

Who is this mythical English reader?

On the eve of International Translation Day 2020, four translators from various time zones around the globe joined Daniel Hahn for a conversation on the subject of the mythical English reader. This Meet the World event was in partnership with the British Centre for Literary Translation, celebrating its 30th anniversary in 2020.

The event also celebrated the 10th anniversary of the Emerging Translator mentorship programme founded by Daniel Hahn and now run by the National Centre for Writing.

The participants: Anton Hur is a translator from Korean, based in Korea, and is a mentor for the programme; Gitanjali Patel is a translator from Portuguese based in the UK; Jen Wei Ting translates from Japanese, as well as being a writer herself, and is in Singapore; and Somrita Urni Ganguly is in India, a former mentee, and translates from Bangla. Daniel Hahn is a writer, editor and translator based in the UK. You can find more extensive bios at the end of this transcript.

Danny: The reason we have this topic – The Mythical English Reader – is because we're thinking about the problems that are created by the idea that there is a uniformity of receivers of translated literature. This English reader is not a particular person but is a kind of embodiment of, poster child for, mascot for this very limiting, very rigid structure that we're going to be talking about today.

The mythical English reader. If we were going to have to define who they are, I suspect they would be somewhere between me and Gitanjali, by which I mean someone close to one of the big publishing centres of the English-speaking world, somebody probably educated, somebody probably white, somebody probably female. The fact that that is a description of a very large proportion of people who are editors in publishing is no coincidence, I think. But I'm going to start with the most general question and ask first, about who your reader is. Who are you translating for when you translate?

Anton: Well, that's a very easy question to answer because it's myself. I am the mythical English reader, it is *moi, c'est moi*. I always have an aesthetic opinion and I've been speaking English for a while now and I read English, my English isn't too bad. So for me, I'm the first reader for my translations, for me I am the reader that I have to satisfy.

But when I became a professional literary translator I went to one workshop where the workshop leader took a translation of mine and said: Oh, this is awkward, and I asked them: That's interesting, so what is awkward about it, what does 'awkward' mean? And they go: It's, you know, *awkward*. And I thought, what does it mean if something is awkward? It means it's awkward to you. Obviously, it's not awkward to me, I did the translation. But what made them feel entitled to make such a judgment: *It's just awkward?* Now some things *are* just awkward. But this was really not that. If something is awkward you should be able to articulate it.

Then I would go into more prestigious workshops where I would meet more prestigious translators and they would have all these subtle little, almost micro-aggressions: Oh, an English reader would not read that. It's not so much that they find it awkward that's the problem, it's that they would use this weird construct of this mythical English reader in order to justify their criticism. That's when I started to interrogate that bias.

Danny: Is this a conversation which you have with publishers before you do a translation? Would you have a conversation with an editor when you're signing a contract, and say: This is what I think, this is who I'm translating for, I'm not really interested in that notion of the reader, but I have this sense. Is it a conversation you feel you can have before you sit down and work?

Anton: I don't think it's a conversation that I can have with editors and publishers. I really feel like this is so politically fraught and in the power differential I am so in the inferior position that I can't really have that discussion with editors and with publishers, although they themselves may not consciously have that bias. I haven't encountered that with publishers so much, but mostly with professors, in workshops and with critics. It's interesting to me that the actual editors and the actual publishers have been very open to: Okay, so this is what you're doing, why don't you try this? They would never say something like: This is awkward, or an English reader would find this awkward. That's not the way they couch their criticism. I don't discuss it with editors, mostly because I don't need to. They seem to know how to get edits done. They deal with people who are even more diva-ish than I am all the time, so I imagine that they're very good at couching their criticisms.

Danny: It's reassuring that you haven't encountered that problem at the editorial point in publishing. Somrita, you're based in India, but you're not just circumstantially based in India, you're also working a lot with Indian publishers. I wonder if your view of this is different, whether there is a different sense of that person Anton is referring to, or is there no sense from publishers or anyone else that there is a kind of figure who can be used as an excuse to decide what is acceptable and what isn't?

