

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, prevodovne 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 bibliomigrantstva 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 pogostejsi 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 – *midsommar* and *St. Jean-Baptise 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 *Nationalbibliografin 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

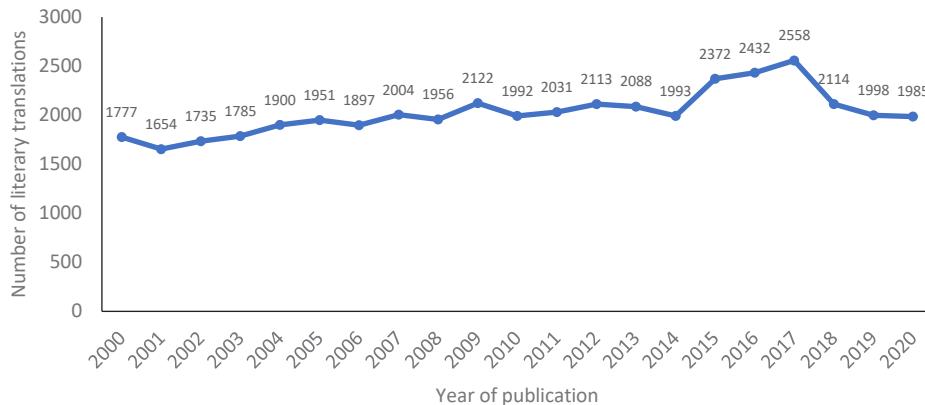


Figure 1. Number of published literary translations into Swedish between 2000 and 2020.

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.

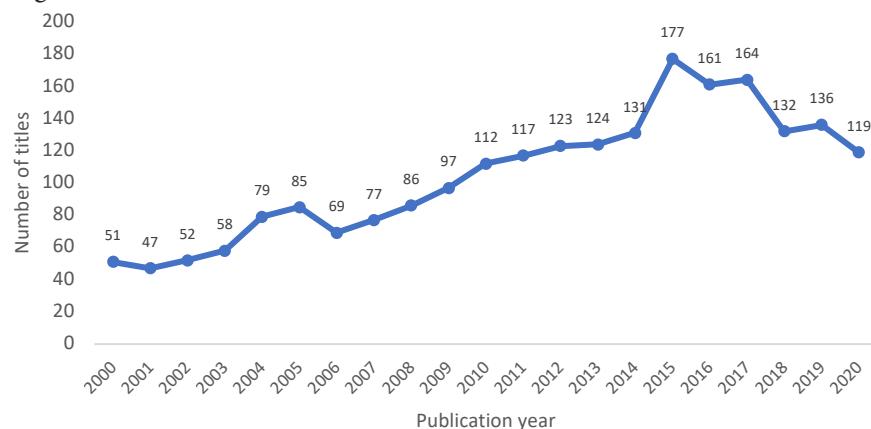


Figure 2. Literature written in French translated into Swedish 2000-2020 sorted by publication year.

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 Québécois 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 Québécois authors of classic novels are subject to an “ongoing extinction”, and that the relatively scarce visibility in the press highlights Québécois 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?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Translators – Translators' gender – Number of titles sorted by translator
Why was it translated?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 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.

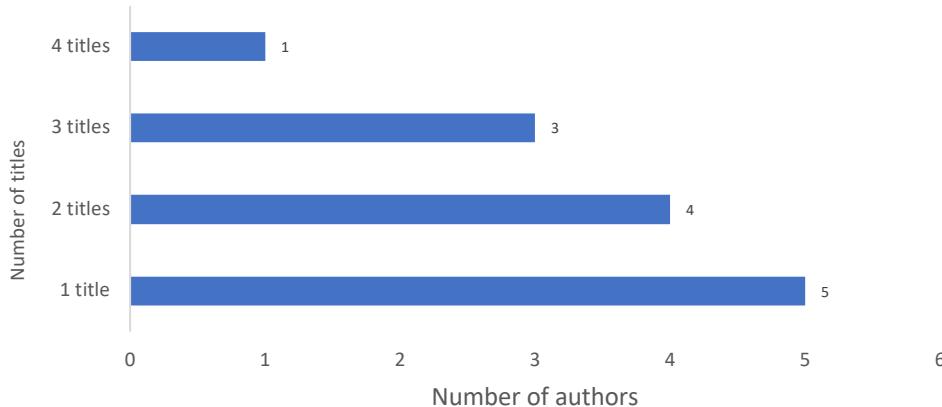


Figure 3. Number of titles by the same author between 2000 and 2020.

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.

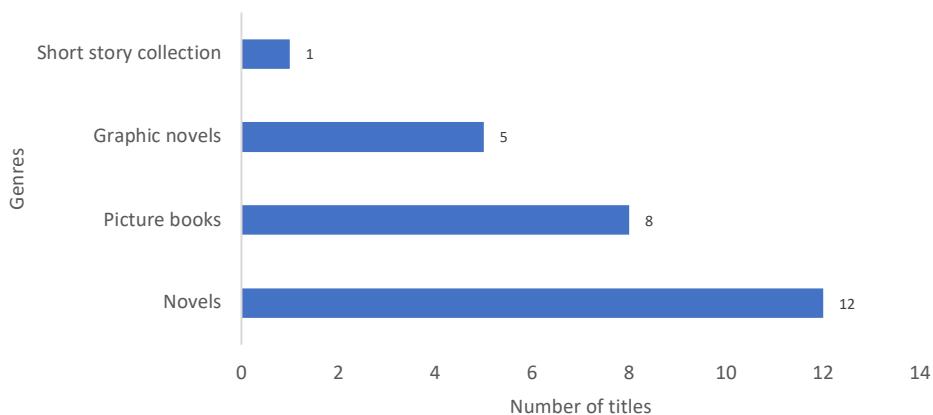


Figure 4. Number of titles translated from Quebecois French to Swedish between 2000 and 2020 sorted by genre.

