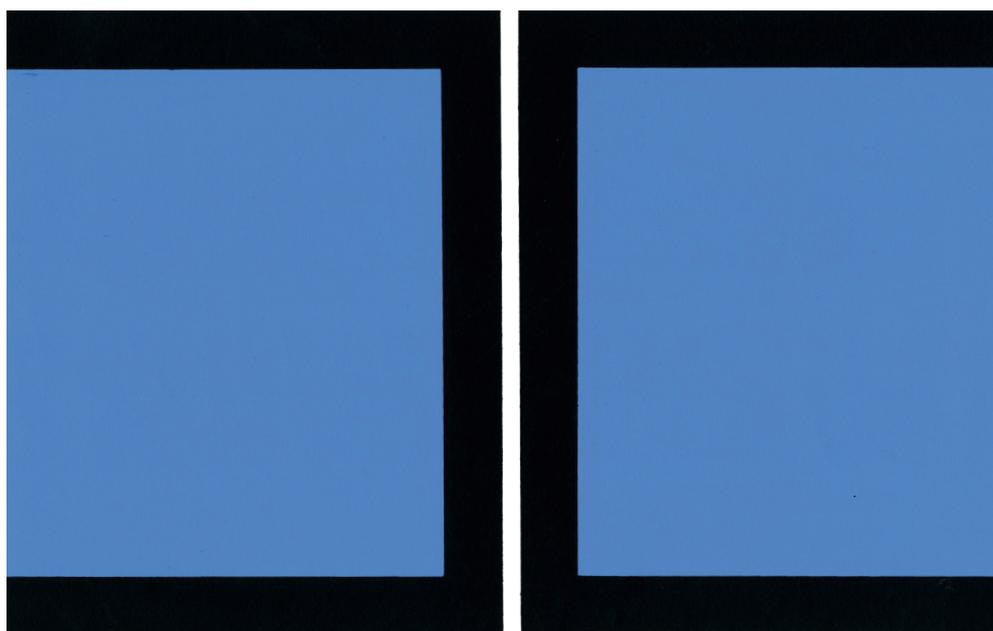


TRANSLATING SCANDINAVIA

Scandinavian Literature
in Italian and German Translation, 1918-1945

EDITED BY

BRUNO BERNI & ANNA WEGENER



Edizioni Quasar

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The Missing Needle: Bibliographies, Translation Flows and Retranslation

by OUTI PALOPOSKI

Abstract

Bibliographies are like haystacks: we engage in endless searches hunting for the needle we think must be there. Sometimes we find what we were looking for; other times, sifting through bibliographical data, all we come across is a lot of “unwanted” information. And yet perhaps we might, just once, turn the issue upside down? If for a moment we shift our gaze from what we are looking for (the needle) to instead consider our surroundings (the haystack), we may discover that the hay in itself is a source of new directions in research. Bibliographies may thus not only help us to solidify our understanding of our initial topic, they may also contextualise it and offer new avenues for research. The examples presented in this article deal with earlier work on specific topics in which bibliographies were initially used for locating statistical information. The problems encountered in the course of these searches ultimately led the scholar to pose new questions. An attempt to survey translation flows led to studies on personal agency or ideological or market pressures, and the search for retranslated literature turned into a study of categorization and classification problems when defining the object, retranslations – which, for its part, engendered a study of revision. Thus, while learning to cope with inaccurate or even misleading sources, we may also learn to see the wider implications of the issue in question.

Introduction

All researchers, no doubt, feel at times that they are lost amidst a great number of details, or that those details do not seem to have anything to do with what they are really looking for. This is very often true at the stage of research where one is trying to compile lists or bibliographies of existing translations, be it for a study of a specific source text and its different translations or for researching translation flows between different regional or language areas. The object of our study seems nice and sharp when we start our bibliographical search, but once we get going, the bibliographical web becomes not unlike the proverbial haystack, where we try to look for the needle we think must be somewhere there, buried under all that hay.

The needle and the hay are two separate issues and seemingly disconnected – why would someone drop a needle in a haystack in the first place, unless by accident? However, the search for the needle may still prove that the hay actually has importance, too. Sifting through the hay, as it were, I will here look at some of the concrete issues that surround translations. By looking at the hay and not the needle I am hoping that it might be possible to find out why the needle got there in the first place. My needle here is translations; my haystack is bibliographies of translations.

Bibliographical data and statistics are an important source of information for the study of translation flows between languages, cultures and nations. At the same time these data may be hard to find, difficult to interpret, or require breaking down into smaller chunks for closer scrutiny. Researchers often need to create their own bibliographies of translations for subsequent use in research projects.¹

1. Pym 1998 speaks about lists and provides useful insights and methodological tools.

As there is great variation in the compilation of bibliographical data between different national institutions, libraries, book trade and literary associations, the collection of such data may prove challenging. Bibliographical sources and searches are the focus of the present article, and they will be approached with the help of two special cases: translation flows between language pairs and retranslation.

