

Personal details

Name:	Richard Ernest Coombes
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Nationality:	British; native language English
Translation language pairs:	Russian to English; Ukrainian to English
Translation specialisations:	Prose (novels, short stories, literary non-fiction) Verse Song Lyrics <i>Additional experience & qualifications: business, creative writing</i>
Education:	MA in Classics, Corpus Christi College Cambridge, 1976 to 1979 (Core elements: language, literature, history, translation)
Other qualifications:	IoLET Level 7 Diploma in Translation

Publication Record

2019 – present

Published physical paper books, as contributor to collections (from Russian)

- ‘Retribution’, a novella by the Kazakh author Akim Tarazi (CUP, 2019)
- Poetry in the bilingual World War II poetry collection ‘Frontovaya Lira’ (‘Poems from the Front’, 2021)
- Poetry of witness to, and protest against, Russia’s wars on Ukraine: ‘Disbelief’ (Smokestack Books, 2023); ‘Dislocation’ (Three String Books, 2024)

Published physical, paper books: as sole translator (from Russian)

- Elena Dolgopyat's short story collection 'Someone Else's Life' ('Chuzhaya Zhizn'), published in May 2023 by Glagoslav Publications
- Alexei Ivanov's novel 'The Food Block', Glagoslav Publications, 2025 (entered by the publisher for the Oxford-Weidenfeld Translation Prize and the John Calder Translation Prize)

Work published in literary journals (paper and electronic), as sole translator

Short stories and poetry in the following magazines (from Russian & Ukrainian)

- The Los Angeles Review (multiple publications, multiple authors)
- The Continental Literary Magazine
- BODY magazine
- Book of Matches
- Right Hand Pointing
- Steam Ticket
- The Temz Review
- InTranslation
- Asymptote blog

Work awaiting publication, as sole translator (from Russian)

- 'Liza's Waterfall' (Pavel Basinsky's documentary-thriller 'Posmotrite Na Menya'), to be published by Glagoslav Publications

Work awaiting publication, as contributor to collections (from Russian)

- *Solastalgia* (anthology of anti-war poetry by poets from Ukraine and other countries protesting Russia's war against Ukraine; this work undertaken as part of the Kopilka project (which produced 'Disbelief' and 'Dislocation'))

Other work, completed and either not yet placed with a publisher, or published on informal (social media) platforms

From Ukrainian and Russian:

- More 'Kopilka' poetry

From Ukrainian only, for pitches to publishers:

- Extracts from Liubko Deresh's novel «Погляд Медузи»
- Extract from «Той Божевільний Рік» by Yevhenia Kononenko (both by arrangement with the publisher, Anetta Antonenko)
- Poems by Maryna Ponomarenko from her collection «Путівник по Урвищу й Околицях» (by arrangement with the publisher, Old Lion)

From Ukrainian only, other:

- More poetry by Maryna Ponomarenko

- Poetry by Andriy Kostinsky
- Song lyrics by Scriabin, Shumei, Fiolet, The Hardkiss, Okean Elzy

Other current activities

I am in discussion with three Ukrainian publishing houses (in addition to Old Lion and Anetta Antonenko) and one Ukrainian literary agent to provide sample translations from novels to which they hold the rights

Pre-translation career

International Tax Specialist, Andersen/Deloitte. My areas of expertise included:

- Transfer pricing technical and operational issues
- Risk assessment
- Strategy and management of HMRC audits
- Interface between clients and HMRC
- Intellectual Property
- Design & delivery of training
- Public speaking

International Tax Specialist, HMRC. My core International Tax functions included:

Operational

- Strategic direction and technical support on business model optimisation, transfer pricing, and Permanent Establishment issues
- Developing transfer pricing approaches to intangibles planning arrangements
- Leading for HMRC in the conduct of litigation cases
- Acting as Competent Authority (an official authorised to deal on behalf of HMRC with counterparts in overseas tax authorities)

Training

- Devising & delivering national programmes of training in transfer pricing and business model optimisation for HMRC officers
- OECD secondments, delivering training programmes to tax officials from other countries in tax treaties and all aspects of international tax

Policy

- Advising Ministers on two Finance Acts

Other activities

- Teaching English to Ukrainians living in my area
- Leading online conversations and conversation clubs in English and Ukrainian with Ukrainians in the UK, Ukraine, and elsewhere