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Translation strategies to and from the literary semi-periphery: Reduction retention, replacement

The dynamics between the cosmopolitan and the vernacular are manifested in the publications themselves – in the actual literary texts and in the verbal and visual information surrounding them in afterwords, dust jacket presentations and cover images. On this micro level, we find the results of translators' creative decisions in transferring the story, drama or poem into new languages as well as editorial interventions in presenting the literary text to new audiences. Examining these changes between source and target texts involves identifying and analysing strategies of transformation. In the translation process, the source text is transformed in order to function on a new literary market addressing new readers. When literary works are published anew in different cultural environments, Isabel Hofmeyr writes in *The Portable Bunyan: A Transnational History of The Pilgrim's Progress*, they change shape. Exploring African versions of John Bunyan's seventeenth-century Christian tale, Hofmeyr shows how imaginary worlds 'are excised, summarized, abridged, and bowdlerized by the new intellectual formations into which they migrate' (Hofmeyr 2004: 2–3). These changes are not neutral. They reshape the literary works according to certain conceptions of the world. They confirm, create or adjust ideas about the source culture, the target culture and their interrelations.

One crucial condition affecting these transformations is the general relation between source and target languages, cultures and literatures that forms the fundamental conditions for the particular translation. In other words, the source and target languages' respective positions in the world literary system are highly important factors as they shape the way in which literary works are made accessible for new audiences. Whether the translation is made from a dominating or a dominant literary culture strongly affects the micro-level transformations. As David Damrosch observes, 'provincial or subordinate

Western writers are always particularly liable to be assimilated to the immediate interests and agendas of those who edit, translate and interpret them' (Damrosch 2003: 24–5). How this liability impacts on literature as it migrates from the semi-periphery to other parts of the world literary system – other semi-peripheral positions, peripheries and centres – is one of the key questions to be explored in this chapter.

The semi-peripheral position is not, however, the decisive factor when it comes to how the literary works are transformed in the translation process. Our studies show that other factors are more important in prompting transformation strategies: the literary status of the work, the scope of distribution, the level of narrative localization and the level of un-standardized language used in the source text all have very strong impact on translators and editors in making the text accessible for the target audience.

Three kinds of translational transformation

Translational transformations have distinct effects on any literary text's relation to the cosmopolitan and the vernacular. It is the source text's rootedness in its original vernacular context – linguistically, socially, culturally – that needs to be dealt with in order to make it understandable for readers who are not parts of or familiar with that context. By necessity, the translation process thus leads to a new dynamic between cosmopolitan and vernacular tendencies. In our material, this transformation is far from univocal. Some of the texts are made less vernacular and more cosmopolitan; others are, on the contrary, vernacularized. More often than not, though, the translations studied here contain instances of both: while some transformations cosmopolitanize the text, others make it more vernacular.

We have identified three different approaches used by translators to deal with the texts' relations to source culture vernaculars: *reduction*, *retention* and *replacement*. In reducing the text's vernacular anchorage, translators lift the text's significance from the culturally specific to a more general level. In this way, editors and translators create access for new readers by neutralizing elements that they think readers would find strange or incomprehensible and which thus would obscure their understanding of the work. The source culture vernacular is faded, leaving room for an understanding unlimited by culture-specific knowledge and familiarity. In retaining the source culture vernacular, translators and editors stress the fact that the publication is a result of a translational process. The target

text reader is reminded that underneath the text he or she is actually reading there is another text belonging to a different linguistic and cultural context. The foreignness of the work's setting, ideas or narrative techniques is highlighted, and the distance between the reader and the author is pointed out. The literary text becomes a passage into the unfamiliar, or, as Damrosch has phrased it in *What is World Literature?*, a window on the world (2003: 15). In replacing source culture specificities with target culture connections and associations, on the other hand, elements from the target vernacular are implemented in the text or the book, establishing a link between the foreign work of literature and the reader's own experiential sphere. The connections to the source culture vernacular are weakened, and new connections to the target culture vernacular are created.

In introducing the processes of reduction, retention and replacement, we propose another way of analysing translational strategies than the long-lived binary optic derived from Friedrich Schleiermacher's nineteenth-century theory on two available kinds of translations (Snell-Hornby 2006: 8). Rather than working with two reciprocally exclusive alternatives – as in Gideon Toury's *adequacy* and *acceptability* (2012) and Lawrence Venuti's *domestication* and *foreignization* (1995) – we would like to study three different ways of dealing with the source text's anchorage in the source culture vernacular. There are three geocultural positions involved in the translational process – the source culture vernacular, the target culture vernacular and the cosmopolitan – and since translators and editors may choose to reinforce any of these, there is one kind of cosmopolitanization and two different kinds of vernacularization available. Reduction is a cosmopolitanizing strategy in which the target text is made less rooted in any vernacular and thus geoculturally generalized. Retention is a process of vernacularization in which the source culture vernacular is strengthened, whereas replacement performs a very different kind of vernacularization by adding distinct connections to the target culture vernacular.

The three transformational strategies are executed on different levels and in different aspects of the publication and the literary work. The most direct and visible transformation occurs in the peritexts. Distinguished from the epitexts, the peritexts are the kinds of paratext that according to Gérard Genette are parts of the volume as such, such as introductions, afterwords, endnotes, footnotes, covers and dust jacket presentations (1987). The peritexts accompany the literary work, offering the reader a way into the work (in covers, introductions and dust jacket presentations), explanations and digressions along the way (in notes and other kinds of interruptions by editors and translators) and afterthoughts (in

afterwords and other information placed at the end of the volume). In these peritexts, editors and translators have a great opportunity to guide the reading of the target text in different directions and thereby shape the reader's notion of the semi-peripheral context in which the literary work was produced. It's on this peritextual level that it becomes most evident that the target text functions differently in the receiving culture than the source text functions in the source culture.

Added peritexts – as well as omitted and replaced peritexts – are also examples of changes in format: the literary work is manifested in a different kind of book than the source text. However, format changes also occur on many other levels and aspects of the book and the work. Sometimes editors decide to make volume changes. A trilogy can be merged into one volume and a long novel can be divided into several books, and a single part of a series of works can be published separately. The number of chapters can also be transformed: long chapters can be divided into several chapters and several short chapters can be merged into longer ones. More often, such alterations take place within chapters when source text divisions into sections and paragraphs are adjusted. A kind of format change that can occur on different levels is abbreviation. Whole chapters, sections and paragraphs as well as single sentences, phrases and words can all be omitted from the target text. A more special kind of format change is the treatment of illustrations, which can be omitted, added or replaced.

On a more fundamental level, the translation process necessarily and evidently entails a change of language. There are no direct equivalences between any distinct languages: whatever word or phrase the translator chooses it will never have the exact same significance as the source language word or phrase, and quite often there is not even a reasonably equivalent counterpart to be used in the target language in order to convey the source text meaning. Untranslatables are found in every language (Apter 2013), but the non-equivalence between languages has more fundamental effects on literary translation than the problem of transferring particularly difficult and specific concepts, words and phrases. Two essential literary devices – style and narrative technique – are intimately connected to the imminent features of each particular language, so that the language shift always also results in stylistic and narrative transformations. The stylistic characteristics of a specific source text will never be exactly the same in the target text. The translator can never be required to find more than an approximation of the style used by the author. The same is true for narrative techniques: some narrative effects are not

that difficult to transfer, but others are deeply connected to the source language grammar and its domestic literary tradition.

Peritextual transformations as well as changes in format, language, style and narrative technique may also result in thematic alterations. Since the theme of a literary work is an abstraction produced by the interpretation of the totality of its different parts, and also a result of contextualization, every single change in the immediate context of the work and in the work itself will have a potential impact on what the story, drama or poem is understood to be about. Often, these thematic changes do not consist of drastic shifts from one theme to another, but rather slight modifications of balance and emphasis, but since the theme of a literary work is essential for the reading experience, even small thematic changes may have a fundamental impact on how it is perceived. Many of the above transformations may also have generic implications. Peritextual presentations and volume changes as well as stylistic, narrative and thematic alterations might turn the literary work into another literary genre. Simplification of a complex narrative technique, for example, will make the target text become another kind of novel than the source text, and an introductory comparison of the translated work with a well-known target culture classic can make it represent a very different kind of literature than it normally represents in the source culture literary tradition.

On the following pages we will explore the processes of reduction, retention and replacement in our six different translational flows to and from the semi-peripheral Swedish. Since these micro-level transformations are to be found in the textual details of the translations, we have been forced to drill deep into a few examples rather than offering a generally valid overview. However, our ambition has been to widen the significance of our observations by comparing the existence of reduction, retention and replacement in different kinds of translations within each flow.

Proletarian realism and crime fiction from Swedish to English

The translational flow from the semi-peripheral Swedish to the hyper-central English language will be discussed via two very different examples. A whole category of social realist modern classics – proletarian fiction – will illustrate small-scale distribution of translated Swedish literature in the UK and the USA,

whereas a single novel will illustrate the international commercial success of the Nordic noir genre. The first kind of translation is characterized by an extensive use of retention. Initially, we expected that the translation of the international bestseller would show opposite characteristics. Our study shows, however, that this is not the case.

In the history of English translations of Swedish literature between 1980 and 2018, a particular kind of publishing organization not covered by Lawrence Venuti's study of US translations (1995) plays a specific role – university presses. With a continual contribution of approximately two titles per year, this kind of publisher provides the British and North American reading public with Swedish literary classics and aesthetically high-end contemporary titles. Being able to focus on educational and scholarly values rather than commercial outcomes, these non-profit presses can afford to be quite small: as many as twenty-three different publishers are responsible for the seventy-nine translations from Swedish published by US and UK university presses from 1980 to 2018.

A closer look at US translations of Swedish working-class novels from the 1930s illustrates the general translational features of these university press titles. This kind of literature has a central position in Swedish twentieth-century literary history, with a distinct connection to the particularly Swedish version of the welfare state. From 1983 to 1991, six translations of classic Swedish proletarian novels originally published in the 1930s appeared in the United States: Jan Fridegård's *I, Lars Hård* (1983; *Jag Lars Hård*, 1935) and *Jacob's Ladder & Mercy* (1985; *Tack för himlastegen*, 1936, and *Barmhärtighet*, 1936), translated by Robert E. Bjork and published by the University of Nebraska Press; Moa Martinson's *Women and Appletrees* (1985; *Kvinnor och äppelträd*, 1933) and *My Mother Gets Married* (1988; *Mor gifter sig*, 1936), translated by Margaret S. Lacy and published by the Feminist Press, an imprint at the City University of New York, and Ivar Lo-Johansson's *Breaking Free* (1990; *Godnatt, jord*, 1933) and *Only a Mother* (1991; *Bara en mor*, 1939), translated by Rochelle Wright and Robert E. Bjork, respectively, and published by the University of Nebraska Press.

Contrary to Lawrence Venuti's general characterization of American twentieth-century translations, all these translations contain an extensive use of foreignizing effects that strongly retain the particularities of the source culture vernacular. One reason for this is the fact that there is a historical gap between the source and target texts. All the novels are canonized working-class narratives

in the history of Swedish literature, and the US translators and editors treat them as foreign classics that require proper and respectful introductions. This explanation is confirmed by a comparison with earlier translations of Swedish working-class novels from the 1930s. In the more contemporaneous translations, the strategy of reducing and replacing the source culture vernacular is distinctly more evident than in the later translations. However, there is a more important reason why the publications from the 1980s and the 1990s include such a high degree of foreignization. Unlike the earlier translations, the later ones are all published by university presses, and all three translators are academics. For Robert E. Bjork, Margaret S. Lacy and Rochelle Wright, literary translation is a parallel pursuit alongside their main occupation as university professors, and their teaching experience and academic knowledge about Sweden make a distinct mark on the American versions of these Swedish classics.

The strategy of retention is most evident on the level of language by the frequent inclusion of Swedish words in the English target texts. Some of the translators keep the Swedish currency and area units throughout the stories, some keep colloquial Swedish words and oral expressions, and many words, especially for Swedish kinds of food and drink, make the texts bilingual. Many of these Swedish words and expressions are kept to insert a foreign flair into the narratives and remind the readers of the novels' settings rather than out of necessity. One example is Margaret S. Lacy's decision to keep the Swedish filler *ja* in *Women and Appletrees*. This little colloquial word, almost void of semantic substance, crops up in italics on each and every page of the translation, constantly destabilizing the English norm and continuously reminding the reader that the novel is set in another culture and was originally written in another language. In her afterword, Lacy explains this strategy with her intention of catching 'the sing-song music' of spoken Swedish (Martinson 1985: 200). The translator wants to keep the oral rhythm of Moa Martinson's prose. Her decision to retain all the *jas* in Martinson's Swedish novel is thus also a question of style. Domestically, Moa Martinson is well known for her personal prose style, which has been seen as gnarly and ungainly in a way that conveys the tough physical lives of her protagonists. Lacy wants to transfer this style to her translation, but by retaining the filler in italics throughout the novel the translator is reinforcing the idiosyncratic characteristics of Martinson's style, adding a bilingual quality to the prose. This effect is most apparent in the dialogue:

'Have you read all of them?' [...]

'Ja, sure, the whole lot. There aren't as many as it looks. Do you like to read?'

'Ja-a, stories for sure, but I haven't time.'

'Time, ja, well, I probably shouldn't have that either, but one can always find some time.'

(103)

(–Har du läst allt det här? [...])

–Ja visst, alltihop, det är inte så mycket som det ser ut. Tycker du om att läsa?

–Ja-a, berättelser förstås, men jag har inte tid.

–Tid ja, det skulle väl inte jag ha heller, men alltid har man någon stund [...].)

(126)

But the retained Swedish filler is also used by the anonymous narrator:

She remembered the alley quarrels, where sexual intercourse was openly derided as the most repulsive thing in creation, she remembered, *ja*, she remembered the boy from the painting, but then her thoughts quieted down, and she dreamed vague, unspeakable dreams.

(81)

(Hon minns grändernas tråtor, där samlagsakten öppet hånades som det vidrigaste i skapelsen, hon minns, ja, hon minns gossen från tavlan, men då stillnar tankarna och Ellen drömmer vaga, utsägbara drömmar.)

(100)

The target text becomes much more deviant from the stylistic norm of realist novels than the source text, and the retention strategy thus heavily increases the stylistic peculiarities of the narrative.

Lacy's description of spoken Swedish is also an example of a peritextual retention of the source vernacular. Swedish is described as a special kind of foreign language with distinct tonal particularities. All the six translations are accompanied by quite extensive introductions or afterwords, all of which underline the fact that the authors and novels are Swedish. The foreign country comes across as a peculiar place, and when Jan Fridegård's trilogy is described as depicting 'Swedish peasant life' (Fridegård 1983) and Lo-Johansson's *Breaking Free* is said to portray life 'on a large baronial estate in Sweden' (Lo-Johansson 1990) the novels are clearly presented as dealing with conditions somewhere else. This effect is most evident in the foot- and endnotes that annotate all the

target texts. *Women and Appletrees*, *My Mother Gets Married*, *I, Lars Hård* and *Jacob's Ladder & Mercy* have seven, fifteen, eighteen and thirty-six footnotes, respectively, and *Only a Mother* and *Breaking Free* have thirty-two and fifty-eight endnotes. Many of these notes contain extensive presentations of Swedish phenomena explaining events, behaviour and references in the novels. They strongly reinforce the impression that the narratives belong to quite another cultural context than the one American readers are familiar with.

The inclusion of foot- and endnotes also affects the format of the publications. Apart from added paratexts, the literary texts themselves become interwoven with continual asterisks or numbers that break the fluency of narrative prose. Especially the inflicted numbers add an academic character to the publications. These books not only offer literary stories originally written in another language but also non-fictional, learned information about the source culture. This added academic dimension of the publication also has generic effects, since the notes tend to push the books from the genre of literary fiction towards the genre of ethnography. In the explanatory notes, an ethnographic gaze is frequently used to describe seasonal feasts and traditions, often in relation to food and drink. In a note to Ivar Lo-Johansson's *Only a Mother*, for example, the translator Robert E. Bjork explains:

Lutfisk: A traditional Swedish Christmas dish made of salted and dried stockfish soaked in a solution of lime, soda, and water for several days. On Christmas Eve, it is boiled and served with a white sauce.

(Lo-Johansson 1991: 487)

In this very detailed explanation of a quite insignificant reference in the story, the translator adopts the role of a cultural cicerone, guiding the reader through the cultural landscape of the source culture. Rather than offering necessary information to avoid a potential misunderstanding of the novel, Bjork uses Lo-Johansson's story to enlighten the American reader about any Swedish cultural phenomena touched upon in the narrative. He grasps the opportunity to teach.

A couple of these notes are added in order to retain the original theme of the novels. For example, Rochelle Wright's first note in *Breaking Free* is a long and detailed explanation of the uniquely Swedish economic system of rural labour that was kept intact up until the mid-twentieth century. This national system is the most crucial context for the way the source text has been read in Sweden: the novel predominantly thematizes the human effects of these social and economic

conditions. But in order to retain this particular theme, Wright is obliged to temporarily turn the novel into a book on the history of Swedish farm labour.

The Swedish vernacular is also retained by peritextual connections to other source culture phenomena. Addressing an American audience in introductions and afterwords, the translators need to contextualize the novels by linking them to Swedish circumstances that might already be known by the readers. This creates a general and prototypical notion of Swedish culture. A recurring vision in Moa Martinson's *Women and Appletrees* is, for example, said to be 'as arresting as Ingmar Bergman's *Dance of Death* in *The Seventh Seal*' (Martinson 1985: 207). For a Swedish reader, the connection between Martinson and Bergman is surprising. The self-taught writer of realist novels on the everyday struggles of working-class women belongs to a completely different part of Swedish twentieth-century culture than the bourgeois director of aesthetically ambitious films. This kind of cultural comparison can perhaps reveal similarities and patterns unnoticeable within the source culture, but the construction of a slim canon of source culture phenomena leads to a merging of very disparate expressions into a unified and univocal cultural space. In the Martinson-Bergman connection, the central target culture perspective comprises and evens out the source culture periphery in a way that confirms and reinforces the hierarchical cultural relation between the United States and Sweden.

