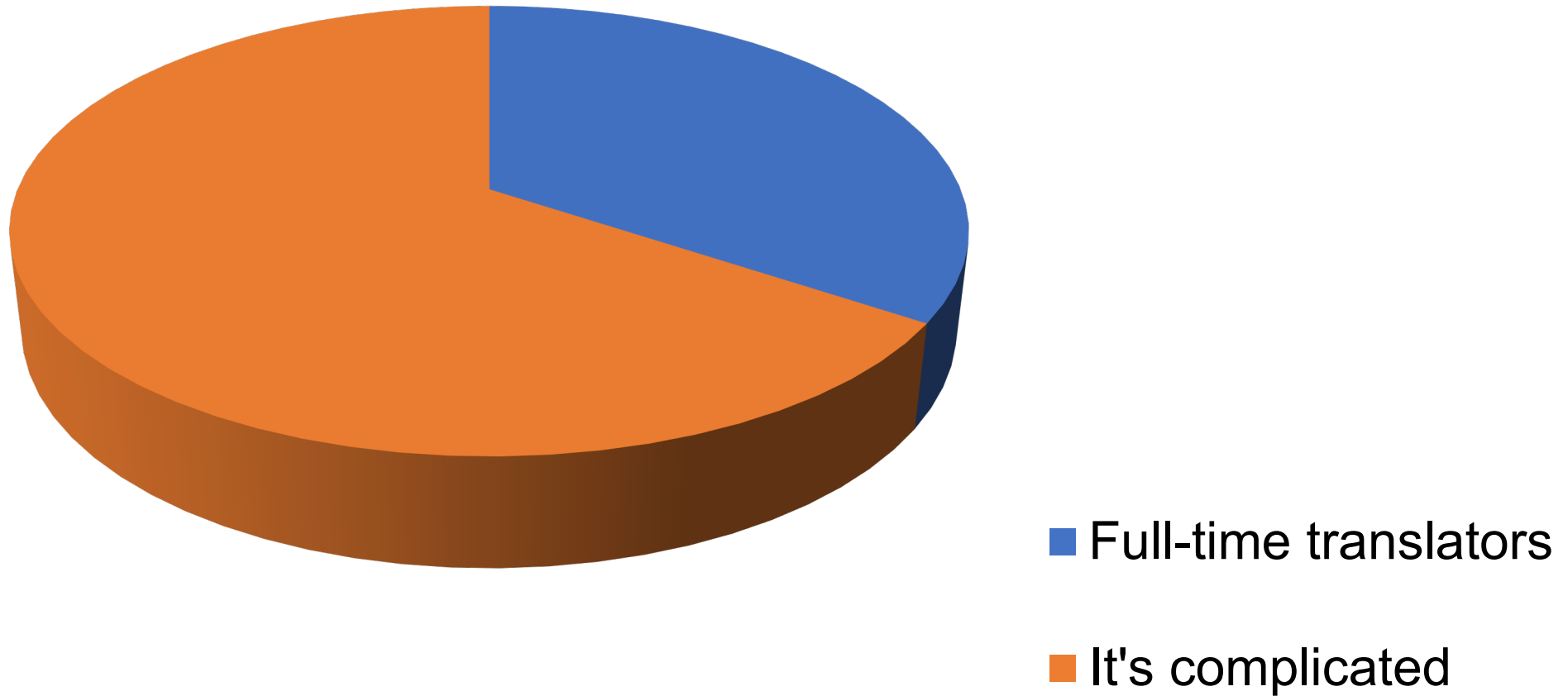


Who are literary translators?

Data from a survey of early-career translators, conducted via the UK-based Emerging Translators Network



Who are literary translators?



A few of the other jobs done by emerging literary translators...

Earning a living:

Waitress
Bartender
Receptionist
Call centre worker
Barista

Books:

Editor
Bookseller
Fiction writer
Editorial assistant
Journalist
Poet
Rights executive (publishing)
Library assistant

Education and research:

Exam invigilator
Language tutor
English as a second language teacher
High school teacher
Research assistant
University lecturer
Documentary researcher

Other areas of the arts:

Film maker
Musician
Lighting designer
Theatre practitioner
Artist
Dance artist
Artist's model

“Other”:

Bicycle mechanic
Doctor
Yoga teacher
Drystone waller
PR consultant
Lawyer
Psychologist

101 of **616** emerging literary/book translators surveyed also do commercial or technical translation at least part-time – and for more established translators, the proportion may be higher. Here are some of their thoughts...