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.

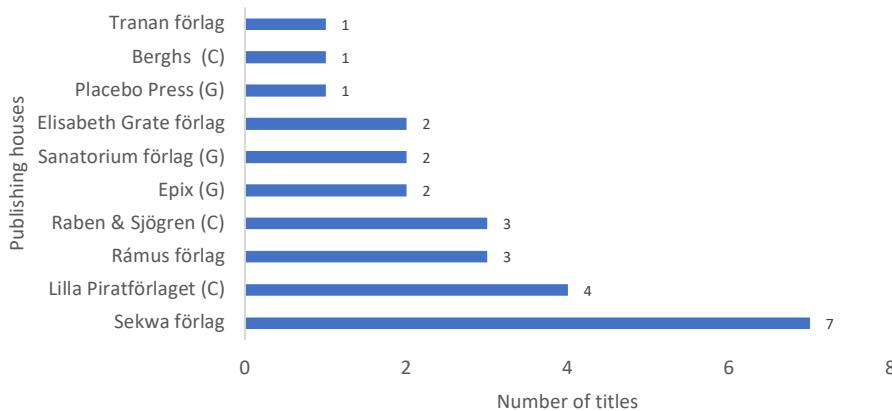


Figure 5. Number of titles translated from Quebecois French to Swedish between 2000 and 2020 sorted by publishing house.

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.

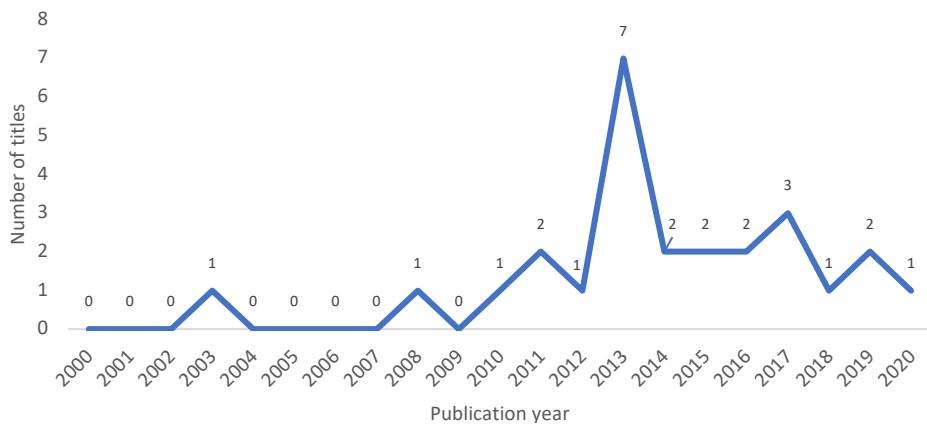


Figure 6. Number of Quebecois titles in Swedish translation published between 2000 and 2020 sorted by publication year.

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>Lingratitudo</i> [Den otacksamma]	Ying Chen	1995	2003	8 years
<i>Immobile</i> [Stillta]	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 carnival 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>Män</i> [Män]	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 Hellsing, 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 Hellsing (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: Thúy 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 Hellsing. An exploratory follow-up study should focus in more detail on the translators' relationship to Quebec and Francophone literature more generally.

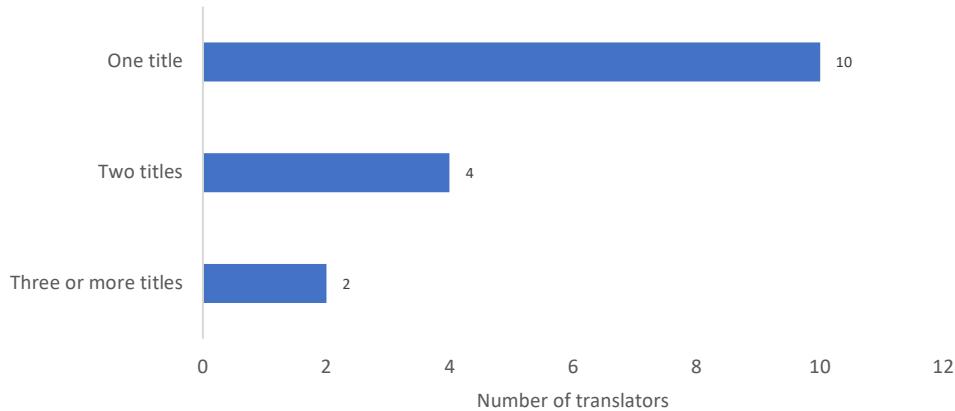


Figure 7. Number of titles translated by the same translator.

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>Män</i> [Män] 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, *Män* 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 *Män* 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 Hellsing	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>Män</i>	<i>Män</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 gateau</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 éditeur (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 carnival des animaux]	–	–	Swedish Arts Council

<i>Anteckningar från Jerusalem</i> [Chroniques de Jérusalem]	Fauve d'Or (2012) Prix Bédéis causa (2012): Meilleur Album Reportage, Sollies-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>Män</i> [Män]	–	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 libres 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 gâteau]	–	–	–
<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 éditeur (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