I will start by discussing what is probably the best-known bibliography of translations, the UNESCO *Index Translationum*, and give examples from research literature of the use of this bibliography. The second part deals with findings related to the use of different bibliographies in my own work and breaks up into two case studies: translation flows between different languages, and retranslation. For the first case, I will combine insights from three surveys of language pair translation exchanges: Spanish–Finnish (1979–1993), Finnish–Polish–Finnish (1889–2016), and Finnish–Italian–Finnish (from 1918 to 1945). The surveys were made in different research contexts and for different reasons, and consequently their time spans are different, but hopefully they can contribute to an understanding of bibliographical work in general as well as the issue of generating new research insights and topics. For the second case, I will look at retranslating and the way bibliographical searches have helped redefine some of the topics within this research area. This part of the paper draws on the project on retranslating in Finland I have been involved in with Kaisa Koskinen from the University of Tampere.

Haystacks: Bibliographies for translations

Bibliographical information in Translation Studies is drawn from a variety of sources and depends on the country of research, on the available resources and on the research questions. There is normally not enough space in a research article for a thorough description of the bibliographies used; some bibliographies may even seem so self-evidently well-known (such as the *Index Translationum* database) that it may not seem relevant to start describing or problematizing them. Bibliographical practices however vary and the results vary accordingly; it is thus useful to describe these haystacks in more detail.

UNESCO Index Translationum

The UNESCO database is “a list of books translated in the world”,² an international bibliography of translations, started in 1932 by the League of Nations and later continued under the auspices of the UN.³ Since 1979 the data has been digitalized, appearing first on CD-rom and later in an on-line database, which now has more than 2,000,000 entries between the years 1979 and 2009. From 1932 until 1979 the bibliography is available in book form, at the UNESCO headquarters and National depository libraries. The cost-efficiency of the database⁴ comes from the search facility, but also from its extensive scope and global reach: there is a network of around one hundred national libraries contributing to the bibliography.

Index Translationum, thus, is a second-order bibliography: a number of national institutions send in their own bibliographical data which is then processed to form part of the database. While being a potential source of distortions, the second-order nature of the bibliography also is the very basis for its existence: without the prior work done on the national level, there would be no global bibliography.

2. *Index Translationum* website: <portal.unesco.org>, consulted 18 April 2017. UNESCO *Index Translationum* web pages since moved and most links disconnected.

3. See Rosi & Tukaj 2007.

4. Poupaud *et al.* 2009, 270.

The problems with using the *Index Translationum* thus partly stem from what is also its strength. The wide reach and global comparisons, made possible through resorting to national bibliographies, are also prone to inaccurate information and delays in processing the vast amounts of data. Categorising books is not a straightforward process either and is done differently in the different member countries and their national libraries. These shortcomings have also been voiced by, among others, the authors of the *Publishing Translations in Europe* report:

The two main reasons for the differences are problems of definition and regularity of submissions. Although Unesco (and its ISBN bureau) made repeated attempts at standard definitions, everyday practice poses a great variety of dilemmas. Some of the simplest cases with regard to translated literary titles: reprints and re-editions, bilingual publications, unconventional book formats (even before the advent of e-books), quasi-books etc. Each organisation tends to find its own response to these dilemmas.⁵

Digital search is possible on post-1979 data only, since earlier information exists in a different format (books). The search facility in itself is easy and relatively fast for most of the period between 1979 and 2009. The processing of data into the database is rather time-consuming; for most countries there is no data for later than 2009.⁶ This is understandable for the huge effort required to process the statistics from the around 100 nations that provide data, but it does render following the most recent trends impossible. The pace of processing seems to have slowed down during the past decade: the downloading of data for the *Publishing Translations in Europe* report⁷ took place in 2009, when 2005 was “the last relatively complete year”, implying that the gap was only four years whereas it now is eight to ten years. According to the “Last Updates / Contributions from countries” page on the *Index* website, there has been no data from several countries for more than ten years, and the data from several others is still being processed. Sometimes these gaps extend to earlier times as well: for Finland, the data for the year 1992 is being processed now. The only countries with post-2009 data published are: for 2010, Andorra, Benin, Jordan, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Timor-Leste, Togo and Tunisia; for 2011, Monaco and Qatar.⁸ Any studies on the recent trends thus must rely on other bibliographies and data collection methods.

Out of the studies using the *Index* as their starting point for comparing translation flows across the world, the best-known are most likely those of Lawrence Venuti and Johan Heilbron.⁹ Both have pointed out the dominance of the English language in the global translation market. An earlier survey was carried out by Anatolij Šajkevič of the years 1955–1983, with interesting comparisons on translation trends and what he calls “thematic spectra” in different areas. For example, the former Soviet republics relied heavily on the translation of works of particular political figures.¹⁰ Šajkevič also compared the proportion of translated books (PTB)¹¹ between different countries. Venuti’s approach was similar to Šajkevič in comparing percentages of translations and original works; an approach later criticized by Anthony Pym. While the PTB does reveal the relation between translations and domestic literary production in the country in question, big language areas may still have considerably more translations in numbers than small countries, where overall book production figures are lower.¹²

The *Diversity report 2016*¹³ on the book markets and translations in Europe would seem to promise an updated study, but the report in itself is not available in the announced address, only the executive summary. Without seeing the report, it is impossible to say how up-to-date it is – the executive summary refers to book markets but not the actual source for the data (and the main focus seems to be on best-sellers). In a review, the editor-in-chief of *Publishing Perspectives*, Porter Anderson mentions the data used are the *Index Translationum* statistics up to 2004, which would make the gap

5. Budapest Observatory 2010, 4.

6. Search carried out on 20 December 2017.

7. Budapest Observatory 2010, 4.

8. Information as per 20 December 2017.

9. Venuti 1995; Heilbron 2008.

10. Šajkevič 1992.

