

My good auspices for my students or readers, then, would be to ensure for them, as much as we possibly can, the privilege of accessing texts in the original. This includes, and you can now at least partly do that online, without leaving your desk, appreciating first editions: the material aspect of books, their graphic presentation, publisher strategies, illustrations, even the quality of the printing paper. In other words, I believe we can legitimately propose a critical approach only after evaluating the strategies in the actual product. My feeling is that only after you have gained a somewhat 'intimate' relationship with the text, can you detect what is ostensibly there and what is looming at the back and projecting into the future. There may be dormant critical issues as well as dormant meanings of words that may be re-functionalized and re-circulated, at the same time recovering their first impact on readers' eyes and minds...

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## POETRY

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### James Robertson

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*James Robertson is a poet, publisher, writer, editor and translator, a cultural activist who was prominent in the 'Yes' campaign for Scottish independence – but he is best known as a prize-winning novelist. His novels are The Fanatic (2000), Joseph Knight (2003, winner of both the Saltire and Scottish Arts Council Book of the Year awards), The Testament of Gideon Mack (2006, longlisted for the Man Booker Prize), And the Land Lay Still (2010, winner of the Saltire Book of the Year award) and The Professor of Truth (2013). His latest novel was inspired*

*by the bombing of Pan Am flight 103 on 21<sup>st</sup> December 1998. This atrocity resulted in the deaths of all 243 passengers and 16 crew, as well as 11 inhabitants of the Scottish town of Lockerbie. He has translated several children's books into Scots, including works by A.A. Milne, Roald Dahl, Alexander McCall Smith and Julia Donaldson. Robertson has held writer-in-residence posts, at Brownsbank Cottage (former home of the poet Hugh MacDiarmid) from 1993 to 1995, at the Scottish Parliament (2004), Edinburgh Napier University (2010 -11), and is an Honorary Research Fellow at the University of Glasgow. His most recent book, published in November 2014, is 365, a collection of 365-word stories written every day during 2013. His poetry has been published in Sound-Shadow (1995), Hem and Heid (2009) and in numerous anthologies and pamphlets. He lives in rural Angus, near Dundee.*

### Mirin

Not much is told of him.  
He came from Ireland – Mirin of Benchor –  
a blink of light in the long, cold dark.  
He may have known Columba, Brendan, Blane, Moluag.  
(It was an age of saints.)

They flickered on the sea in currachs  
like floating candles, flame and course  
set by the hand of God. Wild bays and firths  
they settled, stone on stone, constructing shelters,  
making paths on which to carry or send the Word.

Brendan sailed seven years in search of the blessed isle  
of eternal youth. Mirin's journey brought him  
to Strathclyde, to Paessa's clearing in the woods

and a waterfall, whereby he built a chapel,  
a community in Christ.

Who can say from such a distance what he,  
what any of those holy wanderers sought,  
or what they found? Only the names remain –  
Dunblane, Inchmurrin, Kilmaluaig –  
these and some legends, and the frail, familiar sense

of drifting, groping, reaching – with redemption  
out there somewhere in the cruel, uncharted world.

### **One Day on Stob Ghabhar...**

God said, 'Let there be rain',  
and by God there was.  
The summer sky stretched out  
a great, grey canvas of cloud,  
then tore it asunder.  
We stood beneath a power shower,  
full on, constant, a steaming cascade.  
Paths became burns, burns boiled to rivers:  
we were the ghosts of sailors  
adrift on a mountainous sea.

One day on Stob Ghabhar  
the rain said, 'Let there be puddocks',  
and the hillside erupted in a rash of green joy,  
so many lowping, amphibian thousands  
they made me feel like telling the world  
we had walked in the midst of a miracle.

### **The Weird Lass o Kippenrait**

The weird lass o Kippenrait  
gangs gliskin through the glen.  
Noo I see her like a deer,  
noo she's lost tae me again.

I thocht that I might win her  
or even set her free,  
but whitiver she wis wantin  
wis mair nor I could gie.

*The weird lass o Kippenrait,  
dochter o gentility,  
she bides in the ancestral hame –  
three storeys o captivity.*

Her faither's in the city,  
her mither's gane tae France.  
They left her wi a kist o gowd  
and a cursed inheritance.

