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Introduction:

Patterns and possibilities in the study of translation

The 133 papers published here do not provide a neatly unified pattern. A certain order was created by the questions posed in our call for papers, but, as always, order may be quite deceptive. We asked what translation, broadly speaking, is, what role it plays in literary history and in what ways literature and other media are imported, as well as the reverse: what is exported from Scandinavia? To this was added the internal traffic between the Nordic countries. This produced an initial order among the abstracts submitted, although the papers at the conference were eventually organised in groups of three in more than 70 sessions where the links between papers were sometimes associative in character.

Other systems of order could just as well have been established. One systematising principle could have been the theoretical conquests enabled by the broadened concept of translation, sorting the contributions according to the type of transformation treated. The background in different disciplines could have been considered: besides expected disciplines such as philology and literature, the disciplines represented at the conference comprised linguistics, semiotics, film studies, intermedia studies and intercultural studies. Different genres, art forms and media could have constituted another organisational principle – or the different languages represented. The difficulties in placing the texts in categories made us adopt an alphabetical order in the final publication. Yet, an attempt will be made in the following to trace some patterns and propose a few possibilities for further research. Links will be established with the questions raised in the call for papers but gross simplification of individual contributions will unfortunately be inevitable, treating case studies in language as studies of history and vice versa. Some contributions will be given brief mention, while others will be treated at slightly more length. Some contributors will be entitled to object to the procedure, but some readers may hopefully be enticed to read more about a previously unknown subject.

What is a translation?

At this stage, the question of what translation is has been on the agenda all over the world for several decades. The issue is partly a theoretical one, involving linguistics, philosophy of language, hermeneutics, semiotics, sociology and cultural theory, but it is also a practical problem embracing a range of human activities where ideological and political contexts are inescapable. Naturally, such comprehensive perspectives were present in many of the contributions to the 28th IASS conference on *Translation – adaptation, interpretation, transformation* in Lund 2010. References are often made to the theoretical discussion in present-day translation studies, but also to approaches from the past and discussions in other arenas. In cases where the focus is not on individual texts or phenomena, the question of principles is particularly pronounced. Monica Dominguez-Pérez makes important distinctions with regard to some of the concepts in circulation and Paolo Proietti makes a sketch of what could be a model for the study of present-day literature in translation. Comparisons between written/spoken language and the semiotic discourse of film, including the conditions for transformation between them, are made, from the point of view of semiotics, by Anna Cabak Rédei and, from the point of view of narratology, in Richard McKinney's lecture.

A broad discussion of the implications of translation, the contexts in which it operates, the political constellations and power structures it presupposes or reinforces, is to be found in Soumyajit Samanta's reflections on how cultural difference is negotiated in an international or, if you wish, postcolonial perspective. In some cases, complex historical and sociological contexts may manifest themselves, in concentrated form, in individual texts, e. g. in modern epics. This can be strongly apprehended in two very different analyses of the 2009 trilogy of novels *Eksil, Revolution* and *Liberty* by the Danish author Jakob Ejlerby (Elna Mortensen, Kirsten Thisted). Apparently, such universes, filled with cultural transformations, geographic mobility and linguistic heteroglossia, can be studied in individual works such as Suzanne Brøgger's *Sølve* (Bergur Rønne Moberg), but also as processes involving many different artefacts and media and leading to new constructions of cultural identity (not least in the period of denationalisation) (Barbro Bredesen Opset). In the works of exiled authors or authors who comfortably inhabit several cultures or are bilingual or translingual, conditions for hybrid forms and subtle modifications in diction and lexicon are created (Ingeborg Kongslien). Travel literature, incorporating inevitable encounters with the Other, naturally provides rich opportunities for the study of how cultural and individual identities are rocked and re-

stabilised, albeit precariously (Emilia Ljungberg). The ambiguous and indeterminate impact of individual artefacts can be seen in historical studies of situated usage of, for example, a folk song (Ulrik Lehrman), a romantic nationalist drama (Ellen Rees), mass market war and spy novels during World War I (Claes Ahlund) or political journalism that changes context (Sofie Qvarnström). Apparently, translators may act as important ideological players (Jimmy Vulovic).

A third approach to the question of what translation is, in addition to theoretical and cultural ones, is more philosophical and less related to specific cases. What are the basic conditions for actually conveying a message (Sylvia Söderlind)? Can philosophical systems of ideas be explained in other terms or even understood when the fundamental premises are changed (Poul Houe)? Is a dimension added when philosophical subject matter is treated in fiction (Johan Sahlin)?