11. *Ibid.*, 67.

12. Pym 1996b.

13. Wischenbart & Kovač 2016.

12 years.¹⁴ Furthermore, it seems that the report focuses on a limited number of languages within Europe.

There are several other bibliographies that can be used: first of all, national libraries' databases and statistics, but also publishers' catalogues or indexes and literary societies' databases or lists may prove useful here.¹⁵ While the authors of *Publishing Translations in Europe* report seem to be wary of combining different statistics, Heilbron advises a cautious combination of international and national translation statistics as well as the findings of case studies and surveys, to counter the problems of the *Index*.¹⁶ Sandra Poupaud, Anthony Pym and Esther Torres Simón share this view and suggest checking the *Index Translationum* data against other sources or "filters".¹⁷

General bibliographies and their applications in Translation Studies

Translations need to be teased out of general bibliographies, and thus translation bibliographies share the same constraints as general bibliographies. Our present bibliographical practices have evolved from early on, from book lists and library catalogues from the Antiquity through to the Middle Ages and the printing revolution. The first national code for descriptive cataloguing was created in France in 1789–1791 when the new French republic had nationalised several libraries; one of the first recorded uses of library cards dates from that time.¹⁸ Book information became slowly more standardised in cards or catalogues (the two systems continued in parallel use in several libraries); the Dewey Decimal classification further systematised book-related information in 1876.¹⁹ Even if the standards are similar all over the world, there is variation in the ways different national libraries organise their information collection.

France has been a forerunner in bibliographies and the bibliometric approach in Translation Studies as well. Two important endeavours in France bear witness to this work. The bibliography of translations during the years 1810–1840,²⁰ based on the information in the journal *Bibliothèque de la France*, was compiled in the 1980s, and the recent extensive translation history showcases bibliographical work.²¹ In the volume on the 19th century, there is a chapter dedicated to statistics and bibliometrics.²² Canada is also strong on translation bibliographies,²³ and there is an extensive bibliography of books translated into Portuguese. The project "Intercultural Literature in Portugal 1930–2000: A Critical Bibliography" was initiated in 2007 and jointly organized by the University of Lisbon Centre for English Studies (ULICES) and the Centre for Communication and Culture, Catholic University of Lisbon (CECC)²⁴ and drew on the Bulletin of Portuguese bibliography, on booksellers' catalogues, second-hand bookshops and private libraries in addition to the Portuguese bibliographical database. In addition, a survey of newspapers was carried out to cover for gap years in bibliographies.²⁵

The different practices of cataloguing affect the reliability of records. Stella Linn observes: "Since World War Two, there has been a reasonably reliable (though not infallible) system of recording translations from and into Dutch", and "[...] the National Library of the Netherlands, which records translations from Dutch, does not require publishers to send them a copy of all translations. In countries like Belgium, where this is mandatory, the records are more reliable".²⁶ Heilbron uses for his Dutch data the annual reports by the Research Foundation of the National Association of Booksellers and Publishers, when looking at the translations between French and Dutch in the latter half of the 20th century.²⁷

14. Anderson 2016.

15. See also Pym 1996a.

16. Heilbron 2009.

17. Poupaud *et al.* 2009, 268.

18. Norman 2017.

19. *Ibid.*

20. Van Bragt *et al.* 1995.

21. Chevrel *et al.* 2012

22. Wilfert-Portal 2012; literary statistics are discussed on pages 255–257; see also Gile 2015.

23. Newman & Stratford 1977.

24. See Rosa 2012, 211–212.

25. *Ibid.*, 210.

26. Linn 2006, 27, 38; note 1.

Bibliographies of translations tell about trends in translating and publishing: how many works have been translated into the target language area from a specific source language area. However, they do not always tell the whole picture of the book market and the reading public. An example is given by Anne Lange, whose studies, based on large-scale bibliographical work by Aile Möldre,²⁸ focus on Estonian translations during the Socialist period.²⁹ Because of the quotas for translations from Russian (and other languages), book publishing figures were not indicators of the sales potential or popularity of the books but of the ideological dictates behind translating. When comparing print runs and not just published titles, it is evident that Russian works may not have been that popular, compared to translations from other languages.³⁰ Information on print runs is nowadays notoriously difficult to get, though, as publishers are reluctant to reveal information often classified as business secrets.³¹

Bibliographical information thus forms the basis and provides data for research into a variety of topics. In her endeavour to study the ideological imperative in translated children's books, Nike Pokorn produced a bibliography (and a corpus) of retranslated children's literature into Slovene.³² Bibliographical information was then complemented with text comparisons and interviews to identify relations and trends between the books.³³

The studies surveyed above bear witness to the contextual nature of bibliographical information, even if this information is today guided by national statutes and even more universal principles of data collection and classification. The different political and legal systems also affect the way bibliographies should be interpreted and used. When translations are teased out of general bibliographies, the smaller the scale the more accessible and contextualised information is possible. It is clear that massive bibliographies such as the *Index Translationum* cannot be expected to be reliable in smaller-scale details, but they can serve for global comparisons, with caution.

