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Passing through the filter: Literary translation from Spanish in Lithuania under Soviet censorship

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ABSTRACT

This article presents the translations of Spanish and Latin American authors into Lithuanian during the 50 years of Soviet occupation (1940–1990). The purpose of this research is to explore the legacy of these translations within the context of preventive censorship practiced in the Soviet Union. Preventive censorship involves selectively filtering books and authors for inclusion or exclusion from publication due to ideological or political considerations (cf. Leonardi 2008). The article addresses three main questions: (1) What was the volume of Spanish-language literature in the overall corpus of translations in Soviet Lithuania? (2) Which Spanish-language authors were accessible to Lithuanian readers during the period under consideration? And (3) What factors might have influenced their selection for publication in Lithuanian translation? An attempt is made to describe the corpus of translations from Spanish into Lithuanian, with a particular focus on the selection criteria to be met for inclusion of these literary works in the Soviet canon of foreign literature.

Keywords: Soviet Lithuania, Spanish literature, Latin American literature, translation from Spanish, censorship, paratext

Ozek filter: literarni prevodi iz španščine v Litvi pod sovjetsko cenzuro

IZVLEČEK

V prispevku so predstavljeni prevodi španskih in latinskoameriških avtorjev v litovščino v času petdesetletne sovjetske okupacije (1940–1990). Namen študije je raziskati dediščino teh prevodov v kontekstu preventivne cenzure v Sovjetski zvezi. Preventivna cenzura pomeni selektivni izbor in izločanje knjig in avtorjev na osnovi ideoloških in političnih kriterijev (gl. Leonardi 2008). V prispevku so obravnavana tri poglobljena vprašanja: (1) Kolikšen delež so predstavljali prevodi literature iz španskega jezika v celotnem korpusu prevodov v sovjetski Litvi? (2) Kateri avtorji, ki so pisali v španskem jeziku, so bili dostopni litovskim bralcem v analiziranem obdobju? In (3) Kateri dejavniki so utegnili vplivati na izbor objav v litovskem jeziku? Predstavljen je poskus opisa korpusa prevodov iz španščine v litovščino, s posebnim poudarkom na kriterijih za izbor literarnih del, ki so postala del sovjetskega kanona tuje literature.

Ključne besede: sovjetska Litva, španska književnost, latinskoameriška književnost, prevajanje iz španščine, cenzura, paratekst

1. Introduction

Over the last two decades, there has been a notable surge in academic research and scholarly works focusing on the publishing history of foreign literary translations in the former USSR (Witt 2011; Baer 2011; Monticelli and Lange 2014; Sherry 2015; Lygo 2016; Rudnytska 2022, to mention but a few) and in Lithuania in particular (Streikus 2008, 2018; Repšienė 2012; Sėdaitytė 2017; Valentinavičienė 2022; Subačius 2023). This particular focus arises from the understanding that the publishing policies during that time were intricately entwined with the ideological agenda of the Soviet system, exercised mainly through control over all cultural production and consumption (see for example Bljum 2005; Zalambani 2009; Streikus 2018).

In the field of translation, this control primarily manifests itself as a form of censorship that can occur before and after publication (Leonardi 2008; Merkle 2010). In this article, we use the term “preventive censorship”, which occurs before a book is approved for publication and, in this context, means a ban on a cultural product’s appearance in the target culture. The term has traditionally been used not only in the field of translation studies (Leonardi 2008; Monticelli and Lange 2014) but also by scholars who have examined preventive censorship and its implications from legal, philosophical, and historical perspectives (Orwell 1946; Fish 1994; Lewis 2007, and many others). The aspect of preventive censorship that involves rewriting or manipulation of the text before its release to the public (Charnow 2005) is beyond the scope of this paper.

The aim of this article is to describe the legacy of translations from Spanish into Lithuanian during the 50 years of Soviet occupation,¹ specifically focusing on those authors who became part of the “domestic world literature canon” (Rudnytska 2022, 40), having passed through the net of preventive censorship. Translation from Spanish was chosen for several reasons. Firstly, Spanish-language authors can be categorized into two distinct groups: authors from continental Spain and Latin American writers, very different groups from the viewpoint of the political agenda of the USSR (Filatov 2017; Prizel 1990; Lavery 2021), and thus an interesting case for considering their inclusion into the Soviet canon of world literature. Secondly, in Lithuania Spanish was known by only a relatively small group of people,² and the number of translators available to work on original Spanish texts was limited. Under such circumstances,

1 The article draws upon the ongoing research project “Translation and censorship under Soviet ideology in Lithuania (1940–1990)”, funded by the Research Council of Lithuania.

2 In Soviet Lithuania translators were not trained at Lithuanian higher education establishments, and Spanish as a foreign language was taught only sporadically as a second foreign language for students majoring in French in the Department of French Philology of Vilnius University.

one could expect fewer translations from the original than from an intermediary Russian language. Finally, other researchers (see Caro 2007; 2017) have noted a lack of research on Spanish translations into Lithuanian compared to other language pairs.³ This article aims to partially address this gap in the literature.

To achieve this goal, the article addresses three main questions: (1) What is the volume of Spanish-language literature in the overall corpus of translations in Soviet Lithuania? (2) Which Spanish-language authors were available in Lithuanian during the period under consideration? And (3) What factors might have influenced their selection from the rich Spanish literary tradition or that of Latin American countries? These questions shape the structure of the article. After discussing methodological aspects and sources, the context of publishing in Soviet Lithuania is briefly introduced. We then examine the volume of Spanish translations during different periods of Soviet rule, and insights from paratextual analysis regarding authors and their works meeting the Soviet control requirements. The final section evaluates the criteria for author selection and draws general conclusions from the selected corpus of publications.

2. Sources and methodology

The data on translated Spanish literature published in Soviet Lithuania were collected from several sources, including *Bibliografijos žinios* [*Bibliographical News*], *Lietuvos TSR knyga* [*The Book of Lithuanian SSR*], *Knygų metraštis* [*Book Annals*], as well as *Spaudos metraštis* [*Press Annals*]. These sources are all archived in the Martynas Mažvydas National Library of Lithuania and chronicle all the materials published in Soviet Lithuania. They were issued by the Chamber of Books of the LSSR, a bibliographic information and book promotion institution, also known as the State Centre for Bibliography and Press Statistics. The Chamber was established in 1945 and operated in Vilnius until its reorganization in 1992. The publications issued by this institution have served as the primary source of statistical information for researchers studying the publishing policies of the Soviet period in Lithuania.

During our work with this archival material, we observed that despite the efforts put into compiling the annals the information was often incomplete. For instance, the source of the translation might be missing. Consequently, the chronicles primarily served

3 Whitfield (2013, 118) also stressed that most studies on the “translation practices in and between the countries of the former Soviet bloc and the West” are done “with the predominant focus on translation of Anglo-American texts into Russian or East European languages”.

as a reference source for identifying publications. We then verified the information provided in the chronicles by examining physical copies of the books, which were also photographed for documentation purposes. Furthermore, information from in-depth interviews conducted with translators and editors who worked during the period in question in the VAGA, the only publishing house specializing in publishing fiction in Soviet Lithuania, was occasionally consulted or referenced.⁴

The data analysis employed both quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative approach aimed to determine the volume of works translated from Spanish into Lithuanian over a 50-year period, assessing the accessibility of Spanish-language authors in Soviet Lithuania through print runs, without considering how readers accessed these books, be it through libraries, bookstores, or universities. The qualitative investigation aimed to identify the translated authors and explore the reasons behind their selection, specifically focusing on the production side and not the reception aspect (a contrary approach is taken by Sicari (2020, 354) in her study of paratexts).

3. The context of publishing in Soviet Lithuania

The Baltic States were the last additions to the Soviet Union, and as such they were incorporated into an already existing ideological, political and cultural system, dominated by Soviet ideology and the Russian language, isolating Lithuanian culture as well as that of Latvia and Estonia from the Western world (Venclova 1979; Veisbergs 2020, 116; Monticelli and Lange 2014; Streikus 2008; 2018). Contrary to other Soviet Republics, which in 1940 had already passed through several stages and shifts of ideological control (Kalnychenko and Kolomiyets 2022), the societies of the Baltic States, which had been strongly influenced by modern nationalism during the inter-war period, were confronted with a Soviet understanding of the world that was imposed on them by force (Streikus 2018, 12; Satkauskytė 2022, 937). An attempt was made to Sovietize these states as quickly as possible (Streikus 2018, 47). About six weeks after Lithuania lost independence, a resolution was passed by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Lithuania concerning establishment of one of the most essential censorship structures, *Glavlit*,⁵ which was authorized to “control

4 These interviews (16 all in all) have been anonymized and are used only for the purposes of this research. Furthermore, we have collected testimony of translators, editors and other agents concerned from secondary sources such as published interviews and memoirs. These testimonies and secondary sources are also used to support the statements made in the article.

5 *Glavnoe upravlenie po delam literatury i izdatel'stv* [the Main Administration of Literature and Publishing]

the content of all published material” (Minutes of the meeting of 11 September 1940 in Streikus 2018, 47), and all forms of censorship were introduced right away.

Rapid changes took place in the field of publishing. In 1940 more than 40 private and state-owned publishing houses were nationalized, and they were replaced by the single State Publishing House, which was reorganized into four entities after World War II. One of these entities became the State Publishing House of Fiction (*Valstybinė grožinės literatūros leidykla*, VGLL). In 1965 VGLL was renamed VAGA, and it remained the sole publisher of fiction until Lithuania regained independence in 1990. One of the divisions of VAGA was dedicated to the translation of foreign literature.

Besides ideological censorship, the effects of the planned economy and quotas that determined the proportion of translations from Russian and from all other languages (Venclova 1979; Streikus 2008; see also Monticelli and Lange 2014, 99) have to be considered. Many of the interviewed translators emphasized that books were included in the plans for translation into Lithuanian only after they had been translated into Russian. This fact suggests that the selection process was primarily conducted in Moscow, with preventive censorship being implemented from the very beginning of the publishing process. There were a few exceptions when a book was first translated into Lithuanian, but such cases were rare. For instance, Julio Cortázar’s most well-known novel *Rayuela* [*Hopscotch*] was published in Lithuanian translation as *Žaidžiame klases* in 1978, eight years before its Russian version.

4. Volume of Spanish translations in Soviet Lithuania

In the *Press Annals* it is indicated that from 1940–1987⁶ there were 16,728 books translated into Lithuanian. Among these, 13,309 titles were translations from Russian and 749 titles comprise translations of authors from other Soviet republics (Latvia, for example; see Veisbergs 2018). Only 2,670 of the total volume of translations were from all other languages. Among these, 105 books (0.62% of all translations, or 3.93% of all translated foreign literature⁷) were translations of authors who wrote in Spanish, either originating from Spain or countries in Latin America. Since we analysed the overall corpus until the end of 1990, the total number of Spanish translations increased to 111 books, as an additional six translations were published before that date. The number of Spanish-language authors included in the corpus was higher, though, primarily

6 This is the last year of the Soviet occupation that the *Press Annals* covers.

7 All numbers except those particularly relating to Spanish literature are from *Press Annals*, where the category of “foreign languages” encompassed all languages other than those spoken in the Soviet republics.

due to a few collections containing a significant number of authors. For instance, an anthology of *Spanish Short Stories* [*Ispanų novelės*] (1984) includes 54 authors, and an anthology of *Latin American Short Stories* [*Lotynų Amerikos novelės*] (1982) contains 34 authors (we will get back to these collections in section 4.2). As a result, the total number of authors whose literary works reached the Lithuanian reading public through translations amounts to 72 from Spain and 78 from Latin America, totalling 150 names. We considered all of these authors, even if there was just a single piece of their works published. However, translations in literary journals were not considered.

The total print run of Spanish translations published in Soviet Lithuania was 2,131,000 copies, averaging around 19,000 copies per book. Notably, children's literature had the highest print runs, such as Felipe Nersy's story *Román Elé* (1985; 80,000 copies), fairy tales *Lágrimas de cocodrilo* by Juan Antonio de Laiglesia (1978; 75,000 copies), and *El cocodrilo de remanso de Guam* by the Cuban writer Onelio Jorge Cardoso (1980; 50,000 copies). Conversely, poetry books had the smallest print runs – typically around 3,000 to 5,000 copies – as demand among the reading public was always lower for these.

4.1 Translations from Spanish into Lithuanian in different periods of Soviet occupation

The analysis of the collected bibliography of the Soviet-era translations shows that the publishing policy was not the same throughout the entire period. The severity of translation censorship varied, oscillating between looser and stricter measures that aligned with the dominant power's tendencies, typically associated with the leaders of the Communist Party of the USSR (Rudnytska 2022; Kalėda et al. 2019; Monticelli and Lange 2014, 100). Traditionally the history of Soviet Baltic Republics is divided into four periods: the Stalinist period, including the first occupation in 1940 and the second after World War II (1940–1952); the Khrushchevian Thaw (1953–1964); the Brezhnevian Stagnation (1965–1984); and the period of Perestroika (1985–1990) (Kalėda et al. 2019).

4.1.1 *The Stalinist years*

Scholars emphasize that the peak of censorship of all types in Soviet Lithuania occurred during Stalin's regime, which in the Baltic States corresponded with the period of "late Stalinism" in the Soviet Union (Kalėda et al. 2019; Rudnytska 2022; cf. also Sherry 2015, 47). This period is widely regarded as the most oppressive stage in the Baltic countries in all spheres of life, while the "publishing sector experienced a significant

pressure to shape the tastes and habits of the reading public”⁸ (Streikus 2018, 59–61). Consequently, very few titles of foreign literature were translated into Lithuanian, among these only three translations from Spanish were released over nearly a decade: an anonymous picaresque novel, *Lazarillo de Tormes*, was published in two volumes in 1940 and likely translated during the time of independent Lithuania; a two-volume reprint of *Don Quixote* by Miguel de Cervantes (1950); and *30 días con los guerrilleros de Levante* by Jesús Izcaray (1951), a small booklet of ideologically acceptable content (given that the guerrillas were a group of fighters against the Franco regime in the Spanish Civil War, and thus supported by the USSR). The translator of this booklet, Valdas Audronaša, was a Communist Party activist himself. The book’s source language is unspecified, but it is likely that it was translated from Russian.

The selection of the few books to be published during the Stalinist years, even though only three titles, seems rather odd, yet it speaks for itself considering the political pressure in Lithuania and the atmosphere of arrests and deportations.⁹ First, under conditions of strict censorial control, especially at the very beginning of the Soviet occupation, when the “rules of the game” (Monticelli and Lange 2014) were not yet known, to stick to the works considered classics seemed to be both important in the eyes of the readers and politically safe. This approach explains why *Don Quixote* was among the first foreign books to be published in Soviet Lithuania (in 1950). Actually, it was a reprint of the translation published in Lithuania during the war years (1942). Its translator, Pulgis Andriušis, started work on it even earlier, in independent Lithuania. This publication marked a milestone in the history of Lithuanian translation (Caro 2007, 257), and so it is not surprising that it was republished several times (in 1950, 1959 and 1971). Additionally it was published as a collection of extracts for schools in 1958 (*Don Kichotas (ištraukos)* [*Don Quixote (extracts)*]). It is worth noting, however, that the translator’s name was only specified in the wartime (1942) publication of the novel. Later editions of 1950, 1959 and 1971 contain only the name of the editor (“edited by Aleksys Churginas”). The translator was never mentioned, because in 1944 he fled Lithuania and, as a political emigrant, became a *persona non grata* in the country. In such cases the names of émigrés would disappear from any public discourse.

8 All translations into English are done by the authors of the article.

9 The first editor-in-chief of the State Publishing House of Fiction, Valys Drazdauskas, was arrested in 1949 and sentenced to 10 years imprisonment. One of the incriminating accusations against him was that “he was trying to publish more translations of Western literature that had no thematic relevance.” (Lithuanian special archive of KGB, in Streikus 2018, 61). Six more editors were also arrested and tried.

The translated picaresque novel of anonymous authorship from the same distant historical period as *Don Quixote* may be treated as both a canonical Spanish text and as entertainment literature (Petrauskas 1999, 568). Judging by the popularity of Ilf and Petrov's novels *The Twelve Chairs* (1928) and *The Golden Calf* (1931) in pre-war USSR, the rogue, the hero of the type depicted in *Lazarillo de Tormes* and other picaresque stories originating in 16th century Spain, was "very much still needed in Russian language Soviet literature" (Oliveira 2023, 4), while the story itself with its criticism of the values of the feudal society and strong anticlericalism (Petrauskas 1999, 561) was within the acceptable themes of the Soviet censors.

4.1.2 *The Khrushchevian Thaw*

The arrival of the "Thaw" during Khrushchev's rule, a period of relative liberalization and cultural openness (Zalambani 2009), "brought an end to the cultural isolation of the preceding decade and publishing houses soon flooded bookstores with an unprecedented quantity and variety of foreign literary works in translation" (Lavery 2021, 14). There was an increase in the publication of translations of the Spanish-language authors in Lithuania as well. From 1956 to 1968, 21 titles were translated from the Spanish language, a notable surge compared to the previous decade.

Besides this increase, a few more aspects attract attention in the bibliography of translations of this period. Firstly, it is evident that not only foreign classics but also prominent contemporary authors were translated and published (Streikus 2008, 9). This trend continued well into the following period. Secondly, out of the 21 translations of Spanish-language authors, two thirds of the titles are attributed to Latin American authors (13), clearly in response to the Latin American Boom which began in the 1960s (Petrauskas 1986, 158) after the success of the revolution in Cuba in 1959. At that time "the entire continent seemed to brim with revolutionary potential" (Lavery 2021, 18). Since then, Latin American authors had been a welcome addition to the publishing plans of publishing houses across the USSR, and Lithuania was no exception.

However, the quotas for the Lithuanian publisher existed as before and it was impossible to catch up with the same amount of titles released in Russian. Therefore many of the books published in Moscow in the 1960s appeared in Lithuanian with a certain delay, of some five to ten years. This period was also marked by a large number of translations through the intermediary Russian language. On the whole, the examination of the physical copies of the books has shown that over these 50 years the majority of books (77 titles) were translated directly from the original source in the Spanish language. Approximately a quarter of all publications (27 titles) were

translated through the intermediary Russian language, while seven books did not have any indication regarding the source language of translation. It is also evident that translations from the intermediary Russian language were primarily conducted until the mid-1970s. In later years, translations were predominantly done directly from the original sources.

Finally, an important organizational change took place during the Thaw – the censorial control was transferred from *Glavlit* to editors and editorial boards of state publishers (Bljum 2005, 46–51; Sherry 2015, 47; Zalambani 2009), and the role of senior editors or heads of an editorial office became even more important because they had to select not only books for translation, but also their translators and authors of paratexts (Sherry 2015, 54). Consequently, the responsibility of VAGA also increased.

4.1.3 The Brezhnevian stagnation

The subsequent period (1969–1987), known as the Era of Stagnation under Brezhnev's leadership of the country, was the longest in Soviet history. Its beginning coincided with the so-called “golden age” (1966–1970) for translation in Lithuania, with no less than 175 Western authors (219 books) translated into Lithuanian.¹⁰ Among these there were a few Spanish-language authors who enjoyed a special status in the USSR and had several works translated into Lithuanian as well. For instance, the foreign literature canon in Lithuania was broadened by three novels by Miguel de Unamuno, namely *Niebla* (1975), *Tres novelas ejemplares y un prólogo* (1975) and *Abel Sánchez: Una historia de passion* (1977); five books of Pablo Neruda's poetry; four novels by Miguel Ángel Asturias (*El señor Presidente* (1969), *Viento fuerte* (1982), *El papá verde* (1983) and *Los ojos de los enterrados* (1985)). Gabriel García Márquez had two novels – *Cien años de soledad* (1972) and *El otoño del patriarca* (1980) – translated as separate books, while two of his short stories came out in the anthology of *Latin American Short Stories* in 1982. Federico García Lorca's poetry book entitled *Kryžkelė [The Crossroads]* was published in 1966, and seven other poems were added when the collection was reprinted under the title *Pamiršti negaliu [I Can't Forget]* in 1988.

After 1970, however, “the mechanism of ‘blacklisting’ began to work more intensively” [...] and “gradually but decisively we returned to publication allocations and trends of the Stalin epoch” (Venclova 1979). But even under stricter censorial control, three or four Spanish translations were published each year. This conclusion supports the finding of Emily Lygo (2016) that stagnation did not affect the translation sector in the USSR.

10 *Lietuvos TSR spaudos statistika 1966–1970 m.* [Publishing Statistics of Lithuanian SSR, 1966–1970]. Vilnius, 1972.

4.1.4 *Perestroika*

During the subsequent Era of Perestroika, which was marked by significant political and economic reforms from 1985 on, the average number of Spanish titles published remained practically unchanged, and fluctuated between three and four. “The sphere of literary translation only saw any real changes in 1988 when previously prohibited works were authorized, Soviet editorial canons were dismantled and the de-Sovietization of the images of foreign authors began” (Rudnytska 2022, 61). There was not much change with regard to Spanish translations either in the number of titles translated or in the selection of the authors: only three of 18 translated titles originated from Spain (Federico García Lorca’s *De profundis and other poems* (1988), Rafael Sánchez Ferlosio’s *El Jarama* (1989) and a collection of poetry by Juan Ramón Jiménez (1988)), and all the others were by Latin American writers.

4.2 Spanish classical works and anthologies of short stories in Lithuanian

Besides the publishing of *Don Quixote* discussed above, three more distinguished Baroque authors of the Spanish Golden Age (Petrauskas 1999, 554) were translated into Lithuanian during the Soviet period: Francisco de Quevedo, Pedro Calderón and Lope de Vega. Francisco de Quevedo became known in Soviet Lithuania through the translation of his picaresque novel *La vida del buscón, llamado don Pablos* [*The Life and Adventures of Buscon the Witty Spaniard*] (1626), translated into Lithuanian as *Perėjūno dono Pablo gyvenimo istorija* in 1983 (Caro 2017). Pedro Calderón’s comedy *La dama duende* [*The Phantom Lady*] (1636) was published in a book form as *Dama vaiduoklė* in 1959 (most probably from the pre-war translation of 1935), but staged only in 1973. Another comedy, *No hay burlas con el amor* [*Love Is No Laughing Matter*] was staged in Lithuania in 1951 and 1960, but it was not included in any collection of plays or published as a separate book. Neither were the plays of Lope de Vega, whose *El maestro de danzar* [*The Dancing Master*] (1593) was staged in 1951, 1959 and 1978, or *El perro del hortelano* [*The Dog in the Manger*], staged in Lithuanian translation as *Šuo ant šieno* in 1950.

Special mention should be made of two anthologies of short stories – *Spanish Short Stories* (1984) and *Latin American Short Stories* (1982). Regarding these books in the context of Spanish translations, two key points are worth noting. First, the selection of Spanish short stories aimed to address the long neglect of many Spanish writers and offer a more comprehensive overview of 20th-century Spanish literary history. This anthology includes 54 authors, most of whom had never been translated before. It spans from Miguel de Unamuno (b. 1864) to Mary Carmen de Celis (b. 1947), the youngest among the included authors. Secondly, all the stories are translated directly

from the original sources, and it is notable that the story selection process took place in Vilnius, not in Moscow. A comparison with the Russian collection *Sovremennaja ispanskaja novella* [*Contemporary Spanish Short Stories*] (1971), compiled by Vadim Jasnyj, reveals that only seven out of 29 authors translated into Russian are also represented in the Lithuanian anthology, and none of the titles are the same. This supports the testimony of one interviewee that the selection was predominantly carried out by the anthology's compiler, Bronius Dovydaitis, from the original sources, with Dovydaitis himself translating 32 of the 54 stories included.

The anthology of *Latin American Short Stories* provided VAGA translators with an opportunity to introduce Lithuanian readers to a wider array of Latin American authors, encompassing both established figures like Julio Cortázar and Gabriel García Márquez, as well as lesser-known writers. Noting that a *cuento* is considered the newest literary genre in Latin America (Petrauskas 1982, 491), the compiler, Valdas Petrauskas, offers an extensive overview of its evolution from the late 19th century through the 20th century. All the stories in the anthology were translated from their original Spanish and Portuguese sources, and the selection of authors was based on the principles of political and thematic suitability described below.

5. Politically acceptable authors

The final question in this analysis concerns the reasoning behind the selection of the authors to be translated. It seems that with preventive censorship having occurred centrally, the local publishers could only make a choice from the pool of available authors and their works. But what factors supported the selection of these particular authors in the first place?

Scholars have emphasized the author's political leanings as a primary reason for acceptance into the Soviet canon of world literature (Venclova 1979, Rudnytska 2022; Valentinavičienė 2023). It is essential to stress that relations between the USSR and Spain were far from amicable for most of the USSR's history. After the Spanish Civil War, the rule of Francisco Franco transformed the two states into ideological and political opponents (Filatov 2017, 20–21). The situation reached its lowest point during WWII when Spain joined Germany by forming the so-called Blue Division (*División Azul*) and participating in the attack against the Soviet Union in 1941 (Juliá 2017, 193–94). It took years to improve relations between the two countries (Filatov 2017, 21).

In contrast, most Latin American countries “fell into the Soviet political orbit at the beginning of the Cold War and were considered by Stalin as ‘most promising’ for

the retransmission of communist values” (Bujnova 2021, 164). Many authors from these countries were treated as friends of the USSR, with favourites including Pablo Neruda, Jorge Amado, Alfonso Gravina, Nicanor Parra, Nicolas Guillen, and a few others (Bujnova 2021, 164). Such friends of the USSR received many privileges in the country, while their books enjoyed excessively high print runs. This policy was initiated from the highest level of political power, and in February 1960 the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the USSR criticized the publishing houses for printing too few translations of Latin American literature, which should be increased in order “to satisfy the interest of Soviet readers in the lives of the peoples fighting the heroic struggle for national independence” (Afanaseva et al. 1998, 232).

A writer’s political views were thus a factor influencing the decision as to whether or not a certain author should be included in a publishing plan. For instance, authors like Gonzalo Torrente Ballester, Luis Romero, Rafael Sánchez Mazas, and Dionisio Ridruejo, among many others, were popular and critically acclaimed writers in Spain, but remained largely unknown in Lithuania. A common thread in their biographies is their active support of the Franco regime, their membership in the fascist Falange Party,¹¹ and their strong opposition to the USSR (e.g., Luis Romero fought against the USSR with *División Azul* (Gracia and Ródenas 2019, 443), Gonzalo Torrente Ballester, for his part, was an enthusiastic Falangist and Francoist ideologue (Jerez-Farran and Amago 2010, 15)). As a result, these right-wing authors could not find a place among Soviet readers, regardless of their literary merits. Conversely, proposals to translate works by prominent communist writers who openly supported the Soviet Union were far more likely to gain approval.