This effect is most evident in the foot- and endnotes, where references, events and behaviour deemed inaccessible for the target reader are explained in an ethnographic way that establishes general ideas of the foreign culture. For example, Lacy explains the expression 'old mother of First Farm' thus: 'Mother is used to designate the wife of a farmer who owns a sizeable farm. She retains this designation after the death of her husband' (Martinson 1985: 92). Notable here is the use of present tense. The note explains what certain Swedes *do* and how the social structure of the Swedish countryside *is* arranged, but Lacy's translation appears fifty-two years after the source text was published in Sweden. Furthermore, the explanatory note refers to an episode in the novel that takes place in the nineteenth century. Describing the rural custom in the present tense a hundred years later gives a strong impression of an unchanged social praxis, untouched by historical development and maintained by a Swedish cultural particularity.

The most annotated translation of all six publications is Rochelle Wright's *Breaking Free*. In this novel by Ivar Lo-Johansson, Wright has included fifty-eight endnotes explaining a wide range of aspects of Swedish culture and society.

Wright's decision to include all these notes strongly emphasizes the notion of cultural difference: the American reader needs this extensive help in order to understand the foreign narrative. But the frequent comments also indicate a possibility to construct a comprehensive overview of a foreign culture. Every single cultural or societal phenomenon hinted at by Lo-Johansson comes forth as explainable and translatable. Sweden can be summarized and understood. These notes thus reinforce the centre's self-imposed mandate to define and control the cultural peripheries. Just like domestication and invisible translators, foreignization and highly visible translators reinforce cultural hierarchies – not by understating the role of the literary interlocutor, but, on the contrary, by emphasizing and confirming his or her power to define the less central cultural space. In other words, the translational strategy of retaining source culture specificity runs the risk of othering and diminishing the semi-periphery.

The target dust jacket covers do not univocally confirm this heavy tendency of retention. Only Nebraska University Press editions of Ivar Lo-Johansson's novels retain their vernacular source culture setting. Whereas the original covers from 1933 and 1939 lift up the proletarian lives to an existential level with the help of graphically striking visual symbols, the US publisher uses Swedish artist Sven Ljungberg's engravings to illustrate how the socioeconomic misery described in the novels is distinctly connected to a particular social and physical milieu.

The University of Nebraska Press' editions of Jan Fridegård's trilogy exemplify, however, the opposite process. In his engravings for the Swedish originals, artist Stig Åsberg connects the protagonist's conflict with society to three distinct physical milieus. On the US covers, on the contrary, Christine Mercer's drawings underline the individually psychological and existential dimensions of Lars Hård's problems. On these dust jackets, then, the vernacular Swedish setting of Jan Fridegård's novels is reduced.

The American and British covers of Moa Martinson's novels deviate more distinctly from the strong retention strategy in the actual texts. Both of them use classic paintings by women artists. With German painter Paula Modersohn-Becker's painting *Mädchenbildnis mit gespreizter Hand vor der Brust* from 1905 the characters of Martinson's *Mor gifter sig* are elevated to a cosmopolitan level of women's hardship, at least for those readers who know that Modersohn-Becker was German and not Swedish. The specific source culture conditions are thus reduced, and the significance of the narrative is generalized. With American artist Mary Cassatt's *Baby Reaching for an Apple* from 1893, the vernacular setting of *Kvinnor och äppelträd* is replaced by a historical frame

from the target culture. In one respect, however, these covers do confirm the retention strategy used by the respective translators. All target covers except *Women and Apple Trees* include the name of the translator. Robert E. Bjork, Rochelle Wright and Margaret S. Lacy are not invisible, either in or on the covers of these books.

The small-scale distribution of Swedish proletarian classics has a distinct contrast in Reg Keeland's translation of Stieg Larsson's *Män som hatar kvinnor* (2005), *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* from 2008, which was published in the UK by MacLehose Press and in the USA by Alfred A. Knopf. As one of the pivotal titles in the international boom of Nordic noir (crime stories in books, television and films set in Scandinavia), Larsson's thriller represents a totally different kind of literary export from Sweden: mainstream entertainment with a broad audience, not necessarily lowbrow in every cultural context, but definitely wide-brow. In the British and American editions of the thriller, there are no introductions, no afterwords and no footnotes. Another distinct contrast to how Bjork, Lacy and Wright treat the proletarian novels is the fact that Reg Keeland makes himself quite independent and creative in transferring the Swedish story into English.

Keeland's text is a strongly shortened version of Larsson's novel, not on the level of events and characters, but on the detailed level of narration. In the majority of the paragraphs there are significant abbreviations of Larsson's way to narrate the story, for example in the very first paragraph of the prologue:

Stieg Larsson:

Kommissarien, som visste att samtalet skulle komma efter postutdelningen vid elvatiden på morgonen, drack kaffe medan han väntade. Detta år ringde telefonen redan halv elva. Han lyfte luren och sa hej utan att presentera sig.

(Larsson 2005: 5)

Reg Keeland:

The old policeman was sitting with his coffee, waiting, expecting the call.

(Larsson 2008: 1)

Literal translation with omitted information in bold:

The Detective Superintendent, **who knew that the call would come after the post had arrived at 11 am**, had a coffee while he waited. **This year the phone rang at half past ten. He lifted the hook and said hello without presenting himself.**

Usually, these continuous and quite evenly distributed abbreviations of Larsson's prose make the paragraphs shorter and thereby increase the narrative pace of the story. Keeland's version becomes faster, more action-driven and less reflexive than Larsson's. A telling example is found a couple of pages into the novel's first chapter, when the protagonist Mikael Blomkvist is answering questions from the Swedish press after he has been found guilty of libel:

Stieg Larsson:

"Men du glömde bort att man som journalist faktiskt måste kunna belägga sina påståenden", sa Hon från TV4 med en antydning till skärpa i rösten. Påståendet kunde knappast förnekas. De hade varit goda vänner. Hennes ansikte var neutralt men Mikael tyckte sig kunna urskilja en antydning till besviket avståndstagande i hennes ögon.

Mikael Blomkvist stannade kvar och besvarade frågor i ytterligare några plågsamma minuter. Den fråga som låg outtalad i luften men som ingen reporter kom sig för att ställa – kanske därför att det var så generande obegripligt – var hur Mikael hade kunnat skriva en text som så fullständigt saknade substans. Reportrarna på plats, undantaget vikarien på *Dagens Industri*, var alla veteraner med bred yrkesbakgrund. För dem låg svaret på frågan bortom det begripligas gräns.

Reg Keeland:

"But how did you come to forget that journalists actually have to back up their assertions?" *She* from T.V.4. Her expression was neutral, but Blomkvist thought he saw a hint of disappointed repudiation in her eyes.

The reporters on site, apart from the boy from *Dagens Nyheter*, were all veterans in the business. For them the answer to that question was beyond the conceivable.

Literal translation with omitted information in bold:

"But you forgot that as a journalist you have to be able to back up your assertions", **said *She* from TV4 with a hint of sharpness in her voice. Her statement could hardly be denied. They had been good friends.** Her face was neutral but Mikael thought that he could detect a hint of disappointed distancing in her eyes.

Mikael Blomkvist stayed and answered questions for a couple more painful minutes. The question that lay unuttered in the air but that no reporter came around to ask – perhaps because it was so embarrassingly unconceivable – was how Mikael could have written a text that was so completely devoid of substance. The reporters on site, apart from the stand-in from *Dagens Industri*, were all veterans in the business. For them the answer to that question was beyond the conceivable.

Reg Keeland's abbreviations are so extensive and frequent that it is not unfair to call *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* an abridged version of Larsson's novel, solely concentrated on transmitting the fundamental story to British and American readers. The story behind the translator's pseudonym Reg Keeland, and the way this anecdote emphasizes the role of the publisher Christopher MacLehose and plays down the responsibility of the real translator, Steven T. Murray (see Chapter 2), gives a plausible explanation of this extensive slimming of the text. Furthermore, Christopher MacLehose has explained that his initial intention when he changed Murray's translation was indeed to attract film producers to Larsson's story (McGrath 2010). Moviemakers are of course less interested in the stylistic qualities of a narrative than in its events and characters.

In omitting the verb 'sa' (said) at the beginning of the quoted dialogue above, Keeland adds a stylistic characteristic to the novel. The short, no-nonsense sentence 'She from T.V.4.' infers a hardboiled, ballsy dimension into the narration that does not exist in Larsson's Swedish text. Another detail in the above quote that adds to the dominant tendency to simplify the text is Keeland's change of newspapers from Larsson's *Dagens Industri* to *Dagens Nyheter*. Both are names of real Swedish national papers, but *Dagens Nyheter* has already been mentioned in the translation. Keeland probably does not want to burden the English-speaking reader with too many foreign words and cultural references. Therefore, the two daily papers are merged into one. This is therefore a kind of simplifying that does not involve shortening the text.

Most of Keeland's abbreviations make the novel less particular and more generic. This effect is also the consequence of the radical changes in titles and covers from the Swedish originals to the UK and US versions. One of the things Larsson insisted on when he submitted his manuscript to the Swedish publisher Norstedts was that the title of the book was not changed (Cochrane 2011). Larsson died before the book was published, but the publisher did keep his title *Män som hatar kvinnor* (literally 'Men who hate women'), a title that stands out among the vast jungle of best-selling suspense novels in the bookshop. With the English title *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*, everything that is special and significant in the Swedish title is not only long gone but also replaced by opposite connotations. Larsson's indirect but distinct contempt of male aggression towards women has been turned into a very conventional objectification of a female body. The differences between Swedish and British front covers have the same effect. The Swedish book shows a female face with eyes forcibly closed with the help of two pieces of coarse, hardwearing tape, while the British cover shows

the back and side of a female head with open eyes, and a naked female back, adorned with a discreet tattoo. Whereas the Swedish version shows a human victim of violence, the British cover is a display of a sexualized female body that is possibly also a victim of violence.

The changes of titles and cover images leads to a reduction of the Swedish vernacular. With its title and violent image, the Swedish cover refers to and enhances the role of statistics in the novel. Each of the novel's four parts is introduced with figures on male violence towards women in Sweden: '18% of the women in Sweden have at one time been threatened by a man', '46% of the women in Sweden have been subjected to violence by a man', '13% of the women in Sweden have been subjected to aggravated sexual assault outside of a sexual relationship' and '92% of women in Sweden who have been subjected to sexual assault have not reported the most recent violent incident to the police' (Larsson 2008: 7, 119, 255, 415). The word 'men' in the Swedish title thus particularly refers to men in Sweden, and the abuse executed on the female face on the Swedish book cover refers to the statistics of male aggression in Sweden that run through the book. With the British and American title and covers this focusing upon and visualization of Swedish violence is omitted.

Furthermore, on the Swedish back cover there is an old photograph of a couple of wooden houses on the waterfront of the Stockholm archipelago. For a Swedish audience, this picture shows a prototypically Swedish traditional idyll. This stereotypical notion of unicultural harmony is exactly the national myth that Stieg Larsson explodes with his story on murder, rape, ruthless capitalism and Swedish Nazism. This photograph is not used on the British and the American books. Larsson's novel's intense connections to Swedish history, Swedish historiography and Swedish self-conceptions are thus further reduced. The removal of the name of the daily paper *Dagens Industri* is an example of how Keeland's strategy of simplification affects the vernacular anchorage of Stieg Larsson's novel. The names of two Swedish daily papers are one too many. In omitting one of them the Swedish vernacular space is made smaller, less nuanced and unified.

It is not fair to say, however, that the continuous slimming of Larsson's prose leads to an extensive reduction of vernacular Swedish references. In shortening the text, Keeland seldom takes the opportunity to reduce the many distinct references to specifically Swedish phenomena. Place names such as Fridhemsplan, Bellmansgatan, Gamla Stan, Riddarfjärden, Slussen, Bullandö, Arholma and Ängsö are kept in their original versions and referred to without

explanation (Larsson 2008: 13–17, 248). Similarly, names of TV shows and magazines such as *Rapport*, *Aftonbladet*, *Ordfront Magazine* and *E.T.C.* are not removed or explained (248), although they are slightly adjusted in the latter two cases, since these magazines are called *Ordfront Magasin* and *ETC* in Swedish. Keeland also keeps *en passant* references to domestic business legends Erik Pensner and Peter Wallenberg without enlightening the English-speaking readers in any way about their significance in Swedish financial history (248), and Stieg Larsson's playing around with references to domestically well-known Swedish children's books only needs a very slight clarification:

Berömmelsens baksida var att den andra kvällstidningen inte kunde avhålla sig från att sätta rubriken *Kalle Blomkvist löste fallet*. Den raljerande texten var skriven av en äldre kvinnlig kolumnist och innehöll ett dussin hänvisningar till Astrid Lindgrens unge detektiv.

(Larsson 2005: 15)

The down side of his celebrity was that the other evening newspaper could not resist using the headline "*Kalle Blomkvist solves the case*". The tongue-in-cheek story was written by an older female columnist and contained references to the young detective in Astrid Lindgren's books for children.

(Larsson 2008: 11)

Keeland makes sure that the reader is aware that the name is a reference to children's literature, but even though he does not expect his readers to have any knowledge of the Kalle Blomkvist character as such, he does not tune down but rather expands the reference. Neither Steven T. Murray, Reg Keeland nor Christopher MacLehose thus reduce the narrative's rootedness in the Swedish vernacular society, history and culture. Keeland has simplified the prose and the narration, but not the narrative's setting.

Unlike the translations of modern proletarian classics, then, the translation of Stieg Larsson's contemporary Nordic noir thriller does not respect the original Swedish text as such. Keeland has no problem changing, cutting and adjusting the creative work of Larsson. But this lack of reverence towards the author's narrative style does not affect the novel's rootedness in its original vernacular context. Why? Because cultural and geographical exoticism is a central part of the international attraction of Nordic noir fiction. It is exactly the distinct connections between the fictional world of *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* and the semi-peripheral cultural context of its Swedish origin that make it an international success. Whereas the retention strategies in Robert E. Bjork's,

Margaret S. Lacy's and Rochelle Wright's translations of Swedish proletarian realism have an educational purpose, the lack of reduction and replacement in Reg Keeland's translation of Stieg Larsson's crime novel has an entertaining and atmospheric function.

Two contemporary Swedish novels in French

To illustrate the Swedish–French translational flow, two novels will be compared: the first one is a popular novel in large-scale circulation, the second is a debut novel aimed at an audience of higher prestige. The French translation of the first includes significant examples of reduction and replacement, whereas the translator of the latter is much more prone to using the strategy of retention.

The early 1980s proved a turning point for the French translation market, not least when it came to translations of Scandinavian and Swedish fiction. Since the Second World War, the publishing of Swedish fiction in France had been mostly limited to the major Parisian publishing houses, who chose to publish a small number of authors, heavily invested in symbolic capital. Success was at best limited, although many ambitious translations were made, including novels by Birgitta Trotzig, a catholic writer and Swedish expatriate living in Paris, and the poetry of Gunnar Ekelöf – both highly consecrated authors in their source culture. In the 1980s, however, the French publishing market was rejuvenated by a number of small, some of them soon to be medium-sized presses, including several who chose to focus on translations. As a result, the number of literary works translated from Swedish rose dramatically, reaching a first peak of sixty editions per year by the middle of the 1980s (to be compared with less than twenty editions per year during the years 1945–1975). With this increase in the number of translations came a wider selection of authorships and genres that distinctly transformed the image of Swedish literature in France.

Swedish author Katarina Mazetti (b. 1944) made her debut in the 1980s as an author of children's books. In the 1990s, she went on to write cross-over fiction and finally achieved great success with the novel *Grabben i graven bredvid* (1998; English translation *Benny & Shrimp*, 2008), a romantic story about the culture clashes between life in the urban middle class and the realities of the countryside, aimed at an adult audience. Almost half a million copies have been sold in Sweden alone, and it has been translated into thirty-three languages. (It was also made into a commercially successful movie in 2002.) The novel's

main character is the librarian Desirée who falls in love with a farmer, Benny, an unlikely mate in many ways, since their lives are very different. Mazetti tells the story from two perspectives, letting Desirée speak in one chapter and Benny in the next. They often get to narrate the same events, forming much of the basis of the book's comic effect.

The first of Mazetti's books to be translated into French was the children's book *Köttvars trollformler* (1991; French translation *Trucs et ficelles d'un petit troll*, 2002), published by France's biggest publishing house Hachette. But it was the small publisher Gaïa, specializing in Scandinavian fiction, that managed to secure the rights for *Grabben i graven bredvid*, published (with a literally translated title) as *Le mec de la tombe d'à côté* (which translates as 'The Bloke in the Next Grave', a title chosen because the main characters first meet in a graveyard) in 2006 and translated by Lena Grumbach (translator of a large number of highbrow Swedish novels but also of Stieg Larsson's successful Millennium crime series) and Catherine Marcus. This first French edition went on to sell more than thirty thousand copies and the pocket edition, published in 2009 by Actes sud – another publisher specializing in Scandinavian fiction and also (since 2005) the main shareholder of Gaïa – sold another three hundred thousand. The book was adapted into both a French theatre play and a French TV film screened by TF1, France's most popular domestic network.

When it comes to the French edition of *Grabben i graven bredvid*, one might first consider the novel's changed position and presentation on the literary market compared to the Swedish original. *Grabben i graven bredvid* was published by the mid-sized publisher Alfabeta. The text is printed on 185 pages, Desirée's chapters opening with a few lines of poetry written by the character. On the front cover, there is a somewhat out-of-focus photo of a cow's head, colourized in red, on a monochrome yellow background. On the back cover, the novel is described as '[e]tt tragikomiskt vardagsdrama om kärlekens möjligheter och omöjligheter' (a tragicomic everyday drama about the possibilities and impossibilities of love).

Since Gaïa is a small firm, based in southern France (which is a rare choice, the French book market being very much centralized to Paris), the French translation of Mazetti's novel had a hard start, compared to the original, which could benefit from its publisher's relatively central position in the literary field. Gaïa chose a somewhat different angle for the marketing of Mazetti's novel. The text is printed on 245 pages, which means significantly less text per page compared to the original, and on terracotta coloured or pinkish paper. The paper matches the all-pink back cover and the front cover's drawing of a pink rose

losing its petals one by one, placed beside another drawing, this one of a young woman. On the back cover, the novel is described as a '[r]oman d'amour drôle tendre, à l'humour décapant [qui] touche pourtant là où ça fait mal: ce fossé qui sépare les catégories sociales. On ne peut plus contemporain ...' (a funny and tender love story, with disarming humour [...] that nevertheless touches where it hurts: the gap between the social classes. It doesn't get more contemporary ...).