Such transformations of subject matter take place in several registers. What happens when dreams are translated and made meaningful in certain patterns (Astrid Regnell) or when archaeological objects are interpreted in fictional time (Karin Sanders)? Or when natural processes are transported to ingenious lyrical metaphor (Håkan Sandgren) – a classical conundrum given new relevance by ecological perspectives.

Close to the processes of transformation are, of course, those who have decided to *write* – whether it is for the purpose of representing something or for the purpose of giving voice to someone. Or those who actually translate. Author Sigrid Combüchen gave an appreciated keynote lecture at the conference which presented a number of aspects, from the perspectives of both author and translator, of the craft, the task, which give rise to reflection and new methodological ideas. How do you go about translating *Kalevala* – again (Lars Huldén)? Why are new translations made at all, and what are the problems (Jonas Ellerström)? Is it possible to translate song lyrics, in which the words are so closely related to the music (Johan Franzon), or rhymed Finnish verse into Swedish, when the two languages are so fundamentally different (Torsten Pettersson)? How is modernist Anglophone poetry best translated into Danish (Per Olsen) or “imagist” poems of a contemporary Danish poet – Laus Strandby Nielsen – into English (Jørgen Veisland)? What do you need to consider when translating a piece of 18th-century erotica, which was shocking in its time, into reasonably titillating present-day Swedish (Lena Olsson)? How is a major Norwegian poet – Eldrid Lunden, who was present at the conference – to be translated and introduced to an international audience (Unni Langås och Annabelle Despard)? Practical work on texts seems to open unlimited numbers of new approaches. This is true also for those who research and teach them.

Modern discourse analysis is made part of the translation of drama (Hedwig Reuter). Further edge and detail can be added to comparative and aesthetic analyses when, for example, it is shown how a Swedish production of *Little Eyolf* has made Ibsen play “Strindbergian”. In the plays of Lars Norén, small verbal prompts drag processes into the present of the action, and the mechanism is first revealed in a detailed study of the translation (Ulf Olsson).

Media, genres, art forms

It appears that the productive aspects of literary creation are highlighted as soon as one allows the very concept of translation to be slightly broadened. When translated into different languages, fables are invested with different meanings in transformations across time and in different forms (Erik Zillén), just as mythical subject matter is invested with new meanings (Niclas Johansson, Bo S Svensson) and incorporated in unexpected intertextual patterns (Anna Tebelius). Similarly, key existential situations may be represented in different ways (Gorm Larsen). The story of the underdog may appear to be the same but is, in significant respects, dissimilar in working class literature of the early 20th and 21st centuries respectively (Hans-Ulrik Rosengaard). Philosophical ideas are put to use and their origin is forgotten (or hidden) in drama (Mariusz Kalinowski). Major authors are no strangers to such conjuring tricks.

Of course, the very conditions for different kinds of transformation change over time and the possibilities multiply with the expansion of media (including social media) that change and approach one another, collide and inspire one another. Both film and literature capitalise on the subtle appropriations of expressive means and connotations that take place today – keynote speaker Maaret Koskinen provided a number of striking examples from the work of Ingmar Bergman and Stieg Larsson. Although art forms have never been “pure”, the erasure of boundaries, the combinations and multiplications accelerate in our time – especially in the very present! The result is new issues, leading to concrete research initiatives. “Facts” are made into narratives, in constellations that are not always transparent (Leif Søndergaard) – topical sensations and revelations are distributed at high speed in close to serially connected media and forms. Simultaneously, the media themselves are active and intervene in the reality they communicate (Åsa Bergström). National identity is sold cheaply in children’s literature (Åse Marie Ommundsen), in Danish documentaries dating back to the radical 1930s (Gunhild Agger), but also as broad patterns in popular culture (Lisa Källström). Interesting jumps and connections are made between different media,

novels turning into television serials (Per Thomas Andersen) or films (Arne Engelstad) – occasionally the same work may appear as a novel and as a CD (Gurli Woods). On close scrutiny, the novel can already be found to be heteromedial, an idea first broached by Mikhail Bakhtin (Catrin Brödje). Based on different concepts and interests, the individual studies differ drastically in their ways of approaching these phenomena, but aspects of form and content are typically treated in unison. It is impossible to escape the element of transformation.