“I think the distinction between 'commercial' and 'literary' translation is a largely arbitrary one. When I translate books, I'm working with a direct client who is a publisher. It's a different style of work, but ultimately, the principles are the same: it's all about customer service, professionalism, and turning in a product that meets the client's needs.”

“I actually like the combination a) because it gives me a bit of variety and, importantly, b) because it keeps me solvent - you have to wait so long to get paid for literary work!”

“The nice thing about having a book to work on is that I can organise my time entirely as I see fit, rather than responding to urgent requests and having to turn a translation round in 24 hours.”

“You get more feedback in the literary world; there is a lot of back-and-forth with various editors. Obviously that takes up time, but it makes me feel so much more invested in my work.”

“Working on books means I have concrete projects I can showcase to existing and potential clients.”

“I have survived by translating mass-market books and working in the commercial sector in order to ‘fund’ my literary habit.”

“Doing business translation allowed me to do what was effectively a five-year paid apprenticeship before taking on anything literary. It was like taking a second degree.”

Getting a foot in the door

- **Build your profile**
- **Build your network**

Build your profile

Join the online literature community
and add your opinion to the mix

↳ You Retweeted



Charlotte Collins @cctranslates · Jun 9

#TheEighthLife is coming! Loving this taster from @ScribeUKbooks with the beautiful cover art, & an introduction by @PGJpublishing. Nino #Haratishvili's Georgian-German masterpiece is translated by me and @the_germanist & is out in English this November.



Download the first chapter of The Eighth Life by Nin...
Six romances, a revolution, the story of the century.
The Eighth Life by Nino Haratishvili is published in th...
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↻ 5

♥ 15



Dr Ruth Martin @the_germanist · Jul 25

What new fiction in translation are people particularly looking forward to this autumn? Help me out, I have to write a thing... @andothertweets @ScribeUKbooks @Istros_books @PeirenePress @PushkinPress @TiltedAxisPress and all you other lovely publishers of translations.

💬 20

↻ 13

♥ 21



Dr Ruth Martin @the_germanist · May 11

Leaving the @CeatlNews AGM with lots of ideas for future projects. And with more knowledge about horse breeding, Finnish idioms and the history of urinals, because... well, translators.



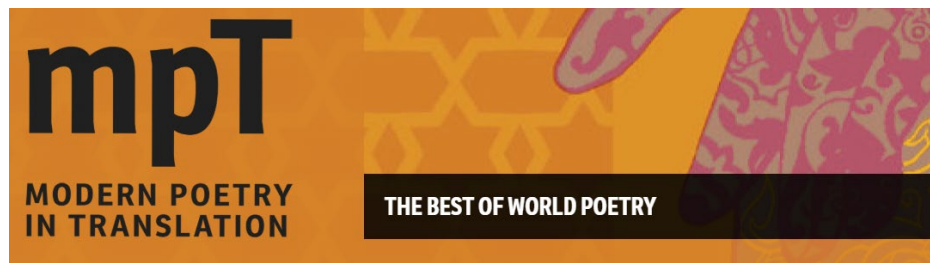
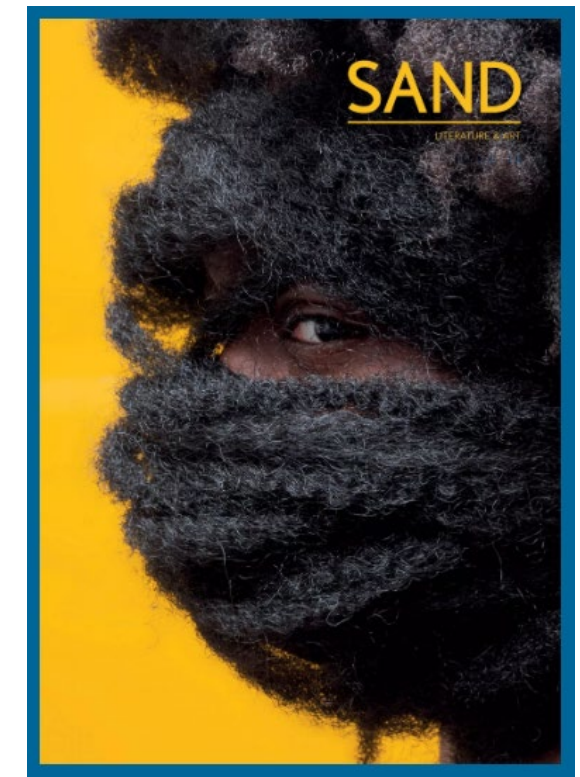
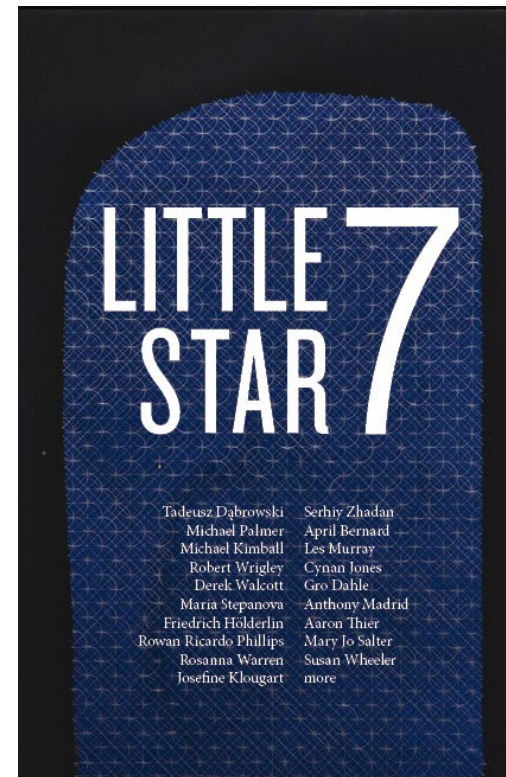
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Build your profile