It might be said, then, that the French edition highlights the romantic 'love story traits' of Mazetti's novel, chiefly through the illustrations (the rose and the petals being signs for love and for the hesitation and problems that come with it). This also means, of course, that *Le mec de la tombe d'à côté* is pratically defined as a book for female readers (a marketing choice not made as clearly by Alfabeta when publishing the original version). The back cover presentation of the French edition does not, on the other hand, differ in any significant way from the source language version. However, the choice of the word 'drôle' (funny) sets a somewhat lighter mood than the Swedish 'komisk' (comic). Other translated editions of Mazetti's novel have been given covers similar to the Swedish original, thus highlighting the elements of satire and culture clash rather than romantic love, for example the Italian version 'O me o muuh' (It's me or moooh), with a front cover photo of a cow sticking out its tongue.

When it comes to the text of the novel, the overall strategy for the translators Grumbach and Marcus when confronted with specificities of the source culture vernacular seems to be a combination of reduction and replacement (the translated text being almost completely devoid of retentions). Often, in the spirit of reduction, names for specifically Swedish phenomena are changed to more general terms: DN (abbreviation for *Dagens Nyheter*), Sweden's biggest morning paper, is reduced to 'journal' (newspaper [interestingly, however, in a later chapter the translators have kept the name *Dagens Nyheter*]), Föreningsbanken (an important Swedish bank) is changed to 'banque' (bank), 'X2000' (the express train operated by Sweden's government owned railway company) is changed to 'train express' (fast train), Bingolotto (a popular Swedish game show involving lotteries) is changed to 'le tirage du Loto' (the lottery draw) and lutfisk (a Swedish Christmas dish made from dried whitefish treated with lye) is changed to the general 'morue' (meaning cod).

Somewhat more complicated, but also a kind of reduction, are mentions of specifically Swedish phenomena and traditions which are explained in the text by the translators. For example, the expression 'det medhavda' (literally 'that which have been brought', which for a Swedish reader cannot mean anything

else than the liquor bottle that has been secretly brought to a party) which Grumbach and Marcus explain as ‘la bouteille que quelqu’un avait apportée’ (‘the bottle that someone had brought’) or ‘Grindslanten’ (a painting by the nineteenth-century Swedish artist August Malmström, having been reproduced in very large numbers and, for a Swedish public, being almost synonymous with ‘kitsch’), explained as ‘ce chromo populaire avec des enfants qui se bagarrent devant une grille à la campagne’ (that popular print of children fighting in front of a countryside gate).

In a number of cases, Grumbach and Marcus have opted for a different technique when faced with Swedish phenomena not easily understood by a French audience, that of replacement. For example, ‘radhus’ (the Swedish kind of terraced house or ‘row house’, often used as a symbol for a typically Swedish family life) is replaced by pavillon (a word used for a single family detached residence, but which comes with roughly the same associations for the French reader). Similarly, the term ‘dansband’ (used to signify a specifically Swedish and Scandinavian music genre, often danced to in pairs and with a main audience of middle aged [or older] adults) is replaced with ‘les vieux standards de bal musette’ (the old standards of the *bal musette*, *bal musette* signifying an evening of dancing in pairs, often accompanied by accordion music and aimed at approximately the same audience as the Swedish ‘dansband’ events), ‘glögg’ (a Swedish Christmas drink made from red wine and spices) is replaced with ‘vin chaud’ (a similar but not identical French drink) and ‘mazarin’ (a Swedish pastry filled with almond paste) is replaced with ‘gâteau étouffe chrétien’ (cake *étouffe chrétien*, *étouffe chrétien* being a French expression signifying something dense and filling).

In conclusion, Grumbach and Marcus’ translation seems bent on familiarizing Mazetti’s novel for larger groups of French readers. Foreign elements are largely played down, and, if it were not for the Swedish proper names and landscapes (and of course for the short back cover presentation of Mazetti as a Swedish journalist and author), one might suspect that *Le mec de la tombe d’à côté* is a French original. Gaïa’s edition is also (somewhat in contrast to the Swedish original) clearly defined as a romantic novel for female readers. Judging by the sales numbers (thirty thousand copies of the original edition and three hundred thousand of the pocket book) and the continuing popularity of Mazetti’s work in France, this transformation strategy seems to have been a success.

Den drunknade (*The Drowned*, 2011) is Therese Bohman’s (b. 1978) debut novel. It was published in 2010 by Norstedts, one of Sweden’s most important

publishers. Bohman tells the story of Marina, an art student of Stockholm University who travels to the south of Sweden to spend some time with her older sister Stella, who lives in a summer house with the rather famous novelist Gabriel. As the days pass, there are signs that Gabriel might be abusing Stella, but Marina nevertheless becomes more and more enthralled by the unpredictable man. Later that summer, Stella tragically drowns in the nearby lake. Marina suspects that Gabriel has something to do with her sister's death, but nevertheless finds it hard to tear herself away. The novel is written in poetic prose, often centred around images of vegetation, death and decline, and uses the art of the English Pre-Raphaelite painters as an important intertext (the cover illustration is an 1855 painting in a similar style, *La jeune martyre* by the French artist Paul Delaroche).

Bohman's short debut novel, 171 pages in its first edition, somewhat surprisingly (given the rather complicated writing, suspenseful but lacking a traditional intrigue) became an international success story, quickly translated into four important languages, French (2011), English (2011), Dutch (2012) and German (2012). This success can be partly explained by the paratexts of the translated editions. The German version, *Die Ertrunkene*, for instance, has borrowed the style of the book cover design from successful Swedish crime novels by authors such as Henning Mankell and Camilla Läckberg, showing a small red cabin by a lake, dramatically tinted in dark blue. The red cabin can be seen as a reference to the popular German vision of Sweden as a countryside idyll, very much influenced by the children's books of Astrid Lindgren (author of, e.g. the Pippi Longstocking-books). The German reader, then, might suspect that Bohman's novel will show this idyll being threatened by dark forces, expectations which are not easy to conform with the story of *Den drunknade*, which is completely devoid of red cabins and criminals, at least in the crime story sense of the word. The cover of the English translation instead shows a greenhouse seen from the exterior, which fits well with the novel's style and story (which in the back cover text is described as combining 'hothouse sensuality with ice-cold fear on every page'). But in a review (from *The Oprah Magazine*), also quoted on the back cover, Bohman is, very surprisingly for a Swedish reader, compared to 'Nordic noir' phenomenon Stieg Larsson, and *Den drunknade* (*The Drowned*) is compared to Larsson's international bestseller *Män som hatar kvinnor* (*The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*). If the reader is expecting the same kind of thrill that can be found in the adventures of Mikael Blomkvist and Lisbeth Salander, the main characters in Larsson's novel, she or he will be sorely disappointed.

Symptomatically, Bohman's English translator Marlaine Delargy, is also the translator of crime novels by Anne Holt, Åsa Larsson and Johan Theorin, as well as the successful horror novels of John Ajvide Lindqvist (author of the vampire novel *Låt den rätte komma in* [*Let the Right One In*]). Bohman's French translator, Carine Bruy, has almost exactly the same profile, having translated crime fiction and thrillers, as well as Ajvide Lindqvist's *Låt den rätte komma in* (*Laisse-moi entrer*) and *Hanteringen av odöda* (*Le retour des morts*). In other words, both Delargy and Bruy have managed to secure a position at the very centre of the international 'boom' of Swedish fiction, Bruy having also translated the immensely popular comic writer Jonas Jonasson, author of *Hundraåringen som klev ut genom fönstret och försvann* (*The Hundred-Year-Old Man Who Climbed Out the Window and Disappeared*). More interesting, however, is that Bohman's rather highbrow debut novel has been placed in this context of international bestsellers.

The French edition of *Den drunknade*, *La noyée* (212 pages), was published by the small and prestigious firm Éditions Balland (based, like the majority of French publishers, in Paris Latin Quarter). The cover photo shows the hand of a person trying to climb out of the water onto a wooden jetty. The choice of image echoes the German edition, suggesting that a murder has been committed, a fact not established in the novel. The front cover clearly states (in contrast to Gaïas edition of Mazetti's *Le mec de la tombe d'à côté*) that the book is a translation, naming the translator and the original language ('Traduit du suédois par Carine Bruy' [Translated from Swedish by Carine Bruy]) and also stating that *La noyée* is part of Balland's series of 'littérature étrangère' (foreign literature). This means assigning Bohman's novel a place close to the pole of small-scale production, the French foreign literature series being characterized by linguistic and national diversity but also by the absence of bestsellers. On the other hand, the back cover text describes the novel as a 'bestseller' in Sweden, a claim that might be contested, since the sales figures of *Den drunknade* were very modest compared to the likes of Stieg Larsson and Camilla Läckberg (even though Bohman's novel sold enough copies to be re-published in a pocket book edition). The rest of the back cover text gives a rather precise summary of *Den drunknade*, without the spectacular (and rather stretched) comparisons of the English edition.

When it comes to Bruy's translation and to the transformation strategies of reduction, retention and replacement, it is clear that *Den drunknade* does not present the same difficulties as Mazetti's *Grabben i graven bredvid*. Bohman's writing often lacks distinct elements of the source culture vernacular. However,

there are a number of cases where Bruy has chosen to reduce the foreignness of Bohman's text. For example, the term 'torp' (signifying a small cottage in the countryside, a kind of leased farm often paid for with manual work on the owner's [the farmer's] field) is simply replaced by 'ferme' (meaning 'farm', which is something else), 'funkisförortstallar' (literally 'the pine trees of the suburbs built in functionalistic style', a clear reference to the suburbs of Stockholm, built in the 1950s and 1960s, whose bright and functionalistic apartment buildings are often interspersed by sparse pine forests) is replaced by 'arbres typiques des banlieus' (which means 'the trees typical of the suburbs') and 'rötmånad' (literally 'the month of rotteness', a Swedish word for the late summer weeks, mostly in August, when temperatures rise and food easily goes bad) is replaced by 'canicule' (which simply means 'heatwave').

More interesting, however, are the nine footnotes in the French translation. These notes, together with the front cover's clear identification of the novel as a translation, retain the cultural specificities of Bohman's Swedish original and stress the cultural differences between Sweden and France. The inclusion of notes serves to remind the reader that what she or he is reading is a *translation*, that there is an *original* text. One might say that the footnotes indicate that the reader is in fact reading two texts at the same time, the original and the translation (Kullberg 2011: 56). Thus, Bruy has chosen the opposite strategy compared to Mazetti's translators Grumbach and Marcus. *La noyée* is clearly aimed at a different audience than *Le mec de la tombe d'à côté* – not the reader typical of the pole of large-scale production, but rather the 'sophisticated' reader of the series of foreign literature published by highbrow editors such as Gallimard and Seuil, readers who care about the cultural capital inherent in translated fiction.

In several of Bruy's notes, the original text is clearly mentioned. When Bohman quotes a song lyric by the British post-punk band New Order, Bruy adds a note saying 'En anglais dans le texte' (In English in the [original] text) and also includes a French translation (as well as the explanation that all the notes are written by the translator). The same strategy is used when Bohman later quotes the British poet Algernon Charles Swinburne. When a French language book title is mentioned, *Une étude sur la peinture symboliste* (which seems to be a made up title), the footnote explains: 'En français dans le texte' (In French in the [original] text). Other footnotes include explanations of Swedish expressions and phenomena, such as *Dagens Nyheter* (the title of Sweden's largest morning paper) and 'Söder' (explained as 'abréviation de Södermalm, quartier sud de Stockholm', meaning 'abbreviation of Södermalm, the southern

part of Stockholm city centre'). Rather than reducing or replacing, then, Bruy has chosen to keep expressions from the original that are highlighted with explanations, thus retaining the vernacular elements of the original text.

In conclusion, Carine Bruy and Éditions Balland have chosen a middle way compared to the German and English editions of *Den drunnade*. Bohman's novel is described as a bestseller, the front cover clearly highlighting the (very sparse) crime fiction elements of the story. At the same time, *La noyée* is paratextually identified as a highbrow translation, which is further emphasized by the translator's footnotes.

Three Italian novels in Swedish

The next translational flow to be studied is one between two semi-peripheral literary languages. The literary traffic from Italian to Swedish will be exemplified by three contemporary novels that are all set in Naples. The regional culture and language are, however, treated very differently in the source texts, giving the translators three different challenges as regards finding a balance among reduction, replacement and retention.

In current Italian fiction, Neapolitan authors and writings set in Naples enjoy a privileged status even outside the national borders. In the following, three novels are analysed, with particular attention paid to the interplay between the vernacular (Neapolitan language, culture and scenery), the national (Italian) and the cosmopolitan (translations, here into Swedish). The selected novels – Erri De Luca's *Montedidio* (2001; *God's Mountain*), Valeria Parrella's *Lo spazio bianco* (2008; *The White Space*) and Elena Ferrante's *L'amica geniale* (2011; *My Brilliant Friend*) – are all set in a Neapolitan environment, which is characterized by poverty and misery, and yet they are localized in different ways. This variation of vernacular anchorage results in three different conditions when translating the novels into Swedish. *Montedidio* (*God's Mountain*) was translated by Viveca Melander and published in 2011 by the small publisher Elisabeth Grate förlag, which usually concentrates on French fiction. The same year, a newcomer on the Swedish market, Astor, published Parrella's *Lo spazio bianco*, translated by Ida Andersen. While Elisabeth Grate and Astor represent two niche market publishers, mainly issuing French, Italian and Spanish literature, Johanna Hedenberg's translation of Ferrante's best-selling *L'amica geniale* was published in 2016 by one of Sweden's largest publishing houses, Norstedts.

A current theme brings the three novels together: the linguistic intracultural opposition between Neapolitan (vernacular) and Italian (national). In the novels, the Neapolitan language appears to a different extent and has different connotations: in Ferrante's novel, *L'amica geniale*, the regional language is almost only present on a thematic level, where it is merely addressed as a class issue, but only rarely do Neapolitan words and phrases occur in the text. In Parrella's *Lo spazio bianco*, the social difference between Neapolitan and Italian is less thematized (this issue is instead addressed in the question of education and literature), but the dialogues between the adult students at an evening course and the protagonist-teacher Maria often display regional spelling. Finally, in De Luca's novel *Montedidio*, a somewhat nostalgic remembrance of the narrator's childhood in the poor Montedidio quarter, the Neapolitan language has a very prominent thematic role and is strongly present in the text itself. The main issue is to understand how the dynamics between these languages are represented and rendered in the Swedish translations. How is the interplay between these languages conveyed in the Swedish translations? And to what extent is the Neapolitan setting of the novels enacted in the peritext?

Practically all the Italian and foreign editions of Elena Ferrante's best-selling novel have women or girls on the front cover. The Swedish editions are no exception. Not surprisingly, the recent paperback edition of *L'amica geniale* has a photo from Saverio Costanzo's television series *My Brilliant Friend* (2018) on the cover. The first edition, however, was garnished with an originally black-and-white photo which had been partly coloured, a technique that emphasizes the novel's dynamic between past and presence. The photo displays two young girls walking side by side on the beach, with some modest barracks in the background and their clothes and haircuts being reminiscent of the styles of the 1950s and the 1960s.

The Neapolitan setting is less obvious in the visual parts of the Swedish cover than in the first Italian edition, where the bay of Naples and Mount Vesuvius are visible in the background. However, this is compensated for in the peritexts: all in all, Naples is mentioned five times on the Swedish flaps and back cover, while it is only mentioned twice in the first Italian edition (cf. Segnini 2017).

Quite different is the minimalist Italian front cover of Valeria Parrella's *Lo spazio bianco*, which shows a pair of black eyelashes on a white background. The French cover is similar while the German is more localized showing stylized branches of palm trees against a pale blue sky with flying birds. In this respect, the Swedish edition differs from the rest by its abstract illustration in black and white on the front cover. Interestingly, the Neapolitan setting of the novel is not

at all mentioned in the Swedish peritext, nor is the city indicated in the short presentation of the author (who was born in Naples). Parrella's novel was the first publication of Astor, a publishing house focused on writers from the Italian and Spanish language areas. All their first editions were dressed in a uniform, having covers of black-and-white abstract formations that signalled modernity, exclusivity and thereby a clear alliance with the autonomous pole. The choice of uniform and easily recognizable covers, which is unusual in Sweden, associated the editions with a continental context (Schwartz 2017: 506).

An image search on Google of Erri De Luca's *Montedidio* is telling. Nearly all translated editions (English, Spanish, French, Norwegian, etc.) have the same kind of picture on the front cover: sepia coloured or black-and-white photos of children playing in the streets, with laundry hanging out to dry. The Swedish cover is no exception: it shows a young boy playing football in the street and in front of him a younger child seen from behind, dressed in a T-shirt or underwear. Interestingly, the Italian editions differ markedly from these localized covers, as the first edition is illustrated with an angel's wing on a celestial blue background, while the second edition is entirely brown, representing the porous tuff stone that the houses in the Montedidio quarter are made of. Montedidio means God's mountain and on the Italian back cover of the novel, the mountain itself is called the 'protagonist' of the novel.

The text on the Swedish back cover refers to both time (1950s) and place, highlighting the element of poverty and the characters' lack of education by expressions such as 'fattigkvarteret Montedidio' (the poor's Montedidio quarter), 'de fattigas skor' (the shoes of the poor), 'fadern som går på stuveriarbetarnas kvällskurs för att lära sig att läsa och skriva' (the father who attends the stowage workers' evening class to learn how to read and write). It also refers to Erri De Luca's own background as a construction worker and member of the left-wing organization 'Lotta continua'.