She brocht me breid and berries  
and cups o bitter tea.  
She pit her fingirs ower ma een

tae hide hersel frae me.

*The weird lass o Kippenrait,  
she lay forenent the nakit fire.  
She poued me down beside her,  
and reived me o ma haill desire.*

I tellt her I wid luve her  
for jist hersel alane,  
but though her hauns were kind eneuch  
her hert wis like a stane.

The mune wis at the windae,  
the oor wis growin late.  
The deer wis at the burnside  
in the glen o Kippenrait.

*The weird lass o Kippenrait,  
she read tae me by caundlelicht,  
and fairy men and carlin wives  
gaed tapsalteerie through the nicht.*

When she wis soond and sleepin  
Saft frae her bed I staw.  
Her hair like lang black feathers lay  
on sheets as white as snaw.

The widd wis rife wi whuspers,  
and sweet wi burdsang tae.  
I turned tae face the risin sun  
as I gaed doon the brae.

## **Dogs**

On the hard part of the beach  
where the tide had gone out,  
before we began the long haul back  
to the wheelchair waiting on the grass  
like a worried nurse,

we bracketed his bulk against  
a likely fall, and the three of us  
watched the distant dogs  
at play with their families.

What kind of dogs they were, I could not say.  
But he, with his dimming eye,  
who had loved black Labradors all his life,  
saw through them and through our goading jollity,  
and knew they were not his dogs anyway.

And when we had him strapped into the chair again,  
and happed against the coming rain,  
and a friendly lurcher came to say hello,  
he would not reach to clap its back or scratch its chest  
for it was just another dog, like all the rest.

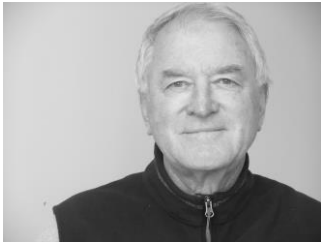
## The Way We Live Now

The way we live now is  
the way we used to live,  
only now we have  
more ways of knowing it,  
and fewer ways of living it.

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### Ross Donlon

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Ross Donlon is an Australian poet. He has appeared in poetry festivals in Australia, Ireland and England and is winner of two international poetry competitions. His book *The Blue Dressing Gown* was featured on National Radio in Australia. His next, *The Sea Road*, a book of 50 tanka inspired by Alvik, a village in Norway and translated by children there, will be launched in 2015. [www.rossdonlon.com](http://www.rossdonlon.com)

### Midsummer night

*For Ingeborg Kroll*

In Álvik the festival of Midsummer Night is at eight o'clock  
but there's a sense of displacement or disorientation.  
We tourists want it to be midnight,  
expectation of fantasy over a screen of fact  
but it's still broad daylight on an overcast day.  
Clouds like fallen towers edge along the fjord,  
fine films of rain keep the scene shifting,  
new images drift over the wooden reels piled like an altar,  
a foreshore pyre billows next to the town's fire truck,  
a fireman in protective gear slews fuel on the flames.

We expected other signs across the water,  
other torches along the picturesque rim,  
other symbols as the night came on,  
perhaps a romance of paganism,  
primal fire before the light of Christianity,  
but the water only smoked with rain.

Enough witches were burned in Christian Norway,  
some in Bergen, eighteen once up north in Vardø  
to warrant two monuments. Both are in the guides.  
All were women condemned by strange weather,  
neighbours' hysteria and the encouragement of torture.  
Being Norway, there's an architect designed  
memorial in Vardø. The illusion of an empty chair  
is consumed by flames inside a glass space,  
as though regret for what happened in 1621  
must be never ending, the constant, almost animate fire  
more awful, more alive, than stone.

In Vardø only Ingeborg Kroll refused to confess  
to flying, drowning sailors or having a tour of hell  
before her body gave up to white hot iron cutting,  
and her chest burning with sulphur.  
Buried on an island opposite the gallows  
the shape stretches like another judgment.

In Ålvik children gather in the roped front row  
sitting cross legged, themselves tiny idols  
who look up and down from the cameras  
which they nurse and touch as tenderly as manikins.

