

COMMENT & DEBATE

Nordic Research Network 2010: PhD Symposium of Scandinavian Studies in the UK

On 9-10 September 2010 the Department of Scandinavian Studies at University College London hosted a PhD conference open to all students carrying out research in Scandinavian Studies and based at UK institutions. With its programme of presentations, discussions, socialising activities and workshops, the symposium wanted to raise the awareness of the extent and significance of Scandinavian Studies within the UK research environment. At the Nordic Research Network 2010: PhD Symposium of Scandinavian Studies in the UK – which was made possible thanks to generous funding from the AHRC through the Student-led Initiatives Scheme – participating students were invited to give a 20-minute presentation on their current PhD research. Sessions were not organised on a disciplinary basis. To emphasise the interdisciplinary nature of this event, project presentations were grouped together according to other criteria (topic, theme, methodology, etc.). The two most immediate outcomes of the symposium were a blog-style website and the articles published below. We hope that the website – [www. http://nordicresearchnetwork.blogspot.com](http://nordicresearchnetwork.blogspot.com) – will continue the work started during the symposium and become a virtual platform for PhD research in Scandinavian Studies in the UK that can be visible, easily traceable and reachable by British and foreign academic and non-academic institutions. The short contributions appearing in this issue of Scandinavica, on the other hand, give a taste of the topics discussed in the course of the symposium. They represent a snapshot of the state of these students' PhD projects at the time of the symposium. Depending on how far each student had come in his/her research, these articles present either the objectives and preliminary findings or the end results of each research project. They show how research is a constant process of discovery, analysis and development

that only begins with the end of a PhD programme. They also demonstrate that the Scandinavian Studies postgraduate community in the UK is alive and dynamic. The research topics presented at the symposium are representative of a wide range of research areas, including translation and adaptation, publishing, literature, history, language and language politics, society, law and religion. At the same time, these researches also appear to share a tendency towards interdisciplinary, intertextuality and cross-cultural interaction. In other words, they all remind us that Scandinavian Studies – an already broad subject area that includes the study of any aspect of the languages, cultures and/or histories of the Nordic countries – should be seen as a dynamic field, open to be redefined and to establish new contacts with other fields and cultures.

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Adapting, Translating and Publishing

Backwards and Forwards:

The Roundabout Ways of Icelandic Literary Transmission

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This paper is based on the findings of my PhD thesis (UCL, 2009), a comparative study of the transmission of two German ‘Volksbücher’ into Danish and Icelandic. The ‘Volksbücher’ (Danish ‘Folkebøger’) were prose narratives, printed on relatively cheap paper to great popularity in the period from c. 1550–1870 — in short, the ‘Bestsellers’ of the time, playing an important role in paving the way for the modern novel (Mortensen & Schack 2007:132). Most ‘Volksbücher’ were imported and reworked versions of medieval epic poetry, mostly Italian, Spanish or French (Classen 1995:1). During the transmission time, Iceland was a part of the Danish kingdom. Iceland had had a rich literary tradition from the time of its settlement in the ninth century and until the end of the Middle Ages. This literary interest continued after the Reformation and with increased Danish influence, many ‘Folkebøger’ found their way to the country where they were translated, among them both *Helena* and *En Doctors Datter*. Due to special circumstances in Iceland — the Church controlling the printing press and almost only publishing religious texts — the Icelandic versions of the stories are solely preserved in handwritten manuscripts. This manuscript culture was a remnant from medieval times, when literature was much more unstable than after the advent of the printing press. Therefore, Icelandic scribes, who, it must be noted, were not only clergymen but also ‘normal farmers’ (see, e.g. Driscoll 1996:97), continued to do their work, setting their mark on what they copied, so one can say that the two stories were transmitted forwards in time, yet backwards in culture.

One of the stories I investigated is derived from the French ‘chanson de geste’ *La belle Héléne de Constantinople* (c. 1300, see for instance Roussel 1998). Its German title is *Die geduldige Helena* (The Patient Helena), while

in Danish it is usually referred to simply as Helena. In Icelandic the title varies a little more, for instance, as *Sagan af Elinu einhentu* (The Saga of Elín the One-Handed) and *Sagan af Helenu vænu og sonum hennar* (The Saga of Helena the Fair and Her Sons).