Not all translations of *Lamica geniale* have kept the word 'geniale' (ingenious, clever) in the title and even fewer have maintained the determiner before 'amica', which has sometimes been changed to the possessive pronoun 'my': *My Brilliant Friend* (English), *Lamie prodigieuse* (French), *Mi briljante venninne* (Norwegian), *La amiga estupenda* (Spanish). However, there are examples of languages in which the word *geniale* is maintained – *Meine geniale Freundin* (German), *Min geniale veninde* (Danish) – and the Brazilian Portuguese is the title that comes closest to the original: *A amiga genial*. The Swedish title, *Min fantastiska väninna* (my fantastic female friend) belongs to the category of titles

that have transformed both the determiner and the adjective *geniale*, which signals a certain detachment from the source text. Even though the question of dialect – *dialetto* – is continuously highlighted in the novel, the source text hardly includes any Neapolitan words at all (only on ten occasions). The translators of Elena Ferrante's *Neapolitan Novels*, in which the narrator often comments on the use of 'dialect' but rarely actually uses it (Cavanaugh 2016: 46), are frequently asked what they have done with the Neapolitan. This confusion experienced by readers of translations in which metalinguistic comments are frequent but foreign words are few is illustrated by Melinda Harvey's interview with Ferrante's American translator Ann Goldstein:

MH: (...) One of the first questions I asked an Italian speaker when I was reading the Neapolitan novels was whether Ferrante used dialect, whether the moments in the novels where your English version says 'she answered in dialect' or 'she moved into dialect now' was your way of indicating that to English-speaking readers.

AG: No, she doesn't write in dialect, and of course I'm grateful.

(Harvey 2016)

A close reading of the source text reveals that it contains surprisingly few local references, especially in comparison with *Montedidio* and *Lo spazio bianco*. In this respect, the translation should not have caused any serious problems; actually, it is almost as if the novel was 'born translated' (cf. Walkowitz 2015).

The tendencies to replace or retain are both rare, but they do occur to a slightly greater extent than reduction, which is a very uncommon strategy applied in the translated text. Replacement can occur in cases concerning food, 'salsiccia' becomes 'korv' (sausage), and 'taralli' becomes 'tarallikringlor' (taralli pretzels). The Italian school system causes problems for translators (see below), but in the three novels analysed here, it has been replaced by the Swedish school system even though it is not parallel to the Italian one. In *Lamica geniale*, the adaptation has also been archaized so that the Italian school system of the 1950s has been transformed into the Swedish school system of the same period: the Italian primary school, 'la scuola elementare', is translated into 'folkskolan', and the secondary school, 'la scuola media', is referred to as 'realskolan'. Names of companies such as 'Manifattura del tabacco' and 'Ferrovie dello stato' are replaced by more generic forms *tobaksbolaget* (the tobacco company) and *järnvägsbolaget* (the railway company), which do not create any obstacles for the Swedish reader. Moreover, book titles mentioned in the novel are referred to with their Swedish

titles and replacement is usually applied in the case of metalinguistic issues, as in the following example, where the italicized words show no semantic relation at all between source and target text:

parole come *avvezzo, lussureggiante, ben volentieri* (44)

[words as accustomed, luxuriant, willingly]

ord som *förvisso, ofantlig och angenäm* (42)

[words as certainly, immense and pleasant]

Italian names of streets and squares are often kept in the Swedish translation (i.e. Piazza Nazionale, Corso Garibaldi, Via Caracciolo), but the strategy wavers when it comes to names of buildings. In this sentence, for example, 'l'Albergo dei poveri' is kept while 'l'Orto botanico' is translated:

Source text:

Mi mostrò piazza Carlo III, l'Albergo dei poveri, l'Orto botanico, via Foria, il Museo (133)

(He showed me Carlo III square, the Hospice of the poor, the Botanical garden, Foria street, the Museum)

Target text:

Han visade mig Piazza Carlo III, Albergo dei poveri, Botaniska trädgården, Via Foria och museet (134)

(He showed me Piazza Carlo III, Albergo dei poveri, the Botanical gardens, Via Foria and the museum)

A similar oscillation can be observed when it comes to names of holidays: the Italian *Ferragosto* in mid-August is replaced with the Swedish name for that Christian holiday, Marie Himmelsfärd (Assumption of Mary), while the Befana, a witch-like woman who brings gifts to Italian children on Epiphany's Eve, is first explained and thereafter mentioned in Italian:

Source text:

Il culmine del conflitto fu raggiunto nel giorno della Befana. (175)

(The culmination of the conflict was reached on the day of the Befana.)

Target text:

Konflikten nådde sin kulmen på trettondagen, *La Befanas dag*. (177)

(The conflict reached its peak the day of the Epiphany, La Befana's day.)

When Neapolitan words and expressions occur in the source text, they are retained in the Swedish translation: 'strùmmolo', 'tàmmaro' and 'chillu strunz' are examples of expressions that are kept in Neapolitan, and they are accompanied by an explanation that is not always present in the source text.

The most striking example of retention is, however, the translation of the word 'dialetto' (dialect) into 'napolitanska' (Neapolitan). Despite the fact that Neapolitan is recognized as a language by UNESCO, it is often referred to as a dialect, especially at the time of the childhood of Ferrante's and De Luca's protagonists. Interestingly, De Luca uses both 'dialetto' and 'napoletano' (and so does the translation), while Ferrante almost exclusively refers to 'dialetto', while the translation refers to 'napolitanska', which retains the lingua-culturally specific origin of the text. As Segnini (2017) has observed, the Neapolitaness of Ferrante's text is more underscored abroad than it is in the Italian texts.

The title of Valeria Parrella's novel *Lo spazio bianco* (meaning 'the white space') has been translated quite differently into German (*Zeit des Wartens*, 'time of waiting'), French (*Le temps suspendu*, 'the suspended time') and Swedish (*Väntrum*, 'waiting room'). It may be noted that while the French and German titles emphasize the temporal aspect, the Swedish title remains more faithful to the spatial dimension in the Italian original. On the other hand, the Swedish title concretizes the somewhat elusive Italian title, which is better preserved in the French and German variants. None of these translational titles, however, underscore the Neapolitaness of the novel.

All three translation strategies are present in the text, even though reduction and replacement are more present than reinforcement. When it comes to the latter, the names of places (such as piazza Garibaldi, corso Vittorio Emanuele) and well-known buildings (Palasport, Castel dell'Ovo) are kept, retaining the source culture vernacular and making it stand out in the Swedish target text. However, there are cases in which the Swedish text vacillates, for instance book titles: Dante's *Purgatorio* is retained, while Manzoni's classic novel *I promessi sposi* (The betrothed) is referred to in Swedish as *De trolovade*. Names of Italian food and dishes are sometimes mentioned without any explanation (i.e. 'palatone'), but they can just as well be replaced: 'girava la frittata' (turned the frittata) is rendered as 'rörde i stekpannan' (stirred in the frying pan). The Neapolitan setting is not at all highlighted or exoticized in the translation. It only comes forth when it seems inevitable, as in the following case where the reader might not know that Naples has a Greek past: 'un cardo della città greca' (a card of the Greek city) becomes 'en ullkarda från det grekiska Neapel' (a wool card from

the Greek Naples). However, there is another example of retention, which is in line with Berman's idea of translating proverbs literally instead of replacing them with equivalents (Berman 1985). The phrase 'grosso come un armadio' (big as a wardrobe) could easily have been translated into the Swedish expression '*stor som ett hus*' (big as a house) but is translated literally. Another example is '*mi spaccava il cuore*' (it broke/split my heart), which is not replaced by the common expression '*det krossade mitt hjärta*' (it crushed my heart), but literally translated into '*det klöv mitt hjärta itu*'. However, the overall tendency in the Swedish text is to reduce or replace.

In dialogues, Neapolitan colloquialisms are reduced to standard Swedish, for example where '*Sì, vabbu*' (in Italian: '*Sì, va bene*') becomes '*Ja, visst*' (Yes, sure), but also English expressions used in the source text, such as 'phone centre' ('*telefoncenter*'), 'internet point' ('*internetcaféer*') and '*la sua body artist preferita*' (his favourite body artist, '*sin favoritkroppskonstnär*') (22, 27). The most obvious reduction with regard to the regional location is the somewhat comic expression '*burocrazia borbonica*' (Bourbon bureaucracy), which is a historical allusion to the Spanish royal family who were the sovereigns of Naples. The Swedish translation reduces this ironic expression into '*byråkratisk process*' (bureaucratic process, 29). Finally, reduction also occurs in metalinguistic passages: '*è piena di seco e pel*' (it's full of *seco* and *pel* [where *seco* and *pel* are examples of compound prepositions]) becomes '*den är full av sammansatta prepositioner*' (it's full of compound prepositions, 41).

Replacement can be illustrated by the target text's rendering of the Italian title system into Swedish, since this system was completely abolished in Sweden after the so-called you-reform that started in 1967. Basically, Swedish translators from Italian have three options: 1) they can translate titles into Swedish, even though it sounds rather obsolete; 2) they can refrain from using forms of address; 3) they can choose to retain the Italian form (i.e. '*signora*', '*dottore*', '*professore*') and thereby retain the foreign origin of the text. In *Lo spazio bianco*, the translator has opted for the first option: '*Dottore, va bene*' becomes '*Okej, doktorn*' and '*Sì, signora, quella è un'iniezione*' becomes '*Jo, frun, det är en injektion*', where '*frun*' is the Swedish word for '*signora*'. Another replacement of this kind refers to the form of address which is highlighted in the text: a student uses the more antiquated and regional form '*voi*' (plural you) and the protagonist, his teacher, tries to force him to use the more modern form '*lei*' (she). The translator has solved this delicate problem by using older Swedish forms of address.

As we have seen in the case of Ferrante above, replacement is the most recurring strategy when the Italian educational and administrative systems are translated into Swedish. For instance, even though the Italian school system is not parallel to the Swedish, expressions deriving from the latter are used. Likewise, the Italian political administration and authorities have been translated into Swedish equivalents. The same strategy has been applied in cases of typically Italian accommodation forms, and also in relation to building material ('le maioliche', 'case di tufo', 'il muro di tufo'). When it comes to imprecations, Italian expressions are often freely replaced by Swedish ones: 'Cristo santo', for example, becomes 'Herre jävlar'.

Reduction and replacement are not very common strategies in the Swedish translation of Erri De Luca's best-selling novel about the Neapolitan quarter called *Montedidio*. As we have seen, the peritexts vernacularize the novel, and so does the narrative text itself. Retention is therefore the most obvious strategy applied by the translator and editor. To start with, we can observe that the title has been maintained even though the Swedish reader will probably miss its semantic element: *Montedidio* means God's mountain (which is the English, more domesticated title of the novel). Not translating the Italian title is in line with the vernacularization in the rest of the peritexts. The language issue is a recurrent theme in the source text; the novel has plenty of vernacular words and phrases scattered throughout its pages, but instead of using footnotes De Luca provides an explanatory gloss in Italian after each Neapolitan expression. The Swedish translation imitates this strategy by retaining nearly all the Neapolitan expressions intact and inserting translations into Swedish. This can be illustrated by the very first sentence of the novel:

Source text:

A iurnata è 'nu muorzo, la giornata è un morso, è la voce di mast'Errico sulla porta della bottega. (7)

(A iurnata è 'nu muorzo, the day is a bite, it is master Errico's voice outside the door of the shop.)

Target text:

A iurnata è 'nu muorzo, dagen är en munsbit, det är master Erricos röst utanför dörren till snickarverkstan. (9)

(A iurnata è 'nu muorzo, the day is a morsel, it is master Errico's voice outside the door of the carpenter workshop.)

Since this strategy is applied throughout the whole novel, the vernacular is heavily reinforced. There are even a few cases when the gloss is left out and hence the reader has to find out the meaning of the Neapolitan words by relying on the context:

Source text:

Abbiamo messo la polvere velenosa, nel deposito c'era pure qualche topo, “o sùrece, ‘o sùrece”, ha strillato il maestro, gli fanno impressione, a me no. (10)

(We put the poisonous powder, in the deposit there were also some rats, “o sùrece, ‘o sùrece”, the master screamed, they make an impression on him, not on me.)

Target text:

Vi lade ut giftpulver, i förrådet fanns det också en och annan råtta, “o sùrece, ‘o sùrece”, skrek mast'Errico, han är rädd för dem, inte jag. (11)

(We put poisonous powder, in the deposit there were also some rats, “o sùrece, ‘o sùrece”, mast'Errico screamed, he's afraid of them, I'm not.)

Interestingly, the Swedish reviewers did not complain about the presence of Neapolitan in the target text. Viveca Melander's translation was explicitly praised by several critics. But are not the glossed phrases in Neapolitan obvious cases of exoticism or what Emily Apter calls 'eye dialect'? (Berman 1985, Apter 2006: 155). What are the benefits of *showing* a vernacular that the reader is not expected to understand, and then providing an explanation? Actually, the aesthetic gains are manifold. Firstly, since the language issue is a major theme in the source text, it is obvious to the reader that the glossed sentences are in Neapolitan. The translation transforms De Luca's Italian–Neapolitan text, in which Neapolitan is somewhat fetishized, into a bilingual Swedish–Neapolitan text, leaving Italian out. The absence of Italian language in the target text is perfectly consistent with the source text's attitude towards Italian: 'We live in Italy, but we are not Italians,' says the narrator's father, who speaks only Neapolitan and describes Italian as a 'silent language'. According to Rebecca Walkowitz, 'multilingual works aim to reduce the importance of dominant languages' (2013: 183), an aim that could be reinforced by multilingual translations. The Swedish translation of De Luca's novel, where the dominant language Italian, for obvious reasons, is repressed, while dominated Neapolitan is maintained, creates an unusual Swedish–Neapolitan narrative.

Another aspect of the aesthetic benefits of the Swedish translation concerns how one of the characters in the book refers to Italian as ‘a language without saliva’, while Neapolitan is more of a ‘spittle in the mouth’. This particular quality of the vernacular is visualized in the translation through the spelling out of all the Neapolitan phrases, including the many accents and double consonants at the beginnings of the words: ‘e ppe fforza, comme partivo co’ ll’augurio d’o schiattamuorte?’ (62), ‘pièttene, pettenésse, piètene larghe e stritte, ne’ perucchiù, accattáteve ’ò pèttene’ (41). The diversity of the vernacular is underscored in this intricate play on the iconicity of the foreign words, which even a reader who does not understand Neapolitan can perceive. It is worth noting, however, that a paradox arises in the Swedish translations that retain Neapolitan or other vernacular expressions: the languages that are manifested as vernaculars in the Italian source text undergo a double exposure in the translation, because readers identify them as both real foreign languages and, if the text informs them about it, as vernaculars. This paradox creates a fascinating split between the cosmopolitan level (what is foreign) and the vernacular level (what is regional) in the translation that is non-existent in the source text.

A third benefit concerns translational norms. It is often presumed that, compared to writers, literary translators less often consider it their task to develop and change cultural norms of the target language’s literature. When it comes to the representation of regional varieties, the Swedish and international norm has been to avoid translating a source language vernacular or ‘dialect’ into a target language vernacular (see, for instance, Englund Dimitrova 1997: 62). The possibility of consistently retaining the vernacular of the source text, providing a gloss, as Melander does, is not reported as a common procedure. Ellen McRae, for instance, suggests four different strategies for translating Italian dialect into English. The only strategy that comes close to the Swedish translator’s method is what she refers to as ‘compensation’, which ‘can be achieved by the systematic direct transfer of key “exotic” items or the occasional use of literal renderings that convey local colour and evoke foreignness’ (2011: 32). In this regard, the Swedish translator of Erri De Luca’s *Montedidio* approaches an innovative way of solving the eternal problem of dialect translation, confirming that the translational norms in this respect are undergoing a ‘creative turn’.

To summarize, *Montedidio* is a very localized source text, which has been kept intact in the Swedish translation, mainly through using the strategy of retention and a localized peritext. Valeria Parrella’s *Lo spazio bianco* is, on the other hand,

a localized source text that has not been kept intact in the Swedish translation or peritexts. Reduction and replacement have rather swept away its Neapolitaness, probably in order to underscore the novel's 'universal' traits. Elena Ferrante's *Lamica geniale* surprisingly turned out to be a less localized source text than expected. Traditional culture-specific items (names of streets and places as well as trademarks, famous buildings, particular foods and so on) are actually so few that it would be difficult to locate the story if it was not for the word 'dialetto' and the peritexts. The result is that the translation does not have to adopt so many of the strategies which are analysed here. However, while reduction is not common at all, examples of both replacement and retention occur.

Two Anglophone African novels in Swedish

In analysing translations of Anglophone African literature to Swedish, we will focus on two narratives, one contemporary Zimbabwean novel and one Kenyan novel first published in the 1960s. However, the Swedish translations were published only a year apart. Both novels include distinct cases of replacement and retention, but these strategies are prompted by different source text phenomena.

The translation of Anglophone African literature in the period 1980–2018 obviously cover titles originally written in English, but also include South African authors Deon Meyer and Marlene van Niekerk, who both write in Afrikaans, since their work is translated from English. Ugandan author Moses Isegawa, whose novel *Despoternas maskerad* (*Abyssinian Chronicles*) first published in Dutch as *Abessinjs Kroniken*, was translated from the English edition. The translation of Anglophone African literature into Swedish presents a complex example of cultural transfer because of the tension between the linguistic dimensions of the fictional universe – the language or languages used by the characters and fictional narrators – and the literary text. African novels in English can be seen – and indeed have been seen – as already-translated works, where the source text covers and hides an original. Frequently, English language African novels highlight their status precisely as 'translated' texts through the insertion of phrases in other languages – which are either translated and explained in the narrative or left untranslated – or references to the fact that dialogues or narration are carried out in languages other than English. These features, characteristic of what the author Ngugi wa

Thiong'o once labelled 'Afro-English' (Ngugi 1985) literature, will be discussed as they appear in NoViolet Bulawayo's *We Need New Names* and Ngugi's *The River Between*.

Zimbabwean author NoViolet Bulawayo's novel was originally published in 2013. It was translated into Swedish as *Vi behöver nya namn* and published in 2014 by Wahlström & Widstrand, a publisher that describes itself as engaged in Swedish and translated quality literature 'med potential att nå många läsare' (with the potential to reach many) (<https://www.wwd.se/om-forlaget/>), with Kazuo Ishiguro, Amos Oz, Anne Tyler and Evelyn Waugh among its foreign authors. The Swedish translation is done by Niclas Hval, an established specialist translator in the field of canonized literature. Hval translates from English, often novels from regions outside Britain which display non-standard writing, for example Marlon James *A Brief History of Seven Killings* and Junot Díaz' *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*, but also prestigious English writers such as Ian McEwan. Hval is the vice chair of the board of the Swedish translators, and he teaches translation at Valand Academy – one of the most prestigious higher education institutes for creative writing in Sweden <https://niclashval.se/>.