Even a fairly small language area such as Finland has not a translation bibliography of its own, despite the fact that there were efforts as early as 1980s to create one. The pilot project resulted in a useful compilation of existing partial bibliographies, coupled with a suggestion for the bibliographical schema to be followed, but it also made clear that huge efforts would be required in order to carry out the work. Without the necessary resources, the bibliography remained a dream. However, the Canadian translation bibliographies and the Portuguese project mentioned earlier do show that such bibliographies are possible.

Bibliographical searches in surveys of language-specific translation flows

Apart from global translation flows and trends, there is often an interest in following what kinds of exchanges take place between two specific languages or countries. Above, Lange and Pokorn studied all translation imports for a specific period whereas Linn and Heilbron were interested in exchanges between two nations. Hanna Pięta for her part focuses on cultural exchanges between so-called (semi-)peripheral languages (Polish and European Portuguese)³⁴ and indirectness in translations.³⁵ In Finland, the study of translation flows from Greece was the starting point for the PhD work on indirectness by Laura Ivaska.³⁶

Peripheral languages set in high relief issues of selection and indirectness but also of cultural agency and networks.³⁷ Source to target language bibliographies may direct our attention to these questions; smaller data sets allow for a closer study of the contextual issues and may thus produce

27. Heilbron 2008, 189; note 1.

28. Möldre 2005.

29. Lange 2011.

30. *Ibid.*, 4.

31. Linn 2006, 27.

32. Pokorn 2012.

33. For the relationship between research questions and the

aims of setting up translation bibliographies, see Pym 1996a.

34. Pięta 2016.

35. See the special issue of the journal *Translation Studies* edited by Rosa, Pięta and Bueno Maia 2017.

36. See Ivaska and Paloposki 2018.

new research questions. As regards bibliographical work, comparisons of national libraries' data between two countries help expand on the *Index* data. The European Library web page, which unfortunately is not being updated since 31 December 2016, has links to the national libraries throughout Europe.³⁸

The Finnish national database Fennica collects information on books published in Finland, in Finnish, in Swedish in Finland, in Finnish elsewhere, and translated into Finnish, or translated into Swedish within Finland. Sami, Roma and Finnish sign language books are also catalogued if they have been produced in Finland. Fennica provides information not only on holdings in the National Library (differing, in this, from some other national databases) but on all books conforming to the above definition, even in cases where the books are not available or there are no extant copies left. Fennica is a good example of the necessary evils of all bibliographical work: even the most diligently compiled bibliography cannot avoid omissions and inaccuracies, as these often stem from lacking paratextual information in the books themselves. The information at source is not always accurate or does not conform to the standards; the standards have evolved over time; and books and/or catalogues may have gone missing. In Finland, the fire at the university town of Turku in 1827 destroyed most of the university library collection, and piecing together information was and has been a time-consuming effort. With developing practices and requirements, transferring information from books to cards, from cards to catalogues, from printed catalogues to digital form has been a long, complicated and – no doubt – very tedious process with each stage prone to mistakes. But as with the *Index Translationum*, all human endeavours are prone to imperfections. A database with some errors is better than no database at all. We would also do well in remembering to collect lists of omissions and mistakes whenever we find them and draw the librarians' attention to them, little by little checking and improving on the available data.

The Fennica database allows for different kinds of searches, among them, the search according to the language of the original. Thus, language pair comparisons are fairly easy to carry out, facilitating research into translation flows between individual languages. These can then be combined or compared, for a wider view of translation exchanges.

Case 1: Spanish–Finnish

One of my earliest exercises in translation flow studies took place in August 2000 and was made in order to find out how much literature had been translated from Spanish to Finnish, in connection with a larger survey on the translational map of Finland. To collect information I searched the *Index Translationum*, which at that time was on a CD-rom, published in the previous year (1999) and collecting data from the year 1979 onwards. My first time with the *Index*, I imagined I would be getting the data for the twenty year period from 1979 until 1999, the launch year of the diskette. However, the last indexed translations were from the year 1993; a sign of the slow pace of processing of the data even at that time.