But there seems to have been exceptions. For instance, Camilo José Cela, one of Spain’s Nobel laureates, had two novels – *La familia de Pascual Duarte* [*The Family of Pascual Duarte*] and *La colmena* [*Hive*] – published in Russian (1970) and Lithuanian (1981). Some of his short stories were also included in the anthology of 1984. This is surprising because the author “willingly offered his services as an informer for Franco’s regime and moved voluntarily from Madrid to Galicia during the Civil War in order to join the rebel forces there. Cela later served proudly as an official censor during the dictatorship” (Jerez-Farran and Amago 2010, 15), and this history should have disqualified him from being published in the USSR. Furthermore, the published books predate Cela’s Nobel Prize in Literature (1989), so there is no reason to think that he was included for his literary fame. As such, in the context of preventive censorship, his case is worth exploring further.

11 Falange Española de las JONS.

6. Thematically acceptable works

More information on why certain authors were translated in this period can be found in the paratexts which, following Gerard Genette, include both *epitexts* (1997, 2–3), i.e. texts about the work and its author presented in different sources outside the book (e.g. critical articles in the press or scholarly articles) and *peritexts* (1997, 16), i.e. texts attached to the translations themselves, like forewords and afterwords. In our corpus of 111 books 15 contain a foreword and 69 have afterwords of varying length, and only 27 books are without paratexts.

Nearly 50 years ago, the Lithuanian dissident writer Tomas Venclova referred to these forewords and afterwords as “lightning rods”, and defined them as “Marxist or pseudo-Marxist essays on their work which include suitable criticism to pass the censor’s scrutiny” (Venclova 1979). It appears that, until the mid-1960s, forewords were the more favoured option. They were typically concise and often unsigned, providing only basic information on the author and/or book and some ideologically biased sentences. Exceptions are a few peritexts written by the authors themselves. These were much longer (up to 10 pages) and signed (Ciro Alegria’s “Foreword to the 10th Edition” of his novel *El mundo es ancho y ajeno* [*Broad and Alien is the World*], translated into Lithuanian as *Pasaulis platus ir svetimas* in 1980, can serve as an example).

The afterwords differ in nature, with some being short (about one page) and neutral in content, others taking the form of critical articles, providing a more thorough analysis of the book and its place in literary history. Typically, these afterwords were authored by specialists, including literature professors, literary critics, or the translators themselves. To placate censors, the peritexts contain a few sentences of the ideologically desirable content, e.g., biographical details about the author’s commitment to communist ideals, the moral superiority of the Soviet state over the “decaying West”,¹² or the advantages of living in a socialist system (cf. Sicari 2020, 357).

Having examined the peritexts and some available epitexts, we have identified certain recurring patterns that help answer the question of inclusion of some of the authors into the Soviet canon of foreign literature. These patterns extend beyond mere literary accomplishments of the authors and delve into their personal moral values, political stances, the ideological themes in their works, and the nature of their protagonists. We have classified the authors into five overarching groups as follows:

12 A saying that was often used in the press when writing about capitalist countries, particularly the USA (cf. Rudnytska 2023, 132).

Authors who held communist beliefs and idealized the USSR, Russian culture and literature

The priority candidates for being published in the Soviet Union were those authors who held communist beliefs and were admirers of the Soviet Union and its achievements (cf. Lavery 24–25). For instance, in the foreword to the translation of his book, Jesús Izcaray was introduced as a “communist, editor-in-chief of the party’s organ *Mundo obrero*, collaborator of the *Frente rocho* and other communist papers. He established his reputation as a journalist in 1936–1939 during the Spanish people’s fight against fascists and interventionists, participated in the defence of Madrid, spent many years in exile...”¹³ (J.I.,¹⁴ 3; see also Baez Ramos 1994).

Such authors as Joaquín Gutiérrez and Pablo Neruda, Alfredo Varela and José Mancisidor, Benito Pérez Galdós and Miguel Ángel Asturias, as well as many others, were treated as friends of the USSR (Bujnova 2021, 164). Most of them were communists or at least supporters of socialist ideology. They visited the Soviet Union (Joaquín Gutiérrez spent five years in Moscow) and wrote numerous favourable articles about the country. Pablo Neruda, a celebrated poet, glorified the Soviet Union’s accomplishments, “addressed the Soviet people in a poem-letter, referring to the USSR as the holy and pure homeland” (P.N., 4). Benito Pérez Galdós acknowledged that he was influenced by the Russian novelist Ivan Turgenev and is quoted as having said that “genuine democracy could only be achieved within a socialist system” (B.P.G., 261). Ramón del Valle-Inclán, known for his sympathies toward the Soviet Union, was elected president of the Spanish Society of Friends of the USSR in 1933.

Authors critical of the United States and works that portray the Western world, capitalism, and the bourgeoisie in a negative light

Lavery (2021, 24–25) has pointed out that proposals for translation of Latin American writers, “who were talented but not necessarily leftist, were more likely to be accepted if critics emphasized a given work’s denunciation of US foreign policy or criticism of bourgeois”. This coincides with our finding that many of the published Latin American authors provided a powerful critique of American imperialism and capitalism. Carlos Luis Fallas’ novels, such as *Mamita Yunai* and *Marcos Ramírez*, translated as *Mamita Junai* (1955) and *Išdykėlis Markas* (1963), “vividly depict the exploitation and harsh working conditions imposed by American ‘civilizers’ in Costa Rica’s plantations” (C.L.F., 281). Álvaro Yunque himself wrote a foreword for his novel *Niños de hoy*

13 The quotes are from the peritexts of the published translations.

14 For the peritexts, included under Primary sources, only author initials are provided.

[*The Boys of the South*] translated as *Pietų berniukai* (1961). In this, he addresses Soviet children, highlighting their fortunate position in the USSR compared to poor Argentinian children living in a capitalist country. He portrays capitalism as a system characterized by egoism, injustice, and cruelty (Á.Y., 3). The story *Doña Bárbara* by Rómulo Gallegos focuses on the North American oil monopolies in Venezuela and “portrays the character of Donja Barbara as a symbol of capitalist evils” (R.G., 360). Ana María Matute’s *Los soldados lloran de noche* [*Soldiers Cry at Night*], translated as *Kareiviai verkia naktį* (1967), exposes the bourgeois world where everything is commodified, and calls for reforms to address these issues” (A.M.M., 222). Finally, Mario Vargas Llosa’s *La casa verde* [*The Green House*] “portrays America as a prison of time that crushes individuals’ hopes and leaves them empty-handed” (M.V.L., 366). In the figure of Miguel Ángel Asturias, who visited the Soviet Union in 1966 and received the esteemed Lenin Prize as a recognition of his literary achievements, “the Soviets found a harsh critic of the United States’ imperialistic demagoguery in Latin America and a passionate spokesperson for his down trodden national community” (Lavery 2021, 61).

Writers and works criticizing the Franco regime and Francoist Spain

Numerous writers and their works cast a critical light on the Franco regime and Francoist Spain. For instance, Federico García Lorca’s poetry emerged as a “potent weapon against the fascist system during the Spanish Civil War” (F.G.L., 146). Towards the end of the 1930s, this was particularly exploited in the US and UK (Walsh 2020, 6), and gained recognition in the USSR after his execution by Francoists in 1936. Juan Antonio de Zunzunegui’s novel *Esta oscura desbandada* [*Running in the Dark*] translated as *Bégimas tamsoje* (1970), exposed the prevalence of “scammers and fraudsters who flourished in Spain after Franco’s victory” (J.A.Z., 363). Miguel Delibes, through his novels *Cinco horas con Mario* [*Five Hours with Mario*] and *Las ratas* [*Rats*], published in one volume in 1979, “vividly portrayed the harsh and impoverished life experienced in Francoist Spain, insights into the social and economic challenges that marginalized communities in Spain faced during that period and a need for change” (M.D., 310).

Authors and works that expressed anti-religious sentiments

Several Spanish authors boldly expressed anti-religious sentiments, challenging the influence of the Catholic Church and critiquing religious dogma in different ways. For instance, in Benito Pérez Galdós’ novel *Doña Perfecta*, translated as *Donja Perfekta* as early as 1957, “the author took aim at feudal and Catholic Spain” (B.P.G., 260).

José Rubén Romero's *La vida inútil de Pito Pérez* [*The Useless Life of Pito Pérez*], translated into Lithuanian as *Niekam tikęs Pito Pereso gyvenimas* (1967), featured a protagonist who "ridiculed the Church, the clergy, authorities, provincial doctors and pharmacists, [] even God himself" (J.R.R., 158), reflecting a deep scepticism towards religious figures and institutions. Juan Valera, in *Pepita Jiménez*, published in 1970, challenged religious asceticism and advocated for embracing human nature in the earthly realm, drawing from his own decision to abandon the priesthood in rejection of mystical ideals (J.V., 191). Agustín Yañez, in his book *Al filo del agua* [*The Edge of the Storm*], translated as *Prieš audrą* (1987), highlighted the "clergy's sole purpose of keeping people subjugated" (A.Y., 373).

Works portraying the lives of the proletariat and ordinary people from the countryside

The Soviet Union claimed to be a country of "workers and peasants", and therefore works that provided glimpses into the lives of the working class and rural communities were often deemed acceptable. These works not only emphasized the struggles and aspirations of the people, but also explored the broader social issues they faced throughout different historical periods. For instance, in his novel *Las ciegas hormigas* [*Blind Ants*], translated as *Aklos skruzdės* in 1977, Ramiro Pinilla offered "a poignant portrayal of the Basque community, [] evoking sympathy and empathy for the hard-working, strong-willed Basques, who toil like blind ants for their livelihood" (R.P., 239). Similarly, Luis Landínez's novel *Los hijos de Máximo Judas* [*The Children of Máximo Judas*], translated as *Maksimo Judo vaikai* in 1961, "depicted the prevalent issues in the Spanish countryside of that historical period, the villagers and their toil in the pastures, offering insights into the realities of rural life" (L.L., 273). Additionally, Ángel María de Lera's novel *Tierra para morir* [*The Land to Die*], translated as *Žemė gyventi – žemė mirti* (1974), "vividly illustrated the existence of a poor and isolated village, exploring the factors behind mass emigration from the Spanish countryside" (Á.M.L., 277).

Most of the books that had forewords and afterwords can be attributed to at least one of these categories or even two, as supporting communist ideas usually goes together with criticism of capitalist countries, or the Church, and other typical thematic choices. Moreover, since the cases are rather similar, here we provided only a few examples of the information stressed for each category. It is notable that these characteristics are consciously directed toward the tacit criteria of acceptability. Reading about the same authors or books in other sources, the emphasis is sometimes different. For instance, in many sources Carmen Laforet's novel *Nada* [Engl. *Andrea*] is described as a "novel

of female adolescent development” (Del Mastro 1997, 55) and is associated with such themes as existentialism and the adolescent search for identity. In the afterward to the Lithuanian translation, the topic of the book is said to be the “[d]ark and unsettling Spain in the aftermath of the Civil War” (C.L., 197). Most probably, this side of the story was presented in the paratext of the Lithuanian translation in order to let it pass censorial scrutiny, as existentialism was not a literary trend that was accepted in the Soviet Union because it was deemed to uphold too pessimistic views on the world and the future (Streikus 2018).

7. Conclusions

The analysis of Spanish-language literature publications in Soviet Lithuania over a period of 50 years, as presented in this article, has revealed fluctuations and shifts driven by the political climate and cultural policies of each period. During Stalin’s era, strict censorship led to only three titles from Spain being published in nearly a decade. Later the numbers increased slightly, yet still never exceeded three or four titles per year, regardless of whether a title was just a short story or a long, two-volume novel.

The collected bibliographic data reveal that at the beginning of the period concerned translations from Spain focused on classical novels from the Golden Age and the novels with thematically acceptable content. Latin American literature, on the other hand, exhibited more diversity, poetry comprising quite a significant portion. Statistically, Cuban authors formed the largest group (21) due to Cuba’s close ties with the USSR following the Cuban revolution. As literary critics of the time portrayed Latin American literature as the voice of the oppressed, the publication of translations by previously untranslated writers became possible (Lavery 2021, 18). Thus the number of translations of Latin American authors was increasing throughout the entire Soviet period, right up until Lithuania’s independence in 1990. For instance, during the period of *Perestroika* (1985–1990), out of 18 titles only three translations were of the works by Spanish authors.

Another distinctive feature of Lithuanian translations of literary works written in Spanish is a high number of Latin American authors connected to modernist trends in Western literature. The most famous representatives of the Latin American Boom – Carlos Fuentes, Mario Vargas Llosa, Julio Cortázar, and Gabriel García Márquez – who “internalized the techniques of Western modernism and applied them in their depictions of Latin American reality” (Lavery 2021, 19), became to a certain extent available in Lithuanian as well. The canon of Latin American literature that appeared in Lithuanian translation during Soviet times included at least the most important

works the world was speaking about. However, the Spanish authors selected for translation were mainly those who wrote in a classical, realistic manner. The statistical data amply support this conclusion.

Upon examining the paratextual information in the publications, clear trends of politically biased title and author selection for translation emerge, i.e., the author's political leanings were a primary reason for acceptance into or elimination from the Soviet canon of world literature. This suggests that preventive censorship persisted throughout the entire period, disregarding the literary merit or popularity of the authors in their home countries. For example, works by writers affiliated with Falange, the right-wing party supporting Franco and his regime, such as Gonzalo Torrente Ballester, Luis Romero, Rafael Sánchez Mazas, or Dionisio Ridruejo were never published in the USSR or Lithuania, despite their popularity in post-war Spain.

The findings of the analysis of paratextual elements allowed us to establish a link between the bibliographic data and preventive translation censorship. The pre-selection practices were confirmed by the analysis of forewords and afterwords of the translated Spanish-language fiction titles published in Soviet Lithuania. These paratexts often provide an indication of the thematic content of the books and the political stance of their authors in alignment with the dominant ideology. This demonstrated to both the world and Soviet readers that important authors were published in the USSR. The fact that most of them conveniently had leftist leanings served as an additional factor to prove the superiority of the Soviet system.

Furthermore, although translation and publication quotas were much smaller for the peripheral publishing houses in comparison to the central ones, and many more Russian authors were published than foreign ones, it seems that publishers in Lithuania did their utmost to publish the best authors available, often navigating between those they saw as safe and those they saw as valuable. Then, after the rules of the game had been learned, certain deviations from general Soviet practices were possible, an example being the anthology of *Spanish Short Stories*.

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Chaucer's Pardoner in Slovenian and the significance of paratext in making meaning in translation

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ABSTRACT

The article examines the Slovenian translations of Chaucer's collection *The Canterbury Tales* with a focus on the character of the Pardoner and his gender and sexual non-normativity as discussed by critics in the last century. The 1974 and 2012 Slovenian translations differ to a certain extent, but not in any significant manner with reference to the Pardoner's portrayal. However, important differences become apparent when comparing the paratexts of the two editions, especially their explanatory notes, which are likely to lead readers to make different meanings of the texts. Because of the different paratexts in the Slovenian editions of the *Tales*, the two editions of the "same" target text are in effect different texts. Hence, the article argues for the importance of paratexts both in producing, translating and reading texts as well as in translation analyses.

Keywords: Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales*, Pardoner, gender and sexuality, Slovenian translation, translation paratext

Chaucerjev Odpustkar v slovenskem prevodu in pomen parabesedila za opomenjanje prevoda

IZVLEČEK

Prispevek obravnava slovenska prevoda Chaucerjeve zbirke *The Canterbury Tales* [*Canterburyjske povesti*], pri čemer se osredotoča na lik Odpustkarja ter na njegovo spolno in seksualno nenormativnost, kot ju je mogoče razbrati v literarni zgodovini zadnjih sto let. Slovenska prevoda iz let 1974 in 2012 se sicer nekoliko razlikujeta, vendar ne pri upodobitvi Odpustkarja. Nasprotno pa se pokažejo pomembne razlike pri primerjavi parabesedil obeh izdaj, zlasti razlagalnih opomb, ki bralca po vsej verjetnosti pripeljejo do tega, da besedili različno interpretira. Zaradi različnih parabesedil v slovenskih izdajah *Canterburyskih povesti* sta obe izdaji »istega« ciljnega besedila v resnici različni besedili. V prispevku je poudarjen pomen parabesedil tako pri pisanju, prevajanju in branju besedila, kot tudi pri prevodni analizi.

Ključne besede: Geoffrey Chaucer, *Canterburyske povesti*, Odpustkar, spol in spolnost, slovenski prevod, prevodno parabesedilo

1. Introduction

Geoffrey Chaucer's most celebrated work, *The Canterbury Tales* (c. 1385–1400), a collection of tales of various genres told by pilgrims travelling from London to Canterbury in a storytelling competition, includes among its narrators the Pardoner. He has been described as “one of the least admirable, if not the most repulsive, characters in the *Canterbury Tales*” (Bullough and Brewer 2011, 96). In fact, he is a highly controversial character – a liar and a cheat who nevertheless tells a moral tale. Accordingly, radically different, sometimes mutually exclusive, interpretations of the Pardoner's identity have emerged – some more plausible, others less so, some anachronistic (e.g., Picard 2019) or based on questionable evidence, others reserved and historically informed (e.g., Cocco 2008). Each author refers (selectively) to their preferred sources, ancient and medieval (e.g., Curry 1919) or modern (e.g., Bullough and Brewer 2011), and the interpretations that gain more traction gradually become critical commonplaces until fashion changes and new views establish themselves. For instance, one of the major editions in the last decades of the 20th century, *The Riverside Chaucer* (3rd edition, edited by Larry D. Benson in 1987), glossed the description of the Pardoner (as “a geldyng or a mare”) as “a eunuch or a homosexual” (Chaucer 1987, 34), both reflecting the widespread contemporaneous view of the Pardoner as homosexual and further cementing it (see, e.g., Rossignol 1999, 267).

In an attempt to answer the question(s) about who (what) the Pardoner is and, more specifically, who (what) he is (if “he” it is at all) in the original and Slovenian translation, this essay will examine descriptions of the Pardoner, particularly of his appearance, and his interactions with others on the journey towards the shrine of St Thomas à Beckett in the source and target texts. There is a six-hundred-year gap between Chaucer's world and ours, and – in addition to the language – much has changed. To be made intelligible to modern readers such texts require paratexts (usually in the form of footnotes and introductions), helping them to understand the changes in conceptions of the self and world, scientific investigation, the concepts and contexts of knowledge, etc. However, paratexts cannot be neutral. They frame the text and direct its understanding, and they are sites of cultural, historical, biographical, literary, ideological and other interpretations and speculations. Therefore, this analysis of the Pardoner will focus on target-text paratexts as well as the main texts, not only because “reading of a text never occurs in isolation from the paratext around it”, but also because paratexts have often been used to assert dominant views, “providing a frame within which the text itself is to be read” (Batchelor 2018, 8, 32).

2. Slovenian translations of *The Canterbury Tales*

The Canterbury Tales was first published in Slovenian translation by Marjan Strojan in a very limited scope in 1974. The book *Iz Canterburyjskih zgodb* [From the Canterbury Tales] was issued in the Kondor series,¹ and it contained translations of the “General Prologue”, “The Miller’s Tale” and “The Pardoner’s Tale”, the translator’s 120 explanatory notes and his 35-page “Introduction”. Prior to this publication, Radio Slovenia had produced a radio play using Strojan’s first translated excerpts from the *Tales* (Chaucer 1971). It was this radio play, and its success, that motivated him to continue working on the text (Jurc 2015). His translation of the “General Prologue” was also published in 1996 in *Antologija angleške poezije* [Anthology of English Poetry] (Strojan 1996, 31–53). Strojan’s 1974 “Introduction” falls into four sections, providing contexts to (1) the literature of the period, Chaucer’s bio- and bibliography; (2) *The Canterbury Tales* (its historical, social and cultural circumstances, e.g., the plague, peasant revolts, religious conflicts, secularization); (3) the “General Prologue”; and (4) “The Miller’s Tale” and “The Pardoner’s Tale”.

When in 2012 a significantly extended version was published – *Canterburyjske povesti* [The Canterbury Tales] – it included 14 more tales in addition to the ones from the 1974 edition, those by the Knight, Reeve, Man of Law, Wife of Bath, Friar, Clerk, Merchant, Franklin, Physician, Shipman, Prioress, Sir Thopas, Nun’s Priest and Manciple. The edition also contained “Chaucer’s Retraction”, 235 explanatory glosses, a short introductory note for each tale (outlining the tale’s genre and sources), including those that had not been translated, a timeline with historical and cultural backgrounds to the *Tales* and a 12-page “Introduction”, all written by the translator.² As opposed to the 1974 “Introduction”, the one from 2012 is a less neatly structured discussion of the sources for *The Canterbury Tales* and Chaucer’s handling of them, the influence of Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio, Chaucer’s biography, poetic voice, verse, rhetorical figures, and his language, the text of the *Tales* as an editorial construct, differences between the medieval and modern conceptions of the world, humans, sciences, living conditions, education, etc. Unlike the 1974 version, the introduction of 2012 also lists the English editions the Slovenian translator used and consulted (Chaucer 2012, 481).

1 A distinguished book series of Slovenian and international classics with authoritative introductions published since 1956, it has been called “the Slovenian Penguin Classics” (J. 2016).

2 The change from “zgodbe” in 1974 to “povesti” in 2012 as the translations of “tales” in the title is explained in Strojan (2013).

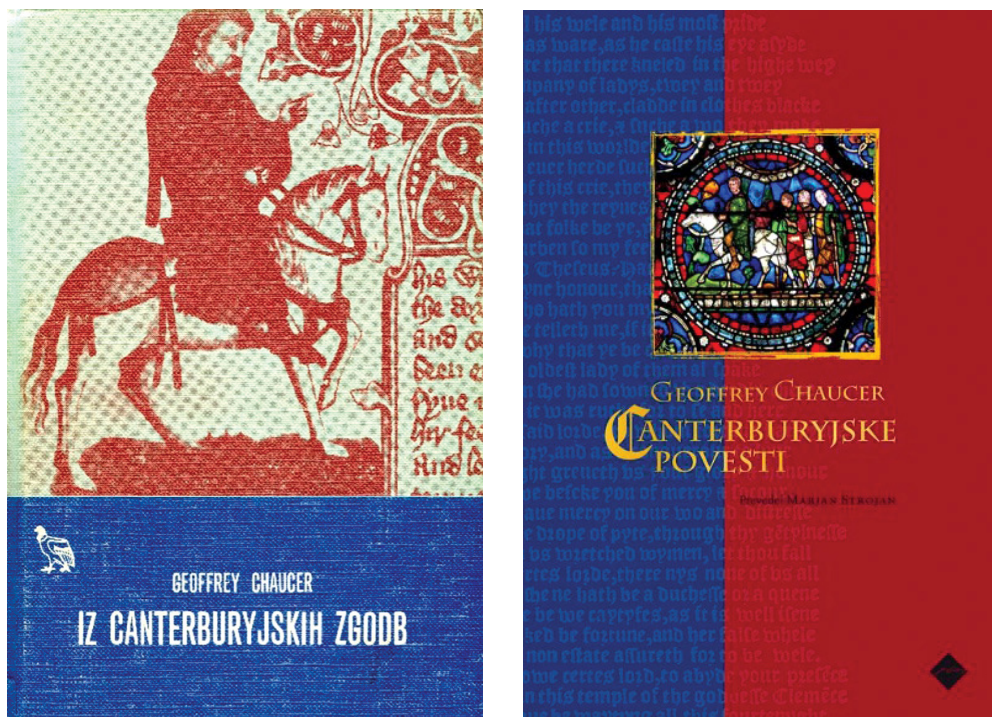


Figure 1. The covers of the 1974 (left) and 2012 Slovenian editions of *The Canterbury Tales*.

Upon publication in 2012, Strojjan's translation was recognized as an outstanding cultural achievement, and in 2015 it was given one of the highest awards granted by the Republic of Slovenia in the field of art, the Prešeren Fund Award. The committee in its explanation wrote that "the translation masterfully conveys both the content and stylistic complexities of the original in a contemporary target language – it is a translation that is artistic, polished and linguistically rich, but also highly readable and easily accessible to today's readers" (Grošelj 2015). As one of the most celebrated works in the English literary system, rendered into Slovenian by a prominent, critically acclaimed translator, Strojjan's 2012 translation acquired all the trappings of a canonical text in the Slovenian literary system, too (see, e.g., Novak 2013).

3. Paratext in/and translation

This article argues that paratexts are of utmost importance for the understanding of translated literary texts and should therefore be included in every research of translated literary works. As Gérard Genette (2001, 3) famously put it, "a text without a paratext does not exist and never has existed". According to him, it is the paratext

that “enables a text to become a book and to be offered as such to its readers and, more generally, to the public” (Genette 2001, 1). Genette’s term paratext covers a variety of elements, which either provide comments on the text, introduce and present the text to the reader, or even influence the reception of the text (see Batchelor 2018, 12). In translation studies, the most widely studied paratexts are the translator’s preface, notes, book covers, book titles and information about source languages and translators (Batchelor 2018, 26).

Each translator is first and foremost a reader, an interpreter of the text they translate, of the paratexts and all the studies they consult while translating. Translation is, above all, interpretation, and “individual acts of interpretation remain partial and open-ended; they cannot hope to exhaust the meaning of a text, not so much because texts are so rich as to be inexhaustible but because they are read from changing vantage-point in changing contexts” (Hermans 2007, 30). The very same text in the same language is read and understood differently by different readers even when they are socialized into the same cultural and linguistic environments. This is true, to the same extent, of translation studies and analyses. While the shifts that occur in translation can be described more or less objectively, their interpretation is merely that – *an* interpretation.

Translators reproduce the assumptions, beliefs, norms and prejudices of their target cultures, and although their choices may seem to be purely linguistic, they are (also) the consequence of cultural, social, ideological and other considerations. In other words, “a translation provides an ideological resolution for the linguistic and cultural differences of the foreign text” (Venuti 2000, 485). In the process of translation, the translator may appear to be free to decide whether or not to follow existing norms, but if they do not accept them, their translation may be rejected as lacking and/or flawed (Pokorn 2009, 47). A great variety of factors will decide on how translators approach and execute translation, such as their subjective beliefs, expectations, ideologies, skills, knowledge, etc. They “may flaunt their individual style of translating or they may quietly follow convention”, but they unavoidably “show their hand in the choices they make” (Hermans 2007, 33). However, when ideological forces change, a translation that was previously considered adequate may in turn become problematic or rejected.