Bulawayo's novel clearly signals its status as a (hypothetically) translated original. Most visibly, this comes out in the untranslated expressions – frequently parts of dialogues – which are included in the narrative. For a reader not familiar with the language, most of them are partly intelligible through contextual information ('You you futsekani leave her alone you bloody mgodoyis get away beSatan beRoma!', 21 [I don't want to move to a place where I will be called mkeremkere, 21]), but some remain more difficult to decipher, such as the 'funeral song' sung by mourners, for instance (138). Through these features, Bulawayo's literary aesthetics sets up a logic of inclusion and (partial) exclusion where the narrative is more transparent to readers versed in Ndebele or Zulu than those who are not, all the while indicating to the latter group – through explanations or the careful selection of untranslated information – that nothing too vital is missed.

Hval's translation retains the cultural and linguistic difference emphasized in the original text. In an interview conducted while he was translating Bulawayo, Hval explained that he strove to 'really listen to the author and the book' and sought in his translation to create something that 'wasn't bland, or literal translation' (Artikelförfattare 2013). A creative translation strategy in this regard is the use of neologisms. When the young narrator refers in the original text to the USA as the 'big baboon' of the world – a phrase which draws on

African fauna for metaphorical expressiveness – it is translated as ‘babianbossen’ (literally ‘baboon boss’), a phrase which is not part of the standard variety but arguably resonates with a Swedish youth culture used to mixing English and Swedish words. The translator’s inventiveness can also be seen in a word such as ‘knäklapprare’ (literally ‘knee-clatterer’), which is translated as ‘kiss-knees’ – an insult one of the characters throws in the face of another (16, 12). In Swedish, this neologism has the ring of history, evoking horse-drawn transports of earlier days. In addition to signalling the translated status of the Swedish edition, in this context the noun has the advantage of preserving the rhythm and the syntax of the original text: the equivalent to ‘kiss-knees’, or ‘knock-knees’, in Swedish is not a noun but an adjective – ‘kobent’ – and using this common term in the target text would require modifying the sentence. With ‘knäklapprare’, the clipped and fast-paced dialogue is kept, and the translator avoids inventing a noun to follow the adjective.

An intricate example of the translation’s emphasis on foreignness involves the translation of the names of the characters in the novel. In the original text, the friends at the centre of the narrative have names that are either given names or nicknames: Bastard, Chipso, Godknows, Shbo and Stina. Most of these are either translated – ‘Bastard’ becomes ‘Horungen’ (literally ‘child of a whore’ or ‘child of whoring’) and ‘Godknows’ becomes ‘Gudvet’ (literally ‘God knows’). ‘Stina’, however, while a peculiar name for a young boy in a southern African context, is a common girl’s name in Sweden. Hval has therefore chosen to invent a name, ‘Stinez’, that sounds odd to Swedish ears – and one would presume, to Zimbabwean – to stress the foreignness of the setting the text presents.

The translation also includes strategies of replacement intended to familiarize the text to the reader. One example concerns the representation of the type of English spoken by the white Zimbabweans who briefly appear in the narrative – or more precisely the way this kind of English sounds to the main characters of the novel. In the original text, this class-based variety is unmarked. When a gang of angry Black men appear at the home of a rich white Zimbabwean couple, the hostile dialogue that ensues gives the white husband’s speech as standard variety while presenting the Black leader’s speech as non-standard through grammar and register:

‘Can’t you read? You brung English to this country and now you want it explained to you, your own language, have you no shame? [...]

Bloody nonsense! This is illegal, I own this fucking property, I have the papers to prove it, the white man says. [...]

We know, sir. I'm sorry, but it's just the times, you know. They are changing, you know [...]' (117)

'Kan du inte läsa? Ni tog med engelskan till det här landet och nu vill du få det förklarad, ditt eget språk, har du ingen skam i kroppen? [...]

Struntprat! Det här är olagligt, jag äger ju för fan den här fastigheten, jag har papper på det, säger den vite mannen. [...]

Vi vet det, sir. Jag är ledsen, men sådana är tyvärr tiderna, va. Det är nya tider nu, va. [...]' (110)

The translation modifies the non-standard verb form 'brung' into the standard 'tog', but translates the informal 'you know' into 'va', a common translation of this expression. When one of the protagonist Darling's gang later mimics white speech it is spelled in a way clearly intended to reproduce the sound of Received Pronunciation: 'Wee fawgoat the fowks, wee fawgoat the fowks', Godknows says, 'sounding like a white man' (130). That this sociolect – which signals both race, as Godknows indicates, and class – has no immediate equivalent is demonstrated by the fact that Hval's rendering is not easily placed in social and geographical terms. He translates it as 'Vii gleömde fafflarna, vii gleömde fafflarna', devising a form of speech that alludes simultaneously to the posh sounds of a Stockholm suburb, and/or certain language varieties of Skåne, in southern Sweden, where diphthongs are common (120).

This strategy of replacing a locally specific form of speech with another local form of speech, can be compared with the representation of the non-standard English spoken by the Chinese workers in the narrative. In the original, the simplified English is marked, for example by simple verb forms and repetitions: 'We build you big big mall. All nice shops inside. Gucci, Louis Vuitton, Versace, and so on so on' (46). In Swedish this is marked among other things by the absence of articles and incorrect number: 'Vi bygger stor galleria till er. Bara fin affär i den, Gucci, Louis Vuitton, Versace och så' (46). A representation using the standard dialect would be 'Vi bygger *en* stor galleria till er. *Det kommer bara finnas fina affärer* i den, Gucci, Louis Vuitton, Versace och så'.

A further example of replacement can be seen in the section of the novel which is set in the United States. One of the characters, Kristal, refers to her speech as 'ebonics': Black American speech. The term is used defensively when Kristal is

challenged by Darling, for her way of speaking. In the Swedish translation, Kristal's 'ebonics' is represented through a combination of slang from the Stockholm region – words such as *jidddrar* for 'messing with'; and expressions such as *jag svär*, which is a literal translation of 'I swear', mostly associated with suburban slang – and retaining translations such as *Du vet inte skit*, which is not commonly used in Swedish (though the same expression with an article – *Du vet inte ett skit* – is) but transparently translates 'You don't know shit'.

What is the situation into which the translated works are released? The translation of *We Need New Names* was preceded by translations of a number of Zimbabwean authors over a long period. Doris Lessing, Chenjerai Hove, Charles Mungoshi, Dambudzo Marechera and Yvonne Vera were all translated before Bulawayo. Thus, for the reader interested in Zimbabwean literature there are several writers to choose from. Apart from Lessing and Vera, however, there are few works by each author. Of Hove's writing (three novels and two poetry collections), two have been translated into Swedish; Mungoshi and Dangarembga, admittedly less prolific writers (Dangarembga three novels, Mungoshi four short story collections), have each had only one work translated. Vera has been given a more prominent place in Swedish literature through the translation of three of her novels.

A look at the times of the translations and the publishers shows that publishers' interest in Zimbabwean authors, again excluding Lessing, has been rather temporary. Dangarembga was published by Trevi (now defunct) in 1990; Hove by Legenda (now defunct) in 1990 and B. Östling in 1995; Mungoshi by Tranan in 2003; and Marechera by h:ström in 2011. Vera has received more sustained attention through the translation of three of her novels from 1999 to 2005. It is reasonable to conclude that Swedish publishing of Zimbabwean literature, apart from Lessing and to some extent Vera, is based more on individual works than authorships.

The translation of Bulawayo's novel, though it falls into a line of translations of Zimbabwean literature, is also part of a current publishing trend focused not on country-specific literature, but on contemporary African literature in English. Bulawayo's novel belongs to a wave of African English language novels that includes authors such as Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Taye Selasi, Chris Abani, Teju Cole, Sefi Atta and others who have become globally successful, first by being published in Britain or the United States, and then by being translated into a number of languages (some of them, such as Adichie and Cole have also been published anew in their countries of origin). Bulawayo's Booker nomination is a testament

to the attraction of this category of literature which combines aesthetic value with economic value through projected sales.

If the tradition of publishing Zimbabwean and African literature in Sweden, and the current success of serious but popular African literature indicate the reasons for *selecting* Bulawayo to be translated, the translation strategies and effects can also be explained through the broader context of Swedish publishing. One of the significant features of the target language context is the openness towards non-standard modes of speaking that a generation of Swedish authors with immigrant backgrounds have forged. Authors such as Alejandro Leiva Wenger, Jonas Hassen Khemiri, Marijane Bhaktiari and Johannes Anyuru have all turned the speech patterns and narrative modes associated with urban minorities, with the slang of the suburbs, and with hip-hop culture into literary art. All had their literary debuts, or their breakthrough novels, published between 2000 and 2005. A decade later, authors such as Athena Farrokhzad added to this tradition. Within translated literature, this broadening of representational possibilities has been accomplished through the translation of authors such as Marlon James and Junot Díaz (both translated by Hval).

The packaging of the English language edition, published by Chatto and Windus, underscores the text's contemporary and translational characteristics. The cover is aesthetically eclectic, colourful, in naïve style and apparently hand-painted. The words of the title are set in boxes, each with a different background colour, and the space around the title is seemingly sprinkled with equally manually produced, if stylized, guavas, with associations to doodling. The colours of the Zimbabwean flag are among the colours, as are the American – the word 'new' in the title clearly referencing the Star Spangled Banner. The back cover features a quotation from the first chapter (punctuation removed, all in capitals) which brings out the carefree attitude of the children, and the intensity of the narrative ('THEN WE ARE RUSHING THEN WE ARE RUNNING THEN WE ARE RUNNING AND LAUGHING AND LAUGHING AND LAUGHING').

The Swedish edition, published by Wahlström & Widstrand, retains much of the original aesthetic, but tones down the naivety in favour of a more symmetric style. The colours of the Zimbabwean and the American flags are there in the cover in the form of horizontal stripes, with the stars of the American flag appearing at the bottom and top of the front cover. Six children, silhouetted, climb a stylized guava tree positioned on the right margin. The upward movement and the stars spread at the top of the cover gives the impression of an altogether more romanticized view of childhood and children – as if they

were climbing towards the stars – which contrasts with the British edition. The back cover features information about the narrative and gives some contextual information (referring, for instance, to Mugabe's 'war veterans' and township life), and describes the novel as a shocking and intense coming-of-age story ('omskakande och nervigt vital skildring av en ung flickas vuxenblivande').

The River Between is set in Kenya during the spread of British colonization. At the centre of the story are two villages, Kameno and Mukuya, on the brink of being fully integrated into the colonial management system, which are separated by the river of the title. Their separation also marks conflicting ideas as there is a clash between Christianity, represented mainly by the old man and convert preacher in Kameno, and traditional religious ideas, manifested in the old 'prophet' in Mukuya. In this struggle of ideas a younger generation are trying to negotiate the changing landscapes. At the heart of the conflict is the practice of circumcision, particularly its place in the cultural system, and its consequences for those who submit to it or refuse to do so.

Ngugi's novel was first published in 1965 by Heinemann Educational Publishers as the seventeenth publication in the 'African Writers Series' and has long had the status of a classic in African literature. This status is evidenced by the fact that the current English language edition is a fifty-year anniversary publication by Penguin Classics which includes a 'message' from Chinua Achebe (apparently drawn from his editorship of the AWR) and a foreword by Uzodinma Iweala, author of *Beasts of No Nation*, one of the more popular African novels in recent years.

The Penguin edition paratext has few features in common with the first, 1965 'African Writers Series' novel. The former presented a painted landscape with the river of the title centred and flowing through a pair of hands, symbolically invoking the bringing together needed to settle the conflict of the narrative; however, the contemporary edition appears, at least at first sight, less artistic and more general. The front cover features a photograph of an ordinary scene: an individual in a fishing canoe, in a landscape that could be anywhere outside the industrialized world. What seems to be the individual's journey across the river may echo the symbolic meaning of the river between, and the actions needed to join its sides.

Like the Penguin version, the Swedish edition confirms Ngugi's status as a canonical author. *Floden mellan bergen* is published alongside Ngugi's older and newer works, most of which are packaged with similar aesthetics to give the appearance of a series, and are equipped with prefaces by established

Swedish scholars of postcolonial literary studies. The preface to *The River Between* is written by Mikela Lundahl, historian of ideas and senior lecturer at Gothenburg University. *A Grain of Wheat* (*Om icke vetekornet*), *The Devil on the Cross* (*Djävulen på korset*) and *Weep Not, Child* (*Upp genom mörkret*) have all been translated into Swedish before (in 1980 and 1981) and were re-published by Modernista between 2014 and 2015 with prefaces by well-known critics or researchers. But Modernista extends the Ngugi library in Swedish by adding a new translation of the fable *The Upright Revolution*, published in 2017, and *Wizard of the Crow* – the latter planned for publication in 2022. All the longer works (that is, excluding *The Upright Revolution*) have designs and covers that are similar, which give them the appearance of a book series. However, the Modernista edition of *Floden mellan bergen* is based on an old translation, and is published by a young publisher (Modernista was founded in 2002) with an as-yet somewhat undefined position in the publishing field. The translator Philippa Wiking (1920–2010) was a missionary to Tanzania and translated several works, mostly in the category of psychology and related fields.

Modernista's cover bears no resemblance to Penguin's. Instead, it borrows its aesthetics from the editions of Ngugi's more recent works, his memoir series *In the House of the Interpreter*, *Births of a Dream Weaver*, *Dreams in a Time of War* and *Wizard of the Crow*, which, although published by different publishers in the USA and UK, share a design based on collage technique, the inclusion of animals and graphic elements and occasionally human features or clothes items such as hats. In the Swedish edition, a blue-tinted and double-exposed landscape makes up a vague background whereas the foreground is dominated by a hyena with a human eye inserted, collage-fashion, and covering most of its head. A fragment of a recognizably African cloth also covers part of the animal's body.

The cover of Modernista's edition can be said to accomplish two goals. Firstly, its collage technique wraps Ngugi's text in an aesthetic that is recognizably modernist with a clear reference to an African cultural sphere. Secondly, though implicitly and perhaps unknown to the Swedish reader, it 'updates' Ngugi's early novel by linking it, through the similarity of its cover art, to his more recent production.

Like Bulawayo's novel, *The River Between* leaves no doubt about its characteristics of being a translated original. In contrast to *We Need New Names*, however, most of these terms are explained in the source text itself. Thus, the original gives 'thingira, a man's hut' and 'kihii, an uncircumcised boy' (which

the Swedish translation follows: '*Kagutui ka Mucii gatihagakwo Ageni*: husets oljeduk skall inte gnida främlingars hud' (17), '*thingira*, mannens hydda' (22), '*tene na tene*, I evigheters evighet', and '*kihii*, en oomskuren pojke' (54)). The explanatory ambition includes not only terms and expressions but also customs and traditions, as in the following description of a blessing: 'a shower of saliva onto his breast in the Gikuyu way of blessing' (29), or, in a passage that addresses the heart of the conflict, the ritual of circumcision:

Circumcision was an important ritual to the tribe. It kept people together, bound the tribe. It was at the core of the social structure, and a [*sic*] something that gave meaning to a man's life. End the custom and the spiritual basis of the tribe's cohesion and integration would be no more.

Ngugi's text, then, helps the reader unfamiliar with local traditions and vernacular terms to understand the events and their meanings, occasionally in ways that seem to confirm the argument presented by critics such as Eileen Julien and Graham Huggan that the intended audience of postcolonial African novels are American and European readers with little knowledge of the local cultural specificities (Huggan 2001, Julien 2006, 2018).

One of the significant characteristics of Ngugi's novel is the use of biblical references and terms. This relates directly to the theme and to the characterization, of course, but it also provides a template for describing Gikuyu beliefs and customs and it permeates the narrative voice so that the novelistic text approaches a biblical story. The opening of the novel displays the biblical register clearly: 'The two ridges lay side by side. One was Kamenno, the other was Kamuyu. Between them was a valley. It was called the valley of life'. In other places, constatives referring to the 'people' have a biblical ring: 'People saw this and were happy'; 'There was much rejoicing everywhere' (45). This register is maintained throughout: in single words – as when the boy Kanuthia obeys his friend 'meekly' (20) – in sentence structure (like the many sentences beginning with 'And ...' [25]) – and the use of Christian words (such as 'God' and 'sacred' and 'prophecy') and phrases for local customs and traditions. The narrative voice, to exemplify this last trait, describes the end of the ritual of the 'second birth' like baptism, and in biblical style: 'She dipped him into the water and he came out clean' (26); labels Chege a 'prophet' and has Chege describe a 'prophecy' articulated by the old seer Mugo in the following terms: "Salvation shall come from the hills. From the blood that flows in me, I say from the same tree, a son shall rise. And his duty shall be to lead and save the people!"

The translation adheres closely to this biblical register, reinforcing it at times. The repetition of the subjective, which in Swedish is typical of this style, is one example of this, as in 'Människorna såg det och det gjorde dem lyckliga' ('People saw this and were happy'; literally 'The people saw this *and it made them* happy'; 15); and the translation of 'bulrush' as *vass*, which is the biblical word for the reeds among which Moses is found. There are occasional exceptions to this rule, as when the translation avoids the Swedish biblical equivalent of 'meekly' – which is *saktnodigt* – in favour of *fogligt* (20).

Even when not biblical, the translation uses an elevated, poetic and at times slightly archaic register when the source text is closer to standard diction. Examples are 'sorgebudet' (17) for 'sad news'; 'gulröd färgton' (67) for 'dull pale orange'; 'tvistigheter' (69) for 'strife' and 'hölja över huvudet med' for 'cover their heads with'.

Apart from the pervasive use of biblical language, the translation is characterized by strategies to reduce and replace the particularities of the Kenyan setting and text. One example of the former is the translation of 'When your stomach bites you' into as 'När du har magknip' (29) – an ingenious translation as 'magknip' literally means 'pinch-stomach', but which nevertheless familiarizes the text since it avoids what in a Swedish context would be an odd verb ('bite') for a common informal expression. Another example is the translation of 'huge cattle road' into 'kostigen' (literally 'cow path'), an expression that is familiar to Swedish readers, but also connotes something distinctly narrower and smaller than the road denoted by the text. A third example of this replacement strategy is the translation of musical instruments in the narrative. The 'beating of drums and jingles' is translated into 'trummornas dunkande och klingandet av skallror' (literally 'the beating of drums and ringing of rattles', 55). The translation does not quite conjure the sounds of the traditional instruments probably referenced here (which were probably made of metal) and which had a rather darker sound than the one connoted by 'klingandet' (in the original text, moreover, the jingles 'beat') but may seem suitable to an audience accustomed to the word 'skallra'. The translation also belittles the quality of the musical performance since 'skallra' connotes a child's instrument. In the same scene the 'whistles' used are translated as 'pipor', which to an audience familiar with older musical practices may connote a reed instrument but in contemporary Swedish connotes instruments with little musical quality – such as toys and referee instruments – and not the flutes that Ngugi must have had in mind.