The numbers – 202 translations from Spanish into Finnish – were my “needle” in this case; this was a very simple exercise of surveying translation flows, and was to be compared and contrasted with similar exercises into other languages. The search was merely a part of a larger quantitative study with no special interest in the Spanish–Finnish case. With hindsight, it is easy to say that I was naively expecting all 202 texts to be from Spanish, and, if not classics, at least highbrow literature. I was more interested in numbers than in what those 202 titles were. But, perhaps because of my personal interest in Spanish-language literature and partly also as a happenstance, I decided to look more closely at the entries to see what kinds of literature those figures contained. The results were

37. Tahir Gürçağlar & Pokorn 2013; Pokorn 2013; Tahir Gürçağlar 2013. 38. <www.theeuropeanlibrary.org/tel4/>

of two kinds: first, a number of dubious entries caught my attention, and second, the break-up of the literature was not what I had been expecting. Both kinds of results can be seen as the kind of hay this article focuses on.

First, the entries that I found suspicious were titles that did not look like they had actually been translated from Spanish: the author's name did not conform to the Spanish language. There were five such cases, and I compared the entries with Fennica in order to confirm or refute my suspicions. Indeed, they had all been catalogued differently in the *Index* as in Fennica. Thus, it was evident that the erroneous source languages did not originate from Fennica, the national database used for contributing data to the *Index*. My queries to the National Library in Finland did not yield any more information: the staff responsible for the mediation of information to the international bibliography had no idea where the errors may have occurred. This case proved that there may be discrepancies between the *Index* and the self-same national library databases that have been used in creating the *Index*.³⁹

As regards bibliography work, the usefulness of small-scale bibliographic exercises lies in the ease with which it is possible to check individual entries for at least the most obvious errors. Statistical comparisons with several languages and countries involved produce large amounts of data, which do not easily yield to individual checking, so we have to accept that in the mega- or meta-level large-scale analyses there is always a margin of error. Smaller sets of data (for example, between two nations that may not share a long-term cultural exchange) provide the necessary counterpoint to relativise and contextualise large-scale studies: it is easier to spot mistakes, going through the entries and checking at least the ones that induce doubts (for example, if the writer's name raises doubts about the language or country of origin of the book). Obviously, it is difficult to gauge the reliability of each national system and therefore no general advice can be given on whether to use the *Index* or national databases for two-language comparisons; in the Finnish case it seems clear that the national data is to be preferred, even if there are exceptions to this as well.

For a small follow-up, I checked the Spanish–Finnish language pair for the year 2008 for the *Index* and Fennica. After my initial experiences with the former, I was expecting there to be more entries in the national bibliography than in the *Index* which – I thought – would be more prone to drop-outs and omissions (this is the case for a random check with the French–Finnish language pair in 2008: whereas the *Index* lists 129 translations, Fennica lists 134). But for Spanish–Finnish exchanges in 2008, the results are the reverse: there are 35 hits in the *Index*, and only 23 in Fennica. The reason for this was found to lie in the multiple sources used by the *Index*: several books on Nordic architecture, published in Norway and with texts originally written in Spanish and translated into Norwegian, Swedish and Finnish are listed in the *Index* but not in Fennica. Most likely, the *Index* information on Finnish has been taken from data provided by Norway. The Finnish national database had missed this information as the publishing place was Norway. Unexpected results like this may provide avenues for new research questions, for example on international collaboration in publishing and translating, which, again, is a little researched area as yet.⁴⁰

Databases provide us with numbers and point towards trends and timelines, but they do not tell us everything. A closer look at the titles reveals what exactly has been translated. Out of the 202 Spanish-to-Finnish entries we first have to deduct the five works not translated from Spanish (despite their cataloguing as such) and the seven reprints, resulting in 190 translations. Out of these, 35 were titles produced by the Disney corporation. Taken the international role of the company, this may not be as surprising as what it looks. The corporation is organised in such a way that different series – pocket books, magazines, cartoons – are produced in different countries (among them, Spain, Italy and Denmark), in the local languages, and translated from these languages for other target populations. Thus, if you only use statistical information for translation flows, without examining what the actual titles are, the emerging picture may be distorted. The researcher needs to

39. Paloposki 2000.

40. Jansen & Wegener 2013, 15.

know more of the titles in order to be able to measure any cultural impact or draw any conclusions as to the relations of the two cultures. In the Spanish-Finnish case, the translation flow tells us also about the Disney production and distribution networks and strength in the global marketplace; maybe more pointedly than about the cultural exchanges between Spain and Finland. With a closer study of the bibliographical information, the heterogeneity of translating and the different power issues in translating and publishing come under scrutiny. This is the kind of an interesting side-effect bibliographies bring: more food (hay) for thought, new research avenues.

Case 2: Polish–Finnish–Polish

This survey was made in 2016 to look at Polish–Finnish cultural exchanges. Interestingly, there seems to be a fair deal of equality here: there are around 200 Polish books translated into Finnish, and the same number of Finnish works translated into Polish, throughout the approximately 130 years of translating between the two languages.