Paratexts added to translations may include translation-specific aspects in which translators “signal their agenda” (Hermans 2007, 33), discuss their choices and translation dilemmas. Moreover, they may appeal to the values they supposedly share with their audiences, establishing a bond with them and cementing “cultural affinities [...], ideological loyalties and collective identities” (Hermans 2007, 65). Translators’ paratexts are the privileged site of “the self-reference of translation

[...], a metadimension where translation speaks about itself” (Hermans 2007, 51) and translation choices are explained and justified. Consequently, it is important to consider the impact translators’ prefaces, comments, footnotes and similar paratexts have on the meaning that the reader is likely to make of the text.

In both Slovenian book editions of Geoffrey Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales*, the translator Marjan Strojan was also the author of the entire critical apparatus. His introductions (see Section 2, above) and other paratexts are not translation-oriented, with the notable exception of explanatory notes, which are going to be the focus of this analysis. Although it is sometimes difficult to make a clear-cut distinction, 22 out of the 120 explanatory notes in the 1974 edition (i.e., just over 18%) explicitly highlight, explain or reflect on the translation. To this can be added a footnote in the “Introduction” that draws attention to differences between Chaucer’s English and the contemporary Slovenian language (Chaucer 1974, 101), and Strojan’s acknowledgement of the support and encouragement he received during his translation work from one of the most prominent Slovenian poets and awarded translator Janez Menart (Chaucer 1974, 116). On the other hand, the 2012 translation has but three notes out of 235 (which is just over one percent) that could cautiously be termed translation related. Although the name of the translator features on the cover page and is made much more prominent than in the older edition, the self-reflexivity as indicated in the paratexts seems to have diminished in the second translation.

The first of the three translation-focused notes in the 2012 edition justifies the Slovenian name (“Kratka suknja [A Short Coat]”) for the London inn where the pilgrims meet (the Tabard), the second elaborates on the term “outridere” in the Monk’s description, and the third discusses the possible meanings of “grange” in “The Miller’s Tale” (Chaucer 2012, 425, 426, 429). The same three textual cruxes are explained in the 1974 notes, although in more detail. The 1974 note explains the etymology of the inn’s name, which is translated there as “Pri knežji suknji [At the Princely Coat]”, but Strojan also speaks in the first person, acknowledging the help of another translator, whose idea he has used in his translation (Chaucer 1974, 109). While the notes in both editions explain the name of the inn, the 1974 one also highlights the different ways in which translators reach their solutions. “Outridere” is similarly glossed in both editions, and so is “grange” (as possibly both a common noun and a place name); however, in the 1974 edition the translator additionally explains that he was not able to locate the place geographically (Chaucer 1974, 114).

The more specifically translation-reflective notes in the 1974 version, which are absent in the 2012 book, include, among others, notes explaining omissions due to the number of feet in a verse (Chaucer 1974, 110 [notes 57 and 86]) as well as other

omissions (Chaucer 1974, 114 [note 109]); notes highlighting passages which the translator was unable to understand (Chaucer 1974, 111 [note 314], 114 [notes 662, 19], 115 [note 66]); notes drawing attention to “free translation” (Chaucer 1974, 114 [notes 284 and 373]), lexical shifts (Chaucer 1974, 115 [note 120]), onomatopoeia lost in translation (Chaucer 1974, 115 [note 268]) and differences in grammatical gender between English and Slovenian (Chaucer 1974, 116 [note 389]). Thus, the readers of the 1974 version will have their attention drawn more directly to the fact that they are reading a translation which is markedly different from the original in various ways. It is, however, worth pointing out that the 2012 text makes some of the notes redundant by rectifying the omissions, although most of the textual issues discussed in the 1974 notes remain valid for the 2012 translation as well.

4. The Pardoner

The “General Prologue” to *The Canterbury Tales*, “probably the most famous prologue in English literature” (Rudd 2001, 107), introduces the “nyne and twenty [nine and twenty]” pilgrims bound for Canterbury that the narrator has met “in Southwerk at the Tabard [in Southwark, at the Tabard]” (GP, 24, 20).³ Among the pilgrims there is the Pardoner, whose appearance, in particular in association with his fraudulent advertising and provision of fake relics, sets him apart and makes him an outcast – in the eyes of both his fellow travellers and readers. In criticism, his behaviour and professional practice, as well as his body, have been understood as immoral, deviant, transgressive and, more recently, queer (see below).

The second part of his description in the “General Prologue” focuses on him as a personification of professional corruption (“with feyned flaterye and japes, / he made the person and the peple his apes [with feigned sincerity and tricks, / he made monkeys out of the parson and the people]”; GP, 705–706). In the first part, however, the emphasis is on his physical appearance, in particular on his hair (“as yelow as wex, / [...] smothe it heeng [...] / by ounces henge his lokkes [...] / and therwith he his

3 All quotations from the original are from *The Riverside Chaucer* (Chaucer 1987). Line references are to this edition and are given parenthetically together with the following abbreviations: GP for the “General Prologue”, MT for “The Miller’s Tale” and PT for “The Pardoner’s Tale”. Slovenian quotations are from Chaucer 2012, which is, unless stated otherwise, identical to Chaucer 1974. Translations of Chaucer into modern English are from *Chaucer’s Canterbury Tales (Selected): An Interlinear Translation* by Vincent F. Hopper, revised by Andrew Galloway, Hauppauge: Barron’s Educational Series, 2012. All (literal) translations from Slovenian back into English are the present author’s. Both are given in square brackets after the original.

shuldres overspradde; / [...] thynne it lay, by colpons oon and oon / [...] / dischevelee [as yellow as wax ... smooth it hung ... down thinly ... covered his shoulders ... sparsely it lay, by shreds here and there ... dishevelled]”; GP, 675–683), his glaring eyes (“swiche glarynge eyen hadde he as an hare [he had staring eyes like a hare’s]”; GP, 684), high voice (“a voys he hadde as smal as hath a goot [a voice he had as high as a goat’s]”, 688), conspicuous lack of facial hair (“no berd hadde he, ne nevere sholde have [no beard had he, nor ever would have]”; GP, 689–690) and his self-consciously trendy style (“but hood, for jolitee, wered he noon, / [...] / hym thoughte he rood al of the newe jet [yet, for amusement, he wore no hood ... he thought he rode in the latest style]”; GP, 680–682).



Figure 2. The Pardoner in the Ellesmere manuscript of *The Canterbury Tales* (c. 1400–1410), Wikimedia Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_Pardoner_-_Ellesmere_Chaucer.jpg.

The litany of the Pardoner’s presumably deficient secondary sex characteristics is summed up by the narrator of the “General Prologue” in the verse “I trowe he were a geldyng or a mare [I believe he was a gelding or a mare]” (GP, 691), of which every word has received extensive critical attention (Sturges 2000, 64). In the last century,

this single line has informed most discussions about the Pardoner and “the Pardoner’s biological condition – or sexual predisposition – has been fundamental to virtually every attempt to understand the character’s complicated personality” (Gust 2009, 146) – as opposed to critics before the 20th century, who did not see much need to go beyond emphases on the character’s greed and immorality.

The Pardoner has been identified by scholars as, *inter alia*, a “*eunuchus ex nativitate*” (i.e., a born eunuch, Curry 1919, 598), “a testicular pseudo-hermaphrodite of the feminine type” (Rowland 1964, 58), “feminoid” (Howard 1978, 344), a homosexual (McAlpine 1980), “a sodomist” and “a simoniac” (Vance 1989, 736), a “philanderer” (Green 1993, 145), “a misuser of rhetorical skill” (Gross 1995, 2), “the first gay character in English literature, certainly the first major one” (Woods 1998, 51), “a cross-dressing woman” (Myers 2000, 57), a “spiritually sterile” individual (Patterson 2001, 664), one half of “the first recognizable ‘gay couple’ in English literature” (Bowers 2001, 305), a queer person (Burger 2003), “a theological sodomite or hermeneutical eunuch [...] a nexus of intermingling discourses” (Burger 2003, 141), someone with “an ill-disciplined heterosexual libido [...] an object-lesson in skilful defamation” (Cartlidge 2006, 232, 234), “an anal erotic” (Stockton 2008, 146), a person defined by “a phlegmatic complexion” (Whitney 2011, 388), “a negative prototype of the effeminate male” (Bullough and Brewer 2011, 96), “a female transvestite” (Bullough and Brewer 2011, 100), a person living with Klinefelter syndrome (Bullough and Brewer 2011, 101), “an honest liar” (Pugh 2013, 99), a “hypocritical braggart” (Minnis 2008, 168), “an unrepentant sinner who tells an exemplary tale” (Ginsberg 2015, 200), “a woman passing as a man” (da Costa 2017, 29), intersexual (Zarins 2018), a “transgendered subjectivity” (Raskolnikov 2019, 411), “essentially a salesman” (Tasioulas 2020, 75), “the pilgrim campaigner’s poster boy of uncertainty” (Hanning 2021, 68) and “a series of unanswered questions” (McCarthy 2022, 195).

Since Walter Curry’s 1919 hypothesis that the character might be a born eunuch, “the determination of his sexual ‘secret’ has been central to the scholarly hermeneutic concerning the Pardoner” (Gust 2009, 145; see also Bullough and Brewer 2011, 97, 103), although not without controversy. While Curry’s interpretation was groundbreaking and enormously influential, the author “relied heavily on the writing of Antonius Polemon Laodicensis”, of whose descriptions of eunuchs “Chaucer probably had no knowledge” (Bullough and Brewer 2011, 98). There is some disagreement, too, about the linguistic and literary evidence to corroborate various hypotheses put forward. For instance, Myers (2000, 55–58) argues that there is overwhelming evidence in favour of the term “*mare*” meaning woman, not homosexual, and in favour of the Summoner and the Pardoner being heterosexual. Cocco (2008, 363) and da Costa

(2017, 29) similarly argue that “mare” has no known uses in the sense of homosexual in Latin or English. It is also important to acknowledge that “aberrant sexual behavior was a standard accusation in heresy charges” (Fletcher 1990, 120). While some authors look to medieval categories to describe the Pardoner (e.g., Whitney 2011, 359), others rely on modern clinical medicine (e.g., Rowland 1964, 57), depending on their views, ideologies and perspectives.

Whatever one's views, it is vital to keep in mind that taking modern stereotypes as key to unlock medieval identities (see, e.g., Pearsall 1983, 359; Picard 2019) is misleading and anachronistic (Prendergast and Trigg 2020, 116), and it has become widely accepted that “sodomy as a category and identity [...] is not translatable by the modern terms homosexuality and homosexual” (Burger 2003, 125; see also Raskolnikov 2019, 410). Moreover, critics' contemporary prejudices can have an important impact on their readings of the past. As Bullough and Brewer (2011, 95) point out, the view that effeminacy makes the Pardoner a repulsive character “illustrates just how much our own cultural prejudices influence our interpretations of the past and emphasizes how strong the assumption was, in both medieval and modern times, that there was somehow something wrong with being an effeminate man”.

Finally, the discrepancies that may seem difficult to account for (e.g., the Pardoner's supposed same-sex inclinations as implied in the “General Prologue” on the one hand and his boasting about womanizing and intention to get married in “The Wife of Bath's Prologue” on the other, his goat-like voice in the “General Prologue” and his loud preaching voice in “The Pardoner's Prologue”) are perhaps due to a very practical reason, “namely that Chaucer was engaged in a process of rewriting which left some unfinished business, loose ends which, with world enough and time, he may well have tied up” (Minnis 2008, 168). Furthermore, the descriptions of the Pardoner may be nothing more (or less) than “a deliberate slander against him” (Cartlidge 2006, 234) and the associations with unmanliness “are neither literal description nor scientific definition – but meant to be insulting” (Minnis 2008, 156).

The latter view seems to be supported by the Slovenian translator in his 1974 “Introduction”, where he writes that “in line with medieval conceptions of psychological phenomena, the Summoner's and the Pardoner's physical appearance is only a sign of the overall corruption and weakness of their characters. And – *pars pro toto* – they too are nothing but a confirmation and outward manifestation of the moral and material corruption of Mother Church” (Chaucer 1974, 105). He also argues elsewhere that “most of the poet's ignorant narrators are not only ‘lewed’ but also morally depraved, which manifests itself in various deformative physical features and the almost obligatory (comic) state of their drunkenness” (Strojan 2013, 26).

Given the range of readers' responses to the character, it is obvious that Chaucer's "textual clues are ambivalent, offering a variety of possible readings rather than pointing to a single 'right answer'" (Horrox 2014, 455). The Pardoner seems to be defined by plurality and indeterminacy, in terms of both his gender and sexuality and his relationships to others (Pugh 2014, 91; Sturges 2000, 27, 58). However, the verse central to all the interpretations and speculations regarding the "castrated horse or mare" metaphor is absent in all Slovenian editions, and the omission is neither explained nor commented on. In effect, this particular translator's decision reflects the silence in criticism from before the early 20th century concerning the Pardoner's gender/sexual status in a very literal way.

5. Translating gender and sexuality in text and paratext

In addition to the Pardoner's beard – that is to say, the suspicious lack thereof – six more pilgrims have their beards described in the "General Prologue": the Merchant had "a forked berd [a forked beard]" (GP, 270), the Franklin's "whit was [...] as is the dayesye [white was ... as is the daisy]" (GP, 332), "with many a tempest hadde [the Shipman's] berd been shake [with many a tempest had ... been shaken]" (GP, 406), the Miller's "berd as any sowe or fox was reed, / and therto brood, as though it were a spade [his beard was as red as any sow or fox / and as broad as if it were a spade]" (GP, 552–553), the Reeve's "berd was shave as ny as ever he kan [beard was shaven as close as possible]" (GP, 588) and the Summoner had a "piled berd [scraggly beard]" (GP, 627). Margaret Jennings (1978) explores the significance of beards in Chaucer and in medieval historical and physiognomic contexts more generally, and in her interpretation depictions of beards help readers work out what the bearded characters are like. According to her, for instance, the Franklin is cordial, sincere and friendly, the Merchant is fashionable, the Reeve is a hypocritical underling, the Summoner is syphilitic and the Miller is strong and disreputable (Jennings 1978, 366–367).

The description of the Pardoner's lack of facial hair immediately precedes the verse "I trowe he were a geldyng or a mare", which makes it particularly significant, emphasizing as it does his assumed sex/gender non-normativity:

No berd hadde he, ne nevere sholde have;
As smothe it was as it were late shave.
[No beard had he, nor ever would have,
As smooth he was as if he'd just shaved;]

(GP, 689–690)

Ni nosil brade, in kot sem odkril,
se *prav kot ženske* ni nikoli bril.
[He didn't wear a beard and as I found out
he, *just like women*, never shaved.]

(Chaucer 2012, 24)

In the Middle English original, the Pardoner does not have a beard, could never have one and his face is as smooth as if it has just been shaved. In the Slovenian, however, the Pardoner does not have a beard and he never shaves – “just like women”. This gender-specific comparison is not there in the original. It may be argued that, by referring to the other gender, the comparison makes the translation adequate as it calls attention to the uncertainties of the Pardoner’s gender. On the other hand, the translation may be perceived as inadequate since it reinforces the binary gender system (in which the *differentia specifica* between men and women is that the former shave and the latter do not) that the Pardoner’s portrayal seems to question.

In the 1974 version of his translation, Strojan similarly added a reference to the binary gender system where Chaucer has none in the description of the Wife of Bath’s face in the “General Prologue”. In 2012 he amended his translation to preserve the three modifiers and did away with the gendered adjective “možata” (masculine/manly):

Boold was hir face, and fair, and reed of hewe.	V obraz bila je čedna in <i>možata</i> .
[Bold was her face, and fair, and red of hue.]	[Her face was comely and <i>manly</i> .]
(GP, 458)	(Chaucer 1974, 18)
	Bila je čedna, rdečih lih, čokata;
	[She was comely, red-cheeked and stout;]
	(Chaucer 2012, 17)

Another difference between the source and target texts in treating the gender binary – this time with the opposite outcome to the two instances just discussed – occurs in “The Miller’s Tale”. When Alison and Nicholas trick Absolon into kissing Alison’s naked private parts that she sticks out of the window in darkness, he immediately realizes that his “misdirected kiss” (as literary history coyly describes it; Rudd 2001, 72) did not reach her mouth. The circumlocution describing Alison’s pubic hair that Absolon senses on his lips with some disgust (“Abak he stirte, and thoughte it was amys, / For wel he wiste a womman hath no berd. / He felte a thyng al rough and long yherd [Back he started, and thought something was wrong, / For he well knew women don’t have beards; / He felt a rough and long-haired thing]” [MT, 3736–38]) is partly cut in the Slovenian two-verse rendering (“A glej, v trenutku mu na misel pade, / da ženske po večini so brez brade [But, look, it suddenly occurs to him / that women are mostly without a beard]” [Chaucer 2012, 111]). The last quoted verse of the original is omitted in the Slovenian translation. Furthermore, the source-text narrator’s generalizing statement that “a womman hath no berd” has been made more relative by Strojan, who makes Absolon reason that “women are mostly without a beard”. These words are less unambiguously supportive of the binary gender system presupposing

that if an individual has a beard that individual cannot be a woman. Like before, Strojan and Chaucer approach the rigidity of the binary system differently, but unlike the cases of the Pardoner and the Wife of Bath, here it is Chaucer who reinforces it and, by shifting the generic woman to most women, Strojan who relaxes it.

The Pardoner travels together with the Summoner, “his freend and his compeer [his friend and comrade]” (GP, 670), and they are heard singing together.

Ful loude he soong “Com hider, *love*, to me!”
 This Somonour bar to hym a *stif burdoun*;
 Was nevere trompe of half so greet a soun.
 [Full loudly he sang, “Come hither, love, to me.”
 The summoner joined him with a stiff bass,
 Never was there trumpet half so powerful.]

(GP, 672–674)

»O, *ljuba*, pridi!« piskal je kot nor
 in za podporo zraven na ves glas
 kot tromba je grmel Klicarjev *bas*.
 [“Oh, *love* [*fem.*], come!” he shrieked as if crazy,
 and to back him up, at the top of his voice
 the Summoner’s *bass* thundered like a trumpet.]

(Chaucer 2012, 23)

The Pardoner’s “Com hider, love, to me!” is gender non-specific in the original; in other words, it could potentially be addressed to the Summoner. This is presented by some critics, who see the “stif burdoun” not only as a musical term but also as a pun on an erect penis, as evidence that the Summoner and the Pardoner are romantically and/or sexually involved (see, e.g., Bowers 2001, 306; Cocco 2008, 362). Moreover, together with the “mare” metaphor, they interpret it as the narrator’s further insinuation that the Pardoner is “the passive member in a homosexual relation” (Patterson 2001, 661). Others remain unconvinced by this thesis (Minnis 2008, 158), and stress that “the Summoner is notoriously heterosexual, a womanizer who is said to know the secrets of all the women in his parish, which he uses to blackmail them into having sex” (Myers 2000, 56) and that the Pardoner himself says he “was aboute to wedde a wyf [about to wed a wife]” (“The Wife of Bath’s Tale”, 166) and has “a joly wenche in every toun [a jolly wench in every town]” (PT, 453).

Turning to the Slovenian translation and its potential to support the interpretations just mentioned, it immediately transpires that the vocative “love” in the Pardoner’s song has been ascribed feminine gender and thus gender-disambiguated, making it unlikely to refer to the Summoner, and the “stif burdoun” sexual innuendo is absent. It is not always possible to recreate various readings of the originals in the translation, because translations inevitably reflect multiple positionings and limitations, ranging from ideological to linguistic. The former might have been behind the heteronormativity of the translation of the lexeme “love” (presuming that if the speaker of a love lyric is a man, he must be addressing a woman). On the other hand, linguistic as well as ideological (moral) reasons may have restricted the polysemantic potential of the

musical and sexual connotations of the “stif burdoun”. And when translators are choosing among alternatives, André Lefevere (1992, 39) argues that “on every level of the translation process, it can be shown that, if linguistic considerations enter into conflict with considerations of an ideological and/or poetological nature, the latter tend to win out”.

When in “The Introduction to the Pardoner’s Tale”, the Host decides it is the Pardoner’s turn to tell a story, he invites him to do so with the following words:

“Thou <i>beel amy</i> , thou Pardoner,” he sayde,	In vi, gospod Odpustkar, <i>bel ami</i> ,
“Telle us som myrthe or japes right anon.”	ste ravno pravšen fant za te reči.
[“Thou fair friend, thou Pardoner,” he said,	[And you, Mr Pardoner, <i>bel ami</i> ,
“Tell us some mirth or comic tales right away:”]	are just the chap for these things.]
(PT, 318–319)	(Chaucer 2012, 338)

Addressing the Pardoner as “beel amy” could be “a disrespectful allusion to his effeminate appearance” (Andrew 2006, 208), and the French phrase is variously glossed – or translated – as “old chum” (Chaucer 1977, 258), “pretty friend” (Chaucer 1996, 312), “dear friend” (Chaucer 2005), “my good friend” (Chaucer 2010, 305), “friend” (Chaucer 2011, 325) and suchlike. The Slovenian translator left the French phrase in the original and added a note to explain it in his 1974 edition: “*bel ami* (French): pretty friend, also used pejoratively. Here it means the same as ‘pansy’ [Slovenian: ‘topli bratec’, a slur for a gay man]. The Host is mocking the lack of masculine attributes in the Pardoner” (Chaucer 1974, 115). However, he dropped the gloss and left the phrase unexplained in the 2012 version, thereby withdrawing the explicit paratextual reference to the Pardoner’s possible sexual heterodoxy.

Having concluded his tale, the Pardoner continues his “profane secularization of all things ecclesiastical” (Chaucer 1974, 98) by shocking his fellow pilgrims once again when he attempts to sell them his relics, even though he has already admitted they are not genuine. His effort to peddle them – regardless of whether it is “a joke or a wild gamble” or whether “he loses track of which audience he is addressing”, possibly because he is drunk (Andrew 2006, 209) – stirs up fierce anger in the Host, who “dismisses the Pardoner’s claims regarding his holy relics, positing their value to be excrementally worthless rather than spiritually priceless” (Pugh 2013, 100). Outraged, the Host accuses the Pardoner of wanting him to kiss the Pardoner’s dirty “olde breech [old breeches]” (PT, 948). Rather, the Host continues, “I wolde I hadde thy coillons in myn hond [I would I had your testicles in my hand]” and “they shul be shryned in an hogges toord! [they shall be enshrined in a hog’s turd]” (PT, 952, 955). Either a threat of the Pardoner’s castration or a reference to his already missing testicles, the

Host's reference to the Pardoner's presumably inadequate masculinity, his calculated "scatological insult" (Blamires 2006, 104), clearly recalls the Pardoner's portrait in the "General Prologue".

In his "Introduction" to the 1974 imprint, Strojan interprets the verses as follows: "The Pardoner's handling of people's sins [...] eventually meets with determined resistance from the representative of all that is healthy in humankind, Harry Bailley, the Host, who takes on the Pardoner as the Pardoner has been taking on sins, the world and people – in a profane way. And therein is the Pardoner's defeat" (Chaucer 1974, 107). His translation, however, makes some significant shifts. In addition to the change from kissing the Pardoner's old breeches to his old buttocks ("tvojo staro rit [your old arse]"), the Slovenian text makes a more substantial change. Whereas the Host in the source text threatens to "enshrine" the Pardoner's testicles in a hog's turd, the Host in the Slovenian translation calls to the Pardoner to have them sewn to his cap ("v znamenje si jih prišij na kapo [as a sign sew them to your cap]"). Strojan reflects on his translation of the verse in a note added to the 1974 edition: "That which is obscene in medieval English is bland in Slovenian. As I had already done in *The Miller's Tale*, I falsified Chaucer's verses here as well out of concern for the moral good of the nation, but I did so by retaining the meaning while toning down the obscenity, if, of course, there is anything obscene left there at all" (Chaucer 1974, 116). This note was left out of the 2012 edition.⁴

There seem to be at least two issues arising from the translator's explanation. First, if the connotation of a lexical unit relies primarily on its obscenity, can the meaning remain the same if the obscenity is erased? And, second, at the time of the conservative morality of the 1970s, the translator's justification of this (self-)censorship – and the implicit anticipation of his readers' approval – was perhaps easier to accept than in 2012, but since the translation of this passage did not change in the version of 2012 one may wonder whether the nation's moral good had to be defended in the same way in the second decade of the 21st century, too. Consequently (perhaps contrary to what one might have expected), the 1974 edition seems more adequate, because the translator's paratext at least acknowledges the obscenity in the original that the translation of the main text has diluted.

On the other hand, the link between the Pardoner's shameful appearance and his shady business is more directly drawn in Strojan's translation than in Chaucer's original at this point. By having his Host insist the Pardoner should sew his severed testicles onto

4 Although Strojan does not elaborate on his "falsification" of "The Miller's Tale", the omission of the depiction of Alison's pubic hair discussed earlier appears to fit the description.

his cap, Stojan links this verse with the Pardoner's portrayal in the "General Prologue", where we learn that "a vernycle hadde he sowed upon his cappe [he had a veronica sewed on his cap]" (GP, 685), that is, he had a cloth with the imprint of Christ's face sewn upon his cap. He also draws (indirect) attention to this sartorial feature of the Pardoner in a note (Chaucer 1974, 116). The description of the Pardoner's character and business thus, perchance, comes full circle more markedly in the translation than it does in the original, in another example of how translations both ambiguate and disambiguate, narrow and expand, textual semantics.

6. Conclusion

This article takes as its focus the portrayal of the Pardoner, one of the pilgrim narrators in Geoffrey Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, in the Middle English source text and the Slovenian translations published in 1974 and 2012 by the same translator, Marjan Stojan. The analysis of Chaucer's Pardoner and his translation(s) in Slovenian texts and paratexts follows the critical mainstream which focuses on the character's gender and sexual non-normativity and shows how gender and sexuality are fields where ideologies tend to work pervasively and inescapably, even if discreetly and largely unnoticeably. It is a truism, but nonetheless worth bearing in mind, that ideology is at its strongest when it seems to be absent or when it conveys the impression of reflecting a natural state of affairs. This has a direct link with translation. The ideologies and socio-cultural circumstances in the target community or literary system inevitably influence translation, and the functions of translation in the target literary system may be altogether independent of those in the original system (Grosman 2004, 77). Every translation reflects the target culture's ideology and poetics as well as translators' subjective qualities and experiences, and various degrees of manipulation and adaptation of the source text are necessary to make the translated text acceptable to the ideological and literary circumstances of a particular culture (Grosman 2004, 67–68). There is no escaping the fact that "for as long as a translation remains a translation, then, it will always have a translator's presence and therefore a translator's subject position inscribed in it, however well hidden they may be" (Hermans 2007, 27).