Somrita: You asked if we have that conversation with the editor about who we're translating for. Possibly because I've worked with editors I know or have known for a while, I've managed to have that conversation with them, so I tend to know who the book or the translation is for. Is it for an Indian readership? Is it primarily for somebody in the UK? Is it primarily for someone in the US? I don't think my translation changes vastly, but there are some subtle changes and I'm aware of that. For someone in the UK who is reading a book from India and is not aware of how caste works in India, I will try to massage in more information while I'm translating, to contextualise what I'm saying. So yes, I have had the chance to have that conversation with editors to figure out who my readers are.

But to answer the other question: who am I translating for? Unlike Anton, I don't translate for myself. I translate for people who do not have access to Bangla or Hindi. I believe that good writing, good art is like the sun, it's meant for everybody, and through my translation I try to carry some of the warmth of that sun to corners of the world where its rays don't reach. I'm not translating for someone who has access to Bangla. Subconsciously, I'm always translating for someone who will not be able to read the story in Bangla.

Danny: I wonder whether one of the issues is that it's not possible to translate without some sense of who your reader is, whether it's yourself or somebody else, whether it's a kind of vague collective or a particular person. And so who gets to decide who is the acceptable reader? Can you imagine translating with no sense of who you're translating for?

Gitanjali: You can't pigeonhole the reader. As we've seen in the many reports on diversity in the publishing industry, such as the recent Spread the Word report, the assumptions made about the UK readership reflect a desire to cater to a narrow audience. When I think about who I translate for, I really relate to what Madhu Kaza said about translation as a process of migration, or the movement of bodies. So when we translate, we can't think about moving those words, that text without considering its relationship with history, politics, race, imperialism. And if we carry that metaphor on, we can think about the translated text as a diasporic community which faces all the pressures of assimilation, threats of erasure... But there is also the potential for the translated text to be a site of resistance for that community. When I think about who I translate for, I think I translate for the writer and the community that I'm representing, because I think the translation is all about respecting the dignity of the person that you're representing in your translation, especially if that person and that community is marginalised in the country that you're translating from.

Danny: I'll come back a little later to that parallel with diasporic text and diasporic people. I'm interested in the status that English has in places where English may be the majority language or a minority language. One of the things that we don't take account of when we talk about readers in this way is the fact that the relationship to English, if you're a heritage speaker, is different for people from different backgrounds and contexts.

In Singapore you have many languages, your relationship to English is different from mine. Can you say something about that kind of limiting when we talk about who the reader is, the sense that we're always talking about people who are first-language English readers, which is by no means everyone, always talking about heritage English readers.

Wei Ting: Singapore is an interesting case because in the 1980s, we used to have bilingual education and we switched. We used to have Chinese medium schools and English medium schools, then by the 1980s it became an entirely English medium school system. As a result, a lot of people, a lot of families found themselves losing their mother tongue, and English was forced upon a large share of the population.

Danny: I wonder whether one of the things that is different about translating and writing is that in theory one can write without a reader, but translating, by its nature, the etymology of the English word at least, is about carrying across. It's positional, about transferring something to a particular place, particular reader, imaginary or otherwise.

Wei Ting: I call myself an accidental translator and when I first started out writing and translating I wasn't very conscious of who I was writing for, but it was along the process that it started to become more and more clear to me. I called myself an accidental translator because of the reason I started translating. At a literary conference in Seoul I heard a story and I was moved to tell the story to more people. I started questioning why there weren't more of such narratives available in the English language and that sent me down a rabbit hole, trying to discover why is it that certain works appear in English and why what we actually see in the English language is such a tiny percentage of the literature that appears in the original language. It's a tiny, tiny fraction, and how does this selection process come about? That made me realise that I had a much more conscious and much more important role than I realised in what gets translated and that, was what made me realise who I really am translating for. Sometimes it feels a bit self-important to say this, but I translate for people whose stories don't get heard in traditional English language publishing, whether because they don't have the voice or they don't have access to opportunities to be heard.