Most settle to watch the digital version  
once removed from reality,  
able to edit and save the furnace of wheels on fire.  
Eventually the reels begin to topple  
and roll into themselves.  
Their round faces look up burning  
before rows of screens, a smiling crowd,  
and one thousand years of shadows  
while small boys, as ever, cry,

*More diesel. More diesel.*

### **Death in Rome**

I saw Death  
                  in a square in Rome,  
quite near the Vatican in fact.  
It was too hot for Death,  
                  nearly 40° C,  
and the plaza swarming with passers-by;  
the scammers, scammed and the damned  
moving bee-like stall to stall, stopping to dip  
into a pocket, purse then gelato.

Poor Death,  
                  in her black hoodie,  
black jeans and leather boots  
with the silver straps attached,  
white makeup glistening buds of sweat,  
half moon eye shadow below two black suns  
peering into the worlds of crowded stalls,  
she was more like Death-Warmed-Up than Death.

Death needed the coffin  
                  she climbed on  
to get her head above the ignorant crowd,  
legs braced as though trying to stay afloat,  
leaning a bony arm on her scythe,  
as black tape fluttered from its blade.

Death had a black cape  
                  spread before her  
but I was too far away (I was avoiding Death)  
to see whether tribute was forthcoming.

Customers seemed distracted by being alive.  
Still she was patient, looking blankly into the future,  
sitting down now and then to smoke on the coffin,  
elbows on knees, shoulders hunched.

Death saw me

during one of these smokes.

I was cruising on the edge of the cosmos, pretending  
invisibility, even invincibility. But up looked Death  
and stared straight at me with a smile of recognition.

Death might be like this, I thought,

a sudden sense of looking into life's last black hole,  
outer space becoming inner space without the star trek,  
then the familiarity of going home.

I nearly spoke to Death then

but being shy by nature, superstitious, anxious,  
and not having Latin (or Italian) and wondering  
anyway how an ordinary man can help Death,  
I hurried to St Peter's for some beads I had to buy,  
some ceilings I had to see, some pomp and pain I had to witness,  
before I died.

### **If Further Evidence Were Needed**

'Waves of invaders' is a gentle sounding phrase  
for what happens when killing becomes tidal.  
Western Romania knew centuries of invasion  
until in an act displaying some attempt at finality,  
Austro-Hungarians levelled the capital, Timișoara.  
They left just the fortress of King Robert Charles of Anjou  
as a marker or playing counter on swampy crossroads.

Then they built an outpost, or memory of Vienna.  
A canal cured the swamp. City planners mapped  
millimetre perfect squares and streets in the wake  
of the Ottoman retreat, like boys saying, *So there*.

Three centuries later in a park near the centre,  
I scan a map looking for wordslips of history,  
shards of language, half-lost names, an accidental  
echo of those otherwise swept away.

The lines radiate sun-like from the city centre,  
bulevard and strada celebrate a hand span  
of men's names, all drawn from current occupants,  
as if reminders are needed of who they were.  
Like proclamations are the *Bulevard of December 16, 1989*,  
*Bulevard of the Revolution*, *Bulevard of the Republic*,  
while *Strada December 1, 1918*, is a statement  
marking both the beginning and end of a world.

Perhaps it's not surprising that the Dacians, Romans  
and the hordes of hordes who followed are invisible,  
except in faces, daily speech or hints of cuisine.  
It's inevitable, I re-consider, that those who lease

a space, name and decorate after their own time.

And far down in a corner, in a new part of town,  
close by the university, almost a footnote to the map,  
an ironic aside to the evolution of my species  
(if any further evidence were needed):  
*Strada Charles Darwin.*

### **In an Antique Land**

The synagogue in Strada Mărășești, Timișoara,  
is circled by market stalls and swarming shoppers.  
The doors are high and wide as one expects from faith,  
a brick building secured with a band of stars  
crowned by a window with the Star of David.  
Twin towers, 'with a Moorish influence', spiral dizzily  
toward the sky, yet this is only of historical interest today.  
The building isn't used for worship anymore  
and the stone book of Torah open on the roof  
like a declaration or offering, could be closed.

