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General conclusion

We set out to highlight and analyse a position that has been left unnoticed or under-studied by earlier research on world literature: the semi-periphery. Perhaps it is not the most extreme of positions, nor the most exciting. It cannot be summarized in striking phrases, revealing shocking oversights or prejudiced treatment. This, however, does not mean that it is less interesting, or less worthy of this kind of study. In fact, it has proved itself to be highly productive, since the concept moves beyond the binary centre-periphery model to uncover more decentralized, transversal and inter-peripheral literary communication.

We have also used the concepts of the cosmopolitan and the vernacular in order to engage with the intermingled forces of local specificity and global outreach inherent in world literature. This paradigm has proved an efficient tool in our attempts to understand cultural transfer and the different fields of translation. We have, however, used the concepts in a specific way. Cosmopolitanizing and vernacularizing have been seen as movements in opposite directions on a scale from the most limited circulation of cultural goods to the largest possible one. Crucially, cosmopolitanization and vernacularization can exist alongside one another (e.g. in a text) and can be differently configured on different levels. This use has yielded a more fruitful understanding of the often complex and nuanced world of literary translation. Our collective studies have shown the following.

In Chapter 2, 'Infrastructure of the Semi-peripheral Exchange', our main hypothesis was that the semi-periphery is an intermediate literary space where boundaries between the cosmopolitan and the vernacular are blurred and, more importantly, where ideas of the cosmopolitan and the vernacular are negotiated and transformed. In many cases, the analyses of the selection and framing of translated works confirmed this main hypothesis. The blending of the cosmopolitan and the vernacular concerned all kinds of publishers, from large-scale to small-scale houses. The semi-peripheral Swedish translation field

allows for both domesticating and foreignizing translation and framing, in a way hardly possible in central or hyper-central target cultures, where domestication is a prerequisite (Casanova 2015).

In Chapter 3, 'Translators of Nobel Prize Literature', our discussion of Nobel prize laureates and their translators emphatically showed that high-prestige literature in translation is a field for enthusiasts. Among the translators discussed, only a few are or have been writers and translators exclusively. Several of our examples showed the central role of literary translators in and around the Nobel Prize. When it comes to translated high-prestige literature in general, the act of translation is more often than not made explicit. The name of the translator might even be printed on the book cover. It is, however, of equal importance to stress literature's capacity to consecrate those who handle it – publishers, academies, translators, etc. Our analysis also stressed the fact that literary prestige is created, and that the autonomy of high-prestige literature is consequently being emphasized by the literary establishment.

In Chapter 4, 'Translation Strategies to and from the Literary Semi-periphery', we undertook an in-depth analysis of the translation strategies in twenty translated novels, in which translators and publishers dealt with source culture vernaculars in different ways. Eleven of the novels included significant instances of retaining source culture references and phenomena, thereby reinforcing the distance between target and source culture. We also found instances of replacement and reduction, although to a lesser extent. The strategy of retention, we found, leads to many different effects and is pursued for different reasons.

In Chapter 5, 'Positioning the Swedish Literary Semi-periphery', we used the findings from Chapters 2 to 4 in order to position and discuss the Swedish semi-periphery. Narrowing down the focus and examining solely the Swedish literary geography and fiction exclusively – both domestic and translated – during the last forty years, we could show that this literary space has become more and more closed, which probably entails a more central position in the Scandinavian literary geography. At the same time, the number of translations *from* Swedish steadily increased, supporting the claim that the stronger source languages are relatively less common as target languages. In line with studies on globalization's effect on the publishing industry, our material also demonstrated an overall trend of 'contemporization' in translations both into and from Swedish. A shifting gender balance towards a greater degree of women writers proved to be a trend in several of our translation flows. The changes varied significantly, however, and in some cases tipped the scales from quite extreme positions. Consequently,

Gisèle Sapiro's observation that, within canonical literature, the world has seen a global trend of 'feminization' – albeit changing the balance quite modestly – was not confirmed in our material, which presented a more varied pattern.

Taken together, Chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5 have shown the conditions of translated literature on the micro, meso and macro levels, specifically with a connection to the literary semi-periphery. Different agents and different practices have been in focus, some of them not often studied in the field of world literature. Although overarching trends have not always been identified, the work undertaken in this volume has given deep insights into the multifaceted world of translated literature.

So, how do literary texts circulate between languages and literary cultures? Well, that all depends. Our studies do not show a general tendency, but rather a range of diverse minor patterns. From the point of view of cosmopolitanizing and vernacularizing processes, literary circulation to and from the Swedish semi-periphery has proved to be shaped by a set of conditions due to particular relations between specific literary cultures and markets, publishing agendas, authorial positions, temporal gaps between source and target texts, translator profiles, genre, stylistic qualities and ambitions, and narrative techniques. These disparate conditions definitely affect each other, but not in a regular, predetermined way.

The semi-peripheral literary space does not only work in relation to three other kinds of space – minor peripheral spaces, major central spaces and other semi-peripheral spaces – but also according to disparate strands of circulation mechanisms that function beyond these hierarchies: infrastructures that moves freely across spaces of different sizes and statuses. Indeed, the hierarchical world system of literary markets and literary cultures are often overshadowed by differences in technique, style, genre, positions, gaps, profiles and specific relations. The dynamics between dominance and subordination is far from the only mechanism at play in international literary circulation, at least from a median undominant and undominated perspective.

But how special is Sweden as a case of the possible? Does its position as a major Scandinavian literary culture lead to a particular kind of central semi-periphery? And does that fact that the Swedish literary culture each year – through the Nobel Prize – significantly affects the formation of the world literary canon make it unlike other semi-peripheral positions? No, we don't think so. Every semi-peripheral culture has its own idiosyncrasies that cannot be directly compared to any others. But the set of conditions governing the literary traffic to and from these different semi-peripheral positions are probably quite similar, in

their complexity and diversity. That is, at least, our suggestion. It remains to be validated by further studies.

Is, then, semi-peripheral translation a particular kind of translation? Our answer is yes and no. On the one hand, translation to and from the semi-periphery shows a larger diversity than translation to and from the centre and to and from the periphery. On the other hand, we believe that the multifaceted qualities evident in the semi-peripheral translational processes studied in this book make a general diversity at work on all levels and between all kinds of positions extra apparent. The complexity is everywhere, but it's at its thickest in the in-between.