The examples selected for discussion in this article imply differences in the meanings the readers of the 1974 and 2012 Slovenian editions of the *Tales* are likely to make, focusing especially on obscenity and sexual and gender non-normativity in Chaucer's portrait of the Pardoner. In the last century many interpretations of the Pardoner have pivoted around the verse from the "General Prologue" describing him as a castrated horse or a mare, but this verse has been omitted from both Slovenian editions without

an explanation. However, differences between the two editions only become fully apparent when comparing the paratexts, in particular the explanatory notes, since the translation itself remains largely the same. For instance, in the 1974 edition the translator in his note explicitly calls the reader's attention to the Pardoner's assumed gender and sexual non-normativity (the gloss on "bel ami") and to the obscenity of the Host's attack on the Pardoner at the end of "The Pardoner's Tale". The 2012 edition, on the other hand, retains the same translations but removes the paratextual elements and thus the way in which they highlight the Pardoner's identity heterodoxies. Although Genette (2001, 12) asserts that, regardless of any ideological or other positionings expressed in paratexts, "the paratextual element is always subordinate to 'its' text", the analysis presented here suggests otherwise, or at least implies that paratexts may become a fundamental element in meaning making in translation.

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Looking sideways: Quebec literature in Swedish translation 2000–2020

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ABSTRACT

This article presents an overview of contemporary bibliomigrancy patterns of translated fiction from the province of Quebec to Sweden, between 2000 and 2020. Quebec and Sweden offer an interesting comparison, since French is considered a central language but the province of Quebec occupies a peripheral position in comparison with its Anglophone neighbours, whereas Swedish is considered a semi-peripheral language but Sweden occupies a central position in the Scandinavian subsystem. Drawing on theories on bibliomigrancy and polysystem, the article investigates 26 titles from the point of view of external translation history, focusing on the following questions: What was translated? When was it translated? Where was it translated? Who translated it? Why was it translated? The analysis shows that different genres, notably novels, picture books, and graphic novels, have been translated into Swedish during the investigated time frame, with different patterns regarding factors such as publication interval, translators, and translation subsidies. The increasing tendency of Quebecois titles appearing in Swedish follows the increasing trend of French as a source language in Sweden's literary market, in contrast to the more even pace of translated literature into Swedish more generally. The results further suggest that a region's language may have a more significant influence than its geopolitical position in the international market of translations.

Keywords: translation sociology, Quebec literature, bibliomigrancy, translation flows, translation subsidies

Pogled od strani: quebeška literatura v švedskem prevodu 2000–2020

IZVLEČEK

V prispevku je predstavljen pregled vzorcev sodobnega bibliomigranstva, knjižne izselitve, prevodne literature iz Quebeca na Švedsko med letoma 2000 in 2020. Quebec in Švedska omogočata zanimivo primerjavo, kajti francoščina velja za centralni jezik, provinca Quebec pa je v primerjavi s sosednjimi angleškimi govornimi področji v perifernem položaju. Švedščina nasprotno velja za polperiferni jezik, Švedska pa v skandinavskem podsistemu zavzema centralni položaj. Na podlagi teorije bibliomigranstva in polistemske teorije v prispevku analiziramo 26 del z vidika eksterne zgodovine prevajanja, pri čemer se osredotočamo na naslednja vprašanja: Kaj je bilo prevedeno? Kdaj se je prevedlo? Kje se je prevedlo? Kdo je prevajal? Zakaj se je prevedlo? Analiza pokaže, da so bili v časovnem okviru raziskave v švedščino prevedena besedila različnih žanrov, zlasti romani,

slikanice in risoromani, pri čemer se ni dalo ugotoviti, da bi se pokazale kakšne primerljive podobnosti glede časa, ki ga določeno delo potrebovalo, da je izšel njegov prevod, izbranih prevajalcev in podpore prevajalskih subvencij. Naraščajoči trend prevajanja quebeških del v švedščino sledi vse pogostejši vlogi francoščine kot izvirnega jezika na švedskem književnem trgu, kar pa je v nasprotju z drugimi jeziki, iz katerih so prevodi v švedščino na splošno bolj enakomerno razporejeni. Na podlagi izsledkov je prav tako mogoče sklepati, da ima na mednarodnem prevodnem trgu jezik regije pomembnejši vpliv kot njen geopolitični položaj.

Ključne besede: sociologija prevoda, quebeška literatura, bibliomigrantstvo, prevodni tokovi, prevajalske subvencije

1. Introduction

In many respects, Sweden and the Canadian province of Quebec share notable similarities: roughly similar population sizes (Sweden 10.4 million; Quebec 8.8 million), strong traditions of social democracy, and important festivities – *midssommar* and *St. Jean-Baptiste Festives* – taking place near the end of June. In both places hockey is considered a source of national pride, and in the fall the annual moose hunts occur. From a translation sociological viewpoint, however, Sweden and Quebec occupy opposite positions with respect to the status of their official languages and their positions in the international market of translations. French is considered to be a central language (Van Es and Heilbron 2015, 297), but the province of Quebec occupies a seemingly peripheral position on a global scale as well as in relation to its immediate surroundings, i.e., Anglophone Canada and the USA (Córdoba Serrano 2013, 5). In contrast, Swedish has been labelled a semi-peripheral language (Heilbron 1999), and is certainly semi-peripheral on a global scale (Edfeldt et al. 2022, 7), although it is regarded as having a central position within the Scandinavian system (Lindqvist 2016).

In this article, I present an overview of contemporary bibliomigrancy patterns of translated fiction from the province of Quebec to Sweden between 2000–2020, with a special focus on the position of the languages in the global hierarchy of languages (Heilbron 1999). Bibliomigrancy is defined as “an umbrella term that describes the migration of literary works in the form of books from one part of the world to the other” (Mani 2011, 289). The article is mainly descriptive, and, in order to gain an overview, I have included *all* fiction genres present in the material. The Quebec-Sweden connection provides a particularly interesting case of an inversed situation in terms of geopolitical position and the position of languages, with translations flowing “sideways” – from a globally peripheral region with a central language to another globally peripheral yet peripherally central country with a semi-peripheral language. This raises important questions as to what is the most indicative for bibliomigrancy patterns with respect to the Quebec-Sweden connection.

Research on Quebec literature translated into Swedish is scarce, with the notable exception of Cedergren's (2018) study on the translation of Quebec classics into Swedish between 1980–2015; the investigation in the present article partly overlaps with Cedergren's study in time but has a different scope, as this study includes *all* sorts of translations while Cedergren's study only focuses on novels that can be considered classics. Edfeldt et al. (2022), who explore translation into Swedish and its reception in Sweden as a semi-periphery more broadly, also constitutes an important contribution. As such, this study aligns itself with recent scholarship focusing on the semi-periphery (e.g., Pięta 2016; Budimir 2020; Edfeldt et al. 2022).

With a point of departure in the five key questions on external translation history (see Pięta 2016), the article explores the Quebec-Swedish translational exchange by answering the following five research questions:

1. What was translated?
2. When was it translated?
3. Where was it translated?
4. Who translated it?
5. Why was it translated?¹

In the following, I will present the theoretical framework for this article together with a contextualization of the Swedish context, after which I present the methodological choices governing the study. Thereafter, the results are presented, followed by a concluding discussion.

2. Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework for this article draws upon polysystem theory and translation sociology, and more precisely the sociology of translations (Chesterman 2006) where translated books are researched as products on a global market. Polysystem theory has traditionally been associated with the cultural turn of Translation Studies, although Chesterman emphasizes its sociological dimensions (12). Moreover, this article is concerned with the global hierarchy of languages (Casanova 2007; Heilbron 1999; Van Es and Heilbron 2015), and bibliomigrancy (Mani 2011, Lindqvist 2018).

Sweden's literary market has traditionally been labelled an open system in the polysystemic sense of the word, with a relatively large share of translated literature

1 The "How?" question has been excluded from this study; see more in section 3.

(e.g., Lindqvist 2016). Depending on the time frame and sort of translation investigated, researchers have proposed percentages between 16% and 41% (e.g., Lindqvist 2002, 36; Lindqvist 2016, 178). The National Library of Sweden covers statistics on published translations, but since the reports of *Utgivningspuls* and its predecessor *Nationalbibliografen i siffror* do not consistently include statistics on published translations, the information shown in Figure 1 has been obtained by using its Libris search engine (Libris n.d.).²

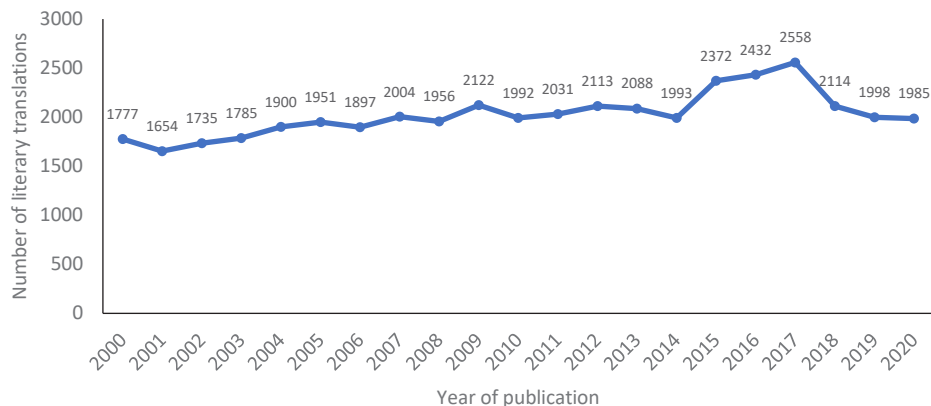


Figure 1. Number of published literary translations into Swedish between 2000 and 2020.

As seen in Figure 1, the investigated time frame 2000–2020 includes, in total, 49,959 titles, indicating an annual mean publication rate of 2,379 titles. From 2001 onwards, the rate increased steadily until 2014, after which a peak occurred in 2017 with 2,558 titles. From 2018, the number of translated translations declined to more normal levels again.

It is important to emphasize that Figure 1 covers all different genres, including novels, short stories, children’s literature, and graphic novels. According to polysystem theory, different genres occupy different systems within the greater literary polysystem (Even Zohar [1978] 2000), and thus different genres, such as high prestige literature, children’s literature, and comics, each function within their own system. Given Cedergren’s (2018) focus on classic Quebec novels, which can be considered high prestige literature, there is an even greater need to examine which other genres are translated into Swedish from Quebecois French. On genres and the centrality of languages, Lindqvist (2012, 229, my translation) states that

[t]he more central a language is globally, the higher number of literary

2 I wish to express my gratitude to Ylva Sommerland at the National Library of Sweden for helping me obtain these statistics, as well as those in Figure 2.

genres are also translated from that language. Books that are translated from peripheral languages are, on the other hand, often concentrated on a few genres, such as picture books or crime novels in Sweden's case. The translations from peripheral languages lack the broad repertoire of books that a central position guarantees. This may be one of the explanations for the total dominance of Anglo-American and British literature when it comes to translation in Sweden.

Given that French is considered a central language on a global scale (Heilbron 1999), it could be assumed that several genres are translated from Quebecois French into Swedish. Swedish, on the other hand, is considered a semi-peripheral language (Heilbron 1999). In the quote above, Lindqvist implicitly touches on translation policy, one of Toury's (2012) preliminary norms, which governs what is being translated from a given source language at a given time. Several studies have shown that the position of the source language influences what is published and when. For example, Van Es and Heilbron (2015, 297) also emphasize that "[a] central position in international exchanges implies that there are many translations made out of this language, but relatively few translations made into this language". When looking specifically at translations from French into Swedish, we see that French is one of the top five languages from which translations into Swedish are made (e.g., Lindqvist 2016). The data concerning Swedish literary translations from French published between 2000 and 2020, irrespective of the source culture, is obtained from the National Library of Sweden (Libris n.d.) and presented in Figure 2.

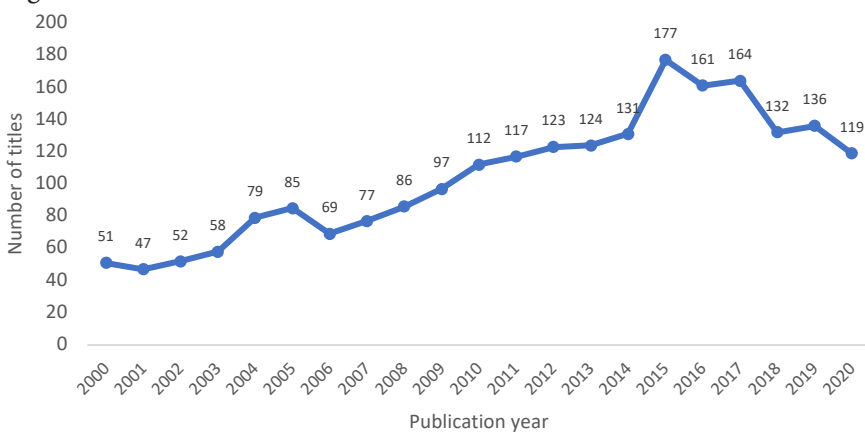


Figure 2. Literature written in French translated into Swedish 2000-2020 sorted by publication year.

Figure 2 shows that during the investigated time period the publication of Swedish translations from French started with fairly low numbers at the turn of the 21st century, leading to a steady increase between 2006 and 2014. Eventually, the number reached a peak in the years 2015–2017, after which it fell. It should be noted that the most recent numbers are still roughly double the publication rates from 2001–2002.

As noted above, the numbers in Figure 2 represent all translations from French, irrespective of their source cultures, which highlights the pluricentric nature of the language. In a Swedish context, research on translation from pluricentric languages has been carried out on, for example, Belgian French (Cedergren 2020; see also Edfeldt et al. 2022 for a more general discussion), although the aspect of a pluricentric source language was only touched upon to a limited degree. And yet pluricentric languages, such as French, challenge the division between region and language. As we have seen, French is considered a central language on a global scale; however, the region of Quebec may be seen as peripheral. Córdoba Serrano (2010 and 2013) elaborates on this notion when she explores the translation flow between Quebec and the Spanish region of Catalonia, as well as Spain in general. The present study has a different scope in the sense that it looks into the bibliomigrancy from a national region (Quebec) to a country (Sweden), where the language used in the region (French) is a central language and the language used in the country (Swedish) a semi-peripheral one.

Regarding the position of French literature in Sweden's literary market, Hedberg (2016) states that since the turn of the millennium French and Francophone literature in Swedish translation has been chiefly published by small, often one-person, publishing houses, as a result of major publishing houses abandoning it in the 1990s. With regard to Quebec French more specifically, Cedergren (2018) explores 28 classic Quebecois authors and their translations into Swedish during the years 1980–2015 with a tripartite focus on translation, dissemination in libraries, and their mentions in the Swedish press. She contends that Quebecois authors of classic novels are subject to an “ongoing extinction”, and that the relatively scarce visibility in the press highlights Quebecois literature as being “difficult” and “hard to access” (Cedergren 2018, 329). However, she points out this decline might have provided an opportunity for modern migrant writers from Quebec. While Cedergren places greater focus on the reception of these writers' work, Córdoba Serrano in her study of the translation flow between Quebec and Catalonia and Spain puts more emphasis on the mechanisms governing the selection criteria of translated titles. She observes “the almost compulsory ‘stopover’ of Quebec fictional

works in France” (Córdoba Serrano 2010, 255), i.e., that fictional works that are published in Spain were previously been published in France. Likewise, Van Es and Heilbron (2015, 305) notice a similar “stopover” in Germany for Dutch literature on their way to the English-language market.

3. Method

The search for titles was conducted using the National Library of Sweden’s search engine Libris (Libris n.d.), which is generally considered to be the most reliable source when it comes to Swedish translations (Cedergren 2018, 24). Since it is not possible to filter a search on specific source culture in Libris, the procedure was instead limited to searching for French to Swedish translations from the investigated time frame, and then manually going through each record in order to detect whether a title was written by a Quebecois author.

The selection criteria are set to full-length books of fiction originally written in French and published in Quebec. This criterion excludes certain titles, for example titles by Quebecois writers writing in English, translations made indirectly via English, and titles first published in France.

The five research questions posed at the beginning of the article have been developed with a point of departure in Pięta’s (2016) conceptualization of the five key questions on external translation history in her study on translation between (semi-)peripheral languages, presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Research questions and investigated parameters.

Research questions	Parameters investigated
What was translated?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Overview of the translated titles – Authors – Authors’ gender – Number of titles by the same author – Genres
Where was it translated?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Publishing houses – Number of titles according to publishing houses
When was it translated?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Number of titles published 2000–2020 – Publication interval between Quebec and Sweden

Who translated it?	– Translators – Translators' gender – Number of titles sorted by translator
Why was it translated?	– Literary awards – Publication in France – Translation subsidies in Sweden

The research questions have been adapted to focus on their descriptive aspects (see Budimir 2020), with the hope that the explanatory part of the study can be explored at a later stage. Since this study is based on bibliometric data and does not include textual analysis of the source and target, the “How” question has been excluded from this study. However, I have added a “Why” question to explore three variables that may influence the selection of source texts to be translated.

4. Analysis

4.1 What was translated?

In the period between 2000 and 2020, a total of 26 titles that met the selection criteria were published. General information such as the original title, the Swedish title, the author, the translator, and the Swedish publisher are presented in Table A in the appendix. The 26 titles were written by a total number of 12 authors: Fanny Britt, Ying Chen, Marianne Dubuc, Guy Delisle, Elise Gravel, Geneviève Lefebvre, Catherine Mavriakakis, Nadine Robert, Joycelyn Saucier, Pierre Szalowski, Kim Thúy, and Lise Tremblay. As can be seen in Table 2, a majority of the writers were women (83.5%), and they wrote 84.5% of the titles.

Table 2. Swedish translations of Quebecois titles between 2000 and 2020 by gender.

	Women		Men		Total (n)
	n	%	N	%	
Authors	10	83.5	3	16.5	12
Titles	22	84.5	5	15.5	26

The male authors – Delisle and Szalowski – wrote five of the 26 titles, i.e., 18.5% of the total. Table 2 also reveals that several authors have had more than one translation into Swedish published, while Figure 3 shows the distribution of the number of titles by the

same author. Interestingly, this dominance of female writers is in contrast to previous research on semi-peripheral translation into Swedish (Cedergren 2020; Edfeldt et al. 2022), with both earlier studies reporting predominantly male authors.

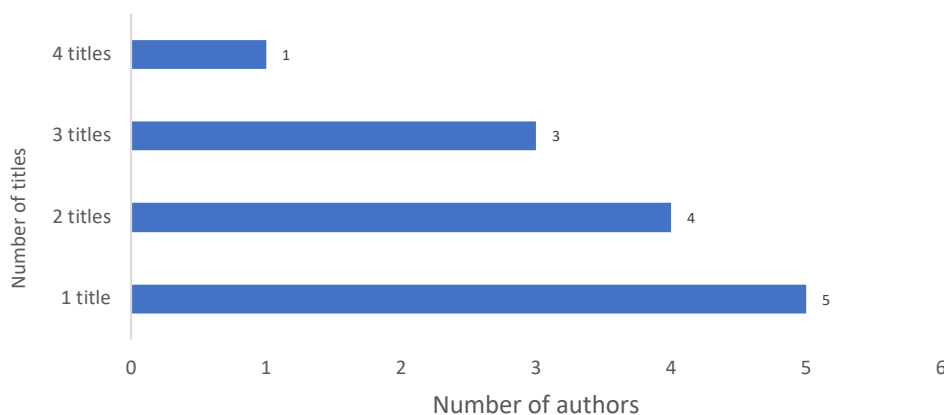


Figure 3. Number of titles by the same author between 2000 and 2020.

Dubuc has four titles published in Swedish translation, which makes her the most published Quebec writer in Sweden during the first two decades of the 21st century. The three writers with three translated titles published each are Delisle, Thúy, and Tremblay. Four writers have published two titles in Swedish translation: Chen, Mavriakakis, Gravel, and Britt. The remaining five authors have all published one title in Swedish translation.

Moreover, it is worth exploring which genres have been translated into Swedish, not least in connection to Lindqvist's (2012, 229) claim that a diversity of genres is indicative of the centrality of a source language. As presented in Figure 4, four genres are present in the material.

Figure 4 shows that the majority of the titles are novels, at 12 out of the 26 titles, i.e. 46% of the overall material, next are picture books with eight titles, after which come graphic novels with six titles. The material includes only one short story collection – *Hägern* by Tremblay. Hence, as predicted given the French language's central position, there are several fiction genres translated from Quebec into Swedish during the investigated period.

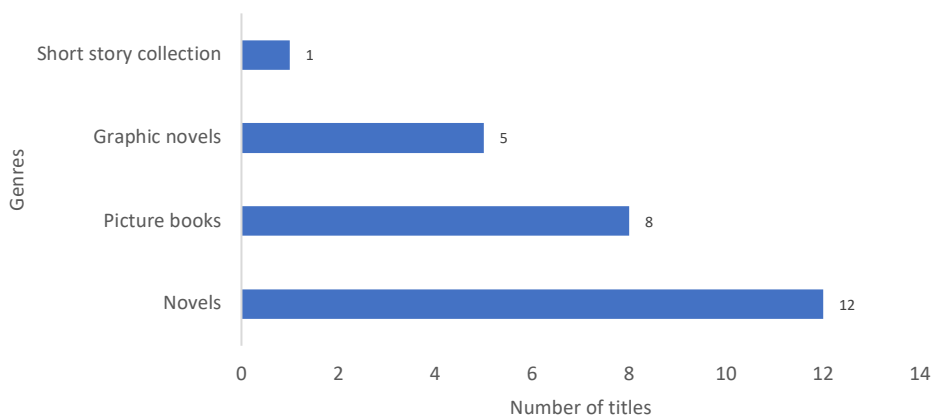


Figure 4. Number of titles translated from Quebecois French to Swedish between 2000 and 2020 sorted by genre.

4.2 Where was it translated?

The titles were published by a total of 10 publishing houses, as presented in Figure 5. Publishing houses specializing in children's and youth literature are marked with a (C), and publishing houses specializing in graphic novels are marked with a (G). The unmarked companies are general publishing houses aimed at an adult readership.

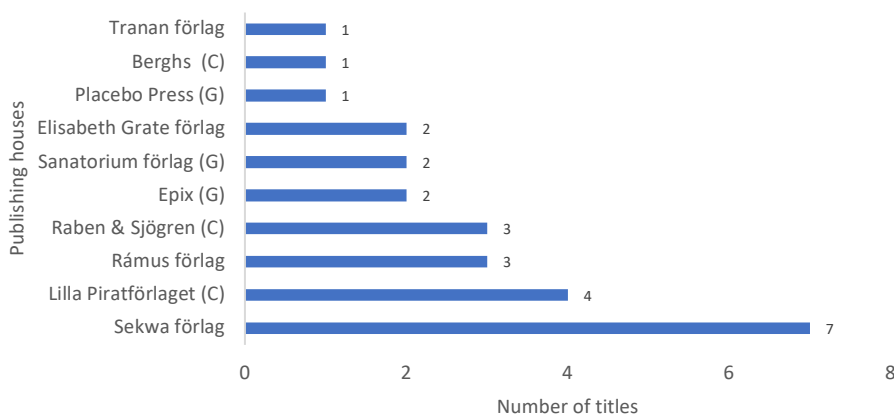


Figure 5. Number of titles translated from Quebecois French to Swedish between 2000 and 2020 sorted by publishing house.

It is noticeable that the publishing houses are predominantly small presses, often specializing in translated literature, which is in line with previous research on French

literature translated into Swedish (Hedberg 2016). Three publishing houses specialize in children's and youth literature – Lilla Piratförlaget, Berghs, and Rabén & Sjögren – the latter being by far the largest publishing house. As can be seen in Figure 5, of these three Lilla Piratförlaget, with four titles, has published the highest number of translations. It can also be noted that Dubuc has been published at all three children's publishing houses: first at Rabén & Sjögren (2011, 2012), then at Berghs (2014), and finally at Lilla Piratförlaget (2017, 2020). Lilla Piratförlaget has also published the two titles by Gravel, while Rabén & Sjögren has published Robertson.

The three publishing houses specializing in graphic novels are Sanatorium förlag, Epix, and Placebo Press. The first two have published two translated titles each (Britt, Delisle) and the latter one title (Delisle). In fact, Sanatorium and Placebo Press are run by the same management (Seriewikin – Placebo Press). It should be noted that the work of Britt is aimed at adolescents, but has been characterized as a graphic novel since the two titles were published by a publisher aimed at an adult readership.

There are four publishing houses publishing novels in the material. Sekwa has published by far the most Quebecois translations (n=7). This publishing house specializes in Francophone, mainly women, writers, although it has also published Szalowski. Another publishing house specialized in Francophone literature is Elisabeth Grate förlag, a small, family-run press, which has published the two titles by Chen. Rámus specializes in translated literature, mainly from Central Europe, and Lise Tremblay is their first Quebec author. Likewise, Tranan specializes in translated literature, mainly African, Asian, and South American literature. Tranan has published Saucier, but also the anthology of Canadian writers mentioned earlier.

In general, there is a remarkable absence of big publishing houses; neither of the three big publishing houses in Sweden – Bonniers, Norstedts, and Natur & Kultur – is present on the list. As far as children's literature is concerned, though, there are major presses present, such as Lilla Piratförlaget and, particularly, Rabén & Sjögren. Overall, however, the translation of Quebec literature, much like French literature in general (Hedberg 2016), seems to be provided by small publishing houses.

4.3 When was it translated?

As shown in Figures 1 and 2, the number of published translations seems to be rather stable over the last two decades, whereas the publication of literature translated from French has increased, even despite the recent downturn. The publication frequency of Quebec literature in Swedish translation is presented in Figure 6.