The possibilities for interaction between different art forms are endless. A ballad may appear in many different forms and media (Bibi Jonsson). Authors such as H C Andersen, Selma Lagerlöf, Per Olov Enqvist, August Strindberg and Henrik Ibsen have inspired composers and librettists of very different backgrounds to compose grand operas, as can be seen in the contributions of, respectively, Elletta Carbone, Anna Smedberg Bondesson, Johan Stenström, Maja-Stina Johansson Wang and Astrid Sæther. The latter two, not least, address spectacular events: both *Miss Julie* and *Hedda Gabler* inspired the Peking Opera to breathtaking productions. The background to the Chinese interest in Strindberg – and Strindberg's interest in China – is presented by Rikard Schönström.

An ancient dimension not least of poetry, music is highly present in the work of the contemporary poet Eeva-Liisa Manner (Lena Kaunonen) and, obviously, crucial when Nordic mythology is fashioned as present-day heavy metal (Sebastian Jazdzewski). The problematic relation between word and image in ekphrasis is given a new dimension when Edward Hopper is treated in a short story by Frode Grytten (Per-Yngve Andersson) or when writing and photography are brought together in new ways in contemporary memory literature (Erik Svendsen). There is no longer any “business as usual”.

Literary history and translation

The new interest in translation is propelled by the previous considerable lack of interest – it was insufficiently realised how much of “our” literature or literature in general consists of translations. This is not least a historical fact, since the literature that is read and influential at a certain point in time and in a certain place consists not only of the domestic literature that is later celebrated in national histories of literature. This widened perspective makes the times and places more complex to describe, but more alive and truthful. Translation has a “precarious” position in Swedish literary history, as Lars Kleberg pointed out in his keynote lecture, which took the form of a knowledgeable and enthusiastic introduction to what has actually been done in the field,

theoretically and historically, and, no less importantly, what remains to be done. Even the possibilities of writing a language history of the Swedish history of translation were addressed in a lecture, including fundamental issues of historiography and bibliographical resources (Lars Wollin).

An important station on the route to vernacular literature is the translation of the classics, which in itself has a long history (Johanna Akujärvi). On this route, including imitation and translation as natural components in the teaching of rhetoric (Lars-Erik Johansson), a full-scale formulaic aesthetic with considerable creative potential could be developed (Anna Cullhed). Artistry consisted in adapting formulae to new cultural contexts as deftly as possible (Alfred Sjödin). The use of classical material was so comprehensive and the texts so fertile and well-known that a single name, with accumulated meanings – such as “Sappho” – could serve as a surface on which to project contemporary ideas about female artists. Sophia Elisabet Brenner was soon dubbed the “Sappho of the North” (Jon Helgason). For male authors the alternative possibility emerged to become “the son of many tears” in a pattern originating in the long tradition of translations of Saint Augustine that, in the Nordic countries, starts in 1843 but is still visible in Dag Solstad’s 1996 novel *Professor Andersens natt* (Ingrid Nymoen). Not even the *Confessiones* of a Norwegian male start from scratch.

The aesthetic treatment and translation of the self into new, liberated forms of literary identity was of major interest in the 19th century public sphere (notable Swedish examples are *Minnen från Tyskland och Italien* by P D A Atterbom or *Minnen* by Erik Gustaf Geijer) but the political and theoretical terms for the transition are little researched (Peter Henning). Subjectivity was quickly taken for granted. Up until the turn of the century and in the following decades the established system of genres was being dissolved and an author of explosive creativity, such as Johannes V Jensen, could move freely between media and transpose his experiences into different text types (Aage Jørgensen). The phenomenon had its economic aspects – both Johannes V Jensen and August Strindberg knew how to capitalise on their experiences – but is also related to the possibilities of staging or investigating the self made available by different genres. In the work of essayist and aesthetics scholar Hans Ruin, it can be seen how diary annotations, letters and reviews are transformed into essays – a genre in which observations of historical phenomena may be discreet forms of self-investigation (Anders Westerlund).

Looked at from the other side – less from the point of view of the self and its possibilities than from the point of view of the public and

its expectations – translation in the work of an author may harbour problems of a different order. When Knut Hamsun in 1915 threw down the gauntlet in the Norwegian public debate on infanticide, his newspaper articles are highly condemnatory whereas the treatment of the same subject in *The Growth of Soil* two years later is more nuanced and sympathetic. What governed these differences – the genres, the public expectations, the discourse or what (Bjarne Markussen)?