Danny: That question of whose stories get translated, which books get translated, what makes it in and what doesn't, is potentially one of the effects of an assumed homogeneity of what a reader wants or what a reader finds palatable. Alexander Chee says that books are not just the door to another world, they are part of the door to the whole world. So there's a question of which of the bits of the picture are missing.

Brazil is a really good example of one of those places where we don't translate very much, but what we translate is a very, very narrow selection of a certain kind of writer and a certain kind of story. It's not quite carnival and football and street crime and samba, but nonetheless there is a real kind of limiting of which stories are getting told from a country like Brazil.

Gitanjali: First to name exactly whose story we are talking about: it's usually white, middle class, non-disabled, straight writers from Rio and Sao Paulo. For a country that is so huge and where 54 percent of the country identify as not white, it seems quite amazing that the majority of translated literature from Brazil reflects that dominant perspective. When we think about translating literature from a specific place, we should be thinking about how translation can be representative of the

whole place and its people. If only a narrow perspective is entering English, it demonstrates how the translator, and publisher, are complicit in perpetuating dominant social structures through their text selections. When we think about whose stories aren't getting told, we're thinking about Black, indigenous and other minoritised identities in Brazil, and how they are often themes rather than authorial voices in literature. Often this comes with perpetuating really harmful stereotypes, which are then carried through into the Anglophone world through translation. This a really important element of translated literature: whose voices and what stories we are telling about that place.

The Spread the Word report was so important because it gave evidence for what people have been experiencing, which is that publishers have been reported to think that writers of colour are too commercially risky to publish, they think that stories that talk about and that have characters of colour are niche and won't appeal to their core audience, and also that people of colour don't read as much as their core audience, which is also really shocking.

I think we've got those two things to balance up, the publishing industry and the pressures they put on what texts get translated, and the translators themselves and which texts they choose to translate.

Danny: I'd be curious to know from Anton and from Somrita whether you have that same sense, whether there is a particular kind of Korean book or story, or Bangla story or book, that is more likely to find its way into the global anglophone publishing market.

Anton: There are so few works that get published from Korean, although it seems like a lot, and to be honest we are overrepresented, given the size of the country.

Danny: You're doing a lot better than Brazil if that helps!

Anton: That does help. But there's so few Korean translations that are published that I don't think that it's really possible to draw a line. They were trying to make K-thrillers a thing, but it's not really.

For me as a reader I don't want something that I know I would like, I want something that I didn't know I would like, and I think a lot of readers don't know what they're going to like until they are presented with it and until they read it. With that in mind, whenever I go out into a bookstore looking for something to translate – because I'm very mercenary that way, I go into a bookstore here in Seoul and I look at what's out and sometimes I'm surprised enough to be like: Oh, I want to translate this book. Why? Because there's nothing like it, I did not expect this book to exist. Now that I know that it exists and I really like it, I really like how they pulled it off, I want to translate it. That's what I think when I think of what the audience is going to like. It's not so much that I have this text where I want things to fit into it. It's more like: if I'm surprised by it and if I'm engaged by it – but I have to be surprised by it and it has to fall from the sky, because that's always been what reading has been like for me. It has to be something that I didn't know that I would like until I read it.

Danny: You're not trying to second-guess: Well, this is quite an old book, it may be harder to sell, or this is a book by a Korean writer but it's not set in Korea, it may be harder to sell?

Anton: No, because for me, that surprise is the most important thing and I don't care if the author is dead. Kang Kyeong-ae is dead, I still translated her. It doesn't matter if the author is dead, it doesn't matter if it's an old book, it doesn't matter if it didn't do well in Korea, because it could do well in translation. Look at Han Kang. She was more of a cult writer in Korea. She was not the big deal that she is now. She became a hit overseas in translation, thanks to Deborah Smith. We don't know where the next hit is going to come, no one knows, and whoever pretends they know is just faking it. For me, that's the most important thing, and I am so confident in my abilities as a translator that I know

that I could overcome all of those obstacles. But the one thing I cannot overcome is a text that is not surprising, that people expect to like or hate. That's the one thing we just can't overcome as literary translators.