Wiking's translation contains a number of footnotes. A whole range of words and concepts are explained: 'panga' (described as a kind of 'long knife for cutting

grass and bush', 35), 'kiama' (translated as 'förening': 'association', 80), 'tutikwenda irigu' ('vi vill inte ha oomskurna flickor': 'we do not want uncircumcised girls', 83), 'riika' ('årsgrupp': 'year group', 112), and 'thahu' ('smitta'; 'contamination', 145). According to Lawrence Venuti, footnotes exemplify a foreignizing translation strategy since they highlight cultural differences, and provide guidance in how to understand those differences. From a more postcolonial point of view, however, footnotes may also be seen as attempts to determine and explain cultural differences, in the effort risking (or perhaps even striving) to manage and erase them. This is what happens in at least one of the footnotes in Wiking's translation (Kullberg 2011: 58). The 'kiama', which Iweala describes in his foreword as a 'governing body' and which in the literary text emerges as something akin to a regional council encompassing several ridges and villages and invested with a great deal of power, is given as 'association', a general term which says nothing about its status or its function but is familiar in Swedish contexts of sports, church and other non-professional activities.

Ngugi wa Thiong'o was the second Black African writer to be translated into Swedish. Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* was translated as *Allt går sönder* in 1967. The publishing of Ngugi four years later marks an interest in the influential voices of African intellectuals connected to political struggle and decolonization. Wole Soyinka, another prominent African writer and intellectual, was translated into Swedish in 1976, and Stockholm hosted the 'African-Scandinavian Writers' Conference' in February 1967 (in which Ngugi and Soyinka participated) with topics such as 'The Decolonization of African Literature' and 'Individualism and the Social Responsibility of the Writer'. And the seminal Ugandan magazine *Transition*, founded in Kampala in 1961, had both Swedish readers and contributors (see e.g. Falk 2019). Over the following decades, this publishing interest changed, and up to the 1980s African literature on the Swedish book market was dominated by white South African writers such as Doris Lessing, André Brink and Nadine Gordimer.

The translation of Achebe's *No Longer at Ease* and *Arrow of God* have appeared in recent years (as *Inte längre hemma*, 2014, and *Guds pil*, 2015, respectively) and thus provide the publishing context for the re-publication of *The River Between*. Modernista's edition of Ngugi also repeats the publishing pattern of Achebe in Swedish. Where the first translation of his work was published in text only, more recent editions – both new ones and re-published ones – have included contextual information in the form of prefaces. Per Wästberg, a well-known Swedish Africanist, author and member of the Swedish Academy, wrote

the introduction to a 2004 edition of Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, and Stefan Helgesson and Stephan Larsen, who have both been engaged for the Ngugi editions, have written prefaces for Achebe's other works (Helgesson for *Inte längre hemma* and Larsen for *Guds pil*, both published by Tranan).

Both David Damrosch and Lawrence Venuti have observed that translation into English continuously threatens to erase cultural differences in the name of easy communication and the ideal of standard language (Damrosch 2003). Venuti, indeed, has argued that this kind of translation, dominant in the American case, which aims to 'enhance intelligibility for a broad English language readership', amounts to 'nationalist' translation in its suppression of cultural difference in the source text in the service of national identity (2005/2013: 121). With regard to translation into the semi-peripheral language of Swedish the pattern appears to differ from the English that Damrosch and Venuti discuss. Wiking's translation and the Modernista edition include a preface by an established scholar which emphasizes the foreignness of the original text, at the same time offering a point of entry into the text. The footnotes Venuti sees as typical of foreignizing translation, in this case present a more ambiguous attitude since they partly familiarize aspects of Gikuyu cultural life. The translation's retention strategies are, further, partly offset by the source text's inclusion of untranslated words, which are kept in the target text. Hval more distinctly retains the foreignness of the text – to the extent that he invents new words – apart from a few examples, notably on minor characters' use of English – which are replaced with characteristics ostensibly familiar to the readers. *Vi behöver nya namn* and *Floden mellan bergen* were published with only a year between them. They were, then, released onto the same literary market. The translation strategies, however, or in Ngugi's case, the decision not to renew a forty-year-old translation, demonstrate that they are intended for very different audiences.

Two Lusophone novels in Swedish

This section will focus on two contemporary Swedish translations, one of a Portuguese and one of a Mozambican novel. Despite the fact that the former translation shows significant ambitions to retain the cultural particularities of the source text and the latter shows strong tendencies to reduce and replace the source culture vernacular, both translations include illustrative combinations of reduction and retention.

The internationally recognized Portuguese writer António Lobo Antunes has fourteen titles translated into Swedish (of twenty-eight novels in Portuguese) published by the mid-sized publishing house Forum from 1985 to 2015. Together with the (other) internationally consecrated Portuguese writer, José Saramago, Antunes' authorship appeared heavily in the speculations about the Nobel Prize during the 1990s. After the prize was awarded to José Saramago in 1998, finally rendering a prize for a work in the Portuguese language, the interest from the major publishing house seemed to decline somewhat. In 2014 the small-scale publishing house Modernista took up his authorship and re-published *De förrådda* (*Os cus de Judas*, 1979), and in 2017 the so-called Benfica Trilogy, including *Betraktelser över själens passioner* (*Tratado das paixões da alma*, 1990), *Tingens naturliga ordning* (*A ordem natural das coisas*, 1992) and *Carlos Gardels död* (*A morte de Carlos Gardel*, 1994). These novels were not published as a trilogy in the first place, although this was suggested by Antunes himself in a later interview. Even though not a format change, it is evident that Modernista enhances the idea of formatting these novels into a trilogy in their marketing. The Benfica Trilogy is in focus for analysing the works' epitext and, consequently, how Lobo Antunes' works were inscribed and transformed in the Swedish market in the 2010s. The novel *Tingens naturliga ordning*, translated by Marianne Eyre, will serve for analysing the translation strategies on the text level.

To transform Lobo Antunes' prose into another language brings with it many challenges. His prose is composed in the (post)modernist tradition with an advanced experimental and narrative technique. A polyphonic narrative, often containing two different narrative voices and different time perspectives in the same sentence. Extended sentences containing long monologues structured as inner dialogues between the narrator and a partner, where contemporary dialogues and events are intertwined with past ones. Deeply rooted in the vernacular geography of Lisbon (Benfica), everyday events and emotional moods, the narrative blends personal memories with historical, political and social events.

All the strategies of reducing, replacing and retaining can be traced in Marianne Eyre's translation, although they somewhat alter the expected outcomes of 'familiarity' and 'foreignness' for the reader – a shift that may be attributed to the modernist, cosmopolitan quality of the text. Replacements are evident in the translations of swear words and slang, for example 'Putá, sua putá' (whore, you whore) translated into the Swedish 'Skitmorsa' (shit mother). Indicating a transformation of the text, in some parts, into a less-offensive language in the

Swedish edition. However, it should be recognized that swear words in the Romance languages are of a blunter character than the Swedish ones.

The translation follows closely and proficiently the complicated structure of the long sentences, without losing fluency in Swedish. When Antunes starts a new paragraph or sentence without a full stop the translation does the same. The translation also maintains the experimental composition of long sentences (polyphonic narrative), separating different narrative perspectives, voices and time slots with commas, parenthesis, italics and capitals in the same sentence. The translation also keeps the Portuguese names from the vernacular geography of places, neighbourhoods, streets and, for example, the Lisbon river 'Tejo', even though a translation in Swedish exists: 'Tagus'. Both these transformation techniques can be considered as retaining the source texts' vernacular culture and experimental form in a way that reminds the target reader of another text underneath, belonging to a different linguistic and cultural sphere.

Nevertheless, in this case the retention strategy does not necessarily lead to a sense of geocultural unfamiliarity for the Swedish reader. On the contrary, it may reduce the text's vernacular rootedness and lift it to a general cultural level, something we will see is being heavily advocated for in the peritexts of Antunes' works. The vernacular setting of a specific urban geography – through naming neighbourhoods, streets, rivers and public places – and an urban 'everyday struggling life' framed in an experimental literary form are highly recognizable as a (post)modernist cosmopolitan literature. Antunes' affiliation with this tradition is expressed in the introduction to Modernista's edition of *Betraktelse över själens passioner* by Anders Cullhed: 'Antunes är trots allt lika bunden till sin hemstad som argentinaren Ernesto Sabato (en av hans favoritförfattare) till Buenos Aires, James Joyce till Dublin eller poeten Konstantinos Kavafis till Alexandria' (Antunes is just as bound to his hometown as the Argentinian Ernesto Sabato (one of his favourite writers) is to Buenos Aires, James Joyce to Dublin, and the poet Konstantinos Kavafis to Alexandria) (Cullhed 2017: viii). Even though this experimental novel form will target readers in Sweden who are familiar with modernist texts it will still require readers to be experienced and interested to access it. The success of transforming this complicated form is also highly dependent on the translator. It is worth emphasizing that the translator Marianne Eyre has been highly celebrated for her ability to transmit Antunes' musicality and experimental form, which has been pointed out in various book reviews and introductions, as well as in a dedication to her by Lobo Antunes in a Swedish edition.

Forum's dust jackets carry citations of book reviews published in the major daily papers in Sweden. Antunes' prose is celebrated as universal, experimental, innovative and extraordinary, his novels often hailed as masterpieces, for example in the national newspaper *Svenska Dagbladet*: 'Ty Lobo Antunes förefaller att representera höjdpunkten i detta sekels europeiska modernism (...). Man ska var försiktig med att använda orden "mästerverk". Att denna roman utgör ett sådant tvivlar jag inte en sekund på. Läs, tag och läs!' (As Lobo Antunes represents the peak of this century's European modernism (...). One should use the word 'masterpiece' with discretion, but that this novel constitutes such a thing I do not doubt for a second. Read, take up and read!) (Antunes 1994b).

In the dust jacket writer's presentation, Antunes is claimed to be the 'greatest Portuguese writer now living', which was modified into 'from his generation' after Saramago's Nobel Prize (Antunes 1992b). Statements like this, launching Saramago and Antunes as the best and *only* authors from Portugal in the Swedish book market, obscure other contemporary Portuguese authorships, for example equally important women writers in the source context such as Lídia Jorge and Maria Velho da Costa (cf. Helgesson 2017: viii). A startling fact is that only one novel by a Portuguese woman, namely Lídia Jorge, has been translated into Swedish since 1976. Even though Jorge has been awarded literary prizes, has a recognized important position in the source culture and, just like Antunes, writes critically on contemporary social issues and major historical events, none of this is mentioned on the dust jacket of the 2001 Swedish translation *Walters dotter* of her novel *O vale da paixão* (Jorge 2001).

In a similar manner, the introductions in the Modernista editions for the Benfica Trilogy also describe Antunes as one of the most important contemporary European writers and compare him – both in topic and style – to names such as Marcel Proust, Virginia Woolf, Vladimir Nabokov and Claude Simon. This framing of Lobo Antunes thus carries the features of 'cosmopolitan qualities' described by Es and Heilbron (2015: 303), and it is visible in the books' cover design. With photographs in black and white of artistic still lifes with a modernistic composition, the covers transmit a sophisticated and avant-garde impression.

This cosmopolitanization is strongly reinforced by the publisher's epitextual presentation of how Antunes' novels function differently in the source culture vis-à-vis the target culture, in which they sketch a transformation from a situated social critique to a universal human condition. In a Portuguese context,

Antunes' narratives inhabit tough critical reflections upon the socio-historical transformations suffered by Portuguese society in the late twentieth century. For the translation reader these topics are said, by Modernista, to represent universal questions: the Portuguese colonial war is compared with the Vietnam War, the Portuguese homecoming soldier with Odysseus, criticism of Portuguese colonial amnesia with European cultural amnesia and so forth.

From the Mozambican writer Mia Couto's over forty books (novels, short stories, poetry, chronicles, children's literature and essays), five novels have been translated into Swedish: *Sömnängarland* (Ordfront, 1995; *En bok för alla*, 1999), *Under frangipaniträdet* (Ordfront, 1997), *Flamingons sista flykt* (Ordfront, 2002), *Sjöjungfruns andra fot* (Leopard, 2010, reprinted, 2014) and *Jesusalem* (Leopard, 2015). The following analysis of translation strategies concerns the first edition of *Sjöjungfruns andra fot* (*O outro Pé da Sereia*, 2006), translated by Irene Anderberg. Mia Couto's two Swedish publishers are both mid-sized and independent, niched as politically engaged with a focus on public debate, cultural history, as well as fiction from Africa and Asia.

The Portuguese publisher Caminho presents Couto as an innovator and renewer of the Portuguese literary language (from the Lusophone margin to the centre). The dust jackets also emphasize his international recognition and canonization, listing his translations and many literary prizes. The peritexts accompanying Couto in the Swedish book market do not emphasize his renewal of language in the same way. On Leopard's website and on the dust jacket of *Sjöjungfruns andra fot*, Mia Couto is acclaimed as the most important writer from Portuguese-speaking Africa. Leopard does not offer an introduction to the writer's biography or literary universe. The earlier editions published by Ordfront, on the other hand, provide more extensive prefaces introducing the writer to the Swedish audience.

Leopard's framing of the novel does not inscribe his work into the discourse of the anthropological and postcolonial exotic, common for African postcolonial novels (Huggan 2001). Rather, it enhances Couto's universal values through a sophisticated image that does not exploit bright colours or stereotypical African images. Instead, Leopard's presentation of Couto's novel highlights the narrative's engagement in cosmopolitan current social issues as stereotyping and prejudices in relation to race, identity, religion and tradition: 'I *Sjöjungfruns andra fot* korsas nuet med det förflutna, drömmar med verklighet och med en god portion humour ifrågasätts förutfattade meningar om ras och identitet, religion och tradition' (In the mermaid's second foot, the present is intersected with the past,

dreams with reality, and with a good amount of humour preconceived notions of race and identity, religion and tradition are questioned) (Couto 2010).

In the transcontinental literary circuit for the Portuguese-language literatures – especially Portugal and Brazil – Mia Couto is both a best-selling author and a renewer of the Portuguese language and literature. Couto is broadly recognized for his Mozambican vernacular language transformations of European Portuguese, using neologisms, inserting African words (Ronga) and oral narrative techniques into his literary language. The challenges of transforming Mia Couto's prose into Swedish are many. In his narrative structure, different perspectives of consciousness and spatial dimensions intertwine in a way that blurs the sharp boundaries between present reality, dreams and ancestral dimensions. The latter has caused some literary scholars to categorize his prose as magical realism (e.g. Mariano Siskind 2014). Thematically and linguistically, most of his novels are rooted in vernacular specificities (historical events, rural communities, costumes and beliefs), which fosters a situated social critique. Translators thus need to bridge a certain cultural gap when presenting Couto to a Swedish readership.

In *Sjöjungfruns andra fot* the translator mainly uses the strategies of reducing and replacing the specificities of the source vernacular in a way that strongly neutralizes and domesticates them. There are various examples of how the content and the distinctive language used in Couto's narrative are neutralized and shifted to a more familiar level. They will be discussed here mainly through the translation solutions chosen for the Ronga words, intertwined in the narrative structure of the source text. Words in Ronga are numerous in the source text and they are accompanied by explanatory footnotes placed at the end of the page (Caminho's edition). In her Swedish translation, Irene Anderberg has omitted these footnotes. Instead, she has used three other strategies to deal with the bilingual character of Couto's novel: 1) she keeps the Ronga word and adds an explanatory translation in the same sentence; 2) she replaces the African word with an equivalent word translated from European Portuguese; and 3) she omits the African word and its concept from the text without any comment:

Strategy 1:

deixara de se apresentar como um **nyanga** (*)

upphört att presentera sig som **nyanga**, **spåman** (22)

(ceased to present himself as a **nyanga**, **soothsayer**)

Strategy 2:

O magaiça (*) depôs o caixão na areia [explained in the note as the European Portuguese '**mineiro**']

Gruvarbetaren satte ner kistan i sanden (92)

(**the miner** put the chest down in the sand)

Strategy 3:

Pudessem escutar as suas vozes e todos entenderiam que bastava o português deles, **muzungos** (*), para os diferenciar dos demais, os indígenas.

Hade man kunnat höra deras röster skulle portugisiskan räckt för att alla skulle kunnat skilja dem från de övriga, de infödda. (174)

(Had their voices been audible, their Portuguese would have been enough for everyone to distinguish them from the rest, the natives.)

The footnote (in the source text) for this last omitted (in the target text) African word explains: 'Muzungos: nome dado aos brancos ou pessoas de outra raça culturalmente assimilados' (Couto 2006: 170, 'Muzungos: name given to whites or persons of another race that are culturally assimilated'). Most of the African words embedded in Couto's narrative are explained by him in a footnote which in turn describes specific Mozambican fauna, flora, religious or cultural artefacts and different, ethnic groups and their languages. This additional specific cultural knowledge of the source vernacular's landscape is probably in part directed at the Portuguese reader as Couto's novel was first published in Portugal. In this regard, the use of footnotes by Couto in his original text can be said to somewhat follow a model in postcolonial literature, presented to European audiences, of explaining cultural differences and particularities. More importantly they also function – as Christina Kullberg observes in the case of the Swedish translations of Maryse Condé – as providers of vernacular specificities that enhance the visibility and subjectivity of people and places in the source culture (Kullberg 2011: 57). Nevertheless, adapting the novel for Swedish readers, the translator and the publisher's choices were to omit a large part of this cultural information contained in the source text, which also reduced this ethical dimension of Couto's narrative.

In keeping names of places and characters in Portuguese untranslated, the translator retains the source culture vernacular to a certain degree. But with this strategy, the translation simultaneously reduces Mia Couto's technique of

giving symbolically charged names for his characters, for example ‘Lázaro Vivo’ (literal translation Living Lazarus), ‘Antigamente’ (literally formerly, in the old days) and ‘Vila Longe’ (literally faraway village), which is an important symbolic dimension of the source text. Together with omitting the colourful specificities of fauna, flora, artefacts and people, Anderberg’s tendency to retain the Portuguese proper names leads to a strong reduction of the source culture vernacular. At the same time, the strategy of keeping Ronga words and the fact that the novel has strong vernacular traits in content and plot, paradoxically, makes the text come across as a translation that still retains much of its source culture.