Submit to literary journals



Build your profile

Do sample translations

dtv

 rowohlt

Diogenes

Kiepenheuer
& Witsch

DROEMER*


EICHBORN

Suhrkamp

PIPER


S. FISCHER
VERLAGE

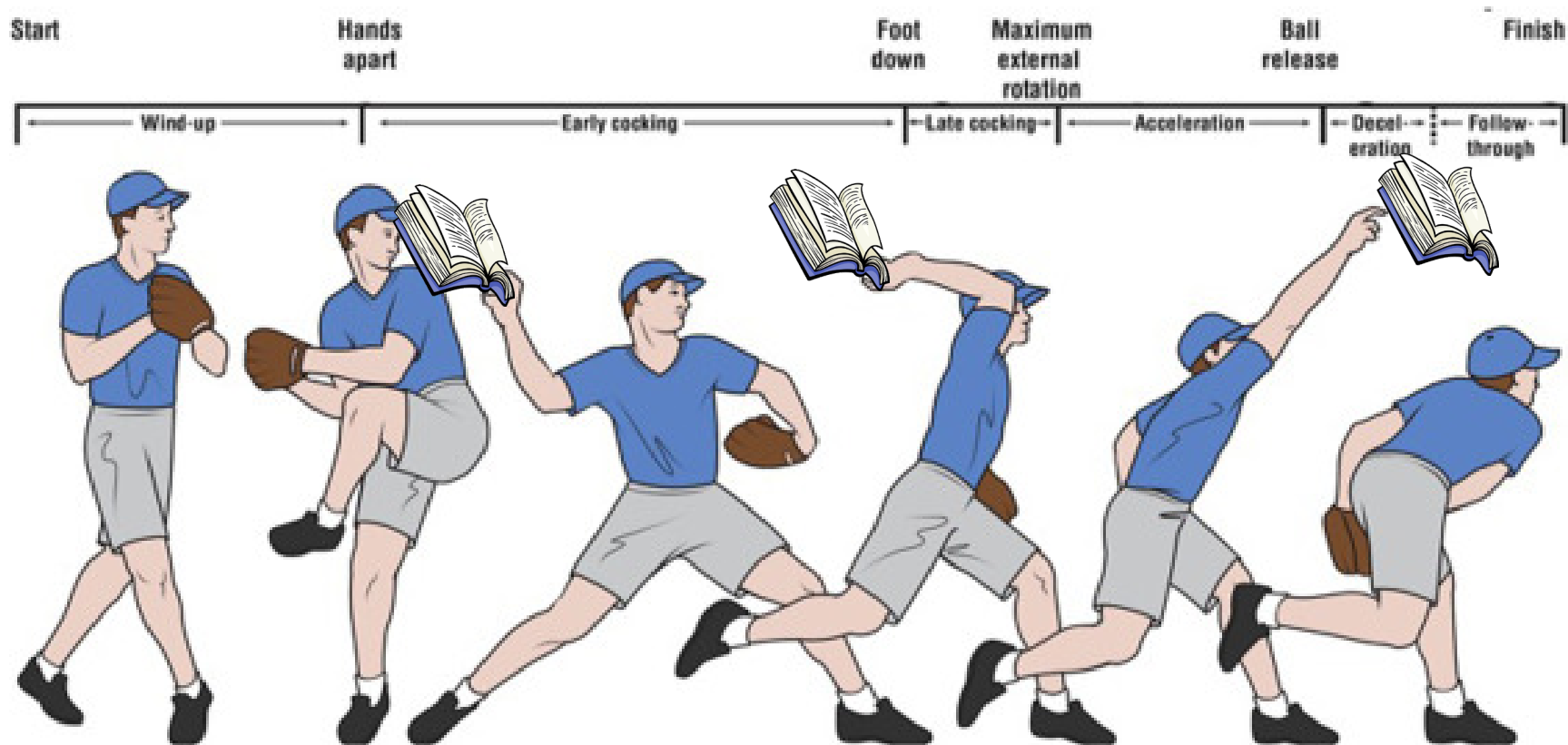
Build your network



Build your network

- **Hang out with other literary translators**
- **Find a mentor**
- **Go to book fairs and translation events**
- **Chat to publishers at book launches**
- **Join a(nother) professional association (ALTA/AG/TA)**
- **Connect with cultural institutes**

To pitch or not to pitch?



Working with publishers

Negotiating a contract: what do I need to negotiate?

- Fee
- Deadline
- Rights
- Responsibilities

Negotiating a contract

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



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[Home](#) > A Model Contract for Literary Translations

A MODEL CONTRACT FOR LITERARY TRANSLATIONS

November 30, 2012

Updated 9/15/17. The model contract is intended to be a starting point in negotiations between the translator and publisher. Be sure to see also our [Translation FAQs](#).

This agreement is entered into on [date] between [Translator's name] (hereinafter the "Translator"), whose address is [Translator's address] and [Publisher's name] (hereinafter the "Publisher"), whose address is [Publisher's address], concerning a translation into English (hereinafter the "Translation") of [title of original Work] (hereinafter the "Work") by [Author's name] (hereinafter the "Author") from the [name of language], presently titled [working title in English].

1. The Translator agrees to deliver the Translation to the Publisher on or before [date] in the absence of delays due to circumstances beyond their control and unless otherwise extended in writing by both parties.