Closer to the present, many contributions focus on a comparatively specific moment in literary history. A number of studies of individual authors and historical currents enrich the understanding – and debate – of Danish modernism from the 60s and onwards (Jan Rosiek, Neal Ashley Conrad Thing, Peter Stein Larsen, Marianne Stidsen). Poets such as Ezra Pound, Gunnar Ekelöf, Charles Olson, Frank O'Hara and John Ashbery eventually become obvious points of reference for the contemporary discussion. Some of the institutional conditions for such processes are made visible in Anders Juhl Rasmussen's close look at a Danish publishing house which, in the 60s, marketed a number of European currents, especially in the novel, that were to become influential on domestic literature. A different corner of the Nordic stage of the 60s exhibits more experimental and avant-garde theatricals. One example are the translations into the new languages *Birdo* and *Fåglo*, which were inspired by the sounds of birds in English and Swedish and introduced by Öyvind Fahlström. Another innovative work – *Whammo* – was more closely related to the sound effects of comic strips (Per Bäckström). Ornithologists were baffled.

As of old, authors are also translators. The 20th century was to see this to an increasing extent. Ezra Pound and his work come to mind, although his is an exceptional case where the boundary between original work and translation is difficult to maintain. In many cases authors display magnificently open minds and adopt a more or less explicit translation ideology (Krzysztof Bak on Birgitta Trotzig), or include translations as important and integral – but often unrecognised – parts of their oeuvres. This is very obviously the case with Vilhelm Ekelund (Tobias Dahlkvist), Paul la Cour (Gherardo Ginarelli), Erik Lindegren (Roland Lysell) and Jan Erik Vold (Ole Karlsen). An extraordinary achievement is to be found in the Swedish Academy secretary Anders Österling's work in introducing and translating poetry (Jenny Westerström) and authors such as Hjalmar Söderberg (Björn Sundberg), Bertel Gripenberg (Anna Möller-Sibelius) and Jarl Hemmel (Thomas Ek) are seen in an unexpected light when focus is placed on what and how they translated and how this aspect of their work fits into their literary activities as a whole. Even decisions about

what not to translate may be significant (see Per Rydén on the reluctant C D af Wirsén).

Import – export – traffic

The heading “import – export – traffic” in the call for papers may have appeared quotidian but a number of papers deal with the circumstances in which literature from abroad enters the Scandinavian context or Scandinavian literature is transported into other cultural contexts. The phenomenon has already been mentioned with regard to literary history and broad cultural transformations but can also be studied in more specific cases. It is possible that the terms seem most relevant to current processes and their economic and sociological aspects. Furthermore, what may be regarded as an import from a Dutch perspective, for example, may be seen as an export from a Scandinavian one. Traffic, on the other hand, may be a suitable metaphor for activities in several directions.

When the conditions for both import and export are studied in detail, the results can become concrete and specific. This seems to be the ambition of a range of coordinated and thorough Dutch projects. The foundations and infrastructure of the activities emerge when one considers what is required in order to study them. For one thing, the significance of bibliographies of translated literature must not be underestimated (Petra Broomans). The actual intermediaries of literature in the Netherlands must be mapped (Els Biesemans) as well as individual and important introducers and translators of Scandinavian literature on the continent (Ester Jiresch). A case study is also presented: the Dutch reception of Arne Garborg (Roald Van Eljswijk). The study of reception and translation can move from general conditions, through studies of players and recipients, to details of language.

Import

For a long time it was taken for granted in the North that learning and culture was primarily to be found elsewhere. For practical reasons, some things were regarded as desirable for import and translation from Latin. Drugs, knowledge about them and their use, are a part of items imported at an early stage from the south in the Middle Ages. An intricate system of Old Norse manuscripts provides a partial insight into the phenomenon (Fabian Schwabe). Later in history, when the creation of *national* literatures was at issue, import and translation were crucial. As is well known, translations are of essential importance when a new literature, in a new literary language, is in the offing. This is how the necessary genres can be established and produced in numbers that

leave traces. Translations of key works from the culture in which the new literature wants to be acknowledged are also fundamental. Above all, however, translation is needed for cultivating the literary language that is seeing the light of day. The Faroe Islands and the Faroese language constitute an almost paradigmatic example in which all the components can be seen in operation (Turið Sigurðardóttir).