Danny: Somrita, are you mindful of what you think other people, be it publishers or whoever, might like, or do think I'm going to have the confidence in my own taste and readers will find it?

Somrita: I've been translating for three years now and, fortunately or unfortunately, I've never had to pitch a work to publishers, I have not done that yet, I look forward to doing it. I've always worked on projects that have been commissioned. I agree that sometimes we're trying to pigeonhole writers and entire cultures. If you're trying to sell a book in translation from India to the UK or the US, it's more likely that the publisher is going to expect the book to talk about caste, women's issues, oppression of gender minorities or other minorities. I do think we've become a bit of a type and I personally find it very difficult to sell sci-fi written in Bangla, translated into English, in the UK market or, for example, a book that I worked on, a massive, five-volume young adult adventure novel, *Firesongs*. There doesn't seem to be much interest in an adventure novel written in Bangla, it seems there is not much of a market for it in translation. I do feel we're getting pigeonholed and it's a little sad, because when we publish something in the UK from India, or from Calcutta, or West Bengal, we represent this as minority writing, except that in Calcutta, in India, this is not minority writing at all. This could be an award-winning novel catering to a large mass, it could be huge. But when it travels to the UK or the US in translation, because Bangla writing is so underrepresented in these two markets in particular, it tends to get pigeonholed into that minority block, and so people have expectations of what they want to read when something is coming from India.

Anton: That's a really interesting note about science fiction. I would totally read a science fiction work that was written in Bangla. My debut literary translation was a science fiction work and it was literally the second Korean science fiction short story published in English. When I offered it to Words Without Borders I didn't say: do you publish science fiction? I mean, they do. Now we have three books of Korean science fiction coming out. A lot of times we – the Smoking Tigers who happened to be the translators of these books – felt like we're really fighting an uphill battle, where we know that this book is really awesome. We were helped by the fact that it was around 2016, 2017 when Liu Cixin's *Three-Body Problem* became such a huge hit. The perception was: science fiction in translation can be a thing. It's still an uphill battle but it is definitely something that we have to fight for as translators if we want a queer work to be published, if we want a science fiction work to be published. We are working against the perception that if it's very literary, it can't be genre, it can't use all of the different elements of thrillers and so on. There are some genre works that are very popular in translation, but they are still quite rare and it's still an uphill battle.

Somrita: I'm really glad you mentioned Words Without Borders because I think there are journals that are really making the market a lot more democratic. A shout-out to platforms like Words Without Borders or Asymptote. There are a lot more indie publishers, as opposed to the big traditional houses, that are willing to invest in genre fiction or in works that don't fit into these stereotypes. And of course we need to fight for better representation as well.

As I mentioned earlier, I've not pitched anything before, but if I were to pitch, I would pitch something that I want to read. I wouldn't just pitch something which everybody else in the Anglophone world wants to read about India. With the Internet, with digital platforms, the process is a lot more democratic now. We can also just put things up on our blogs or websites and try to figure out if this mythical reader has any interest in the work instead of having the big publishers sitting as gatekeepers and dictating: yes, this is permissible, and no, that is not marketable at all.

Danny: One of the problems is not just the question of it somehow having to be literary, but also that translated literature often is seen as having almost an anthropological function, and so the purpose is to find out about this culture. Why would I read a Bangla novel set on Mars if I can read a novel written in English which is set on Mars? If I'm going to read a Bangla novel, it has to tell me something about this culture which I don't know anything about, rather than actually thinking about the author and the authorial voice and all of those things involved in a great piece of writing which are not just to do with presenting an exotic culture to people for whom it is unfamiliar.