2. The Publisher shall pay the Translator a fee of \$____ for the Translation, payable as follows: The Translator shall receive the first half (\$____) within 30 days of signature of this contract by both parties, and the second half (\$____) within 30 days of delivery by the Translator.
3. The Translator shall receive the following royalties from sales of the Translation:
 - a) XX% of the Publisher's list price on all hardcover copies sold;

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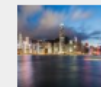
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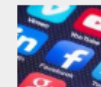
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What's New



Arrest of Hong Kong Activists "An Assault on Activism and Protest"



DARE: Facebook, Twitter to Attend Disinformation Event at Federal Elections Office



First Amendment Champion Theodore J. Boutrous, Jr., PEN America's Legal Director

All contracts are negotiable (and publishers expect to negotiate)

What is important to you?

Battles you might want to pick:

Fee paid in instalments to regulate income

Retention of copyright

Royalties

Retention of subsidiary rights





- The negotiation of fees is a matter for the individual translator and publisher to resolve. You should always feel comfortable about asking to be fairly paid. In the SoA's experience, UK trade publishers will pay in the region of **£95 per thousand words [\$120]** for a prose translation. The word count can apply to either the source or target language.
- The agreed sum may come as a flat fee, an advance against royalties, or a fee plus royalties from the first copy sold. For poetry we have observed payment in the region of **£1.10 [\$1.42] per line with a minimum of £35 [\$45] per poem.**