A frequently occurring feature of (semi-)peripheral translation exchanges is their indirectness. Surprisingly, Polish literature has been translated directly since the first decades of the 20th century. Geographical proximity alone does not always result in lively translation exchanges or produce direct translations:⁴¹ Poland's neighbour Lithuania is the source culture for only 11 works translated into Finnish until this day. Some other facilitating factors may thus be needed for directness and high frequencies of translations. In the case of Polish–Finnish cultural exchanges, the tradition was largely set up by one translator, Maila Talvio, whose position and agency entitle her to be called “cultural ambassador”.⁴² Directness, visibility and influence may thus sometimes be the result of the passion of one or two persons only. In the early days of the 20th century, Maila Talvio and her husband, professor of Slavic languages J. J. Mikkola, were the promoters and agents of Polish culture and literature in Finland. Bibliographies serve here to identify frequently occurring translator names: these names may lead to studies on cultural ambassadors.

Case 3: Finnish–Italian

The Finnish–Italian data were prepared for the Translating Scandinavia conference as a special case: Finland, strictly speaking, is not part of Scandinavia, but notwithstanding the linguistic differences, her cultural relations with the Scandinavian countries are close, and Nordic literature has been important in Finnish translation history. Finland is one step further removed from Italy geographically than the rest of Scandinavia, and the languages, too, are more distant from each other, so it may prove an interesting case for comparison.

Translations were sought for the period 1918–1945 in accordance with the conference focus. For Italian to Finnish, the Fennica on-line bibliography was used, and for Finnish to Italian, in addition to Fennica, the Finnish Literature Society database (FILI) for translations from Finnish to other languages proved an interesting comparison. In addition, the bibliography prepared by Anna Wegener was helpful as was the online bibliography by Riccardo Marmugi, again, found with the help from Anna Wegener.⁴³ Furthermore, when comparing Finnish-to-Italian statistics with Finnish-to-German figures (Germany being another focus point in the conference), additional information was found from the webpage celebrating the Finnish national poet Johan Ludvig Runeberg, who wrote in Swedish. Here it is necessary to remark upon the existence of the Swedish-language literature in Finland and its translations into other languages, which is an often overlooked phenomenon. The

41. As shown by, for example, Tahir Gürçağlar & Pokorn 2013, 184–187.

42. Jones 2000.

43. Wegener 2016; Marmugi 2016.

focus on Scandinavia in the conference made the Swedish literature in Finland more visible and it was consequently taken into account in the searches. As regards bibliographical searches, this means additional searches with Swedish as the source language and Finland as the original place of publication.

The total number of Finnish and Finnish-Swedish to Italian translations was under 20 but there was interesting variation in the three main databases. For example, perhaps one of the most famous and translated books and a national icon in Finland, Aleksis Kivi's *I sette fratelli* (*Seitsemän veljestä*; *Seven Brothers*), was included in Marmugi's database but not in the other two at the time of consulting the databases (11 October 2016). The reason appears to be a human error: the language of translation had been entered in Fennica in the wrong format and therefore the book did not appear when translations into Italian were sought. When the search word was changed to Kivi (name of author), the Italian version did appear in Fennica. As FILI takes its basic information from Fennica, the error was repeated there. At the time of writing the article (18 April 2017) the error has been corrected in Fennica, but not in FILI.

Another work by Kivi, *Leea*, appeared in the FILI database, but not in Fennica. Surprisingly, *Kalevala* (the Finnish national epic) in its two translations into Italian (1927 and 1935) does not appear in FILI while it does in Fennica. Similar small differences appear in both directions. As for Marmugi, his database includes more translations from the Swedish in Finland than the other two.

An overall observation about translations into Italian during the period in question is that the number of translations is fairly small, as was perhaps to be expected. The translation choices also include the most obvious ones: *Kalevala*, its sister volume *Kanteletar* and *I sette fratelli*. The two probably most famous Finnish writers, the historical novelist Mika Waltari and the only Finnish Nobel prize winning author, F. E. Sillanpää, were among the translated authors.

However, a closer look at what has been translated, by whom and by which publishers, gives more food for thought. In the fairly short list of translations, two translator names appear repeatedly: those of Paola Faggioli (four translations) and Paolo Emilio Pavolini (three translations; furthermore, he is mentioned also in connection with some of Faggioli's translations). Their complex relationship and the links to Finland and the Finnish language lie behind their translation activity. Here, again, it may be a question of so-called cultural ambassadors: for various reasons, they promoted Finnish literature in Italy during the early decades of the 20th century.⁴⁴ Here again, bibliographies may lead us to study translators' agency, networks and the influence one or two central figures can have in translation and cultural exchanges.

Ondřej Vimr makes the point that target culture demand is not the only force in the birth of translations.⁴⁵ His argument is that we need to look at not just the forces pulling in translations but also at the forces pushing translations into a system from outside. These include the market forces and the marketability of international bestsellers, recently discussed by Rebecca L. Walkowitz;⁴⁶ another kind of "push" is constituted by pressure from the source culture to create visibility for its own cultural products abroad. According to Vimr, the interwar era was the period when institutional interventions were first introduced. In addition to state subsidies and cultural pacts between countries, translations could be published at the source but promoted in target cultures. The Italian translation of *Kanteletar* was published in Finland by a Finnish publishing house. (Here the databases differ: Fennica specifies the place of publishing but the publisher, according to them, is unknown; FILI gives the name of the publisher as WSOY publishing house). It is likely that for a work of the Finnish national canon, there was an impetus for the Finnish institutions to support the translation, perhaps also Finnish money involved in its promotion; this remains to be studied.