Works already imported quickly enter a dialogue with the new works being produced. Or the different translations of a work, when available, may constitute a separate field within the domestic tradition. A case in point are the different Norwegian versions of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, including all the abridged versions which were often based on the 1951 Disney film. Here, the typical mechanisms – adaptation (for children) and ambivalence (the text's bridging of two literary systems, one for children and for adults) – can be viewed in intricate interaction with the position of translation vis-à-vis source and target languages/cultures (Åse Kristine Tveit). Another form of intertextuality and creative adaptation is to be found in Maria Parr's 2009 novel *Tonje Glimmerdal*, in which the 1880 Swiss classic *Heidi* by Johanna Spyri is not literally translated but involved, referenced and referred to in a passionate and up-to-date defence of the rights of children and nature, to which additional voices and polyphony have been added (Harald Bache-Wiig).

An important present-day form of initiative and activity concerns the introduction and translation of literature in non-European languages into the Nordic languages. Fortunately, a great deal is taking place in this field, not least because of individual achievements and prescient publishers and journals. At the conference, however, only one lecture addressed this aspect, albeit in exemplary and far-reaching fashion. The subject concerned the practical work of understanding and translating a poem by Muhammed al-Maghut, one of Syria's most beloved 20th-century poets (Bo Holmberg).

To return to the discussion of what translation may mean *today*, the current media landscape may make it difficult and perhaps irrelevant to determine what is imported and what is domestic. Sometimes concepts and entire programme formats are imported, in legally regulated fixed-format transfers, and produced with domestic players. Translations may occur in many forms and simultaneously, as in the case of chicklit and chickflicks. As for chicklit, specifically, translation involves a modern re-use of earlier genres of women's literature and adaptations of literature into film and television serials, but also translation of literary texts, subtitling and domestic versions of post-feminist heroines (Vibeke Pedersen).

Export

Granting the same reservations as for the heading “import” above, the term “export” may be used to cover a number of studies of when and how Scandinavian literary works were translated. The fact that the dates for the appearance of a work and its translation may differ a great deal gives rise to interesting questions about the use of the texts and about the initiatives for and problems involved in translation. An Icelandic saga became a success story in a series of popular German adaptations in the inter-war years (Michael Irlenbusch-Reynard). What demands were met by the saga? In 1994 a few letters from Naples by the Swedish 18th-century traveller Jacob Jonas Björnsthål were published in Italian, as part of a series of “city profiles”(Carla Cariboni Killander). What context can explain such an initiative? The mysterious romantic classic *Spader Dame* (1824) by the Swede Claes Livijn was very successful in different versions, not least in German-speaking environments (Jonas Asklund, Ljubica Miocevic). H C Andersen (Joanna Cymbrykiewicz) and, later, Henrik Ibsen have been given large-scale introductions in Poland (Helena Garczynska), and the latter also in Czechoslovakia (Martin Humpal, Karolina Stehlikova). The introduction of Strindberg in Russia is described in general terms (Katarina Muradyan), whereas small details, such as interjections and the numinous “Hu!” in the chamber plays can be used as a focus for the understanding of the plays in a number of languages (Ewa Mrozek-Sadowska). Strindberg’s *Le Plaidoyer d’un fou* may be a special case: although the author referred to the translation as “whore’s work”, the different versions anxiously and subtly adapted the text to the prevalent gender norms in various places. Yet, the novel managed to cause a scandal – more or less everywhere (Kristina Sjögren). The major Scandinavian authors of the modern breakthrough and the subsequent decades reached their international audience in different ways. On occasion, the encounter takes place on uncertain legal foundations, as was the case with *Gösta Berling’s saga* (Ann-Sofie Ljung Svensson), but Selma Lagerlöf really reached her audiences, both in English (Helena Forsås-Scott) and in Czech (Linda Kaprova), invariably under specific conditions of reception. An example of a comprehensive, complex and drawn out exporting process is to be found in the reception of the work of Johannes V Jensen in the German-speaking countries (Monica Wenusch).

Further on in the 20th century, Astrid Lindgren, of course, emerges strongly: both Pippi in Polish (Hanna Dymel-Trzebiatowska) and Emil of Lönneberga in Russian (Katerina Schwetz) have apparently managed to confuse both children and translators. The mechanisms governing which Scandinavian children’s books are translated into Czech (Petra

Stajnerova) apparently differ from those which determine the export of children's books to France (Carina Gossas and Charlotte Lindgren) – and the image of Sweden is differently inflected in Czech translations (Dagmar Hartlova).

An author acutely aware of the complications and possibilities caused by different target languages and cultures, Karen Blixen retained the privilege of fine-tuning the different versions of *Babette's Feast* (Ieva Steponavičiute).