The place is now used, we're told, for 'cultural events',  
and today a rock festival poster for the, *Popular and Unknown*,  
with whirling symbols of space and time, only hint at irony.

So well preserved a structure shouldn't recall *Ozymandias*,  
Shelley's sonnet destruction of a self-styled 'King of Kings'  
but given the holocausts of the twentieth century  
the solid seeming walls still recall a 'colossal wreck'  
and the phrase, 'nothing beside remains,' still has meaning.

### **Gărâna Tanka**

Wolfsberg/ Gărâna.  
Centuries keep shuffling names  
people and animals.  
'Forest is reconquering,'  
they say. 'Wolves are coming back.'

My own name changes.  
The sound translates as 'wicked'.  
I feign innocence,  
at home in Romania's  
Mirror House of History.

Jazz riffs with the rain  
playing cymbals on the roof  
while thunder solos.  
I listen in my bedroom,  
waiting for a poem to fall.

Marooned in English,  
I hear voices downstairs shouting.  
Angry or happy?  
I *can* understand their dog  
barking with excited yelps.

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## SUMMER COURSE REPORT

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***“Training, Translation and Tourism in Venice”***, Venice, Italy, 5-19 July 2014  
**EU Erasmus Intensive Programme Report**

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A mysterious city on water, Venice has always been one of the most attractive cultural and touristic destinations in Europe. It has widely preoccupied Western imagination, which can be seen in many literary and visual artworks, from William Shakespeare and Thomas Mann to J. M. William Turner or Antonio Lucio Vivaldi. “Training, Translation and Tourism in Venice,” a two-week project of the EU Erasmus Intensive Programme that took place from 5<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> of July 2014 in Venice, was equally meant to spread and revise the cultural myth of this Venetian space. The summer course was coordinated by Milan State University (Italy), in partnership with the University of Warwick in Coventry (United Kingdom), the University of Szeged (Hungary), and the University of Venice Ca’ Foscari (Italy).

The aim of this multidisciplinary programme was to make sense of Venice’s unique multi-layered environment. Accordingly, the teaching staff that consisted of internationally recognized scholars attempted to highlight Venice on page and on screen in the context of multilingualism; within the frame of translation itself as a means of cross-cultural encounters; and as a site of identity (re)constructions of contemporary Venetian locals and nomadic tourists alike. English was the common language of the twenty-two participating instructors and the twenty-four students from four universities, but they altogether had dozens of nationalities and native languages through which the programme, relying on their close cooperation, managed to break down the hegemony of English. In light of this, alternative passages between languages – in the case of untranslatable terms and contexts – were always in the foreground of the lectures. Languages and dialects not spoken by participants, such as Venetian, were also introduced and used during the varied exercises and workshops. While the lectures and workshops were held in Warwick’s Venice Centre, Palazzo Pesaro Papafava, the Intensive Programme also offered a few guided tours to lesser known areas of the city and the lagoon, including the multilingual Ghetto and the cultic bookshop of Libreria Acqua Alta, run by Luigi Frizzo.

With my apologies for not being exhaustive, I would like to give the reader a brief summary of the programme. The themes of a few fairly theory-oriented lectures ranged from the representation of translation and of the translator in Anglo-American cinema and theatre (Mariacristina Cavecchi, Milan State University), and the cultural and national significance of the translator, of maps, and of multilingualism across the Mediterranean (Loredana Polezzi, University of Warwick), to literary translation from a gendered point of view (Eliana Maestri, University of Warwick), and sharing personal experiences of translation and editing as a profession with the students (Maureen Freely, University of Warwick, an author, journalist, and translator). The practice-oriented lectures that constituted the greater part of the programme served to prepare students to perform their tasks and exercises. After translation had been examined within the frames of language philosophical investigations (Anna Kérchy, University of Szeged, Hungary), students had to translate “Jabberwocky” (1871), a nonsense poem by Lewis Carroll, into their native languages. Following discussions on the methodology of ethnographic interviewing (with Erzsébet Barát, University of Szeged), students were ready to interview people from the local community in the San Pietro area of Venice and tourists in San Marco Square and Rialto. Having examined media literacy as well as the preservation and dissemination of cultural heritage through digital humanities (with