I want to ask about the restrictions on what gets translated and what doesn't, that sort of awkwardness or what was identified with awkwardness, and whether there is a risk of translated texts being expected to be flat, whether the expectation for something which is translated, compared to something that is written in English, is much less bold stylistically because there is an assumption that it's going to be flattened out.

Wei Ting: If you look at informal anecdotal evidence from the USA and the UK, there's been a lot of chatter about why so little translated fiction gets published, but there seems to be a psychological barrier in those audiences towards reading translated fiction because they think they have to overcome something in order to be able to enjoy this text, when really, with a translated book, that should not be the case. Either that or you should have an open enough mind to know that you cannot expect to identify with everything that you read in the text. I don't think any translator ever sets out to flatten the text, but I like to compare translated works with the original and recently there was a bit of a debate about Mieko Kawakami's *Breasts and Eggs*, about different translations and how the dialect gets translated. My own observation is that, not just in her work but in other Japanese texts, a lot of the very lyrical moments of description, when it gets translated into English it becomes something, else. I wouldn't say that it isn't an authentic translation, I think that every translator has to have the leeway to translate the way that they want to, but then the question is what are we aiming to do with the translation? Are we aiming to replicate, should we aim to replicate that lyricism? What is the important point? If you want to try and replicate every single part of that beautiful phrase or description, you might end up missing the forest for the trees. I became less judgmental when I started translating myself and I started thinking: Oh my God, this is such a beautiful piece of Japanese description, but how am I going to render it into English? And I think that was the point for me when I realised that I can't translate it word for word. If I want to, I have to come up with something completely new that has the essence but may not use the same words. We shouldn't think of these as flaws in translation. Something that I've been thinking about recently is translation as a departure, it's a departure point for the translator to create something new and we should be open to that, both as readers and as translators, and also as writers.

Danny: Jeremy Tiang says: I keep being told by editors, English doesn't do that, and my response is: Well, English hasn't done that yet. I'm interested in the extent to which translators are allowed to be the people who are doing the stylistically interesting things that stretch a language rather than having to be more polite and cautious because somehow the benefit of the doubt is given less to the strangeness of translation. English is this great, malleable language which is open to novelty and influence, but there's this risk that English gets stretched by the innovative stylists who write in English and translators have to somehow be much more normative and much more conforming.

I was thinking, Gitanjali, about the diaspora parallel. In a piece you and Jesse wrote for Words Without Borders about good translations you talk about good being not just to do with ideas of quality but also to do with virtue and obedience. It made me think about this good immigrant thing, where the text has to be quite grateful to be here, frankly, and keep its head down and not bother anyone and it will be tolerated. I don't know whether that feels like going too fast at a parallel, but the extent to which we are prepared to tolerate translations being interesting, being stylistically bold, does seem similar.

Gitanjali: Sometimes the attitude towards translated works in English is just another way of exerting control over something that can't be controlled, perpetuating the idea that language is something that we can control. It's massively imperial. Translation is a unique opportunity to push the boundaries of English and show what English can do at the point of contact with other languages. There's so many things that we have to push English to do in order to make the translation work. There are so many different ways in which a translation could be considered good, which is what makes it such a unique art form. When I hear that question, I also have to think about it from my own perspective as a minoritised translator and how pressures to conform are even greater because there's always going to be a question of 'oh, that's her name, so how good is her English? How good is her translation going to be? Is her prose going to be fluent?' Assessments of a good translation in the UK publishing industry, and I think also the US, centre this emphasis on fluency and seamless prose. Not 'awkward', as Anton said. But also, what's funny is that when you are a minoritised translator, your fluency is in question before your prose is even seen. Many translators have had the experience of one editor calling prose 'too awkward', and then another editor will look at the same piece and say 'it's too fluent', as if that's a thing.

Danny: There is also the question of the different Englishes that we all have and what those hierarchies are, not just individual to individual, but as though there were a single, solid, hermetic Indian English, British English, whatever English. And we're obviously kidding ourselves if we think that these hierarchies of different Englishes are not incredibly entrenched. Somrita, could say something about your experience of jostling against that hierarchy.