Active translators in the target culture may thus "pull" in literature, while source culture institutions may "push" literature to target cultures. Yet another "pushing" force may consist of the foreign

44. Delfina Sessa is working on Finnish to Italian translators of the period in her PhD study (University of Turku, Finland).

45. Vimr, forthcoming.
46. Walkowitz 2015.

author's links to the target culture. This may have been the case with E. R. Gummerus (1905–1991), a Finnish-Swedish author whose book appeared in Italian translation (*La Fortezza*) in 1944. Gummerus had moved to Italy in 1934, but his family's links go even deeper than that: his father had already been Finland's chargé d'affaires to Italy in 1919–1925.

When the number of translations is small, these special cases stand out. On one hand, conclusions cannot be generalised outside the period and language pair; on the other hand, there may be more of a margin of error in interpreting their importance. Moreover, to judge their role in Italy as a whole, they need to be put in perspective with other translations into Italian of the time. Nevertheless, they point towards issues that are worth studying: the intricate networks between authors, translators and publishers; the directness of translations; and the institutional facilitating factors. It is again the issues surrounding the bibliographical details and springing from them that form new and interesting avenues for future research.

Retranslation

Bibliographical issues are at the core of a lot of translation research, especially in studying translation flows between regions and languages. There are also specific topics that highlight the problematicity of information searching and go to the very principles of what kinds of information is being gathered. One such issue is indirect translating: bibliographies do not always (not even often) collect information on the intermediary languages between the original language of the text and the translation, for the simple fact that this information is usually not available in the paratexts of the works in question.⁴⁷ Another issue is retranslating. When starting to study retranslation, the first problem – and often a forgotten one – is that retranslating is a particularly challenging topic bibliographically.

When starting to work with retranslations in the year 2000, my colleague Kaisa Koskinen and I came across the problem of how to find retranslations on a larger scale. We were intrigued by the claims that retranslations were made at intervals of 30 or 50 years and wanted to check whether that applies to retranslating in general. We already knew of retranslations where this was not the case, but wanted more data to check on our early intuitions. We also wanted to see what has been retranslated and what not, in general, outside the “usual suspects”, the most obvious classics. Our focus was on Finland, and we wanted to gain an overall view of the phenomenon of retranslating in this particular geographical area and into this particular language. Finnish would thus function as a test case for hypotheses and assumptions about retranslating. Most of retranslation studies are focused on single cases and/or theoretical issues and there has been no overall empirical view or review of retranslating across certain time periods or geographical locations; an important exception is the bibliographical research in Turkey.⁴⁸

Today it is commonplace to tell the reader who the translator of the book is, and sometimes even the original title and the potential intermediary language are given, but this has not always been the case. Today, the Finnish legislation stipulates – much alike the Belgian one, referred to earlier – that publishers need to donate five copies of each publication to the National Library. These books form the basis of the national collection, and also the bibliographic compilation is done based on the paratextual information in the books. However, it is well-known that translations are curiously unmarked in general/national bibliographies and they can only be found through (sometimes complicated) searches, combining search options in different search fields.

The national database of Finnish literature Fennica (like many other national databases) has a standardised bibliographical entry system with fields pertaining to authors, translators, titles, years of publication etc., but there is no field for the book being a translation. The translational status of a book is evident in the presence of a translator name in the bibliographical entry, and there is a

47. Marin-Lacarta (2017, 135–137) discusses the problem of indirect translations in bibliographies. The rest of the ar-

title is dedicated to discussing alternative sources.
48. Berk Albachten 2017.

specific field also for the original language of the work, even if this does not show up in the interface but has to be looked up separately. Translations, thus, cannot be sought up *en masse*; they have to be looked up with different keywords and searches. Retranslations take the difficulty one step further: they are near-impossible to find with a simple bibliographical search. They are not categorized as such: there is no field in the bibliographic entry where this kind of information could be entered, simply – presumably – because it has not been considered an important piece of information (and, again, it does not usually appear in the paratexts).

Further problems arise if the translated book titles differ from each other and from the original one. Who would imagine that a book called (in Finnish) “The Doctor who got lost in the erotic” (tr. in 1928) is Arthur Schnitzler’s *Traumnovelle*, later to be translated with a more direct title (“Dream novel”)? (Well, the movie made of the book 70 years later did not stay true to the title either: *Eyes Wide Shut*). Or that Charles Dickens’ *Great Expectations* has been translated under a title that back-translates “A Brilliant Future”. For bibliographic searches of retranslations, ironically, you first have to know (or have a fairly good guess) what has been retranslated before you can find it in the national bibliography of Finland. There is no entry in the bibliographic files of the books that is meant for signalling “retranslation”; no single keyword or search facility that you can type in to look for retranslations. The word “retranslation” hardly ever even appears in a bibliographic entry. A specialized bibliography of translations would perhaps foresee this need, but as mentioned earlier, there have been no resources for this kind of an endeavour.