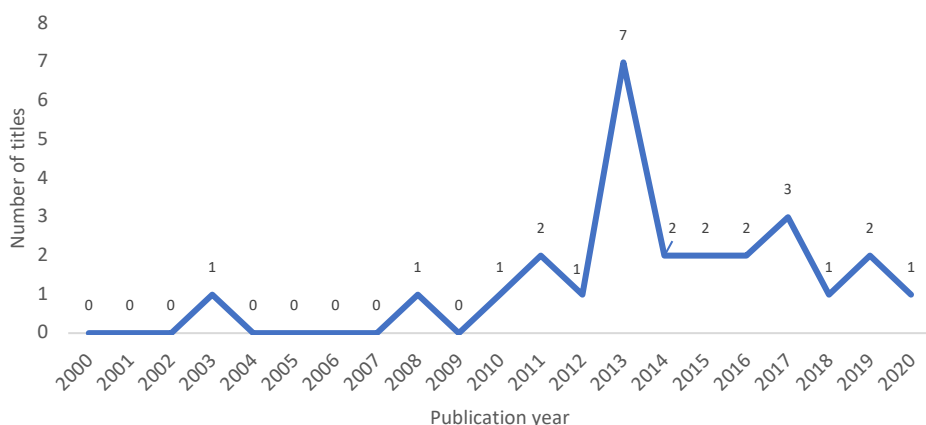


Figure 6. Number of Quebecois titles in Swedish translation published between 2000 and 2020 sorted by publication year.

The 26 titles published over the last twenty years give a mean of 1.3 titles per year. As seen in Figure 6, there was a sudden, seemingly inexplicable, peak in 2013 with seven titles. Hence the publication of Quebecois titles seems to be slowly increasing and thereby follows the general publishing tendency of translated French literature (cf. Figure 2), albeit on a much smaller scale.

It is also interesting to investigate the publication interval between when the titles were published in Quebec and Sweden, i.e., how many years it took for the title to become translated into Swedish, and Table 3 presents these numbers.

Table 3. Interval between the publication years of the original (Q) and its Swedish translation (S).

Original [Swedish title]	Author	Publication (Q)	Publication (S)	Interval
<i>Lingratitude</i> [Den otacksamma]	Ying Chen	1995	2003	8 years
<i>Immobile</i> [Stilla]	Ying Chen	1998	2008	10 years
<i>Le ciel de Bay City</i> [Himlen i Bay City]	Catherine Mavrikakis	2009	2010	1 year
<i>Ru</i> [Ru]	Kim Thúy	2009	2011	2 years
<i>Devant ma maison</i> [Framför mitt hus]	Marianne Dubuc	2010	2011	1 year

<i>Au carnaval des animaux</i> [Djurens maskerad]	Marianne Dubuc	2012	2012	Same year
<i>Chroniques de Jérusalem</i> [Anteckningar från Jerusalem]	Guy Delisle	2011	2013	2 years
<i>Pyongyang</i> [Pyongyang]	Guy Delisle	2003	2013	10 years
<i>Mãn</i> [Mãn]	Kim Thúy	2013	2013	Same year
<i>Le froid modifie la trajectoire des poissons</i> [Fiskar ändrar riktning i kallt vatten]	Pierre Szalowski	2007	2013	6 years
<i>Il pleuvait des oiseaux</i> [Det regnade fåglar]	Joycelyne Saucier	2011	2013	2 years
<i>Le ver</i> [Masken]	Elise Gravel	2012	2013	1 year
<i>La mouche</i> [Flugan]	Elise Gravel	2012	2013	1 year
<i>Chroniques birmanes</i> [Anteckningar från Burma]	Guy Delisle	2007	2014	7 years
<i>Le gateau</i> [Alberts tårta]	Marianne Dubuc	2013	2014	1 year
<i>La héronnière</i> [Hägern]	Lise Tremblay	2004	2015	11 years
<i>Les derniers jours de Smokey Nelson</i> [Smokey Nelsons sista dagar]	Catherine Mavrikakis	2012	2015	3 years
<i>Jane, le renard et moi</i> [Jane, räven och jag]	Fanny Britt (and Isabelle Arsenault)	2012	2016	4 year
<i>Vi</i> [Vi]	Kim Thúy	2016	2016	Same year

<i>Toutes les fois ou je ne suis pas morte</i> [Alla gånger jag inte dog]	Geneviève Lefebvre	2017	2017	Same year
<i>Chemin Saint-Paul</i> [Huset på Saint Pauls väg]	Lise Tremblay	2015	2017	2 years
<i>Je ne suis pas ta maman</i> [Jag är inte din mamma]	Marianne Dubuc	2016	2017	1 year
<i>Louis parmi les spectres</i> [Louis och demonerna]	Fanny Britt (and Isabelle Arsenault)	2016	2018	2 years
<i>La pêche blanche</i> [Saguenay]	Lise Tremblay	1994	2019	15 years
<i>Peter, le chat debout</i> [Peter, katten som gick på två ben]	Nadine Robert (and Jean Jullien)	2017	2019	2 years
<i>Sur le dos de Baba</i> [På Babas rygg]	Marianne Dubuc	2020	2020	Same year

Some tendencies can be observed from these numbers. Given that different selection norms govern the selection of different genres (Toury 2012), it is not surprising that we can observe different patterns depending on genre, as can be seen in the overview of publication intervals for the different genres in Table 4, excluding the short story collection.

Table 4. Overview of publication intervals sorted by genre.

Genres	N	Mean (years)	Median (years)
Novels	12	4.8	2
Graphic novels	5	5	4
Children's literature	8	0.8	1

As Table 4 shows, the three genres exhibit different publication interval patterns. The novels have been published within an average of 4.8 years of the Quebec publications, and because some titles by Thúy and Lefebvre were published the same year as in Quebec, the median is only two years. Szalowski, Chen, and Tremblay have a longer

time span; in Szalowski's case six years, Chen eight to 10 years, and Tremblay (*Hägern* and *Saguenay*) 11 to 15 years. These latter have in common that they are published by small publishing houses, which might not be as affected by novelty as the bigger ones. Graphic novels generally have longer intervals between their publication in Quebec and in Sweden, with a mean of five years and a median of four. Children's literature, on the other hand, has been published in Sweden soon after publication in Quebec, on average within a year.

4.4 Who translated it?

The 26 titles are translated by a total of 16 translators: Viktor Agering, Maria Björkman, Cecilia Franklin, Cinna Friedner, Gunilla Halkjaer Olofsson, Anita Hedman, Susanne Helsing, Ulla Linton, Dagmar Olsson, Lotta Riad, Horst Schröder, Gun-Britt Sundström, Elin Svahn, Magdalena Sørensen, Erik Titusson, and Marianne Tufvesson.

Table 5. Swedish translators of Quebecois titles between 2000 and 2020 by gender.

	Women		Men		Total (n)
	n	%	n	%	
Translators	13	81	3	19	16
Titles	23	88.5	4	15.5	27 ³

As shown in Table 5, the majority of the translators are women (81%), and they translated 88.5% of the titles in the corpus. Interestingly, the percentages for the division between the genders of translators are similar to those of authors (see Table 2). Thus, for both authors and translators alike, the translation and publication of Quebec literature in Sweden seem to be a female-dominated affair. In terms of the quantity of titles translated by each translator, these numbers are presented in Figure 7.

The majority of the translators, 10 out of 16, have translated only one title in the corpus. Four translators have translated two titles: Sørensen (Szalowski, Saucier), Tufvesson (Thuy), Susanne Helsing (Dubuc), and Schröder (Delisle). The two translators who have translated three titles or more are Svahn (Tremblay, Britt), and Halkjaer Olofsson (Dubuc, Gravel). Two authors have been translated by more than one translator: Thuy has been translated by both Tufvesson and Linton, and Dubuc has been translated

3 Anita Hedman and Horst Schröder translated *Chroniques de Jérusalem* [Anteckningar från Jerusalem] together, but are treated separately in the statistics, and thus the number of titles is 27 and not 26.

by Titusson, Halkjaer Olofsson, Sundström, and Helsing. An exploratory follow-up study should focus in more detail on the translators' relationship to Quebec and Francophone literature more generally.

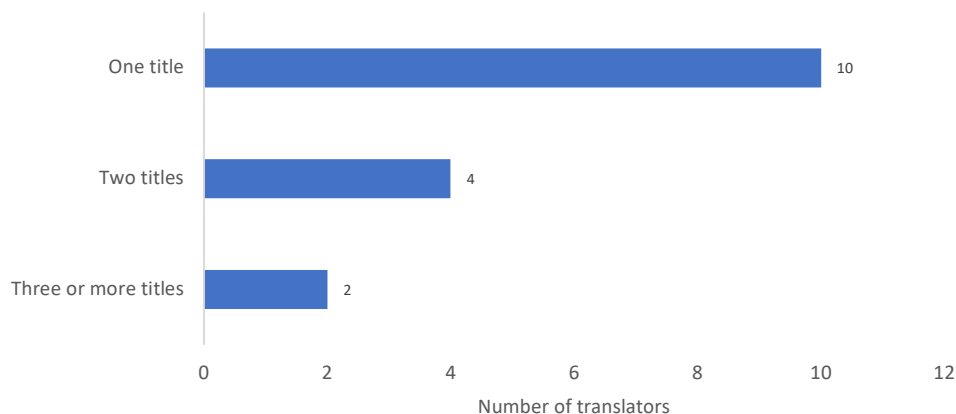


Figure 7. Number of titles translated by the same translator.

4.5 Why was it translated?

While this question is hypothetical and cannot receive an exhaustive answer from the present study, three variables that may yield insight into the selection process, and the norms governing it, are: literary awards in Quebec and internationally, publication in France, and translation subsidies in Sweden. Thus, the consecration mechanisms investigated here are a mix of source- and target-oriented consecration, as well as those related to a third country (France).

Previous research has shown that literary prizes function as a consecration mechanism (Lindqvist 2019). Indeed, many of the authors considered in the current study have received literary awards in Quebec or internationally. I will go through some of the major awards in detail, with a full list of the awards included in Table B in the appendix. Two of the titles have won the Governor General Award, the most prestigious literary award in Canada: *Ru* by Thúy (2010) in the fiction category, and *Jane, le renard et moi* by Britt and Arsenault (2013) in the illustration category. Finalists for the award include *L'Ingratitude* by Chen (1995), *Les derniers jours de Smokey Nelson* by Mavriakakis (2012), and *Louis parmi les spectres* by Britt and Arsenault (2017). Another award worth mentioning is Le Grand Prix Littéraire de Montréal; Tremblay received the award for *La héronnière* in 2003, and Catherine Mavriakakis for *Le ciel de Bay City* in 2008.

Córdoba Serrano (2010, 255) highlighted the importance of “the almost compulsory ‘stopover’ of Quebec fictional works in France” before their publication in Spain and Catalonia. Therefore, we shall examine how many of the Quebecois titles in our corpus were also published in France, which will give us an indication of the global popularity of these. As shown in Table B in the appendix, the majority of the titles – 18 out of 26 – were published in France before the Swedish translation. The eight titles that did not have a stopover in France are four graphic novels (*Jane, le renard et moi*; *Louis parmi les spectres*; *Pyongyang*; *Chroniques de Jérusalem*) and two children’s books (*Le gateau*; *Sur le dos de Baba*). When it comes to the novels, Tremblay’s books stand out: neither *La pêche blanche* nor *Chemin Saint Paul* has been published in France. That four out of five graphic novels were not published in France suggests that the system for graphic novels is governed by other translation norms, where France’s approval is not deemed as important as it is for, say, novels. Another plausible explanation is that small presses are less preoccupied with international recognition, and a future exploratory study, including interviews with publishers and translators, should investigate this aspect more closely.

Córdoba Serrano (2013) stresses the importance of translation subsidies from Canada and Quebec for the translation and publication of Quebecois literature in Spain and Catalonia, and Van Es and Heilbron (2015, 314; see also Schwartz and Edfeldt 2022) state that for translated peripheral literature, “support from non-profit institutions is often a necessary precondition for the translation process”. In this material, there are three translation subsidies present: from the Swedish Arts Council, from la Société de développement des entreprises culturelles (Sodec Québec), and from the Canada Council for the Arts. If successful, the titles are marked with a statement along the lines of “This title was published with the support of [institution]”. For the subsidies from the Swedish Arts Council, described by Edfeldt et al. (2022, 196) as a “central facilitator for literary exchange”, Sweden’s principle of public access to official records permits a more detailed investigation on who applied for subsidies and whose application was successful and whose not. Table 6 presents an overview of the material concerning the three translation subsidies.

Table 6. Overview of Swedish translations and the translation subsidies (Swedish Arts Council, Sodec Québec and the Canada Council for the Arts).

Swedish title	Swedish Arts Council	Sodec Québec	Canada Council for the Arts
<i>Den otacksamma</i> [L’ingratitude] by Ying Chen	–	–	–

<i>Stilla</i> [Immobile] by Ying Chen	Rejected	–	Approved
<i>Himlen i Bay City</i> [Le ciel de Bay city] by Catherine Mavrikakis	Approved	–	–
<i>Ru</i> [Ru] by Kim Thúy	Approved	–	–
<i>Framför mitt hus</i> [Devant ma maison] by Marianne Dubuc	–	–	–
<i>Djurens maskerad</i> [Au carnival des animaux] by Marianne Dubuc	Approved	–	–
<i>Anteckningar från Jerusalem</i> [Chroniques de Jérusalem] by Guy Delisle	Approved	–	–
<i>Pyongyang</i> [Pyongyang] by Guy Delisle	Approved	–	–
<i>Mån</i> [Mån] by Kim Thuy	Approved	–	Approved
<i>Fiskar ändrar riktning i kallt vatten</i> [Le froid modifie la trajectoire des poissons] by Pierre Szalowski	–	–	Approved
<i>Det regnade fåglar</i> [Il pleuvait des oiseaux] by Joycelyne Saucier	Approved	–	–
<i>Masken</i> [Le ver] by Elise Gravel	Approved	–	–
<i>Flugan</i> [La mouche] by Elise Gravel	Approved	–	–
<i>Anteckningar från Burma</i> [Chroniques birmanes] by Guy Delisle	Approved	–	–
<i>Alberts tårta</i> [Le gateau] by Marianne Dubuc	Rejected	–	–
<i>Hägern</i> [La héronnière] by Lise Tremblay	Approved	Approved	Approved

<i>Smokey Nelsons sista dagar</i> [Les derniers jours de Smokey Nelson] by Catherine Mavriakakis	Rejected	–	Approved
<i>Jane, räven och jag</i> [Jane, le renard et moi] by Fanny Britt and Isabelle Arsenault	Approved	–	–
<i>Vi</i> [Vi] by Kim Thuy	Rejected	–	Approved
<i>Alla gånger jag inte dog</i> [Toutes les fois où je ne suis pas morte] by Geneviève Lefebvre	Rejected	–	Approved
<i>Huset på Saint Pauls väg</i> [Chemin Saint-Paul] by Lise Tremblay	Approved	–	Approved
<i>Jag är inte din mamma</i> [Je ne suis pas ta maman] by Marianne Dubuc	Rejected	–	–
<i>Louis och demonerna</i> [Louis parmi les spectres] by Fanny Britt and Isabelle Arsenault	Approved	–	–
<i>Saguenay</i> [La pêche blanche] by Lise Tremblay	Approved	Approved	–
<i>Peter, katten som gick på två ben</i> [Peter, le chat debout] by Nadine Robert and Jean Jullien	–	–	–
<i>På Babas rygg</i> [Sur le dos de Baba] by Marianne Dubuc	Approved	–	–

Summarizing Table 6, it is clear that the majority of the titles translated into Swedish have received translation subsidies from at least one funding body, most often the Swedish Arts Council, strengthening the claims by Córdoba Serrano and Van Es and Heilbron. The publishing houses applied for translation subsidies for 22 out of the 26 titles from the Swedish Arts Council, the exceptions being Chen (2003), Dubuc (2011, 2020), Szalowski (2013), and Robertson (2020), suggesting that the subsidy should be considered as an important reason why these titles have been selected for translation.

Within the Swedish Arts Council, there exists three working groups, each focusing on either fiction, graphic novels, or children's and youth literature (Kulturrådet – Våra arbetsgrupper), so all applications are not treated by the same working group. Out of the 22 titles that applied for the subsidies, 16 titles (73%) were approved. When looking at the rejections in the category "novels", we can see that the rejected titles were written by four authors: Chen (*Stilla*), Mavriakakis (*Smokey Nelsons sista dagar*), Thúy (*Vi*), and Lefebvre. It is worth noting that Thúy's first two titles were approved, as was Mavriakakis' *Himlen i Bay City*. In general, though, the Quebecois titles have been fairly successful in attaining subsidies from the Swedish Art Council.

The two Canadian funding bodies – which were identified by searching for the acknowledgment of the subsidy in each title's colophon – generally granted far fewer subsidies, yet with notable differences between them. Two titles received subsidies from Sodec Québec: Tremblay's *Hägern* and *Saguenay*. Eight titles received subsidies from the Canada Council for the Arts: *Stilla* by Chen, *Mån* and *Vi* by Thúy, *Smokey Nelsons sista dagar* by Mavriakakis, *Fiskar ändrar riktning i kallt vatten* by Szalowski, *Hägern* och *Huset på Saint Pauls väg* by Tremblay, and *Alla gånger jag inte dog* by Lefebvre. However, it is unclear how many of the publishers applied for the Canadian subsidies and were rejected.

Looking at these three consecration mechanisms – literary awards, publication in France, and translation subsidies – provides us with a greater insight into why these particular titles were translated into Swedish. Table B in the appendix aligns the three consecration mechanisms for each title. Firstly, the results show that all but one of the titles have been consecrated in one (n=7), two (n=10), or three (n=8) of the ways identified here, which clearly shows the importance of consecration mechanisms for the publishing of Quebec-Swedish translations. Secondly, it is possible to distinguish patterns based on the genre of the titles. For example, children's literature seems to be less sensitive to the consecration mechanisms examined; however, five out of eight titles intended for a juvenile audience was nevertheless supported by one of the incentives. This could be due to the fact that remuneration for translations of children's literature is considerably lower than that for novels; on the other hand, printing in colour (which is characteristic of children's literature) is a high-cost project. For the graphic novels, publication in France seems to matter the least: out of the five titles, only one (*Chroniques birmanes* by Guy) had been published in France before its translation into Swedish. However, all titles had been awarded literary prizes in the source culture and/or internationally, and received a translation subsidy from the Swedish Art Council. For the novels and the short story collection, the pattern is not so clear-cut. In seven out of the 12 translated novels, all three consecration

mechanisms have been fulfilled. In the case of Thúy's work, neither *Mãn* nor *Vi* has been awarded a prize. And for Tremblay's work, neither *Chemin Saint-Paul* nor *Saguenay* was awarded a prize or was published in France. However, the additional Swedish translations of these authors might have been facilitated by the fact that they had already been translated and published in Sweden. In the case of Lefebvre's *Toutes les fois où je ne suis pas morte*, the publication in France may be seen as a facilitating factor, despite not having obtained any prizes.

In sum, the consecration mechanisms investigated seem to have different weights for different genres. However, the fact that many of the titles tick the boxes of two or three of these consecration mechanisms indicates that they can help answer the question of why these titles were translated into Swedish.

5. Discussion and concluding remarks

The results of the research presented in this article show that there is an upward trend in the publications of Quebec literature in Swedish translation, which follows, particularly in recent years, the publication pattern from French into Swedish. The diversity of genres shows the centrality of the French language despite the fact that the province of Quebec as such remains peripheral on a global scale. Although based on a small sample, these results suggest that a region's language may exert a more significant influence than a region's geopolitical status on the position of the region's literature in the international market of translations.

Furthermore, the results show that the Quebec literature translated into Swedish is composed of different genres which occupy different positions in their respective systems. This is reflected in the different status of publishing houses where translations appear, in publication intervals between the publication of the original and its Swedish translation, and in the fact whether the translations received any subsidies or not. The novels and the short story collection, considered as high prestige literature, are published by small independent publishing houses specialized in translated literature. In this respect this is similar to all Francophone literature in Swedish translation, which is nowadays predominantly published by small actors (Hedberg 2016). The graphic novels are also typically characterized by being published by small presses, and have been successful in obtaining translation subsidies, but are less sensitive to whether the titles have previously been published in France. The high share of children's literature in the corpus is particularly striking. Dubuc stands out with four titles published by three different publishers, which makes her the most often translated author in the corpus. In contrast to the novels for adult readers, translated

Quebecois children's literature has been published by a major children's publishing house, which indicates their more central position. This may explain why these works are less sensitive to the consecration mechanisms explored above. Overall, I argue that a more holistic approach that was used in this research, which did not confine the study to one single genre, may contribute to a deeper understanding of Quebecois literature's bibliomigrancy patterns into Swedish.

Unlike Belgian literature translated into Swedish (Cedergren 2020, 56–57; see also Edfeldt et al. 2022, 248), the corpus of Quebecois works translated into Swedish showed that there is a dominance of women among both authors and translators. For the authors, this can partly be explained by the fact that the publishing house Sekwa förlag, which has published the highest number of the titles from the corpus (seven out of 26 titles), specializes mainly in women writers. A similar feature among the picture books could be explained by the genre being often female-oriented, whereas the translation of graphic novels, which constitutes 65% of Cedergren's (2020) corpus, is perhaps more often conducted by male translators. Furthermore, the dominance of women translators may also be a reflection of the fact that nowadays translation is a female-oriented profession in the Swedish context, and globally (e.g., Wolf 2006; Svahn 2020). But this discrepancy could be further explored in the future.

In addition, the results from this study reveal a small but growing interest in publishing modern Quebecois literature in Sweden, not least children's literature. It is also worthwhile noting that the migrant literature discussed in Cedergren's (2018) study did not have a prominent role in my corpus, except for the work of Thúy and Chen. In general, my findings add nuances to the idea that Quebec is a source culture that is "difficult" or "hard to access" (Cedergren 2018, 32). One should nevertheless be careful in these conclusions, since the corpus investigated in this research was rather small. Taking a wider perspective on Quebecois-Swedish bibliomigrancy patterns by extending the investigated period, preferably pairing it with interviews with publishing representatives and translators, could provide additional insight as to whether the translations activities are due to serendipity or a result of an interest in Quebec as a source culture. Such research could also pinpoint with more accuracy the importance of translation subsidies. In general, there are good possibilities for continuing this line of research in the future, which might also include Anglophone Canadian literature. Lastly, given Dubuc's prominent position in this material, an in-depth study could focus solely on her works in Swedish, including titles that were originally published in France, which would provide an interesting example of a Quebecois writer operating on an international market.

To conclude, this article has investigated a number of parameters of contemporary

Quebec-Swedish bibliomigrancy. If we continue to look beyond the endpoint of this study, we see that the publishing house Rámus published two additional titles from Quebec – Tremblay's *Djur* [L'habitudes des bêtes] and Dominique Fortier's *Pappershem* [Les villes de papier] in 2021; and the publishing house Sekwa published the translation of Thúy's *Em*. As such, the Quebecois–Swedish connection continues.

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Appendix

Table A. Overview of the titles translated from Quebecois French (Q) to Swedish (S) published between 2000 and 2020.

Year (S)	Title (S)	Title (Q)	Author	Publisher (S)	Translator	Genre
2003	<i>Den otacksamma</i>	<i>L'ingratitude</i>	Ying Chen	Elisabeth Grate förlag	Lotta Riad	Novel
2008	<i>Stilla</i>	<i>Immobile</i>	Ying Chen	Elisabeth Grate förlag	Maria Björkman	Novel
2010	<i>Himlen i Bay City</i>	<i>Le ciel de Bay city</i>	Catherine Mavrikakis	Sekwa förlag	Dagmar Olsson	Novel
2011	<i>Framför mitt hus</i>	<i>Devant ma maison</i>	Marianne Dubuc	Rabén & Sjögren	Susanna Hellsing	Children's literature

2011	<i>Ru</i>	<i>Ru</i>	Kim Thúy	Sekwa förlag	Marianne Tufvesson	Novel
2012	<i>Djurens maskerad</i>	<i>Au carnival des animaux</i>	Marianne Dubuc	Rabén & Sjögren	Susanna Helsing	Children's literature
2013	<i>Anteckningar från Jerusalem</i>	<i>Chroniques de Jérusalem</i>	Guy Delisle	Epix	Anita Hedman and Horst Schröder	Graphic novel
2013	<i>Pyongyang</i>	<i>Pyongyang</i>	Guy Delisle	Placebo Press	Viktor Agering	Graphic novel
2013	<i>Mån</i>	<i>Mån</i>	Kim Thúy	Sekwa förlag	Marianne Tufvesson	Novel
2013	<i>Fiskar ändrar riktning i kallt vatten</i>	<i>Le froid modifie la trajectoire des poissons</i>	Pierre Szalowski	Sekwa förlag	Magdalena Sørensen	Novel
2013	<i>Flugan</i>	<i>La mouche</i>	Elise Gravel	Lilla Piratförlaget	Gunilla Halkjaer Olofsson	Children's literature
2013	<i>Masken</i>	<i>Le ver</i>	Elise Gravel	Lilla Piratförlaget	Gunilla Halkjaer Olofsson	Children's literature
2013	<i>Det regnade fåglar</i>	<i>Il pleuvait des oiseaux</i>	Joycelyne Saucier	Tranan förlag	Magdalena Sørensen	Novel
2014	<i>Anteckningar från Burma</i>	<i>Chroniques birmanes</i>	Guy Delisle	Epix	Horst Schröder	Graphic novel
2014	<i>Alberts tårta</i>	<i>Le gâteau</i>	Marianne Dubuc	Berghs	Gun-Britt Sundström	Children's literature
2015	<i>Hägern</i>	<i>La héronnière</i>	Lise Tremblay	Rámus förlag	Elin Svahn	Short stories collection
2015	<i>Smokey Nelsons sista dagar</i>	<i>Les derniers jours de Smokey Nelson</i>	Catherine Mavrikakis	Sekwa förlag	Cecilia Franklin	Novel

2016	<i>Jane, räven och jag</i>	<i>Jane, le renard et moi</i>	Fanny Britt and Isabelle Arsenault (illustrator)	Sanatorium förlag	Elin Svahn	Graphic novel
2016	<i>Vi</i>	<i>Vi</i>	Kim Thúy	Sekwa förlag	Ulla Linton	Novel
2017	<i>Huset på Saint Pauls väg</i>	<i>Chemin Saint-Paul</i>	Lise Tremblay	Rámus förlag	Elin Svahn	Novel
2017	<i>Jag är inte din mamma</i>	<i>Je ne suis pas ta maman</i>	Marianne Dubuc	Lilla Piratförlaget	Gunilla Halkjaer Olofsson	Children's literature
2017	<i>Alla gånger jag inte dog</i>	<i>Toutes les fois où je ne suis pas morte</i>	Geneviève Lefebvre	Sekwa förlag	Ulla Linton	Novel
2018	<i>Louis och demonerna</i>	<i>Louis parmi les spectres</i>	Fanny Britt and Isabelle Arsenault (illustrator)	Sanatorium förlag	Elin Svahn	Graphic novel
2019	<i>Saguenay</i>	<i>La pêche blanche</i>	Lise Tremblay	Rámus förlag	Elin Svahn	Novel
2019	<i>Peter, Katten som gick på två ben</i>	<i>Peter, le chat debout</i>	Nadine Robert and Jean Jullien (illustrator)	Rabén & Sjögren	Cilla Friedner	Children's literature
2020	<i>På Babas rygg</i>	<i>Sur le dos de Baba</i>	Marianne Dubuc	Lilla piratförlaget	Erik Titusson	Children's literature

Table B. The three consecration mechanisms for each title translated from Quebecois French to Swedish 2000–2020.