Somrita: I recently read in *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* that Gertrude Stein went to Paris so she could be alone with the English language. I don't think it's quite possible to be alone with a language. A language doesn't exist alone, it doesn't exist in a vacuum. I could try to be alone with English or alone with Bangla but it won't work because languages, like love, cannot be confined to communities, or in watertight compartments. They spill over, they're messy. My English has completely messed up my Bangla, and similarly, my Bangla colours my English, infects my English. And this infection is not a problem when I'm publishing in India because this is how Indians speak. However, if I'm trying to publish this work in the UK or the US, my English register might seem a little different to some people. It's this idea of difference, this idea of diseased English, that Johannes Göransson called 'the sickness in translation'.

So, this brings us to the question of who is this mythical English reader we're translating for? And how insular is she, or her publisher, or her editor, that they are not aware of the fact that this is 2020 and we speak different Englishes around the world? And why are they unable to acknowledge or make room for these different Englishes? As a translator or as a writer, when I'm sending a work to the UK or to the US, I'm very self-conscious. I try to strike a balance between how 'sanitised' my work should be and how much of my Indianness in English I should retain in the piece for it to be palatable, for it to be digestible by this mythical English reader so that her reading experience is not slowed down. Frankly speaking, I don't think slow reading is as bad as the kind of reputation it has gathered over time. Usually my editors and I have been able to arrive at a meeting point where we say a little bit of indigestion is okay.

English was introduced in India in 1835 and when it was introduced as a medium of instruction in higher education our native languages were rejected as worthless; we were told by Thomas Babington Macaulay that we were not producing anything worth reading or writing or pursuing or studying in any of our Indian languages. Now, 200 years down the line, some of us have claimed this English language for ourselves and we don't let this language own us anymore. For some of us, English is no longer that foreign language, it's become our first language, it's the language of our emotional makeup. So all the quirks and kinks that you find in my writing are my own. I'm reading,

thinking, writing, speaking – I'm doing everything – in English, I'm dreaming in English, if it comes to that. So as opposed to English being the language of merely my intellectual makeup, where I'm always acutely aware of what I'm doing, always aware of rules, semantics and hierarchies, when I'm writing, when I'm translating, I tend to ramble a bit unconsciously; because that's the kind of language I speak here, that's the kind of lives we lead here. I don't homogenise my translations actively. I wait for inputs from my editor to tell me how much of my 'Bengali-English' is okay and how many of my quirks and kinks I have to sacrifice at the altar of the monolithic concept of 'white' English. We can't deny this, it exists, Anglophone publishing circles do hierarchise languages and registers, and we've got 'correct' English registers and 'incorrect' or dirty or diseased English registers. I guess I'm just trying to say that diseased is not necessarily bad, you need to give it a chance. If you keep thinking about what that one monolithic English register is *supposed* to do then you'll never end up figuring out what it *can* do. So I let my language ramble a bit, like my thoughts. As Doris Summer would say, I let my English take a stroll, and sometimes lose its way in neighbouring language fields, and come out the way it does.

Danny: You used the word 'diseased' but also you have so many different and differently loaded ways of expressing. You said English has messed up my Bangla and Bangla has coloured my English, and those are completely different ways of thinking about the value of those relationships. I want to talk a little about this question of who decides that something is acceptable, who decides the story is legitimate or a voice is legitimate. It seems to me that the 'who' is a really important question that we haven't talked about very much.

Gitanjali referred to the Spread the Word report. There's a Claudia Rankine line which is: whiteness wants the kind of progress that reflects what it values, that reflects itself or that is a reflection of itself. And to some extent everyone's going to have their own measures. So the question is not just how we change that, not, as it were, making me, as a white man in England, think differently, but to think about who are going to be the translators, the editors, the decision makers who will impose whatever method or value is important to them. Is one of the things we're talking about not just needing a different way of seeing, but needing a different personnel, essentially?