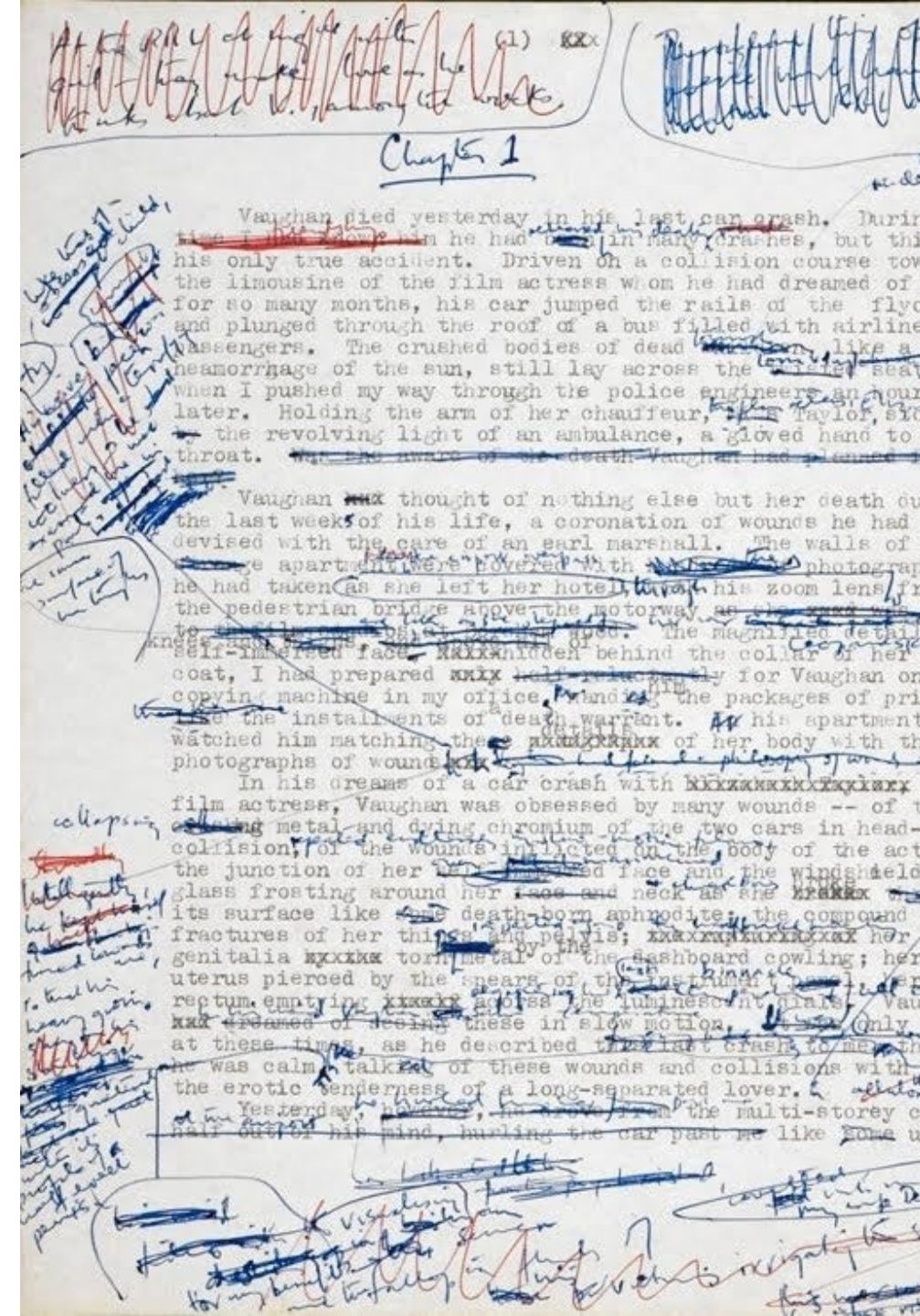


**Don't accept low fees,
even for your first book!**

Working with publishers

1: The commissioning editor

- Manage expectations: provide a sample translation, request a sample edit
- Discuss contact with the author
- Check in occasionally
- Request an extension in good time
- Include notes on your ms
- Translations might not get a full line edit