Title	Literary awards	Publication in France	Translation subsidies
<i>Den otacksamma</i> [L'ingratitude]	Prix des libraires (1996); Prix de la Société des écrivains canadiens (1996); Prix Québec-Paris (1996); Prix Louis-Hémon / Académie de Languedoc (1996); Prix des lectrices - Elle Québec (1996)	Actes Sud (1995); Babel (1999)	–
<i>Stilla</i> [Immobile]	Prix Alfred-DesRochers de l'Association des auteurs des Cantons-de-l'Est (1999)	Actes Sud (1999)	Canada Council for the Arts
<i>Himlen i Bay City</i> [Le ciel de Bay city]	Prix des collégiens (2009); Prix des libraires (2009); Grand prix du livre de Montréal (2008)	Sabine Wespieser editeur (2009); 10:18 (2011)	Swedish Arts Council
<i>Framför mitt hus</i> [Devant ma maison]	–	Casterman (2016)	–
<i>Ru</i> [Ru]	Grand Prix RTL-Lire (2010); Prix du Gouverneur Général (2010); Prix du Grand Public Salon du livre (2010); Grand Prix littéraire Archambault (2011); Mondello Prize for Multiculturalism (2011); Canada Reads (2015)	Liana Levi (2011)	Swedish Arts Council
<i>Djurens maskerad</i> [Au carnaval des animaux]	–	–	Swedish Arts Council

<i>Anteckningar från Jerusalem</i> [Chroniques de Jérusalem]	Fauve d'Or (2012) Prix Bédéis causa (2012): Meilleur Album Reportage, Solliès-Ville (2012); Prix littéraire des lycéens d'Ile-de-France (2013); Prix Segalen des Lycéens d'Asie (2013): Independent Publisher Book Awards – Graphic Novel (2013) Prix Sproing de la meilleure bande dessinée étrangère (2014)	–	Swedish Arts Council
<i>Pyongyang</i> [Pyongyang]	Prix Bédéis causa (2017); Prix Médecins Sans Frontières (2017) Rudolp Dirks Award (2017); Lynd Ward Graphic Novel Prize (2018), Prix littéraire des lycéens du Val d'Oise (2018)	–	Swedish Arts Council
<i>Mån</i> [Mån]	–	Liana Levi (2020)	Swedish Arts Council; Canada Council for the Arts
<i>Fiskar ändrar riktning i kallt vatten</i> [Le froid modifie la trajectoire des poissons]	Grand Prix de la relève littéraire Archambault (2009)	H. d'Ormesson (2010); France Loisir (2011)	Canada Council for the Arts
<i>Flugan</i> [La mouche]	–	Éditions le Pommier (2015)	Swedish Arts Council
<i>Masken</i> [Le ver]	–	Éditions le Pommier (2014)	Swedish Arts Council

<i>Det regnade fåglar</i> [Il pleuvait des oiseaux]	Prix des cinq continents de la francophonie (2011); Prix littéraire des collégiens (2012); Prix Ringuet (2012); Prix France-Québec (2012); Prix des lecteurs Radio-Canada (2012); Combat des livres de Radio Canada (2012); Prix grand Public Salon du livre de Montréal; La Presse (2012); Prix Les irrésistibles – Bibliothèques de Montréal (2012); Prix des Collégiens de Suède en Littérature Québécoises (2012)	Denoël (2013); Folio (2014); À vue d'oeil (2014)	Swedish Arts Council
<i>Anteckningar från Burma</i> [Chronique birmanes]	Prix Albéric-Bourgeois (2008)	Selcourt (2011)	Swedish Arts Council
<i>Alberts tårta</i> [Le gateau]	–	–	–
<i>Hägern</i> [La héronnière]	Grand Prix du livre de Montréal (2003), Prix France-Québec/Jean-Hamelin (2004), Prix des libraires du Québec (2004)	Babel (2005)	Sodec Québec; Swedish Arts Council; Canada Council for the Arts
<i>Smokey Nelsons sista dagar</i> [Les derniers jours de Smokey Nelson]	Prix Jacques-Cartier du roman (2012)	Sabine Wespieser editeur (2012); 10:18 (2014)	Canada Council for the Arts
<i>Jane, räven och jag</i> [Jane, le renard et moi]	The Governor General Award (2013); Bédéis Causa - Grand prix de la ville de Québec (2013); Prix du livre jeunesse des Bibliothèques de Montréal (2013)	–	Swedish Arts Council
<i>Vi</i> [Vi]	–	Édition Liana Levi (2016); Feryane (2017)	Canada Council for the Arts

<i>Huset på Saint Pauls väg</i> [Chemin Saint Paul]	–	–	Sodec Québec; Canada Council for the Arts; Swedish Arts Council
<i>Jag är inte din mamma</i> [Je ne suis pas ta maman]	–	La Martinière Jeunesse (2017)	–
<i>Alla gånger jag inte dog</i> [Toutes les fois où je ne suis pas morte]	–	Robert Laffont (2018)	Canada Council for the Arts
<i>Louis och demonerna</i> [Louis parmi les spectres]	The Governor General Award (illustration) (2017)	–	Swedish Arts Council
<i>Saguenay</i> [La pêche blanche]	–	–	Sodec Québec, Swedish Arts Council
<i>Peter, Katten som gick på två ben</i> [Peter, le chat debout]	–	Little Urban (2018)	–
<i>På Babas rygg</i> [Sur le dos de baba]	–	–	Swedish Arts Council

Bibliodiversity in subsidized translations: Women's writing and Argentina's PROSUR grants (2010-2022)

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ABSTRACT

In 2009, Argentina's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Worship launched Programa Sur (PROSUR), a translation subsidy programme, in order to promote Argentinian literature abroad. Since the interest in Argentinian women's writing is increasing transnationally, this article aims to consider the extent to which PROSUR supports and contributes to transnational bibliodiversity, more specifically to the presence of women's writing and gender equality in the literary sector. By analysing the discourse used by PROSUR, both online and in a personal interview, and by analysing the data on which publishing houses received grants for which authors, as well as works between 2010 and 2022, this article finds that PROSUR supports specific agents in the field that work to increase bibliodiversity, like independent publishers. Still, men's writing receives proportionally more grants than women's writing, although this gap has become smaller over the years, with women's writing surpassing men's in 2022. Moreover, the data also shows that a large number of applications are made for a small number of women who already had some visibility through national and international prizes, English translations, or film adaptations.

Keywords: women's writing, translation grants, Argentinian literature, bibliodiversity, women in translation

Bibliodiverziteteta subvencioniranih prevodov: literatura ženskih avtoric in argentinski program PROSUR (2010–2022)

IZVLEČEK

Leta 2009 je argentinsko Ministrstvo za zunanje zadeve, mednarodno trgovino in verstva uvedlo program subvencioniranja prevodov, Programa Sur (PROSUR), za promocijo argentinske literature v tujini. Ker v mednarodnem prostoru narašča zanimanje za literaturo argentinskih pisateljic, se prispevek osredotoča na vprašanje, v kolikšni meri PROSUR podpira transnacionalno bibliodiverziteteto, bolj natančno prisotnost literature, ki so jo napisale ženske avtorice, in spolno uravnoteženo zastopanost v literaturi, in prispeva k tej prisotnosti in spolni uravnoteženosti. Analiza diskurza, ki se uporablja v okviru programa PROSUR, tako v spletnem okolju kot v intervjujih v živo, in analiza podatkov o založbah, avtorjih in delih, ki so dobili subvencije PROSUR med letoma 2010 in 2022, pokažeta, da PROSUR podpira specifične akterje na tem področju, npr. neodvisne založnike, ki

delujejo v prid večje bibliodiverzitete. Kljub vsemu je več subvencij dodeljenih podpori avtorjev kot podpori avtoric, čeprav se z leti vrzel med spoloma manjša, pri čemer so leta 2022 avtorice prehitile avtorje. Podatki prav tako pokažejo, da je veliko število vlog vloženih za majhno število avtoric, ki so že dosegle večjo prepoznavnost kot prejemnice nacionalnih in mednarodnih nagrad, angleških prevodov ali filmskih adaptacij.

Ključne besede: literature ženskih avtoric, prevajalski projekti, argentinska literatura, bibliodiverziteteta, ženske v prevodu

1. Introduction

In 2009, Argentina's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Worship launched Programa Sur (PROSUR), a translation subsidy programme, in order to promote Argentinian literature abroad. Many Latin American countries, like Mexico, Chile, and Brazil, have such a programme, but the PROSUR initiative was a result of Argentina's presence as guest of honour at the 2010 Frankfurt Book Fair, which required the country to develop long-term plans to stimulate the translation of its literature (Szpilbarg 2017, 427). Since then, PROSUR has subsidized 1,708 translations into fifty languages with grants of up to 3,200 USD.¹ The lists of approved grants are available on the PROSUR website, which allows us to gain insight in how the subsidy programme contributes to the diversity of authors, works, and genres translated from Argentina.

Cultural diversity applied to the world of books is referred to as bibliodiversity, defined in the International Declaration of Independent Publishers as "a complex self-sustaining system of storytelling, writing, publishing and other kinds of production of oral and written literature" (International Alliance of Independent Publishers 2014, 4). Moreover, bibliodiversity is necessary to ensure "a thriving life of culture and a healthy eco-social system" (International Alliance of Independent Publishers 2014, 4). This definition underscores the societal dynamic behind literature as a system construed not only by authors and their thematic-stylistic concerns, but at least as much, if not more so, by editors, translators, publishers, public policy initiatives, and funding.

An important aspect of bibliodiversity is gender equality, as women writers have historically been discriminated against in the literary sector internationally, although they play a crucial role in diversifying and enriching the literary field (Gallego Cuiñas 2022, 77). The PROSUR initiative is a particularly valuable case study, given the public and academic interest in Argentina's contemporary women writers, whose

1 Up until 2022. The 2023 data was not available at the time of writing, because the grant applications were still being processed.

styles, genres, and themes of writing are fodder for celebration, literary criticism, and scholarship. When discussing the critical acclaim of women's writing in Argentina, it is important to consider the role of literary prizes, which consecrate literary prestige and give visibility to specific literary works (Gallego Cuiñas 2022, 5–6). If we look at contemporary novelists and short story authors like Claudia Piñeiro, Mariana Enríquez, and Samanta Schweblin, it seems that Argentinian, Latin American, and Spanish prizes led to foreign publishers' interest in translating the authors' work and, subsequently, prize-winning in translation. Claudia Piñeiro, for example, has won Argentinian prizes for her work (e.g., Premio Planeta Argentina and Premio Clarín de Novela), but also Latin American prizes (e.g., Premio Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz) before winning prizes in translation: she won the German LiBeraturpreis in 2010 and was an International Booker finalist in 2022 with *Elena Knows*, a novel that brings together crime fiction and abortion rights debate. Similarly, gothic horror writer Mariana Enríquez has mostly won prizes for her work in Spanish (as well as Spain-based prizes) before appearing on the International Booker shortlist. There are, however, many more women authors not yet as well-known to the larger transnational literary public, which may be due to the triple invisibility they are subjected to, which I will discuss later on in this article. Therefore, the aim of this article is to consider the extent to which PROSUR supports and contributes to transnational bibliodiversity, more specifically to the presence of women's writing and gender equality in the literary sector.

In what follows, I will summarize the previous scholarship on PROSUR and introduce the concept of triple invisibility, which marks the difficulties Argentinian women face in internationalizing their literary ambitions and publications. Subsequently, I will examine how in spite of these obstacles the status of some women writers is improving thanks to translation. Then I will discuss the status quo regarding bibliodiversity in Argentina and PROSUR's role in it, followed by descriptive data analysis of PROSUR data from the perspective of bibliodiversity and gender inequality in the literary field.

2. Previous research on subsidized *extraducción* in Argentina

The practice of *extraducción* (literary translation from Argentinian Spanish) increased by 35% after 2007, indicating that Argentina's position in the transnational literary field has changed significantly in recent decades (Añon 2014, 98–99). This increase is largely due to Argentina's presence as guest of honour at the Frankfurt Book Fair in 2010, which was attended by 7,539 exhibitors from 111 countries, along with 279,325 visitors over the course of five days (Dujovne and Sorá 2010, 2). This growth in visibility makes the question of gender even more pertinent, given that there are now more resources available to promote women's writing.

Daniela Szpilbarg studied the first PROSUR years (2010-2012) from a sociological perspective, analysing “the relationships between market, publishing and development of cultural policies”. Szpilbarg found that works chosen for translation are either part of the historical canon, or recent titles that have gained popularity through mass media like TV series. In spite of this corroboration of canonical works, PROSUR also contributes to the diversification of authors abroad (Szpilbarg 2017, 432). Camilla Cattarulla has studied PROSUR grants obtained by Italian publishing houses between 2010 and 2012 (Cattarulla 2012). As Szpilbarg’s article already indicated, there is a privileged relationship between PROSUR and Italian publishing. Cattarulla found that Italian publishing houses have made use of the programme to fund translations of literary works often related to political violence, dictatorship, and exile, but also more positive themes like migration and multicultural identity (Cattarulla 2012, 270–71). She concludes that the programme has stimulated an editorial interest in a Latin American reality that is not based on stereotypical representations (Cattarulla 2012, 271). Cecilia Noce also has focused on a specific translation flow, namely PROSUR’s limited yet valuable influence on East and Southeast Asia, arguing that the PROSUR programme should be continued and supplemented by other (private) initiatives in order to foster relations between literary markets in Asia and the rest of the world (Noce 2019).

As insightful as these studies have been for our comprehension of PROSUR’s relation to book markets outside of Argentina, many studies do not include data from the most recent years, which have been of vital importance for women’s writing in Argentina. In connection to this, none of the studies focused on the gender distribution of the approved PROSUR grants over the course of its existence, from 2009 until today. The analysis in this article hopes to contribute to bridging these temporal and gender gaps in the literature.

3. Triple invisibility

Argentinian women authors with international ambitions have to make a name for themselves within a system that still invisibilizes them on three levels, which are best considered in relation to each other. The first invisibility is caused by the secondary position of translation in the book market, especially in the Anglophone book market. Only around 3% of books published in English are translations (Anderson 2013; Heilbron 2010, 3). This number is exceptionally low in comparison to other European languages, which tend to devote a slightly higher percentage of their publications to translated literature. Johan Heilbron’s rule of thumb, at least for European literatures, is that the more peripheral the national language, the higher the share of translations

among published books: for French and German, between 12 and 18% of published books are translated; in Greece and Portugal the number of translations is almost one in three, and in the Netherlands the percentage of translation is 34% (with three out of four translations from English) (Heilbron 2010, 3–4).

Secondly, there is still an inequality when it comes to the publication of women writers. In the Anglophone book market it is estimated that only 26% of books published are authored by women (Anderson 2013). The present article focuses on *extraducción* into various languages, not just English, but the hegemonic position of English-language books and publishing houses has a substantial influence on the visibility of authors anywhere. Of course, gender as an isolated category does not suffice to investigate (biblio)diversity in cultural production. Gender is mostly valuable as an analytical tool when it is examined in combination with other factors such as class, race, and socioeconomic circumstances that influence one's position in society. In the case of the Argentinian literary field, interesting additions to the gender category are hegemonic positions of cultures, languages, and literatures, as well as notions of elitism and prestige. In other words, the secondary position of translation and the secondary position of women writers exacerbate inequality in the literary field, working against bibliodiversity.

The third invisibility has to do with the place these authors write from, namely Latin America. Although Spanish is a central language in international communication (De Swaan 2010, 57; Zlatnar Moe et al. 2019, 30), research has shown that when it comes to literature the number of Latin American authors read in Europe and North America in English translation is much lower, proportionally, than the other way around (Landers 1995, 254). Mapping the translation of books as a world-system, Heilbron found that more than 40% of published translations were translated from English while only one to three percent were translated from Spanish (which includes both Latin American and Iberian Spanish) (Heilbron 1999, 434). Although these numbers date from 1999 and the interplay between gender and translation of Latin American literature has not been studied in quantitative terms, the research mentioned in this section shows clearly that the odds are not in favour of Argentinian women who want to be read outside of Latin America.

The *extraducción* of Argentinian literature can be a way to map the fulfilment of the feminist potential of Argentinian women's writing, as "translation needs feminist activism as much as feminist activism needs translation" (Vassallo 2023, 14–15). General as this statement is, it can certainly not be applied to all kinds of feminist activism. Moreover, it would be a mistake to equate contemporary women's writing in Argentina with feminist literature. However, research in translation studies and the

sociology of translation can be considered a feminist practice, because in researching dissemination and translation flows it aims to uncover the deeply ingrained inequalities in the literary sector, while also looking for positive signs towards more equality.

4. Women's writing in Argentina, international recognition, and translation

In spite of the triple invisibility set out above, the phenomenon of contemporary Latin American and Argentinian women's writing has gained so much traction that scholars and readers alike have started to speak of a new "Boom" (Corroto 2017; Scherer 2021; Alonso Alonso 2019; Mackintosh 2022), in reference to the Boom from the 1960s and 1970s, which was male-dominated and characterized by a strong inclination towards magic realist narratives. Writers like Colombian Gabriel García Márquez, Argentinian Julio Cortázar, Peruvian Mario Vargas Llosa, and Mexican Carlos Fuentes became the main names associated with Latin American literature. Often these authors gained recognition through transnational publication contracts with publishing houses in Spain, but also in part thanks to translation into foreign languages. The work of contemporary Argentinian women authors often has a strong connection to feminist topics in the broad sense of the word, whether or not the authors in question refer to their own work as feminist: the literature they write depicts femicide, gender violence, intimate partner violence, sexual violence, the marginalization of sex workers or other types of gender inequality. We can thus speak of a certain thematic coincidence between the authors, although the authors themselves reject any common label (Lorenzo 2021).

Furthermore, we should acknowledge that there still is a discrepancy in terms of prominence between the old and the new Booms: even though these women authors are gaining popularity and recognition, there are no Nobel Prize winners among them as of yet, nor are they as synonymous with Latin American literature as Gabriel García Márquez is. Still, most years Latin American women are present on the long and short lists of international prizes, such as the International Booker Prize. Often, these Latin American women are Argentinian, what's more, the Argentinian titles tend to be the only titles translated from the Spanish among the nominees. Examples are novelist Ariana Harwicz with *Die, My Love* (International Booker Longlist 2018, translated by Sarah Moses and Carolina Orloff) and Samanta Schweblin's unsettling short story collection *Mouthful of Birds* (International Booker Shortlist 2019, translated by Megan McDowell). Schweblin and McDowell also appeared on the longlist in 2017 and the shortlist in 2020, when they were accompanied by Gabriela Cabezón Cámara with *The Adventures of China Irón* (translated by Iona Macintyre

and Fiona Mackintosh), which is a feminist rewriting of the nineteenth-century epic poem *El Gaucho Martín Fierro*. Mariana Enríquez was shortlisted in 2021 with the gothic horror stories of *The Dangers of Smoking in Bed* (translated by Megan McDowell) and Claudia Piñeiro in 2022 with *Elena Knows*. The International Booker nominations also lay bare the role of literary actors as well as book market politics: some of these works had already received Latin American prizes, such as *Pájaros en la boca* (translated as *A Mouthful of Birds*), which won the Premio de las Casas de las Américas in Cuba prior to publication. Interestingly, *Elena sabe* (translated as *Elena Knows*) won the LiBeraturpreis, a German prize for the best written by a woman in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East, in 2010, twelve years before the International Booker nomination. There was thus often already some kind of critical acclaim prior to submission for the International Booker. Moreover, works submitted to the International Booker have to comply with a number of conditions, such as already being published in the UK and Ireland. Moreover, self-published books are not eligible (The Booker Prizes 2023). In this way, the International Booker Prize favours those authors, works, and publishing houses who are already relatively established in the influential UK and Ireland book market.

Diego Lorenzo, coordinator of PROSUR, said that international prizes, along with film adaptations, are the biggest stimulating factor for other foreign publishing houses to submit an application for a PROSUR translation into a new language (Lorenzo 2023). This underscores the complex interplay between international recognition and translation: translation is a necessary condition to win an international prize, but translation is also often the result of such a prize. This interplay, in its turn, is evidence of how the dissemination of books functions according to the dynamics of an “eco-social system” (International Alliance of Independent Publishers 2014, 4).

5. Bibliodiversity in Argentina

Gallego Cuiñas has developed a scale to determine the degree of bibliodiversity in a certain context, which she applied to small and mid-size publishing houses in Latin America. Scholars like Gallego Cuiñas and Vassallo have argued that, as agents in the literary field, independent publishers play a crucial role in diversifying the sector and shaping its dynamics (Zlatnar Moe et al. 2019, 15). The PROSUR initiative draws attention to the fact that committees founding and organizing subsidy programmes are also such agents, who can thus have a hand in increasing bibliodiversity and shaping the literary field.

For her large-scale study on the behaviour and position of independent publishing houses and their symbolic capital, Gallego Cuiñas considered a range of factors, from

editorial lines to the publication of e-books (Gallego Cuiñas 2022, 93–159). In order to define the degree of bibliodiversity, she proposes four values that should be complied with (Gallego Cuiñas 2022, 92):

1. The publication of minor genres (as proposed by Deleuze and Guattari) and genres that are relatively unprofitable, like poetry, theatre, and essays. This should account for at least 30% of works published (Gallego Cuiñas 2022, 92).

2. The publication of works written by women should account for at least 40% of the total. This is a political act that shows commitment to equal and inclusive literary and editorial labour (Gallego Cuiñas 2022, 92).

3. The publication of new voices should account for at least 30%, because this contributes to making new aesthetics visible, next to authors who already have acquired symbolic capital and write according to what is in fashion (Gallego Cuiñas 2022, 93). However, this condition seems to ignore that debut writers can also be in vogue, for example because they were already public figures before they started writing, or because a debut work was highly successful.

4. The publication of translations should account for at least 30%, which shows commitment to cultural dialogue among languages (Gallego Cuiñas 2022, 93).

Gallego Cuiñas applied these values to the independent publishing scene in Argentina, which led to mixed conclusions: 75% of small publishers and 65% of mid-size publishers fulfil the condition of publishing at least 30% minor and unprofitable genres (Gallego Cuiñas 2022, 106), while 68% of small publishers and 65% of mid-size publishers publish at least 30% novice authors (Gallego Cuiñas 2022, 113), and unfortunately only 22% of small publishers and 35% of mid-size publishers publish 30% translations (Gallego Cuiñas 2022, 116). However, although they do not score well on the translation value, they are relatively gender equal: small publishers publish 47% women writers, and mid-size publishers 39% (Gallego Cuiñas 2022, 106). In total, 80% of the small publishers but only 65% of the mid-size publishers fulfil the condition of publishing at least 40% women writers (Gallego Cuiñas 2022, 111).

Gallego Cuiñas also looked at other practices of gender equality and inclusivity, and in that respect Argentinian publishing houses passed the test of egalitarian and inclusive politics with flying colours (Gallego Cuiñas 2022, 132–144). The vast majority of publishers include a gender focus in their editorial lines and have worked to close the gender gap in employment (Gallego Cuiñas 2022, 132–134). Moreover, more than half of the small and mid-size publishing houses work together with feminist associations (Gallego Cuiñas 2022, 137). In other words, the Argentinian independent publishing scene sets a good example for foreign publishing houses in this regard.

In a personal interview (Lorenzo 2023), Diego Lorenzo emphasized the role of independent publishers and stated that both he and many of the publishers he works with favour the term interdependent publishers, as they build and sustain networks together, with their own lines of communication and translation ideologies. The majority of the publishers applying for PROSUR grants are independent publishers, which means that they function according to a certain spirit of in(ter)dependence, rather than complying with a number of categories that define them as independent, like size. Lorenzo notes that these are the publishing houses that apply for grants in order to diversify their catalogue, striving to offer their readers a less commercial prospectus. Once again, different agents in the literary field, namely publishers, editors, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs enhance each other's work to improve bibliodiversity. In an Anglophone context, Lorenzo praised the role of Charco Press for its commitment to diverse catalogues. Charco Press, an Edinburgh-based publishing house focusing on Latin American literature in translation, launched its *2017 Bundle* catalogue with five books from Argentina, with work from two women, namely Ariana Harwicz and Gabriela Cabezón Cámara, and three men, namely Ricardo Romero, Luis Sagasti, and Jorge Consiglio (Charco Press 2017). The choice of five books from Argentina emphasizes that one country can offer a wide array of literary works, even when limited to a span of just seven years, since all five books were published between 2009 and 2016.

6. PROSUR and transnational dissemination of women's writing

The data analysed in this section is the data made available by PROSUR and includes the lists of grants awarded from 2010 to 2022. Due to the lack of a systematic overview of Argentinian *extraducción*, and a lack of complete translation databases in general, it is impossible to know whether the PROSUR lists provide an exhaustive overview of all the texts translated out of Argentina. However, Diego Lorenzo stated that even though he could not be completely certain, he believed that these lists are quasi-exhaustive, as the PROSUR decision committee almost never rejects applications and because most foreign publishing houses know of the programme's existence by now. Exceptions to this rule would be when two large publishing conglomerates sell translation rights to each other for amounts that are much higher than the average PROSUR grant (Lorenzo 2023). Following the logic of bibliodiversity as proposed by in(ter)dependent publishers as well as Helen Vassallo and Ana Gallego Cuiñas, such deals would be made on commercial and for-profit grounds, and not from a philosophy of diversity. In other words, even if the PROSUR data does not give an exhaustive overview of *extraducción* in Argentina, the database is still the most systematized index of that very phenomenon,

which is why the present study chooses for this database as a convenience sample. Other databases, such as the UNESCO Index Translationum, are incomplete, whereas the Translation Database from Open Letter Books and Three Percent only give an overview of translations in the US, as opposed to PROSUR, which shows a more comprehensive view of translation flows. Furthermore, the aim of this article is to map the role of a subsidy programme as an agent diversifying the book world, not to get an exhaustive overview of all books translated from Argentinian Spanish. In that sense it is also more useful than the incomplete and not very user-friendly UNESCO Index Translationum.