Three Caribbean novels in Swedish

In this last translational flow we will focus on three novels with backdrops and settings in three different Caribbean cultures, originally written in English, French and (at least partly) Spanish and translated into Swedish. In these translations, the strategies of reduction and replacement are very rarely used. Retention is thus the clearly dominating strategy used by the different translators.

Jamaica Kincaid’s novel *Lucy* deals with a young woman who migrates from Antigua in the West Indies to the United States to work as an au pair in New York. It consists of the young woman’s experiences in and thoughts about the new country mixed with memories from her not always happy childhood. The protagonist demasks the mendacious happy family life of her employers while contemplating love and friendship in her surroundings. The novel was first published in hardback in 1990 in New York at Farrar, Straus and Giroux and in pocket edition by the same house in 2002. It was translated into Swedish in 1994 by Lena Fagerström and published by En bok för alla. Another publisher, Tranan, used the same translation in their paperback edition from 2019.

Both the first US paperback and the Swedish 1994 edition use Paul Gauguin’s painting *Poèmes barbares* from 1896 on the cover – a stereotypical exoticizing packaging at first glance, but at the same time cosmopolitanizing given the world wide fame of Paul Gauguin. Whereas the paperback only includes a detail from the painting, the Swedish cover has a full representation, where also the monkey is visible – which could be seen as a reinforcement of the foreign character of the novel. In the Swedish paperback there is no exoticizing painting on the cover. Instead the cover lacks imagery and is only covered by the title of the novel *Lucy*, standing out in red handwriting on a yellow background.

Opening the source novel there is a photograph of Jamaica Kincaid, a short biographical note and a list of her other published novels. This is a formal presentation of the author focusing on her literary production and literary prizes – an authority argument aimed at convincing the source reader of the quality of the novel at hand. The target presentation of Kincaid is on the contrary placed at the back of the cover. This placement makes the presentation more direct and visible. The Swedish presentation is more personal than the English, informing us of her birth name and birthplace, playing more on pathos than on authority arguments in the beginning, but then recovering the authority by placing her as a professor at Harvard University. She is exotic (Caribbean), but still highly regarded within the American culture – a sign of high prestige.

The novel is a first-person narrative without footnotes. We follow the experiences of Lucy as she tells us about them. They are effectively narrated in a plain and precise style with touches of colloquialisms and with surprising turns in the syntax. There is no specific Caribbean variety of English in the source text, not even in the few dialogue sections. If we examine the first paragraph of the chapter ‘The Tongue’, ‘Tungan’, the translation strategy will unfold.

At 14 I had discovered that a tongue had no real taste.

Redan vid fjorton års ålder hade jag upptäckt att tungor egentligen inte har någon direkt smak.

(Already at the age of 14 I had discovered that tongues really do not have any taste.)

In this sentence, the translator makes the prose more wordy, emphasizing the oral narration character of the text. This strategy is, however, compensated for in the next sentence:

I was sucking the tongue of a boy named Tanner, and I was sucking his tongue because I had liked the way his fingers looked on the keys of the piano as he played it, and I had liked the way he looked from the back as he walked across the pasture, and also, when I was close to him, I liked the way behind his ears smelled. (44)

Jag stod och såg på en pojkes tunga, han hette Tanner, och orsaken till att jag smaskade på hans tunga var att jag gillade hans fingrar när de spelade piano, och jag hade också tyckt att han såg fin ut bakifrån när han gick över betesmarken och dessutom, på närmare håll, tyckte jag om lukten bakom hans öron. (45)

The present participle, the -ing form, needs a complement in Swedish which is 'stod och' (standing and) and 'because' becomes 'orsaken till' (the reason for). The clause 'I was sucking his tongue because' is translated with a colloquialism 'smaskade' (munched) retaining the colloquial style in the target text. The syntax is eased up and more concentrated, producing a fine rendering of the stylistic level of the narrative by compensation. This is an adequate translation in the sense of Toury (2012). It is source-oriented and keeps the overall structure distinctive of the source text, often by compensation as we have seen in examples one and two. The syntax, however, is idiomatically rebuilt in Swedish, but it follows the rhythm of the source text, and its idiosyncratic experiences come across as products of Lucy's mind. The colloquial style in vocabulary and syntax of the source text are retained.

If *Lucy* is the story of a West Indian immigrant in the United States, Maryse Condé's *Traversée de la mangrove* is a story about domestic migration within the Caribbean Sea. A body has been found in the mangrove swamps near the small town of Rivière de Sel in Guadeloupe. The novel is constructed around the victim, a suspicious character named Sancher. During the wake, each character in the novel relates his or her relationship and experiences with Sancher. The man is dead, possibly murdered, but he is resurrected in the stories told by the villagers. In the act of telling they discover their own complex history filled with shame, blood and rape. It is not as much the strange man Sancher that they fear, but the past that they never confronted. And surrounding the village there is the mangrove swamp – a dangerous place that acquires a proper voice in the narrative, reflecting the colonial heritage of the Caribbean.

Condé is the most translated Caribbean author in Sweden, with seven novels in Swedish. *Traversée de la mangrove* was translated by Helena Böhme and published by Leopard in 2007 as *Färden genom mangroven*. Studying the covers of the source and target texts of the novel there is a common denominator: the form of a mangrove plant, whether in an actual picture or in a stylized abstract form. The source cover is presented to the reader by the distinct design of the Folio publishing house with the white top where the name of the author is written in the left corner – the most important space according to Western visual grammar (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021) – where also the title of the novel in a slightly bigger font is printed. The rest of the cover consists of a photograph of a Black woman in bright colourful clothing who is crossing a water by help of an old tree reaching over to the other side. The woman is carrying a red saucepan on her head and is using two large sticks to keep her balance. In the foreground there

is a plant with green leaves. The whole picture is reflected in the water, where you also catch a glimpse of the pale blue sky. The setting in the picture is clearly exotic and the photograph gives the cover a touch of authenticity. But this feeling of authenticity is revoked by the mirror effect, suggesting that everything is not as clear as it seems to be.

The Swedish hardcover from 2007 includes an abstraction of a mangrove tree and plays with the colours brown, black and baby blue. The title in baby blue heads the cover. The name of the publishing house Leopard is printed in small characters under the title and the name of the author Maryse Condé in white and on the cover is placed at the bottom of the cover in a larger font than the title – a kind of mirror effect from the front distribution on the source cover. The design of the abstraction plays with Western conceptions of naïve African art and conveys a modest exoticization of the cover focusing mainly on the name of the author. The Swedish paperback edition takes the exoticization a step further and depicts the mangrove in dark brown, blue and pink surrealistically scary on the cover. At the very bottom there is a quote from the newspaper *Dagens Nyheter* stating: 'Detta är en författare i Nobelprisklass' (This is an author of Nobel Prize quality), lifting the prestige of the author to the highest possible position.

In the French original, there is a quite lengthy presentation of Condé, presenting her as a prominent figure on the French literary scene:

Maryse Condé (de son vrai nom Maryse Philcox) est née le 11 février 1937 à Pointe-à-Pitre (Guadeloupe) d'une famille aisée de huit enfants. Elle a fait ses études secondaires en Guadeloupe puis au Lycée Fénelon à Paris, et ses études de lettres à la Sorbonne. Elle se marie à un Guinéen et en 1960 part pour l'Afrique où elle enseigne pendant douze ans (en Guinée, au Ghana et au Sénégal). De retour en France en 1972, elle prépare une thèse de doctorat en littérature comparée à Paris-III sous la direction du professeur René Etiemble. Dès 1975 elle enseigne à l'université en France et est invitée sur de nombreux campus américains. Si à Paris elle obtient en 1987 le Grand Prix Littéraire de la Femme pour *Moi, Tituba sorcière ...*, en 1993, elle est la première femme à obtenir aux Etats-Unis le prix Puterbaugh pur l'ensemble de son oeuvre. *Les derniers rois mages* est son huitième ouvrage de fiction. Remariée à un anglais, Maryse Condé vit aux Etats-Unis où elle enseigne la littérature antillaise.

(Maryse Condé (today Philcox) was born on February 11, 1937 at Pointe-à-Pitre (Guadeloupe) in a wealthy family with eight children. She completed her high school studies in Guadeloupe and then at the Lycée Fénelon in Paris, continuing with literature studies at the Sorbonne. She married a Guinean man in 1960 and left to live in Africa for 12 years (in Guiane, Ghana and Senegal). Returning to

France in 1972, she worked on a thesis in comparative literature at Paris III with professor René Etiemble as her supervisor. Starting in 1975, she gave classes at a French university and was repeatedly invited to several American universities. Back in Paris she was awarded the Grand Prix Littéraire de la Femme for the novel *Moi, Tituba sorcière ...*, and in 1993 she was the first female writer ever to receive the Puterbaugh Prize for her entire œuvre. Her eighth novel is *Les dernier rois mages*. Today, remarried to an Englishman, Maryse Condé lives in the United States where she teaches Caribbean literature.)

Condé is a professor of literature and an awarded fiction author from a French region in the Caribbean, but she has studied in France and at the Sorbonne. She is cosmopolitan, with experience of both Africa and the United States, who has won several prestigious literary prizes. The mere fact of being published at Folio by the Gallimard publishing house is in itself a sure sign of literary consecration.

In the Swedish target text the author is presented to the Swedish audience on the inside of the back of the dust jacket. There is a black-and-white photograph of Maryse Condé and a short peritext:

Maryse Condé, född 1937 på Guadeloupe, anses vara en av den karibiska litteraturens främsta författare. Hon har skrivit ett tjugotal romaner, är flerfaldigt prisbelönad och har undervisat vid bland annat Harvard och Columbia University i New York.

(Maryse Condé, born in 1937 in Guadeloupe is considered one of the most prominent Caribbean writers. She has written some twenty novels and has received several literary awards. She has given classes in literature, for instance at Harvard and Columbia Universities in New York.)

This formal presentation evaluates Condé as one of the most important writers in the Caribbean. In this text Condé's importance for French literature has no relevance and is not even mentioned. Her literary prizes are in focus as well as her connections with prestigious American universities. The American experience of Condé seems more important than her French literary consecration, possibly because of the importance of Anglo-American culture in Sweden.

The Swedish publication includes a short peritextual note giving the reader an insight into Helena Böhme's challenges in translating Condé's novel:

De kreolska orden i kursiv stil finns förklarade i ordlista på sidan 252. Citatet på sidan 174–175 är hämtat ur Daggens härskare av Jacques Roumain i översättning av Jan Larsson, Ord & Visor förlag 2004. Bibelcitaten är hämtade ur 1917 års översättning: Svenska kyrkans diakonistyrelsens bokförlag 1972.

(The Creol words in italics are explained in a glossary on page 252. The quotations on page 174–175 are fetched from Daggens härskare [The dynast of the dew] by Jacques Roumain in translation by Jan Larsson, Ord & Visor Publishing house 2004. The quotations from the Bible all stem from the 1917 translation by the Swedish church diaconical board publishing house, 1972.)

The first sentence states that the Creole words in italics are explained in a glossary at the end of the novel, thereby informing the reader about the function of the italics in the novel: to signal something deviant in the source text, i.e. the French Creole variety. This strategy seems to follow in Swedish what Lennon (2010: 10) identifies as the most important convention for managing other languages than English in bilingual novels in the American book market. They are retained and put into italics. In Sweden it seems that the same convention applies. The translator Helena Böhme has then chosen another way to deal with the novel's bilingual elements than the author or editor of the source text, in which there are added footnotes with French standard translations. At the end of the Swedish book there is hence an 'Alfabetisk ordlista över kreolska ord och uttryck' (an alphabetical glossary of Creole words and expressions), where thirty-four Creole expressions are translated and explained in Swedish. This is a distinct strategy of retention that reminds the reader that the text is a translation, in fact a translation of a translation, a meta-translation. The translator trusts in the reader's ability to interpret culturally specific references and understand foreign words in context.

The Swedish glossary covers about one-third of the Creole variety used in the source text. Another third of the local Creole vocabulary was translated into standard Swedish, a strategy that reduces the source text's vernacular from the culturally specific to a more general level. The remaining third of the Creole variety are kept in the target text, followed by a translation or explanation in standard Swedish. These cases often consist of whole proverbs or strophes from a song incorporated in the narrative as in the example that follows.

Quand TI-Tor s'était installé, il avait eu beaucoup de gens pour s'offusquer et chanter méchamment:

Kouli malaba

Isi dan

Pa peyiwl

Coolie Malabar (injurieux.) Ce pays n'est pas le vôtre. (20)

(OBS: When Ti-Tor had settled, there were here many people, who were offended and maliciously sang:

Kouli malaba

Isi dan

Pa peyiwl

Coolie Malabar (insulting) This is not your country.)

När Ti-Tor bosatte sig här var det många som hade tagit anstöt och elakt sjungit:

Kouli malaba. Kuli Malabar

Isi dan Det här landet

Pa peyiw är inte ditt. (17)

(OBS:When Ti-Tor settled here many people were offended and maliciously sang:

Kouli malaba. Kuli Malabar

Isi dan This country

Pa peyiw is not yours.)

In this example the translator keeps the Creole words in the target text and opts for the standard variety of French in the footnote from the source text and translates it adequately into Swedish, but then she also keeps the swear word in Creole, probably wanting to give the target text an exotic flavour even in the explained part, making the cultural Other manifest in the target text.

The most salient transformation in the target text is retention. In the source text the setting of the novel corresponds to the literary language – a mixture of standard French and the local Creole variety. In the target text the setting is merely evoked by the retention of Creole words and phrases vernacularizing the text, a translation strategy that challenges the expectancy norms of the Swedish readership.

Migration is also the central theme in Junot Díaz' *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*. The novel tells the story of an overweight New Jersey adolescent with Dominican roots who dreams of becoming the Dominican Tolkien and who longs for love. But the *fukú* – the ancient curse that has haunted his family for generations, dooming them to prison, torture and tragic accidents – is constantly in his way. We follow the nerdy hero Oscar, his runaway sister Lola and their ferocious mother Belicia from Santo Domingo to New Jersey and back again. The story is told in a mixture of street-smart English mixed with Spanish Dominican, giving authenticity to the struggling characters. The setting and the code-switching language of the novel thus correspond in the source text. Leah

Hager Cohen characterizes Díaz' literary technique and style in *The New York Times Sunday Book Review* as follows:

Junot Díaz writes in an idiom so electrifying and distinct it's practically an act of aggression, at once alarming and enthralling, even erotic in its assertion of sudden intimacy [...]. Breaking easily and often out of first-person narration to address his readers directly, Díaz flatters us with his confidence. Yet his prose also throws up walls, equally abruptly and equally seductively. Refusing to condescend or even pause for edification, the narrative moves along at speed, exciting us with its demands. This, then, is the Díaz rhythm: a syncopated stagger-step between opacity and transparency, exclusion and inclusion, defiance and desire.

(Hager Cohen 2012)

Doris Sommer underlines that '[c]ode switching prefers the surprise element of an estranged expression to the predictability of one legitimate language: it values artistry over stable identity. And it invites an acknowledgement of aesthetic agency over a politics of cultural recognition' (Sommer 2004: 37).

Díaz' novel was first published in the USA in 2007 by Penguin, and in the UK in 2008 by Faber & Faber. It was translated into Swedish by Niclas Hval and published in 2009 by Bonniers as *Oscar Waos korta förunderliga liv*. Before the narrative starts, the source text paperback, which is the text examined here, has a presentation of the author followed by four appraising quotes from *The New York Times* and *The Times Literary Supplement*. The presentation is focused on authority arguments informing about the author's university degrees, literary prizes and current position teaching creative writing at MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology), all very prestigious tokens of a highly consecrated author within the American literary culture. The presentation reads as follows:

Junot Díaz was born in Santa Domingo, Dominican Republic. He is a graduate of Rutgers University and received his master of fine arts degree from Cornell University. His collection of short stories, *Drown*, was described as a 'dazzlingly talented first book' by Hermione Lee in the Independent on Sunday. He teaches creative writing at MIT. *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* won both the Pulitzer and the American National Book Critics Circle Award for Fiction.

Then follows a quote from the *Fantastic Four* from 1966 and an excerpt from a poem by Derek Walcott. In the Swedish paperback the author is presented on the back cover:

Junot Díaz, född 1968 i Dominikanska republiken, har rönt stora framgångar i sitt hemland USA. Han har skrivit för the New Yorker, undervisar i kreativt

skrivande och har publicerat en novellsamling. Oscar Waos korta förunderliga liv är hans första roman. Den har tilldelats Pulitzerpriset och hyllats av en enig kritikerkår.

(Junot Díaz, born in 1968 in the Dominican Republic, is very successful in his homeland USA. He has written for *The New Yorker* and teaches creative writing and has published a collection of short stories. *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* is his first novel. It has been awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction and has been unanimously praised by critics.)

This presentation is more general and distant than the American one, but just like the source text presentation it is based on authority arguments. One peculiar thing is that the target text stresses that Díaz has written in *The New Yorker* before mentioning his works. To write for that prestigious literary magazine is a sure sign of consecration – a token that he shares with Jamaica Kincaid. In the Swedish book, the reader finds translations of the *Fantastic Four* quote and the Walcott poem. An addition above the colophons is the information on who translated the poem and the novel's quotes from J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* into Swedish, which is a distinct reminder of the fact that the following text is a translation.

An interesting fact having to do with the occurring code-switching between the American slang and the Dominican Spanish is that the translator has opted for a very source-oriented translation strategy translating titles of chapters and subsections that are in English in the source text but retaining its Spanish titles, surprising the Swedish reader and challenging the expectancy norms for translated fiction in Sweden. For instance, the fifth subsection in the first chapter 'Oscar Comes Close' is translated as 'Oscar är nära', followed by the sixth subsection 'Amor de Pendejo' left untranslated as 'Amor de Pendejo' and the seventh 'Oscar in Love' translated literally as 'Oscar är kär'. This strategy distinctly underlines the translated status of the Swedish target text.