There is thus a certain circularity in researching bibliographies for retranslations: you would have to know ahead what texts have been translated more than once to be able to find information on these translations. That means that obviously you would pretty well know the usual suspects: works such as Russian classics, some other classics (*Robinson Crusoe*, *Don Quixote*, etc.), or as the case of Italian–Finnish: Dante, Boccaccio, Manzoni... The problem, of course, is that nobody knows all the classics, from all languages – let alone the “non-classical” literature. And this is what skews our data: in retranslating, we basically only look at classics. That is what Sandra Poupaud and her colleagues warn about: you start to look for something you intuitively think is there and that is what you then end up with.⁴⁹

In retranslating research in general, materials are thus often predetermined. They are classics and canonized authors, other well-known works, or the favourite works of the researcher. This has resulted in a very large number of case studies of classics. With this kind of material, it may often be true that later translations are closer to their originals in some way or other (the so-called “retranslation hypothesis”); there may also be some regularity to their retranslating. Also, the cycle reproduces itself: certain classics tend to be retranslated over and over – exactly because they are classics – and the fact that they have been retranslated so many times then “proves” their status as classics. Translators may even consider it a challenge or an honour to work on a classic (perhaps even with the idea of improvement in their mind), further multiplying the numbers of retranslations.

To get round the problem of locating retranslations, there are some tricks that one can try, though. In the Finnish bibliography database, it is possible to use the word search facility, with words such as “previous” or “earlier”, as sometimes there is a mention “appeared previously in the translation of NN” or “published in a previous translation”. However, this only applies to a fraction of all retranslations.

It is possible also to do smaller searches – to apply filters.⁵⁰ Using the language pair as the filter (as above, in translation exchange research) gives a smaller set that can further be analysed. This way we get a glimpse of not just classics but of everything that has been translated from a certain language area. But the language exchange needs to be small(ish), as there is no way of dealing with all the English-as-source-language material, for example, except for a limited time sequence. Apart

49. Poupaud *et al.* 2009, 269.

50. *Ibid.*

from the language pairs mentioned above, there is a study on the German-Finnish language pair from the point of view of retranslation.⁵¹

In our own work on retranslation, we concluded that a comprehensive view of all retranslations in Finland is impossible, and ended up taking different cross-cuts of Finnish data. In addition to using the Fennica database, we searched through publishers' catalogues and municipal libraries' databases (where we got extremely helpful assistance from the librarians). As a result, one of our main bibliographical data sets was retranslations in the year 2000.⁵² Looking at one specific year and the translations that had appeared that year got us round the problem of only concentrating on classics or canonised literature and showed us what other texts may get retranslated. And, perhaps just as importantly, it made us realize that something else was happening in addition to retranslating: while conducting our bibliographical searches into the translations carried out in the year 2000, we noticed the (much larger) numbers of reprints, some of them edited, some not, and found a new research area. While bibliographical information is often inaccurate as to the status of the text (it is not always clear what editing means, or if a text which is reprinted has been edited or not), the realisation was enough to get us started in studying revising in translation, not just as a first step towards retranslating⁵³ but also as a phenomenon in its own right.⁵⁴

Conclusions

Bibliographies are an amazing source of information. On a large scale, they allow for statistical analyses of translation trends; on a smaller scale, they give us basic information on a translated book. They are not, however, exhaustive or infallible and therefore they need to be interpreted with care and the results need to be complemented with information from other sources. But in addition to fulfilling their basic function (albeit sometimes incompletely), they also lead us into new directions. They answer questions we did not know we were asking; they provide us with new questions, and they lead us to discover new research topics and areas.

Consequently, it is not always a bad thing that we do not know what we are looking for. A very clearly defined topic predetermines our research to some extent, and we may not see the inadvertent, the by-the-way, the connected but invisible strands off our track. A desperate search for the needle may make us throw away the hay around it. As for example in the search for retranslations in bibliographies, "knowing" in advance that classics get retranslated – plus the fact that bibliographical searches are so complicated to make – leads us to find information on classics only, perhaps reinforcing some of the ideas traditionally linked to retranslation (such as "ageing" and "improvement"). But if we have the opportunity to search for the full translation output of a certain time period or language pair, or use some other filter, there will be cases which may challenge our original assumptions. Furthermore, bibliographies lead us to see hitherto non-studied areas bordering on the original field of interest and allow us contextualise it better.

As with retranslation, also translation flows between different cultures or language areas may open our eyes to the border areas and hybrid forms between various ways of translating, allowing for a more multi-faceted view of translating. Bibliographies are not the key to everything, but they offer us more information than what we might have suspected, and lead us in surprising directions. They are the hay surrounding the needle – let us not forget the needle, but let us also keep the hay.

51. Tiittula 2013.

52. The study concerning the year 2000 is reported in Koskinen & Paloposki 2003.

53. As suggested in Vanderschelden 2000.

54. The results were published in Paloposki & Koskinen 2010.

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