On the PROSUR website and regulation it says that they welcome texts of any genre, “by both classic and contemporary Argentine authors” (PROSUR Index). Indeed, the aim is “to foster the translation of culturally significant classic or contemporary literary works [...] which address topics that are representative of the national identity, as an effective means for international dissemination of the traditions, ideas and values of Argentina” (PROSUR Rules). This clearly underscores PROSUR’s interest in building a specific cultural and national image through *extraducción*. This is also illustrated by the fact that the work has to be written in Spanish, by a writer “who is an Argentine native or Argentine by naturalization, or who has been granted Argentine citizenship as a result of being the child of an Argentine parent” (PROSUR Rules).

When asked if the PROSUR committee also rejects applications, Lorenzo stated that PROSUR wants to offer support to as many publishing houses as possible, and refrain from making value judgments on the literary value of a work given that the programme is a public politics initiative. They do not select works based on quality, nor do they prioritize certain aesthetics. For these reasons, they only reject applications for translations of highly polemic authors. The only factor that significantly limits PROSUR is the budget, so they have a cap of 150 grants a year. If they really doubt the cultural or literary value of a work, they will usually still give a grant but not the full 3,200 USD, although a lower grant may also be due only to financial reasons (Lorenzo 2023).

While PROSUR gives grants for both classic and contemporary works, the top ten most translated authors contains a lot of twentieth-century writing:

1. Julio Cortázar (Boom novelist and short story writer, 1914-1984)
2. Jorge Luis Borges (pre-Boom author of short fiction and poetry, 1899-1986)
3. Roberto Arlt (author of novels, plays, and sketches, 1900-1942)
4. Ricardo Piglia (post-dictatorial novelist and hard-boiled fiction writer, 1941-2017)
5. Claudia Piñeiro (contemporary novelist and crime fiction writer, playwright, and screenwriter, 1960-...)

6. César Aira (contemporary novelist and translator, 1949-...)
7. Juan José Saer (novelist and essayist, 1937-2005)
8. Samanta Schweblin (contemporary novelist and short story writer, 1978-...)
9. Mariana Enríquez (contemporary novelist and journalist, 1973-...)
10. Adolfo Bioy Casares (pre-Boom novelist and short story writer, 1914-1999)

Not only does the top ten include seven men and three women, but all of these men also published (most of) their oeuvre in the twentieth century, as opposed to the women, who entered the book market after the change of the millennium. This suggests that the Argentinian literary field is not only defined by the dominance of male writers, but also by the popularity of twentieth-century literature. These two aspects are, of course, related: in the twentieth century, many more male writers had access to the profession of author in comparison to women, which may have to do with women's lower access to education at the time and, subsequently, the low percentage of women in higher education (Palermo 2006, 41), as opposed to the twenty-first century, when the majority of university students in Argentina are women (Kisilevsky and Veleza 2002, 35; Palermo 2006, 42). In other words, in the Argentinian literary field the temporal axis is actually linked to women's invisibility: this top ten suggests that it became easier for women to publish and be recognized as an author in the twenty-first century, which may be due to the range of activist and political initiatives of the past decades that have contributed to a more equal Argentina. Moreover, it also shows that, retrospectively, women authors are still being erased from literary history: not only did they have less chance of being published, but those who did publish have not obtained a prestigious place in the timeless canon of Argentinian literature.

The website states that the PROSUR programme was launched in 2009, but the first data available dates from 2010. This means that they started advertising the programme and accepting submissions for review in 2009 for which they paid the first grants in 2010. There is a separate list of grants per year, with the exception of 2015 and 2016, which appear as one year in the data. When this study was conducted in the summer of 2023, the latest available data was from 2022. The graphs that follow look at the division of applications for men's and women's writing. However, the graphs also include the label 'other', which comprises a number of categories: to refer to works written by at least one man and one woman,² or to works written under a pseudonym. An example of the latter is Sauli Lostal, an Argentinian author whose

2 All the authors in the PROSUR database self-identify as one of these two genders at the time of conducting this study.

identity has as not yet been discovered, although there are rumours that it might be the pen of a certain Luis A. Stallo, and the literary magazine *Letralia* at one point even implied that the author might be Borges, an assertion which *Letralia* quickly withdrew after criticism (Gayubas 2005). 'Other' also refers to works of which there is no information on the contributors available online except for the description 'autores varios [various authors]' in the PROSUR data. This is often the case for anthologies created for publication outside of Argentina. Together, the 'other' category accounts for 29 out of 1,708 grants or 1.7%.

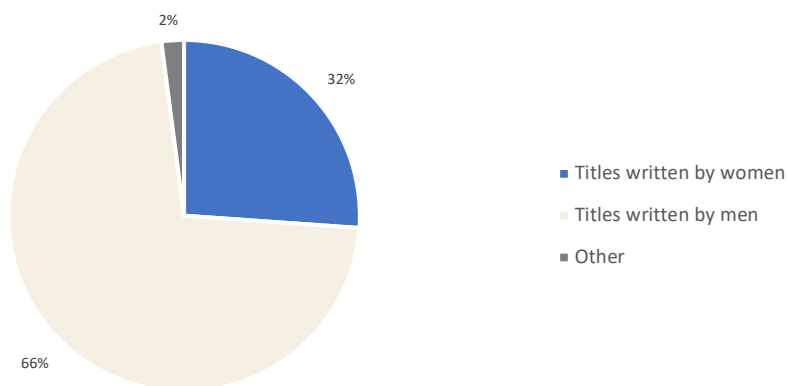


Figure 1: PROSUR grants 2010-2022.

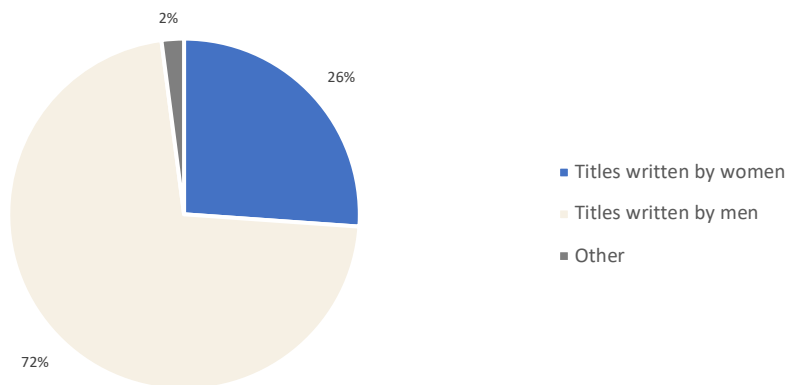


Figure 2: PROSUR grants 2010.

Out of 1,708 grants awarded between 2010 and 2022, 1,127 or 66% were awarded for works written by men, and 552 or 32% for works by women (Figure 1). This means

that the gender inequality has diminished slightly since the first year of the PROSUR programme, when the gender discrepancy was even larger, with 71.8% for men's writing, or 209 out of 291 grants (Figure 2).

A closer look at the evolution of the subsidies' gender distribution reveals that literature written by men has the upper hand until 2022. The coming years will reveal whether the increase in subsidies for women's writing in 2022 was an exception, or if this will become a lasting tendency as a result of sustained international editorial interest in Argentina's women authors (Figure 3).

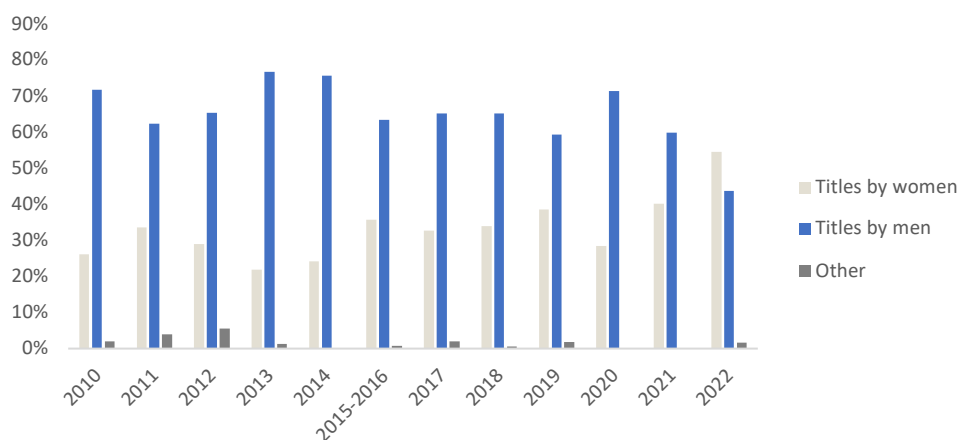


Figure 3: Evolution of gender distribution in PROSUR grants 2010-2022.

Figure 3 shows that PROSUR actually does not fulfil the bibliodiversity condition of publishing women, but there are signs of improvement: in 2021 and 2022, 40.1% and 54.6% of the PROSUR grants went to women's writing, respectively. In 2022, the grants for translations of titles written by women outnumbered the grants for men's writing for the first time. Out of 119 grants, 65 or 54% were for titles written by women, 52 grants or 44% were for those written by men, and 2% were for those written by 'other'. The grants were given to works by 43 different women authors, which means that for a few authors multiple grants were given. Among the authors whose work received two grants are twentieth-century authors like Silvia Molloy, Alejandra Pizarnik, Ana María Shua, Silvina Ocampo, and Luisa Valenzuela, and Hebe Uhart. Others are newer to the literary scene: Lucía Puenzo, Ana Basualdo, Mariana Travacio, Tamara Tenenbaum, and Mariana Sánchez. The authors whose work received three grants are mostly contemporary authors who published the majority of their works after the turn of the millennium: Samanta Schweblin (born 1978), Mariana Enríquez (born 1973), Ariana Harwicz (born

1977), and Claudia Piñeiro (born 1960), with one exception to the rule being Aurora Venturini (1922-2015).

If we look at target languages, we see that the most popular is Italian, with 322 titles or 18.9% of PROSUR grants. The rest of the top five consists of English (180 titles), French (171 titles), Portuguese (163 titles), and German (149 titles). Although English is not the target language to receive the most grants, its influence on the transnational literary field should not be underestimated, as not only native speakers of English but also many others read English translations, often because there is no (recent) translation available or accessible in their own, smaller language. Between 2010 and 2022, 180 titles were translated into English with PROSUR subsidies. As I already mentioned, the nominations of Argentinian women writers for prizes like the International Booker illustrate the Anglophone readership's appreciation of their writing, and the PROSUR data shows that their interest reaches beyond the fraction of the literature that makes it onto those prestigious lists. In other words, Figure 4 shows that these nominations are part of a larger tendency of recognizing and disseminating women's writing.

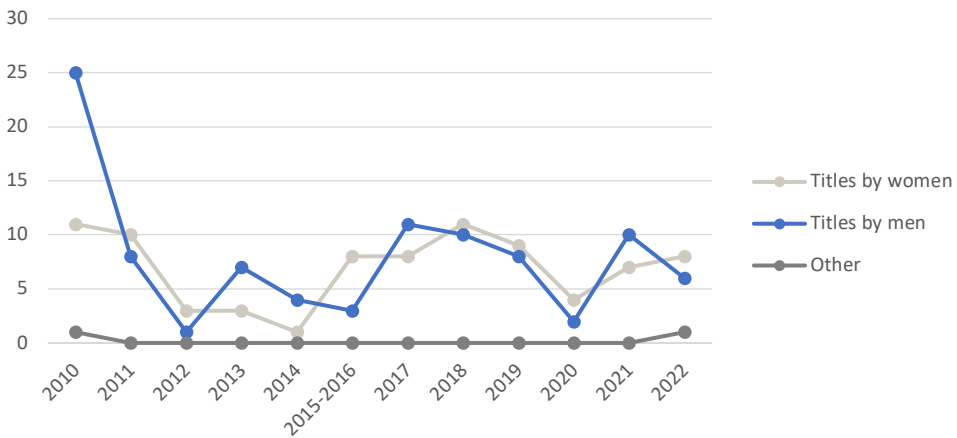


Figure 4: Grants for English translations of titles by women and titles by men.

English subsidized translations from Argentina do not exacerbate gender inequality in the transnational literary field. Excluding the first year (2010), subsidies for women's and men's writing are relatively balanced, as the subsidies are similar in quantity, with the higher number alternating between men's and women's writing most years. In 2022, when more women's titles were translated than men's overall, this was also the case for the translation into English.

The most popular target language is Italian, with 322 titles between 2010 and 2022. This is perhaps more surprising than having English in the top five, and it is unknown why Italian publishers submit so many PROSUR applications. There is no scholarship on the relation between the Italian book market and publishing translations as of yet, underscoring once again the need for more research on the sociology of translation, but there may be commercial reasons for this, or it may have to do with the privileged role of literature in Italian culture. It may also be due to a specific interest in foreign literature, or with the fact that a large number of Italians immigrated to Argentina, establishing a privileged relationship between the two countries.

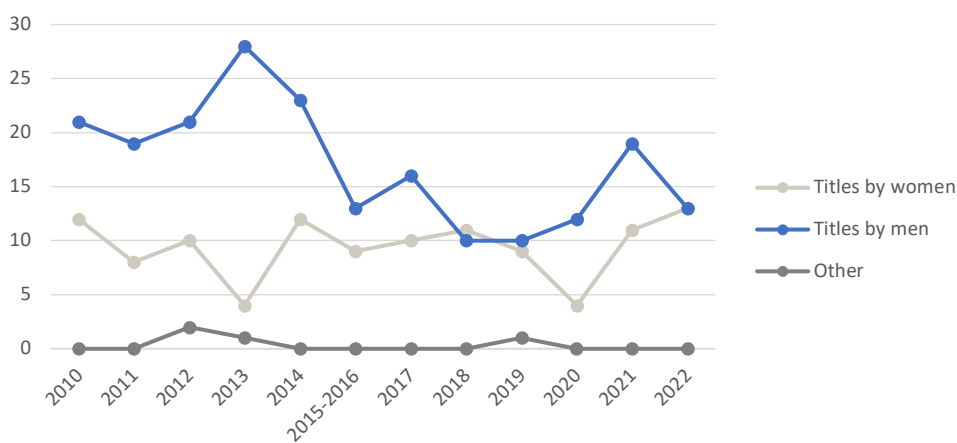


Figure 5: Grants for Italian translations of titles by women and titles by men.

As opposed to the relatively equal gender distribution among the English grants, the grants for Italian translations show a stark gender inequality. Overall, Italian publishing houses are clearly more likely to apply for men's writing than women's, with the exceptions of 2022 and 2018, when literature written by women received exactly the same and a slightly higher number of grants, respectively.

French publishing houses received 171 PROSUR grants between 2010 and 2022. Similar to Anglophone publishers' applications, the gender inequality is mostly visible at the start of the subsidy programme in 2010. Afterwards, men's writing remains more popular than women's writing, but the discrepancy diminishes, except in 2020 when no grants were awarded for French translations of women's writing. Moreover, in line with the general tendency, in 2022 women's writing received more grants than men's. The fourth language in the top five of languages to receive most grants is Portuguese, with 163 subsidized titles to date. Here, it is interesting to note that 83% of grants go to Brazilian publishers and only 17% to Portuguese publishing houses.

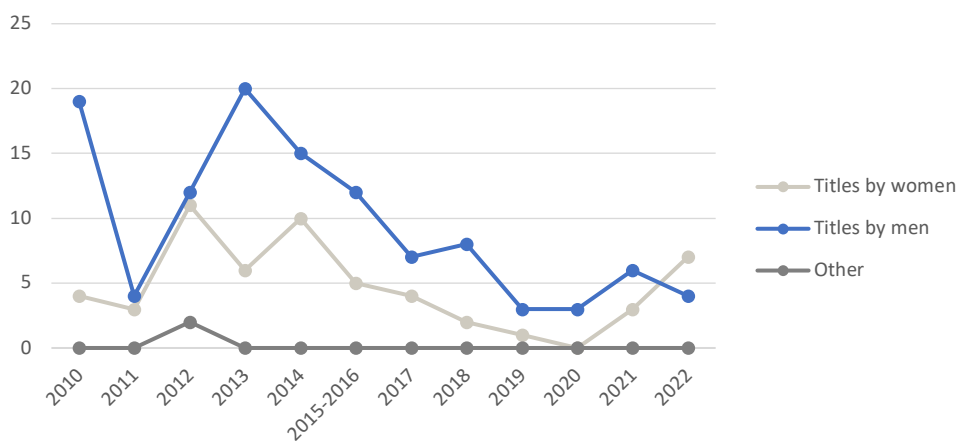


Figure 6: Grants for French translations of titles by women and titles by men.

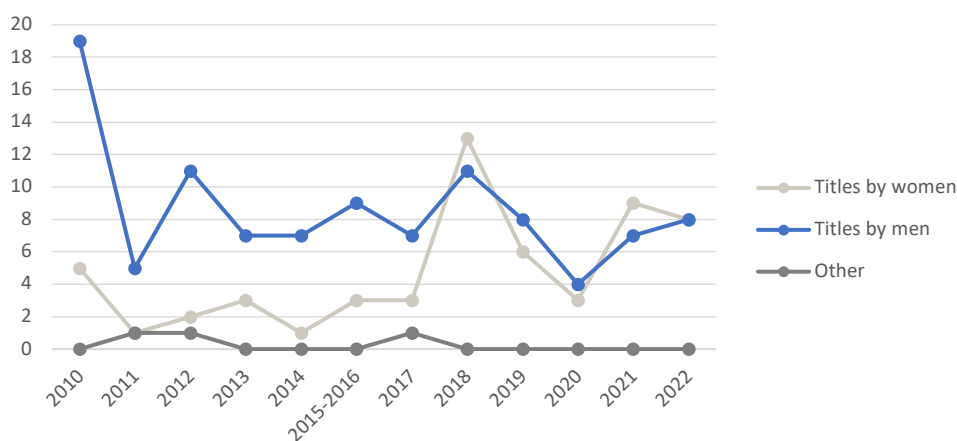


Figure 7: Grants for Portuguese translations of titles by women and titles by men.

The grants awarded to Lusophone publishing houses follow a tendency similar to the Italian for the first half decade: a big discrepancy in the first year, and a diminishing yet continuous inequality during the following years. However, in 2018, the Lusophone publishing houses are the first to favour women's writing, together with the Italians, although men's writing is more popular in the years after that. The years 2021 and 2022, however, show a positive tendency for women's writing, in line with the other languages in the top five. The final language in the top five is German, with 149 PROSUR-subsidized titles between 2010 and 2022. However, 52% of all subsidies for German were awarded in 2010, the year that Argentina was guest of honour at the Frankfurter Book Fair. In other words, the number of awards

applied for and granted in 2010 is not representative of German publishers' interest in Argentinian literature.

In 2010, German publishers translated 51 titles written by men as opposed to 23 titles written by women. In the years after that, the numbers dropped significantly, with every year between one and seven grants for men's writing. In spite of such low numbers, men's writing continues to dominate (if only slightly) in the majority of years, with women's writing receiving between zero and six grants. However, in 2015-2016 and 2022 PROSUR gave an equal number of grants for works by both genders. In 2021, like the Lusophone translations, women's writing was translated more often, with three grants for women's writing as opposed to one for men's.

It is also interesting to look at the women writers for whom publishing houses submit most PROSUR applications and how this trend evolves over the years. Six authors have been translated more than ten times with help from PROSUR. Since 2010, foreign publishing houses have received 34 grants to translate Claudia Piñeiro, 21 for Samanta Schweblin, 19 for Mariana Enríquez, 14 for both Ana María Shua and Luisa Valenzuela, with between zero and three grants a year. Thirteen grants were given for Silvina Ocampo's work, ranging between zero and four a year.

Piñeiro is the only Argentinian woman writer PROSUR has received applications for every year without exception, even if some years the number of applications was higher than others. For example, in 2010 PROSUR awarded six grants to translate her work, whereas in 2021 they only awarded one. Still, the contrast with the most popular (pre-Boom or Boom) male writers remains stark: in 2010, PROSUR also awarded fourteen grants for Borges and seven for Cortázar. If we look at the most popular 'Piñeiro years', which are 2010 (six grants), 2012 (five grants) and 2015-16 (five grants), we see that the applications are for both new and older publications. In 2010, the first PROSUR year, there were four grants for *Las viudas de los jueves* (2005), which was made into a film in 2009 (and it also won the Premio Clarín de Novela in 2005). *Elena sabe* (2006) received two grants, whereas *Las grietas de Jara* (2009), her most recent publication at the time, received none. In 2012, on the other hand, three out of five grants were given for her 2011 publication *Betibú*, one for *Las grietas* and one for her debut novel *Tuya* (2005). In 2015-16, one grant went to her debut, two to *Las viudas* and two to *Una suerte pequeña*, which she published just that year in 2015. In 2022 all three Piñeiro grants were awarded for *Elena sabe*, a novel with feminist tendencies on motherhood, reproductive rights, and suicide, the English translation of which, by Frances Riddle, was shortlisted for the International Booker Prize in 2022. Moreover, in February 2022 Netflix announced that they would be shooting a film adaptation of the novel (Mango 2023). In this way *Las viudas* and *Elena sabe*

underscore Lorenzo's point that prizes and film adaptations increase interest in a work transnationally and lead to more translations (Lorenzo 2023).

The next most popular female author is Samanta Schweblin, who was translated with PROSUR subsidies in most of the years examined in this study. However, the interest in her work is far from stable, with six grants in 2019 and none the year after. In 2018 she published the novel *Kentukis*. That year, neither of the two PROSUR grants given for Schweblin's work was for *Kentukis*, although this is likely because it was published late in the year, when the PROSUR application round had already closed. However, while the 2019 English translation made it onto the International Booker longlist in 2020, this novel about technology and our obsession with online connection did not account for a high number of grants in 2019, as it only attracted the attention of Gallimard in France and Onufri Publishing in Albania. Schweblin's other 2019 grants went to a variety of other works: *Pájaros en la boca* (2009), *Distancia de rescate* (2014), and *Siete casas vacías* (2015).

Mariana Enríquez, who entered the literary field in 1995 with *Bajar es lo peor*, has been a fixture for PROSUR since the beginning, with anywhere between one and three grants most years. Nevertheless, in 2021 she was the second most popular PROSUR writer, with five grants, only surpassed by César Aira, with seven grants. This may be a result of Enríquez' place on the International Booker shortlist with *The Dangers of Smoking in Bed* the same year, a short story collection about violence, poverty, sexual transgressions, and the collective trauma of a country. However, only one application that year is for the translation of *Los peligros de fumar en la cama* (translated as *The Dangers*), into Hungarian. One grant went to Enríquez's other short story collection, *Las cosas que perdimos en el fuego*, and three to her novel *Nuestra parte de noche* (2019). The English translations of her popular works like *Los peligros de fumar en la cama* and *Nuestra parte de noche* are examples of translations that happened without PROSUR's financial support, as there is no account of grants for English translations of these works in the database. So even without including English translations, Enríquez remains one of PROSUR's most translated authors. Both English translations are published by the imprint Granta Books, a publishing house which publishes around 30 titles a year and has published 27 Nobel laureates (Granta). Like Faber & Faber, they are member of the UK Independence Alliance, an alliance "of UK publishers and their international partners who share a common vision of editorial excellence, original, diverse publishing, innovation in marketing and commercial success" (The Independent Alliance). So although they explicitly state they strive for independent publishing, they also cite commercial success as one of the pillars of their philosophy, which goes against the very idea of independent publishing for many scholars and

in(ter)dependent publishers alike (cf. Vassallo 2023; Gallego Cuiñas 2022). In other words, even if Granta considers themselves independent, they are vastly different from small-scale non-for-profit publishing houses and have much larger translation and marketing budgets thanks to bestselling authors (like multiple Nobel Prize winners), which may explain in part why they did not apply for a PROSUR grant.

7. Conclusion

The analysis has shown how PROSUR contributes to the promotion of women's writing and the international readership of these authors, in this way enhancing bibliodiversity in the transnational literary field. As mentioned previously, Argentinian publishers do well on the bibliodiversity scale, especially when it comes to women's writing. However, considering PROSUR's workings over the years, we see that on average only 32% of their grants go to women's writing. While this indicates PROSUR does not fulfil the bibliodiversity condition of publishing women, there are signs of improvement: in 2021 and 2022, 40.1% and 54.6% of the grants were given for women's writing, respectively. The target language that most uses PROSUR grants for bibliodiverse aims is English: although notorious for not publishing many translations, the gender disparity is much smaller among the applications from Anglophone publishing houses than from other languages, like Italian.

While PROSUR can encourage translations of contemporary women's writing when they receive applications for it, the responsibility lies with foreign publishing houses to actually submit those applications. In this way, PROSUR underscores the role of different, albeit interdependent, agents in the literary field: PROSUR can enable in(ter)dependent publishing houses to publish more Argentinian women writers, but only if those publishers are also committed to diversifying their catalogue. PROSUR also encourages bibliodiversity in a different way, namely through the Key Titles project, which also deserves the attention of those interested in the sociology of translation. PROSUR's "little brother" (Lorenzo 2023) is a catalogue displaying a selection of 25 to 28 literary works to increase bibliodiversity and showcase current tendencies in the Argentinian literary scene to foreign publishing houses.

As Diego Lorenzo stated, young women writers are now gaining traction. Indeed, all women authors in the PROSUR top ten started publishing after the millennium. What the top three most 'applied for' women authors have in common is not only their age but also the themes they write about, as their writing is often concerned with types of inequality: they frequently narrate gender inequality, but also socioeconomic vulnerability and racism. The fact that they are so popular in translation is indicative of

the transnational resonance of the social problems they narrate. The high proportion of PROSUR grants in 2021 and 2022 might have set the tone for further dissemination, but it is now up to PROSUR, book fairs, literary prizes, and publishers to foster this transnational interest across languages and cultures.

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Elisabeth Goemans is a PhD student in Hispanic Studies at the University of Edinburgh. Before moving to Scotland, she obtained a master's degree in Western Literature and a master's degree in literary translation. Her PhD project examines the transnational dissemination of gender violence narratives by contemporary Argentinian women writers, with a specific focus on the role of Anglophone translation. Her main research interests include literature in translation, the sociology of literature and translation, Latin American literature, migration literature, and education. Goemans has published on US-American translations of Latin American migration literature, and on migrant teachers in Belgium.