Gitanjali: What would be helpful is not thinking of the mythical English reader as a person or a community, but as a system or a structure that shapes the way that the industry runs, that shapes our self-image, that works to support dominant structures. If we replace 'who is the mythical English reader?' with 'what is coloniality?' we would get closer to the truth. What I don't want us to conclude is: we just need more diversity in the industry. Because having more Black and Brown faces in the industry isn't going to do anything for equity, for inclusion. We really need to think about how these structures are implemented before we start thinking about dismantling them. Thinking about individual people is not useful until we think about the structures.

Danny: But as individuals, maybe not individuals as a target as it were, but for us as individuals there is a question about what we can do in terms of how we relate to these structures and what we challenge and what we accede to. I don't think there's likely to be much disagreement in this group of five of us about the problems that need solving, need changing. But do you have a sense, as one person and as a group of people and your friends and fellow translators, however big this community is, of there being something that you can do about it on any scale?

Anton: What I do in my practice is I try to project a Nietzsche and Übermensch charisma, that I'm a translator, I'm a big deal, I know what I'm talking about, and I say it with so much aplomb and confidence and fake-it-till-you-make-it-ness that at some point people started believing that I actually know what I'm talking about, and I do. But it's a lot of projection and a lot of effort. Translators need to be seen as an authority on language and literature and translation, because until quite recently there were no celebrity translators, readers did not buy books just because they like

the translator. They do exist now, but this is a recent phenomenon, and we are beginning to get some authority on our own. The hashtag #namethetranslator movement is trying to make a social space for translators in order to have that authority so that people will read our works, read the works that we do without this kind of ethnological perspective, that they'll respect them as artistic work, that they will trust us as a literary authority. This is a new development, partly because Twitter and social media help us to project and get our work out there, get our thoughts out there. People begin to see us and they're like: Oh, what they're saying is actually very interesting and I want to read their work. We have to lean into the Nietzsche and celebrity energy, which is terrible because we're basically perpetuating the previous gate system just for our benefit. But for now that's what I'm doing and, God, I'm gonna get a lot of comments about this, aren't I? So I'm going to stop!

Danny: You're among friends, you're fine. What about the rest of you? Does anyone else have a feeling about that, about the things that individually or as a community we can think about quite actively to challenge this? As Gitanjali says, we're talking about structures rather than individuals, but the individual is useful.

Wei Ting: Anton shared something yesterday from the Turkish writer Asli Erdoğan. She said: writing is an act of survival. So I think writing is an act of survival and translation is an act of resistance.

Danny: Yes, that's very good. I do, almost always at the end of chairing events, say that that was so interesting, we could have gone on for many hours. I am often lying when I say that. I'm not lying when I say that now.

Wei Ting: We're just getting started!

Somrita Urni Ganguly is a professor, poet, and literary translator. She is the editor of *Quesadilla and Other Adventures: Food Poems* (2019), and has translated, among other works, Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay's *Anupama and Other Stories* (2020), Dinesh Chandra Chattopadhyay's *Firesongs* (2019), Ashutosh Nadkar's *Shakuni: Master of the Game* (2019), and Shankarlal Sengupta's *The Midnight Sun: Love Lyrics and Farewell Songs* (2018).

Daniel Hahn is a writer, editor and translator, with some sixty books to his name. His translations (from Portuguese, Spanish and French) include fiction from Europe, Africa and the Americas, and non-fiction by writers ranging from Portuguese Nobel laureate José Saramago to Brazilian footballer Pelé.

Anton Hur is a literary translator living in Korea. He is the 2020–2021 Korean mentor for the National Centre for Writing's Emerging Translators Mentoring Scheme.

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Gitanjali Patel is a literary translator and social researcher. She also is the director of Shadow Heroes, an organisation which harnesses the power of literary translation to build critical, creative and inclusive classrooms at secondary schools.