The reception studies reach the present, dealing with contemporary authors and the specific problems involved in translation into different languages. Is it at all possible to translate the *jämtska* dialect of Kerstin Ekman into German (Ulf Norberg)? Or to translate the Swedish concept "folkhemmet" into Polish (Magdalena Zmuda-Trzebiatowska)? The question is inevitably tied to different cultural situations and ideological contexts. Christer Kihlman's novel *Dyre prins*, published in 1976 and translated into Czech in 1979, is turned into a case study of literary sociology with political implications (Jan Dlask). Lars Norén's *Demoner* is translated and the author introduced in Romania – leading to traffic in both directions (Åsa Apelkvist). Mikael Niemi's *Populärmusik från Vittula* is tried out in Belarus (Volha Ryzmakova), leading to complications with the obscene language.

The conditions and reasons for all of these import and export currents are obviously very different. There is a long and still important history of literary interaction between Latvia and Sweden, but the financial outcomes are negligible (Ilona Loha). In present-day Europe, the commercial successes, especially the bibliometrically verified continental boom of crime fiction, are the truly spectacular events (Alexander Künzli och Elisabeth Bladh). The terms faced by the distribution of Scandinavian art film – apart from the really big hits – are obviously different but equally important to discuss (Anders Marklund). Cultural policy makers, just as the publishers and editors, have a considerable responsibility to ensure diversity and quality that may need a more open discussion (Helena Brezinova). This also goes for the evident risks of uniformity in the range of translated literature offered (Carolina Moreno Tena).

Nordic traffic

Differences and similarities between the Nordic languages are always on the agenda when IASS delegates meet, but the issue did not exclude non-Scandinavian scholars from all over the world at the conference. Traffic between the Nordic countries is ubiquitous but particularly visible when made the subject for reflection. Clearly, the term is to be

understood as a metaphor, suggesting the mobility and fervour of the activities, and has previously been used in the title for an anthology on the processes and flows between the countries of modern Nordic poetry – Hadle Oftedal Andersen, Per Erik Ljung and Eva-Britta Ståhl (eds), *Nordisk lyriktrafikk* (2009) – which includes a number of studies of a kind exemplified here in Helga Kress’s and Idar Stegane’s study of the introduction, translation and reception of Sigbjørn Obstfelder in Iceland. This type of “traffic” between the Nordic countries is multidirectional and multidimensional. The fact that neighbouring languages are understood and taught is a natural prerequisite, although it may entail both pleasures and problems, such as collocations and idioms (Mari Baquin and Robert Zola Christensen). All individual cases of contact are singular in one way or another. William Heinesen, for example, had a bilingual background but wrote, for obvious reasons, in Danish. When his work was translated into his native Faroese, for the first time, it was subjected to a new kind of critical scrutiny. This time, however, the focus was placed on the translators and their use of the author for their own purposes (Malan Marnersdóttir). Norwegian author Per Petterson may be the most cross-Nordic one of the whole group, with a Danish mother, Norwegian father and Swedish grandparents, but he grew up in Norway and is based there. His belonging to several nations and languages causes a special type of mobility, involving perpetual adjustments and translations. Typically, one of his books is entitled *Ekkoland* (1989) and indicates how Northern Jutland may have an impact, in different ways, in a Norwegian novel (Anker Gemzøe). The Gotland poet Gustaf Larsson, in contrast, displays a unique melding of poetry of the North, traditional rural poetry and rural modernism (Eva-Britta Ståhl). Halldór Laxness, finally, is in this context in a class of his own. *Salka Valka* exists in twelve different Nordic versions and provides unique material for the study of “continental” Nordic translations (including into Finnish) and their way of approaching the Icelandic original on different language levels starting with orthography. Such a study requires fundamental methodological and theoretical considerations (Martin Ringmar).

The example is challenging. Details are our material, but details are part of contexts and contexts force us to question disciplinary boundaries. Traditionally, we are concerned with Scandinavian languages and Scandinavian literature, a context which in itself is rich and complex. This context is constantly transformed linguistically and artistically, in interaction with film, television and other media and in a dynamic interplay with the surrounding world that can neither be overlooked nor fully surveyed. It is a part of the process that artistic

expression itself, irrespective of medium, impatiently and for many reasons strives to transcend national and linguistic boundaries. Equally important, however, for those of us who study the often complex expressions, is to insist that they are concretely rooted in personal experience and linguistic diversity. Simplification is not the aim when we study translation.