Theatre translation: From target text to target performance

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ABSTRACT

The article analyses the textual changes that occur in the process of staging a performance based on a translated text. Drawing on Morini's four types of theatre translation, namely the interlingual, intralingual, intersemiotic, and intrasemiotic aspects of theatre translation (emerging from Jakobson's classification of translation), the article focuses on the differences between the translated text and the text spoken on the stage through the analysis of the Slovene performance of *Sad Songs from the Heart of Europe* by the Finnish author Kristian Smeds, translated into Slovene by Julija Potrč Šavli. The play, directed by the Finnish theatre director Jari Juutinen, was performed at the Slovene theatre Slovensko ljudsko gledališče Celje by the Slovene actress Maša Grošelj. As the author of the article participated in staging this play as a language consultant, the article provides an insight into the process, and reveals why and how the changes to the text occurred. As the analyses of the written and staged texts show, the majority of the textual changes were introduced by various agents involved in the production of the play, while some were also due to the multimodal interactions between different theatre modes (speech, scenography, sound, light, props, etc.).

Keywords: theatre translation, authorship, aspects of theatre translation, theatre practice, collaborative translation

Prevod v gledališču: od ciljnega besedila do ciljne predstave

IZVLEČEK

V prispevku so analizirane spremembe v besedilu, ki se zgodijo znotraj procesa uprizorjanja predstave, ki temelji na prevedem besedilu. Na osnovi Morinijevih štirih vrst gledališkega prevajanja (to so medjezikovna, znotrajjezikovna, medznakovna in znotrajznakovna vrsta gledališkega prevoda), ki izhajajo iz Jakobsonove klasifikacije prevajanja, se prispevek osredotoča na razlike med prevedenim besedilom in končno podobo besedila, ki je govorjeno na odru, in sicer z analizo procesa predstave *Žalostinke iz srca Evrope* finskega avtorja Kristiana Smedsa, katere besedilno predlogo je v slovenščino prevedla Julija Potrč Šavli. V uprizoritvi, ki jo je režiral finski gledališki režiser Jari Juutinen, je v Slovenskem ljudskem gledališču Celje igrala Maša Grošelj. Avtorica tega prispevka sem pri uprizoritvi sodelovala kot lektorica, kar mi omogoča tako vpogled v proces in kot v razloge za spremembe v besedilu in načine, na katere se te udejanjajo. Analiza pisnega in uprizorjenega besedila pokaže, da na številne spremembe vpliva več akterjev, udeleženi v uprizorjanju, nekatere pa

izhajajo iz multimodalnih interakcij med različnimi modalnostmi gledališča (govor, scenografija, zvok, luč, rekviziti itd.)

Ključne besede: gledališko prevajanje, avtorstvo, vidiki gledališkega prevajanja, gledališka praksa, sodelovalno prevajanje

1. Introduction

Theatre translation is not finished the moment the translator hands in the script, as the process then continues. However, the script is rarely further amended by professional translators, instead it is revised by other agents such as actors, theatre directors, dramaturgs, and language consultants. This list is limited to the participants that work on the verbal mode, but since theatre is a multimodal art form, with different modes interacting, the text that is uttered on the stage is also further changed under the influence of other modes, such as scenography, sound, light, and props. The aim of this article is to analyse the changes in the text that occurred during the staging of a play, from the text read at the first rehearsal to the final performance. The questions this article addresses are the following: What happens to the script when actors (with a director and their team) start working with the text and engage their voice, body, and presence on stage? What kind of changes does the translated text undergo when it is staged, and why? Are the changes to the text always linked to the para- and non-linguistic features of the performance? The answers to these questions will be sought by observing those who interacted with the translated text after it has been submitted by the translator. An attempt will be made to describe the manner of the interventions made by different agents, and to explain their purpose.

The theoretical framework of the research is Morini's four aspects of theatre translation, described in his monograph *Theatre Translation: Theory and Practice* (Morini 2022), which will be discussed later. With the combination of corpus-based study and field observation as the research method, I will apply Morini's aspects of theatre translation to the study of the performance *Sad Songs from the Heart of Europe* by the Finnish author Kristian Smeds. The play was put on stage at the Celje Theatre (Slovensko ljudsko gledališče Celje) in September 2022, and was translated as *Žalostinke iz srca Evrope* by Julija Potrč Šavli and directed by Jari Juutinen.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1 Theatre translation and theatrical system

Up until the end of the 20th century, translation theory explored the field of theatre translation as a special part of literary translation. One of the first monographs on theatre translation was Aaltonen's *Time-Sharing on Stage* (2000). In this, Aaltonen analyses the directors' positioning towards the scripts (and their authors) through an overview of the Finnish theatrical system. She establishes two antipodes of directors' positioning: reverence and subversion, thus exposing directors' entanglements in theatrical production. Aaltonen states that directors, theatres, and the expectations of the public are reverential "[w]hen theatrical systems hope to increase their cultural capital through translation" (Aaltonen 2000, 64). This means that in a young, emerging national theatre system the canonized authors and texts from the cultures considered older and/or superior will be translated and put on stage in a reverential manner, in order to demonstrate that a young national theatre system and language are capable of the same profundity. In contrast, when using a subversive mode of translation "the Foreign is rewritten to serve the Self without breaking away entirely from it, and keeping it still as the reference point against which the Self is defined" (Brisset 1996, as cited in Aaltonen 2000, 73). This means that a subversive theatrical performance would not put on stage a close rendering of the original in the target language, but rather enter into dialogue with the text, for example actualizing it, readjusting its perspectives, and shortening it significantly. These antipodes are often found in different national histories: a reverential positioning towards the source text and its author tends to occur in the constituting period of a nation or state, and is aimed at increasing the cultural capital of the target language or theatrical system. On the other hand, the subversive positioning emerges when source cultures are seen as a threat or when source cultures are patronizing towards the target cultures, and appear on stage when the target theatrical system is already mature. Since Slovene, like Finnish, falls into the category of peripheral languages (Zlatnar Moe et al. 2019, 57), we can assume similar mechanisms are at work in both theatrical systems.

This analysis studies micro-relations that emerge within the process of staging the text, and follows the linearity of authorship: from the playwright through to the translator, the director, and finally the actor. As the meaning in this model emanates from the author, it may be argued that the positioning of the theatre director towards the text and its author is reverential (in Aaltonen's terms). However, when in the staging process multiple theatre practitioners work on the text, negotiate the meaning, and finally agree on what is to be told on stage and in what manner, the traditional

linear perception of the authorship becomes too restrictive. Here, a more rhizomatic perception of the authorship of the final text, where meaning is negotiated between different theatre practitioners, might provide a better insight into the transformations of the staged translated text.

2.2 Theatre translation as a collaborative process

In his 1969 essay “What is an Author?”, Michel Foucault defines the author as a function of discourse, arguing that one of the four characteristics of the “author-function” is that “it does not refer, purely and simply, to an actual individual insofar as it simultaneously gives rise to a variety of egos and to a series of subjective positions that individuals of any class may come to occupy” (Foucault [1969] 2016, 309). Foucault posits that every text with a definite signature manifests a simultaneous dispersion of three egos (the one who indicates the circumstances of composition in the preface, the one who concludes a demonstration, and the one who speaks of the goals of the investigation). The author-function of a work of art created by a group, like in theatre, is characterized by an even more highly complex dispersion of egos and positions of different individuals.

A group work is, indeed, a regular feature of theatre-making, therefore Tarantini (2021) argues that theatre translations are characterized by a rhizomatic structure and that they are the “outcome of a multi-staged, interdisciplinary, and collaborative process” (Tarantini 2021, 4). The 20th century theatre theories emancipated directors from the text, granting them the status of authors (Milohnić 2021, 70). Similarly, Susan Bassnett re-evaluated the figure of the translator who is no longer bound to invisibility, arguing that:

(...) the primary responsibility for bringing a text across linguistic and cultural boundaries rests with the individual translator, who is finally starting to be recognized in the West as essential to the interrelationship between literatures, to the continuation of literary traditions and to the introduction of the new, the foreign, the different. (Bassnett 2014, 56)

Although involving unequal negotiation among different agents, Espasa (2000) argues that a rhizomatic structure in the process of creating meaning transforms every translated text, and that the “mediation of a complex chain of participants” as a specific feature of theatre is not an obstacle to translation:

Rather, this negotiation has to be included as an explanatory factor of performability. Ultimately, I would argue for putting theatre ideology

and power negotiation at the heart of performability, and make such textual and theatrical factors as speakability and playability relative to it. (Espasa 2000, 58)

Negotiation seems a *sine qua non* part of collaborative translatorship: every new staging of a chosen text will negotiate different dimensions of performability, and thus every *mise en scène* will produce a new play. Introducing negotiation into the concept of authorship – in theatre in general, and in translated theatre in particular – allows us to embrace a more rhizomatic paradigm and abandon a strictly hierarchically and chronologically structured linear authorship. To sum up, the understanding that authorship is structured in a rhizomatic way allows us to study the performative and dialectical features of theatre translation.

2.3 Four aspects of theatre translation

Morini (2022) proposes a methodology for analysing theatre translation based on Jakobson's ([1959] 1992) definition of translation. Morini's methodology allows us to maintain the concept of the rhizomatic modification of theatre translation and to show that on the multimodal level different theatre practitioners contribute to the process of transformation of the target text. Jakobson famously defines three kinds of translation, as follows: (a) interlingual translation or *translation proper*, (b) intralingual translation or *rewording*, and (c) intersemiotic translation or *transmutation*, "interpretation of verbal signs by means of nonverbal sign system" ([1959] 1992, 145). To these three, Morini adds (d) an intrasemiotic translation as the performed translation that is characterized by the "dependence of performance on previous performances, on stage or in other media" (2022, 71). These four kinds of translation may all be present in theatre translation, often involving the cooperation of theatre practitioners from different fields:

It turns out, after all, that the feeling of being trapped in a labyrinth experienced by the textual translator was only due to the presence of other agents at work on the same process. The end product belongs as much to the textual translator as it does to the directors, the actors and all the other participants in the transaction. In that sense, theatre translation is always, at least potentially, plural and collaborative. (Morini 2022, 72)

Morini's use of the term "textual translator" here suggests that other participants in the process can also be regarded as translators, either on intralingual, intersemiotic or intrasemiotic levels. The interaction of these four levels – or in terms of the

rhizomatic feature of authorship, the negotiation between different agents in the same process – can result in changes to the text. In the research presented in this article I will try to identify these different agents, and reveal their continuous interaction. The study will thus focus on how the actor's embodiment of intersemiotic translation (c) interacts with the work of the (textual) translator (interlingual translation (a)), how the linguistic choices of (a) textual translator influence directorial and dramaturgic standpoints (intrasemiotic translation (d)), and how the director and dramaturg influence linguistic changes (intralingual translation (b)). These four theatrical translational processes can be linked to three of the theatre practitioners collaborating in the process of staging the play: theatre director (d), dramaturg (c), and language consultant (b). In such a way a combined process- and product-oriented approach of analysing theatre translation is introduced that highlights its collaborative and negotiating character.

Due to the structure of my corpus, in this article I deliberately use the term “changes” and not the term “shifts” that is often found in linguistic and corpus-based translation studies research. I will not analyse the shifts that occur in translation of the source text to the target text, when the text is transferred from one language to another, but rather the changes that occur during the staging of a play and which are introduced into an already translated text.

3. Methodology

3.1 Corpus – text and video material

For this research a parallel corpus was built from the translator's final draft (A), which was 37 pages long and delivered to theatre practitioners, and the language consultant's working script (B), in which all verbal changes, prosodic instructions and other vocal directions that occurred during the staging process are registered. These two documents were scanned and imported into the NVIVO computer software. In the next step, all the changes in the second text (B) and remarks on prosodic features were coded and arranged into groups and then qualitatively analysed. Then, parts of the written corpus were compared to video material (C) from one of the rehearsals in the final stage of the process. It is rare that any changes to the script occur at this stage, when actors tend to solidify the text and their performance. Texts A and B were then compared to video material, paying particular attention to those parts where changes in the working script (B) occurred, in order to determine whether the changes to text A were linked to para- or non-linguistic features of the performance. It was assumed that some of the changes might have been prompted by the structure of the play:

although the whole text is performed by only one actor, the monologue is segmented into different roles that the actor interprets, which might in turn influence the final text uttered on stage.

3.2 Practice as research method

The play chosen for this case study was staged at Celje Theatre (Slovensko ljudsko gledališče Celje), where I participated as an employee in the staging of this play. Being both a theatre practitioner and researcher proved to have several advantages for my work. In particular, practical experience made the formulation of the research questions easier, since I was able to gain an insight into questions, problems, behaviours, and processes that are pertinent for theoretical research. During my research I have also noticed, as Nelson (2022, 14) argues, that practice as a research method in the arts not only enables substantial new insights through systematically undertaken work, but also allows for the development of professional artists, as well as builds bridges between academics and professionals.

My personal involvement in the process of staging the play analysed here has allowed me to enrich the knowledge that I gained as a researcher with the information I gathered as a practitioner. Combining a corpus-based method and practice as research method has also permitted me not only to ascertain what kind of changes occur in the staging of the play, but also to describe how these changes occurred, who proposed and/or accepted these changes, and with what purpose.

4. Kristian Smeds: *Sad Songs from the Heart of Europe*

The play *Sad Songs from the Heart of Europe* by the Finnish author Kristian Smeds was translated by Julija Potrč Šavli directly from Finnish into Slovene. The play was directed by the Finnish theatre director Jari Juutinen (his fourth *mise en scène* of this play) and performed by the Slovene actress Maša Grošelj at Celje Theatre in September 2022. There were two other theatre practitioners who were also involved in the staging of this play: Alja Predan participated as a dramaturg, and I was a language consultant. Smeds' monodrama *Sad Songs from the Heart of Europe* is based on Dostoevsky's novel *Crime and Punishment*, with the narrative perspective shifted to Sonya. In this dramatic work one can find elements of all three major literary genres: prose (excerpts from the Dostoevsky's novel), poetry (poetic, lyrical passages), and drama (Sonya, as *dramatis persona*, embodies other characters from the novel). The actress Maša Grošelj is the only performer in this dramatic piece. She embodies Sonya, who, in turn, speaks about other characters, at times so vividly

that she impersonates them, even to the point that Sonya's character disappears and is no longer visibly present.

The staging of the play was a Finnish-Slovene co-production, which meant that the working languages during the whole process were English, Finnish, and Slovene. I obtained permission to use the video of the performance for this research from the director of the play, the actress and the dramaturg, while the language consultant's working script (B) was created by me.

4.1 Results

The comparison of text A and text B showed that 104 notes were inserted into text B. Two of these changes were grammatical: once the tense was changed (because of the sequence of tenses) and once the form of the adjective was amended (from the definite to the indefinite form). Fifty-three notes record prosodic guidance given to the performer: they do not refer to any kind of textual change, but give instructions to the vocal performance (32 notes on accent and 21 notes on stress guidance). Since notes providing prosodic guidance (information on accents and stress) do not imply any deviation from the linguistic norm of the text performed, nor do they change the text in any other way, these notes were disregarded. Consequently only 49 notes coded in working script B recorded textual changes and were included in the analysis.

The translator from Finnish into Slovene provided interlingual (dramatic) translation (a), and the actress with her body and voice created and embodied the intersemiotic translation (c) – “script turned into performance” (Morini 2022, 71). The theatre director through discussion guided and validated all four aspects of theatre translation, including the interlingual (a) translation, and inserted some in-text comments, explanations, and remarks, which the translator of then introduced into her final text submitted to the theatre. However, this analysis does not analyse those changes introduced in the translation before its first submission to the theatre, and focuses only on those that were introduced in the already submitted translation.

4.1.1 Director's changes

Since the theatre director was Finnish his working script was bilingual, Finnish and Slovene, and sometimes he consulted the English translation as well. The director informed us that some of the textual changes had been negotiated beforehand with the author of the play, although not all the details. One of these changes was the cutting of Marmeladov's long monologue into shorter sequences that were interrupted by the monologue of Katarina, Marmeladov's wife and Sonya's stepmother. The director

argued that Marmeladov's long monologue, as narrated by Sonya, might result in the loss of the audience's attention. Another change proposed by the director was the use of video projection: an exchange of short lines between Sonya and Marmeladov was partly visualized on a screen, so that Marmeladov's lines were written there, while the actress vocalized only Sonya's replies. The director then invited the actress to improvise Katarina's anger towards Marmeladov, thus adding some lines for Katarina, which will be discussed in more detail in the section on the actress below. The director also added some text, in particular he extended Marmeladov's listings of wars in which he had served (from World War I to the Syrian civil war), his begging for money, and Sonya's list of words for prostitutes in different languages.

Comparison with video material

The director's choice to video project some of the script (case 2 above), resulting in the fact that some of Marmeladov's lines in a short exchange with Sonya were not spoken by the actress, did not modify the text, since these replies were not left out from the play. Through the process of intersemiotic retranslation,¹ Marmeladov's lines were visualized on screen. The extension of the lists (case 3 above) of wars and words for prostitutes, or Marmeladov's begging for money, in combination with distinct facial expressions and the wide-open eyes of the actress, produced an almost grotesque effect. The performance thus exploited the dramatic elements in the text and created the alienation effect. These nuances were hidden in the text and this particular interpretation brought them to life – the performance of another actress or different guidance from the director would highlight other nuances or could even bring out other meanings.

4.1.2 Actress's changes

The actress's contributions to the text changes were in negotiation with other participants: she was mainly concerned if the text or a proposed change to the text was utterable, and whether it had the intended effect. In addition to that, the director invited the actress to improvise some lines for Katarina, Marmeladov's wife and Sonya's stepmother. From her improvisation, six lines were kept in the actual performance:²

1 Here, I use the word "retranslation", and reserve the term "intersemiotic translation" for the transformation of the text into speech (when an actor utters the lines), and the term "retranslation" for the transformation of speech back to the text on screen.

2 All translations from Slovene are mine.

Table 1. Lines from improvisation kept in the performance.

a v oštariji da si	so you're at the bar?
a da to ni moja stvar?	and that it's none of my business, you say?
a to, da je moj mož ena pijanska gnida, to ni moja stvar?	my husband being a drunken louse is none of my business?
a to, da zapravljaš dnar za najine otroke, to ni moja stvar?	that you waste our money without thinking about our children is none of my business?
ma, da se mi spraviš domov	you better come home
in to takoj!	right away!

Comparison with video material

It is clear from the video that with the lines that were added by the actress (see Table 1) Katarina does not scold Marmeladov, but instead shows the audience how quickly she can get angry with him. The fourth wall is thus broken down, and the play is no longer closed off in a world where the performers pretend not to see the audience. On the contrary, here the performer (Maša Grošelj), without stepping out of character (where Sonya impersonates Katarina), addresses the audience directly. In this case the intention was to make the audience participate in Katarina's waiting for her drunken husband to come home.

4.1.3 Dramaturg's changes

The dramaturg also contributed to the final text by proposing some changes. Some of these changes are of the same type: the change in formality of address (from more formal to informal) – for example, she suggested that Sonya calls Rodion by his first name, and does not address him formally.

Other notes are linked to the cutting of different passages. Firstly, some of the passages were shortened, then left out completely. One line was left out from Sonya's first monologue: "avtor me je prosil, naj povem, da" (*the author asked me to tell you). This line expresses the author's intention to talk to the audience with his own voice through Sonya; however, the elimination of this line leaves the author outside of the performance. Similarly, six passages in the monologue of the drunken Marmeladov were left out entirely.

Table 2. Lines left out from Marmeladov's monologue.

Lines left out	Description of the motive: Sonya's character impersonating the drunken Marmeladov talking...
ej baba a greva plesat no sej te ne silm	... to a woman in audience, inviting her for a dance
zdaj pa gospod barman šnops natoč	... to an imaginary bartender to pour another round
a vi sploh veste mulci kako zgleda pička odrasle ženske? take mladiče kot ste vi žive požre hudiča	... to the audience, with a vulgar question if they have ever seen an adult woman's genitals
živjo! kako ti je ime? živjo! jaz sem semjon prij grevna na enga ta kratkega jaz častim no fantje, a ste bli pr vojakih kje si služu?	... to three men (separately, repeating three times) in the audience, inviting them on stage for a drink, and then asking them whether they have ever served in the army; the passage is shortened to one question, addressed to the audience as a whole
ej, kelnar! naštmej fantom ta čas mal dobre muske da jim ne bo dougcajt	... to the imaginary bartender to put some music on
za vas rečejo rusi	... to the audience, cheers in Russian

All the cut lines have the same effect: almost completely dismissing the text's intention to break the fourth wall, i.e., the wall between the audience and stage. In three cases the translation (text A) proposes that three men come on stage and have a drink with the actress. This passage in text B was shortened to only one question ("a je bil kdo od vas pr vojakih?" (has anyone of you served in the army?)) addressed to the whole audience and not to any particular individual. Thus, the changes in text B were introduced in order not to invite any of the audience on stage. The last eliminated line in the Table 2 was eliminated due to political reasons, so there would not be no allusions made either to Russia or to the war in Ukraine. The elimination of these passages and avoidance of the breaking of the fourth wall was negotiated between the director and the dramaturg in such a way that their roles cannot be unambiguously discerned.

Comparison with video material

The passages cut from the text originally had an alienation function in text A: breaking the theatrical illusion and inviting reality (the audience) into the performance. With these passages being left out of the play, the breaking of the fourth wall is no longer so important as in text A. On the other hand, it was not completely banished from the play since the actress also stepped down from the stage and spoke directly to the audience. It could be argued here that the breaking of the fourth wall was intersemiotically translated from the text to the movement of the actress's body.

4.1.4 Language consultant's changes

Sixteen notes in the working script (text B) refer to linguistic shifts, 13 of which relate to register adjustment and three to word changes. The register of utterances was changed from the standardized language to colloquial in passages where Sonya's father is drunk, and when Katarina gets angry. The colloquial speech was already present in the textual translation (text A), which was noted with some reductions of vowels. The further adjustments in text B harmonized the reductions of vowels throughout Marmeladov's monologue, as well as the simplification and approximation of combinations of consonants, i.e. "igrice" → "igrce", "dedci" → "desci", "smrdelo" → "smrdel", "najboljši" → "najbolši", "življenje" → "življenje", "obljubim" → "oblubim". Katarina's speech was in standardized register. However, discussions with the director, the dramaturg and especially the actress led us to make Katarina's speech more colloquial when she gets angry with Marmeladov: "zlivati" → "zlivat", "drugega" → "druzga", "v posteljo" → "v postlo". Some words from the standardized register were replaced by their colloquial synonyms: "po stopnicah" → "po štengah", "nekega" → "enga". This decision made Katarina more layered, showing that she is able to switch from one register to another. In one case the word was changed to shorten the line and adjust the rhythm of the phrase: "prav tako nisem // svarilna beseda ali učna ura" → "prav tako nisem // svarilo ali učna ura", and in another to modulate the meaning: "ropar" (robber) → "lopov" (conman), from someone who gets what he wants by force to someone who manipulates another to do so – the latter being more suitable for Marmeladov, who uses a ruse to get money from Sonya. Similarly, for the sake of rhythm, the tag question "ali ne?" (interrogative word) was changed to "ni tako?" (modal verb + adverb).

Comparison with video material

In the video, the actress performs a drunken Marmeladov or an angry Katarina with loud outbursts, distinct body language and facial expressions, which justify the

lowering of the register. Similarly, the actress utters the line “samo upati si je treba” (“you just need to dare”), then marks a pause, crosses the stage, puts the axe on her shoulder, looks at the audience, and only then she utters “ni tako?” (“ain’t that right?”). The long pause between the two lines justified the replacement of the question tag with a self-standing question. In addition, the movement of the actress’s body and the tension in her voice retroactively influence the text: these kinds of details make the process of making meaning deviate from strict linear structure of the authorship and reveal rhizomaticity of the process.

4.2 Negotiation and trust

Of course, the changes described above did not just happen, as they were implemented by the director and reflected his artistic view. As such, in this paper I call them the director’s changes. The dramaturg, actress, and language consultant mostly proposed changes in line with the production concept, which was developed beforehand by the director and the dramaturg. These additional changes were thoroughly discussed during the rehearsals, sometimes over the course of many weeks. For example, the elimination of the passages noted in section 4.1.3 were introduced gradually: the reason was that the actress was hesitant about inviting the audience onto the stage, and the dramaturg then supported her view, arguing that the audience at this particular theatre is not used to such participatory elements. It was then argued that inviting three people on stage would create a pause in the plotline, and for a while it was decided that the actress would invite only two people on stage. However, after a week of rehearsals the negotiation of this passage was reopened with the question of what the actress should do if no one responded to her invitation to come on stage – so, during the brainstorming of all the collaborators, i.e., the actress, director, dramaturg and language consultant, the elimination of the whole passage was proposed. The decision was reached through negotiations, and all the collaborators had the chance to express their views. All the final decisions on the staging of this performance, however, were made by the director, who made sure that every decision was in line with his artistic vision.

Here, the process of staging reveals a linear development of responsibility in meaning-making: emanating from the play, through the (textual) translator to the director, and then to the actress who executes the director’s interpretation and artistic view of the text. This can be aligned with Aaltonen’s concept of a reverential positioning of the theatre director towards the text. However, in the part of the process where multiple theatre practitioners work on the text (including the actress, dramaturg, and language consultant), a more rhizomatic structure offers greater insight into what happens to the text in the process of staging the play.

5. Conclusion

Theatre translation is a process that starts with an interlingual translation and passes through other kinds of translation, i.e., intralingual, inter- and intrasemiotic translations, before it reaches the form performed on stage. These other kinds of text transformation interact with the text and influence its final form. Focussing on the case of Smeds' play *Sad Songs from the Heart of Europe* translated into Slovene by Julija Potrč Šavli, put on stage at Celje Theatre in 2022, directed by Jari Juutinen and performed by Maša Grošelj, I tried to describe what kind of changes occurred in the translated text and why they occurred, what is the process that led to the final performance, and whether the changes of the translation were linked to the para- or non-linguistic features of the performance. In general, the analysis of micro-relations in the process of staging the performance showed that the relations were structured linearly: the story emanated from the playwright, was then retold by the translator, and re-retold by the theatre practitioners. The results also revealed that the positioning of the theatre director towards the text was largely reverential.

However, on some occasions the engagement of multiple theatre practitioners with the text and their contribution to the negotiation of the meaning showed that a more rhizomatic structure of authorship was also in place, and that, at least in part, the meaning-making process in theatre may also be collaborative, performative and creative. To conclude, even when the overall performance seems reverential towards its author, due to the rhizomatic, collaborative features of the process of staging, every theatrical act contains a grain of subversion.

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