

## Translation Guidelines

Kurodahan Press is a business, and that means we're expecting to make a profit. We have no intention of sacrificing quality to make an extra buck, but at the same time there's not much point in publishing books unless we expect them to sell. As a result, we are looking for translations that are designed to make the work attractive to potential readers (buyers); readability, the ability to grab readers and make them want to read the complete work, is essential.

This is a bit different from technical translation, where the overriding goals are succinctness, accuracy and preventing any possible misunderstanding. It is also different from academic translation, where accuracy is the overriding goal, and style and readability are sometimes pushed into second place. We do not want to change the content of a book we publish, or put words into an author's mouth, but there will be times when editorial discretion – localizing, if you will – will be needed.

### Things we expect:

- As much as possible, rendering Japanese passive constructions in the active voice in English. Naturally there will be exceptions to this, but *in general* English readers will expect to encounter snappy, active prose. This is obviously a judgment call: if an author intends to be slow and circumspect, we do not expect to see something else in English.
- Minor rewriting, including deletions and insertion of explanatory text, to provide background detail needed by non-Japanese readers. For example, a Japanese text may refer to merely "Amaterasu," and it might be a good idea to change this to "Amaterasu, the sun goddess" once or twice. If the original and the translation diverge significantly, explanations will have to be provided, because the author will want to know what happened. Again, this is a judgment call.
- There may be cases where the rendition of a proper name will have to be changed. When the Perry Rhodan series was translated from German to English, one of the main characters underwent name surgery from Crest to Khrest, to avoid making American readers think of toothpaste.

### Things we don't expect:

- Footnotes or explanatory paragraphs
- Wholesale deletions because the translator thinks a section obscure or unnecessary
- Variations in tone or style within a work, unless they arise from the source text

## Style:

Each author will obviously have a unique style, including vocabulary and method of describing the flow of events. It is impossible to duplicate a style in a different language, but we should always try to approach it. Short, choppy Japanese sentences should not be rendered in expository paragraphs in English, and long pedagogical narrative should not be vitalized with injections of adjective vitamins.

We see no reason why translators should not use the regional spelling and style conventions they prefer. We do insist on consistency, however: British and American English should not be mixed in the same work. In some cases, we may need to establish a convention for use in a series, but we will otherwise leave the choice up to the translator.

Japanese personal names are given surname first, in the standard Japanese style, as in "Tanaka Kakuei". If you have a good reason to do otherwise, though, you may be able to talk us into making an exception.

## Questions:

There are sure to be many. In almost all cases, however, we will be able to relay questions directly from translators to authors, and arrange to get answers. In theory there is no reason why direct communication between author and translator could not be possible, except that as the publisher we have an obligation to keep copies of all correspondence. We will interfere as little as possible, but must maintain good relations with both authors and translators, and unfortunately this means checking all communications to be sure there are no fights in the offing. E-mail and a dedicated BBS forum may both be possible, but a mailing list is not.

The simple rule of thumb is: when in doubt, ask.

### Word processing:

We can accept translations in almost any format, but we prefer DOCX or DOC files. We will prepare a separate style sheet for manuscript submissions, but some key points include:

- Do not insert blank lines between paragraphs (no double returns), and do not start paragraphs with tabs. If you want spaces between paragraphs and indents on the first lines, adjust your style sheet.  
The only blank lines in your text should be where you want blank lines to appear in the published book.
- Both "smart quotes" or "dumb quotes" are acceptable, but please select only one type and stick with it.
- Any comments or questions you have can be inserted freely, but should be marked clearly with \*\*, making it easy to search for them. In actual translations we will ask you to insert the page numbers from the Japanese original, again flagged with \*\* markers. Insert them between paragraphs, not in the middle of a paragraph, if at all possible.
- All translations should be clearly marked with your name, the name of the work being translated, and the date (or version number) of the translation to make it clear which of two files is the most recent. We usually put the version number in the filename, but as long as the version or date is obvious somewhere, OK.

### A note on the translation trials:

Our objective is to evaluate your skills as a translator and writer, not as a cryptologist. If the original text is difficult to read, or if you suspect a typo, tell us immediately and we'll take care of the problem. Likewise, if you need more context it can be provided.