The translator uses similar retention strategies throughout the novel. He consequently leaves the Dominican vernacular untouched also on the syntactic and lexical levels. The Swedish reader is thus estranged by the fact that the setting and the code-switching of the novel do not correspond in the target text. The first term to come to mind when trying to describe the language mixture in the novel is Spanglish, since the novel is written in English but with a great many inserted Spanish/Dominican words, phrases and whole sentences. Spanglish is often used as a term implying an insecurity in one

language or the other, but Díaz and his narrator Yunior are fluent in both languages, which is why this term cannot be used to describe the special ‘Díaz dialect’ in the novel. Tactical bilingualism on the other hand, as proposed by Laura Fennell (2015: 19), captures this specific literary idiom better. It not only represents the ability to speak and write in two languages, but also the ability to seamlessly integrate one language into another simultaneously. Consequently, Díaz never identifies Spanish insertions with footnotes or italics as Condé does with the Creole variety in the French novel studied. The result is a seamless language blending. Italics are only used in the English variety to convey emphasis.

The sociolinguist Lourdes Torres identifies an ascending order of accessibility for the monolingual English speakers in bilingual texts. Her categories cover three different strategies used by the bilingual narrator: 1) easily accessed or cushioned Spanish; 2) gratifying the bilingual reader; and 3) radical bilingualism (Torres 2007: 77). The first category includes words or phrases that most monolinguals in the United States know and feel comfortable with, for example ‘abuelo’, ‘ojo’ and ‘buenos dias’. It is used in a novel as a trick to lure monolingual readers with exoticism. This category might also work for monolingual Swedish readers and can be considered as an expected part of the retention translation strategy. The second category is more difficult for monolingual English-speaking readers and more enjoyable for bilinguals. In the translation even more so, considering that the Swedish-Spanish bilingual population is much smaller in Sweden than the English-Spanish population is in the United States. This strategy uses Spanish words that are less known to English speakers, for instance ‘maricón’, ‘pendejo’ and ‘carajito’. They are translatable but do not possess the exact same emotional charge in English or Swedish. In the Swedish translation they are even less accessible to the monolingual but tolerant reader. This is an example of Torres’ second category of literary bilingualism:

[...] what every single Dominican, from the richest Jabao in Mao to the poorest güey in El Buey, from the oldest anciano sanmarcorisano to the littlest carajito in San Francisco [...] (3)

([...] det som varena dominikan visste, från den rikaste jabao i Mao till den fattigaste güey i El Buey från den äldste anciano sanmarcorisano till den minsta carajito i San Francisco [...])

The vocabulary used in the Swedish translation is not transparent for the Swedish reader. The phrases ‘jabao i Mao’ and ‘güey i El Buey’ can perhaps be

approximately understood from the sound effects, but ‘anciano sanmarcorisano’ and ‘carajito’ remain unclear. In the following quote, Niclas Wahl has also retained all of Díaz’ Spanish words:

Listen, palomo: You have to grab a muchacha, y metérselo. That will take care of everything. Start with a fea. Coje that fea y metérselo. Tío Rudolfo had four kids with three different women so the nigger was without doubt the family’s resident metéselo expert. (24)

(Hör på här, palomo: du måste få tag i en muchacha, y metérselo. Då fixar sig allting. Börja med en fea. Coje den där fean y metérselo! Tío Rudolfo hade fyra barn med tre olika kvinnor och var helt klart familjens metéseloexpert.) (25)

With the word ‘metéseloexpert’ Hval has created a neologism by mixing Swedish and Dominican vernacular morphemes, a clear example of retention. In these examples the co-text helps the Swedish monolingual reader, but the effect of exclusion is often distinct. The last quote also includes a rare exception to Hval’s retention strategy when Díaz’ controversial word ‘nigger’ is omitted. In this particular case, the narrator’s use of vernacular language is reduced by the translator.

Torres’ third category, radical bilingualism, speaks entirely to bilinguals. It gives the monolingual the feeling of the immigrant’s situation in the new country meeting a new language. It may even be hard to understand for bilinguals, if they do not have access to the specific slang variety of Spanish such as the Dominican slang word ‘parigüiayo’. When these vernacular words are retained in the Swedish translation, the exclusion of the monolingual reader is complete, fully breaking the expectancy norms of Swedish translation:

Tú ta llorando por una muchacha? She hauled Oscar to his feet by his ear. Mami, stop it, his sister cried, stop it! She threw him to the floor. Dale un galletazo, she panted, then see if the little puta respects you. (14)

(Tú ta llorando por una muchacha? Hon tog tag i Oscars öra och drog upp honom på fötter. Mami, sluta! Skrek hans syster. Sluta! Hon kastade honom till golvet. Dale un galletazo, flämtade hon. Sedan får vi se om den lilla putan visar dig någon respekt.) (25)

In this example a full sentence in Dominican is starting the scene. It is Oscar’s mother giving him a lesson in life. The whole sentence is retained in the target text, even the oral variety of incorrect verb declination in ‘Tú ta’ instead of ‘Tú

estás'. The complete sentence 'Dale un galletazo' is also retained and the word 'puta' has been transformed into a Swedish word by adding the Swedish definite article -n, 'putan'.

In some cases, Hval has retained English expressions to create new compound words of English and Swedish, using the fact that English is the second language of most Swedes. Here, the bilingual source text turns into a multilingual target text, creating an additional level of the 'Díaz dialect' in the Swedish target text.

Footnotes are abundant in the source text. They are mostly written in English and are adequately translated into Swedish. They have three main functions in the narrative. Firstly, they serve as reminders of important historical persons and events in the Dominican Republic mostly connected to the former dictator Rafael Trujillo. Secondly, they explain some of the references to science fiction and fantasy. And thirdly, they are used by the omnipotent storyteller (who turns out to be Oscar's former brother-in-law, Yunior) to apostrophe the reader with literary meta-comments on how to start a chapter or to explain the macho culture of the average Dominican male.

In sum, the most salient transformation in Jamaica Kincaid's *Lucy*, Maryse Condé's *Traversée de la mangrove* and Junot Díaz' *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* is the different translators' ascending degree of source-orientation. These different degrees correspond to Gideon Toury's concept of adequate translation (1995), Lawrence Venuti's concept of foreignizing translation (1995) and Philip Lewis' of abusive fidelity (2004). In *Lucy*, retention is noticeable as a result of the adequate translation strategy adopted by the translator. As Itamar Even-Zohar reminds us, an adequate translation realizes in the target language the textual relationships of a source text with no breach of its own basic linguistic system (1975: 43). If adequacy is adopted, the translation will be dominated by attempts to have the ensuing text reflect the source text along with the norms embodied in it (Toury 2012: 79). The translator of *Lucy* has worked very much according to an adequate translation strategy on the textual level, thereby meeting the demands of the Swedish reading public as expressed in the expectancy norms for translations of high prestige literature (cf. Chesterman 1997: 64). This orientation is perspicuous in *Lucy* where the translator constructs a monolingual translation from a monolingual source text.

In *Traversé de la mangrove*, retention is made more obvious by the foreignizing translation strategy chosen by the translator when working with words and phrases in the source text in the local vernacular French Creol. The foreign in foreignizing translation is not a transparent representation of an essence that resides in the foreign text, but a strategic construction whose value is contingent on the current target language situation (Venuti 1995: 20). The Swedish translator of *Traversée de la mangrove* has adopted the foreignizing strategy in her work with conveying the French Creole variety of the source text in Swedish. She standardizes one-third of the occurring Creole variety, keeps one-third with an explanation and leaves the last third unexplained. These are three ways of gradually challenging the expectancy norms of the Swedish reading public – which is a tolerant readership when it comes to foreign cultural phenomena. A bilingual code-switching source text is thus rendered as a bilingual code-switching target text. However, the reader is rarely excluded from understanding.

Finally, in *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* retention is constructed by the risk-taking abusive fidelity translation strategy of the translator (Lewis 2004: 262–4). This strategy involves supplementing the source text and giving it renewed energy. It is a strong forceful translation that values experimentation, tampers with usage and seeks to match the polyvalencies or plurivocities or expressive stresses of the original by producing its own (Lewis 2004: 262). The risk-taking in the translation follows and sometimes exaggerates that of the source text, seamless mixing languages and code-switching, sometimes excluding the Swedish reader from the radical bilingualism in the source text, but also adding a new layer when creating neologisms of mixed Dominican–Swedish and English–Swedish morphemes as a way of conveying and amplifying the ‘Díaz dialect’ in Swedish. A bilingual code-mixing source text then becomes a multilingual code-mixing translation. The abusive fidelity risks testing the tolerance of the Swedish readers by breaking and abusing the translation expectancy norm for high-prestige literary translation and by challenging two of the most profound ethical rules of translation: trust and understanding (cf. Chesterman 1997).

Concluding remarks

The case studies above have dealt with twenty translations: two translations from Swedish into French (Katarina Mazetti’s *Grabben i graven bredvid* and Therese Bohman’s *Den drunknade*); eight translations from Swedish into

English (Jan Fridegård's *Jag Lars Hård*, *Tack för himlastegen* and *Barmhärtighet*, Moa Martinson's *Kvinnor och äppelträd* and *Mor gifter sig*, Ivar Lo-Johansson's *Godnatt, jord* and *Bara en mor* and Stieg Larsson's *Män som hatar kvinnor*); three from Italian into Swedish (Erri de Luca's *Montedidio*, Valeria Parrella's *Lo spazio bianco* and Elena Ferrante's *Lamica geniale*); four from English into Swedish (NoViolet Bulawayo's *We Need New Names*, Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *The River Between*, Jamaica Kincaid's *Lucy* and Junot Díaz' *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*); two from Portuguese into Swedish (António Lobo Antunes' *A ordem natural das coisas* and Mia Couto's *O outro pé da Sereia*); and one from French into Swedish (Maryse Condé's *Traversée de la mangrove*). According to the world system theory of translation patterns, these twenty editions include four translations from the hyper-central language into a semi-peripheral language; eight from a semi-peripheral language into a hyper-central one; one from a central language into a semi-peripheral language; two from a semi-peripheral language into a central one; three from one semi-peripheral into another semi-peripheral language; and two from a peripheral language into a semi-peripheral one. Most kinds of literary traffic to and from semi-peripheral literatures are thus represented in these cases.

In these twenty translations, translators and publishers have dealt with source culture vernaculars in different ways. In six of the translated texts, we find instances of reduction. Source culture specificities in novels by Maryse Condé, Junot Díaz, Katarina Mazetti, Therese Bohman and Mia Couto have been somewhat neutralized in the translation process, in a variety of ways. Proper names of persons, places and brands have been omitted or neutralized, and so have culturally specific words for fauna, flora, artefacts, food and behaviour. The source texts' cultural specificities are also reduced by translators' tendency to remove or neutralize colloquialisms and idiomatic expressions. Another kind of reduction occurs when the inclusion of bilingual elements is omitted and the use of non-standard syntax is standardized in the target text. Furthermore, translators and editors reduce vernacular rootedness by omitting italics, footnotes and source culture references on book covers, as well as through cosmopolitanizing acclaim in dust jacket citations.

Five of the translations show an extensive use of replacement. In Katarina Mazetti's, Elena Ferrante's, Valeria Parrella's, NoViolet Bulawayo's and Ngugi wa Thiong'o's novels, source culture specificities have been replaced by target culture particularities. In these target texts the vernaculars have been dislocated, a process that can be divided into two different strategies: source

culture specificities are replaced by 1) existing or 2) made up target culture counterparts. In our material, the first strategy is the most common one. Source culture-specific proper names, food, musical instruments, building materials, school systems, administrative systems, accommodation forms, expressions, colloquialisms, sociolect and the way persons address each other are often replaced by real target culture versions.

The most common strategy is retention. Eleven of the novels include significant instances of retaining source culture references and phenomena, thereby reinforcing the distance between target and source culture. The source culture vernaculars in the novels by Jamaica Kincaid, Maryse Condé, Junot Díaz, Jan Fridegård, Moa Martinson, Ivar Lo-Johansson, Therese Bohman, Elena Ferrante, Erri De Luca, NoViolet Bulawayo, António Lobo Antunes, Mia Couto and Ngugi wa Thiong'o have all been made more salient and explicit. Instances of retention are to be found on every level of these target texts. In the narratives as such, the source culture vernacular is acknowledged when names of persons, places, buildings, artefacts, holidays and food are kept, and when source culture references are maintained and unexplained. Another distinct acknowledgement of the source culture vernacular is the inclusion of source language words in the target text. Retention also occurs when the translator has invented proper names and used literal translations of source language expressions, and when non-standard source text grammar, words and expressions – including bilingual elements – are maintained by the translator. A special case of this kind of retention is the translators' invention of bilingual neologisms – composed of either target and source languages or target language and non-standard languages in the source text. Peritextual retention of the source culture vernacular include localized front covers, the translator's visibility on the cover, added back cover presentations of the author, introductory translator notes, added footnotes and endnotes, added glossaries of non-standard words and expressions, stress on the text's or the author's foreignness and comparisons with other source culture phenomena. It seems, then, that cultural exchange involving the semi-periphery permits an openness towards what is foreign and unfamiliar. In the case of the Swedish literary culture, Sweden's growing importance in the world republic of letters has not erased the memory of what it means and feels like to be peripheral in relation to a powerful other. Even though Sweden, as will be shown in the following, is becoming a more closed literary culture – in the sense that the number of translations into Swedish is decreasing in relation to the number of

Swedish originals – the translations themselves still show important signs of openness towards the world.

One of the translations studied, Reg Keeland's English version of Stieg Larsson's thriller *Män som hatar kvinnor*, *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*, does not include any significant transformation of the story's rootedness in source culture specificities. The widely distributed English translation is definitely transformed, as Larsson's prose is significantly slimmed, almost paragraph by paragraph, but these continuous shortenings do not reduce domestic Swedish references. *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* is thus just as rooted in the Swedish vernacular setting as *Män som hatar kvinnor*.

One conclusion to be drawn from these case studies is that one kind of transformation does not rule out the use of other strategies. In many of the translations, translators and publishers have made significant use of more than one of these three transformations. In some cases, a kind of balance is achieved in which the source culture vernacular is diminished in some ways and amplified in others. Another observation is that one and the same strategy can have opposite effects on the visibility of the source culture vernacular. Translator Marianne Eyre's ability to maintain António Lobo Antunes' experimental prose in her Swedish rendition of the novel, for example, simultaneously prompts both vernacularizing and cosmopolitanizing effects. A third conclusion is that genre and market position seem to be important factors prompting different strategies to deal with source culture vernaculars. Highbrow status and small-scale distribution tend to prompt retention and thus enhance cultural particularities and stress cultural differences, whereas lowbrow status and large-scale distribution tend to prompt reduction and replacement and thus blur distinctions and even out cultural differences.

Literary translators' challenging task to handle source texts' cultural specificities is not a binary choice between two mutually exclusive alternatives. There are at least three distinct strategies available, and an extensive variety of combinations between them. If we go beyond Friedrich Schleiermacher's tenacious two-way model, we will also have a clearer view of the complex set of objectives behind specific translational choices. Reducing source culture particularities and thereby evening out the cultural difference between reader and text, is usually done to give access to the text, to make it understandable, but the strategy of reduction also avoids forcing the reader to focus on insignificant elements of the narrative. When Lena Grumbarch and Catherine Marcus neutralize the Swedish newspaper *Dagens Nyheter* to 'le journal' and the Swedish

bank 'Föreningsbanken' to 'le banque' in Katarina Mazetti's *Grabben i graven bredvid*, for example, they give the French-speaking reader smooth access to the Swedish story but they also avoid creating an unnecessary interpretive uncertainty. A different kind of reduction occurs when a narrative is lifted from a culturally specific position to a cosmopolitan sphere through stylistic retention. This is what happens in the Swedish translation of António Lobo Antunes' *A ordem natural das coisas* when the translator maintains Antunes' stylistic idiosyncrasies in her Swedish prose, thus neutralizing the novel's vernacular rootedness and positioning it in the cosmopolitan canon of modernism.

Plainly giving access is not the only desirable effect when source culture particularities are replaced with target culture phenomena. When the use of Received Pronunciation in NoViolet Bulawayo's *We Need New Names* is replaced with a posh Stockholm dialect, for example, the translator wants to keep the impression of social hierarchy between the novel's characters. The replacement strategy thus helps to maintain a socially nuanced cultural setting, respecting the distinctions and diversity within the depicted source culture. And when the metalinguistic issues addressed in Elena Ferrante's *L'amica geniale* are replaced with totally dissimilar Swedish examples, the Swedish translator respects the untranslatability of specific Italian words and expressions. The target text does not attempt to convey what it cannot convey.

The strategy of retention leads to many different effects and is pursued for different reasons. Adding an extensive number of footnotes to Swedish proletarian novels has an educational objective, besides reminding the reader that what she or he is reading is a translation. This strategy gives the translators opportunities to teach the readers about a foreign culture, but the limited text in the footnote might give an inadequate impression of the source culture vernacular, at odds with literature's potential of conveying nuances and complexity. When a whole and very particular socioeconomic system is summed up in a couple of sentences, for example, culturally and historically remote conditions are generalized and simplified, giving the target text reader the impression that the cultural Other can be totally explained, known and understood. According to Venuti, footnotes are exemplary of foreignizing translation strategies, since they highlight cultural difference, and provide guidance in how to understand that difference. However, it has also been suggested that footnotes produce almost the opposite effect, by 'sweeping the floor' for the reader, eliminating all kinds of resistance, while at the same time dictating a specific kind of reading, namely a mimetic one (Kullberg 2011: 58). In our analysis, we have discussed both these perspectives.

A very different reason to retain cultural difference governs the Swedish translation of Junot Díaz' *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*. Instead of educating, the translator wants to expose the target reader to the same kind of lack of control and limited understanding that many source text readers have to deal with. When the translator retains the bilingual character of Díaz' prose, he is in fact creating a very different kind of bilingual – and to a certain extent even trilingual – target text. Whereas the American translators of Swedish proletarian realism tend to nationalize the novels' vernacular settings, Díaz' Swedish translator works against stereotypical ideas of national identity and portrays the foreign setting as culturally diverse. A similar effect is evident in the Swedish translation of Erri De Luca's *Montedidio*. When the regional Neapolitan culture and language are retained and made explicit while the national Italian frame is obscured, the translator erases national identities and puts forward the regional vernacular as the primary context in which we live.