Working with publishers

2: The copy editor

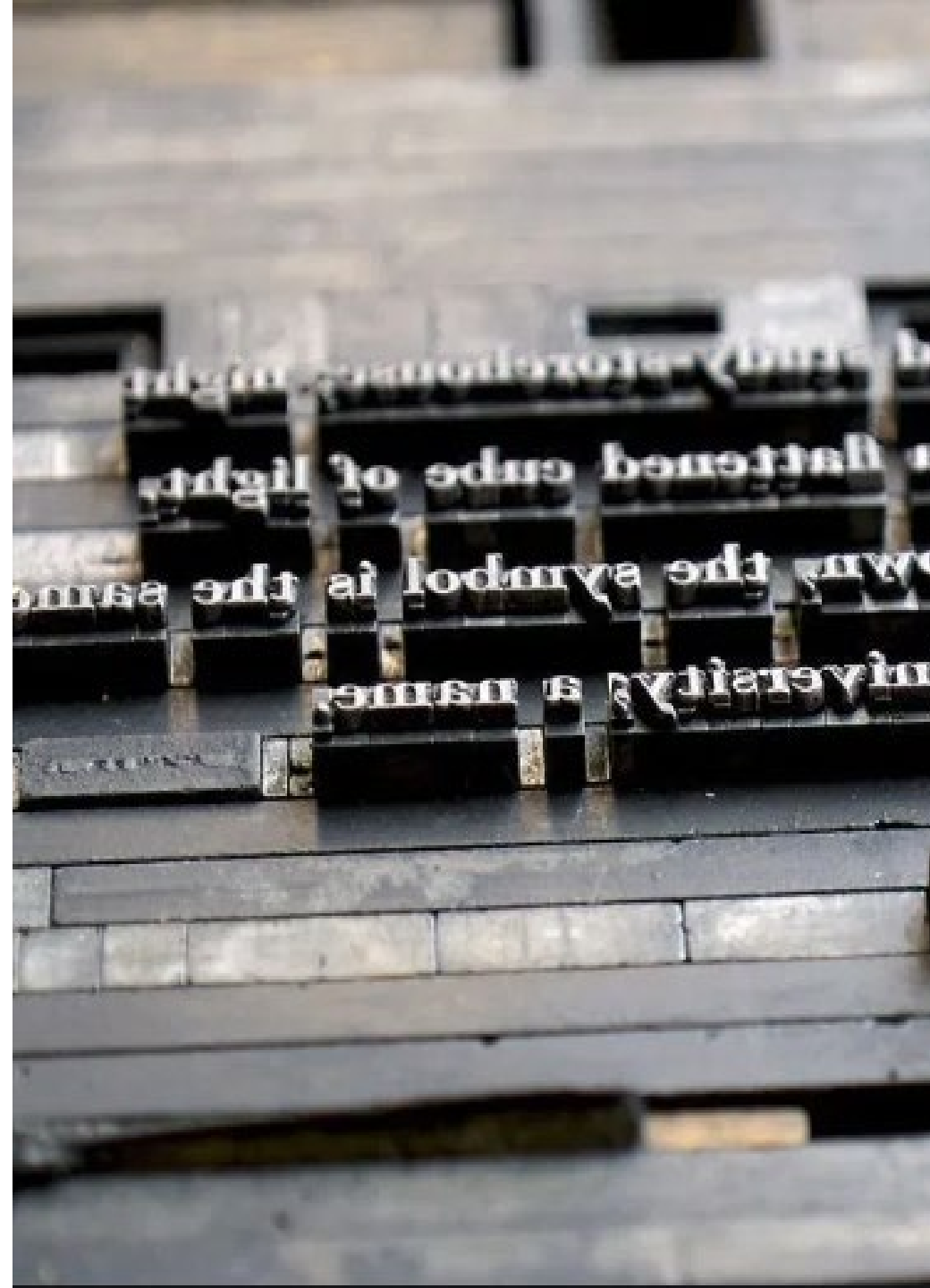
- Request a house style manual
- Find out if your copy editor is in-house or freelance
- Hard-copy proofs? Learn the most common copy-editing marks
- Copy editors are fallible! Don't be afraid to disagree
- Don't be alarmed by a heavy copy edit

	Delete		Flush Left
	Insert		Flush Right
	Join		Center Horizontal
	Move closer		Center Vertical
	Space		Move to the end of the line
	Add Space		Move to the end of the paragraph
	Delete Space		Indent 1 em
	Transpose Word		Indent 2 em
	Transpose Letters		Paragraph
	To separate two or more marks		All Caps
	Let it Stand (ignore correction)		Small Caps
	Move Left		Caps & Small Caps
	Move Right		Capital Letters
	Move Up		Lower Case
	Move Down		Set in Roman
	Align Vertically		Set in Italic
	Align Horizontally		Set in Bold

Working with publishers

3: The production editor

- Allocate time in your diary for proofreading
- Stick to the schedule
- After typesetting: typos and single-word changes only



Working with publishers

4: The publicist

- Decide how much time you have to give
- What do you expect to be paid for?
- Launches, festivals and readings
- Social media
- Blog tours and interviews
- Reviews
- Or maybe: nothing...



Q&A



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