The title changes of the latter story, derived from the story of Giletta of Narbon in Giovanni Boccaccio's *Decameron* (c. 1350), however, are much greater, in all likelihood because the title character, Giletta, becomes anonymous somewhere in the transmission between German versions, one of which is titled *Von gezwungener Liebe* (About Forced Love). In Danish it was presented as a story of *En Doctors Datter* (A Doctor's Daughter). The earliest preserved text, in AM 578 d 4to, contains a direct translation of the Danish title, but later versions/translations all highlight the main character's husband, as *Bertrams saga greifa* (Saga of Count Bertram).

This title change can help shed a light on a particular problematic aspect of the transmission of the Giletta story, supported by some linguistic evidence in the extant texts; whether the four different prose versions preserved in Icelandic should be regarded as four different translations, as Hubert Seelow (1989:78–84) has suggested, or whether they could go back to the work of one, or possibly two, different translators, as I am more prone to believe.

Traditionally, Icelandic stories were attributed to named characters, so the choice of Bertram is not surprising. However, different solutions might have been possible, and it is interesting, if not unlikely, that three different translators made that same choice independent of one another; that is, if they were not already familiar with the *Bertrams saga* title before starting their work.

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BL Add 4857. 'Ævintýr af Greifa Bertram af Rosilien og einni bartskere dóttur af Bononie.' [A folio manuscript, compiled for Magnús Jónsson of Vigur, mostly in

1669–1670 by Þórður Jónsson (ff. 129–143 in January 1690 by Jón Björnsson)], ff. 134r–146r.

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The Many Tongues of Polyphemus: Translating Willy Kyrklund's *Polyfem förvandla*

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My research focuses on the Finland-Swedish writer Willy Kyrklund and in particular on my own proposed translation of his 1964 novel *Polyfem förvandlad* – Polyphemus metamorphosed. I am interested in looking at how this novel's hybrid nature poses problems for its translation at the same time as being a text, which is itself about the problem of communication. What I want to examine through my research are what sort of strategies that need to be developed in order for this novel to be translated.

Polyfem förvandlad a book which sits at the mid-point of the author's oeuvre contains a selection of fragments that at first look might appear unrelated in their variety of sources and style but which on closer inspection reveal a tightly knitted web of not only recurring leitmotifs and imagery but also ideas and themes that seem to investigate repeatedly the same issues; the possibility/ impossibility of communication and the limits of language, Man's hopeless and sometimes tragicomic struggle faced with these constraints, and the relationships he forges with himself, with his fellows and with his gods. Kyrklund's prose in *Polyfem förvandlad* is characterised by its experimental and intertextual nature, mixing references from mythological, literary, religious and cultural sources with high and low language, philosophical enquiries, and a playfulness and sharp irony.

The subject of this paper is to look at how *Polyfem förvandlad* invokes myth, something already referred to in its title: how through these references to myth it appears that the book is saying something about communication and the limits of language and finally how this could come to bear on its translation.

I hope to present some of the problems encountered in translating a very intertextual and experimental text such as Polyphemus metamorphosed as well as initiating a discussion on the difficulty in translating such literature.

The invocation of myth will be analysed on one hand from the perspective of Claude Lévi-Strauss' structural analysis of myth as something, which is essentially transferable and therefore translatable and on the other hand compared with Jacques Derrida's post-structuralist perspective that sees translation as undecidability.

I would like to argue that the way myth is invoked in *Polyfem förvandlad* situates it within a further discussion on translatability and a discussion on what sort of strategies that are needed for the translation of this kind of literature.

The complexity of the book means that its translation will remain as problematic and as fragmented as the novel itself, but also that it has the potential to enrich the text on its own unique terms.

**Pippi, Puffin and Publishing:
A Study of the Translation of Nordic Children's Literature in the
UK, with a Focus on Four British Publishing Houses, 1950-2010**

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Project background and scope

My research draws on the fields of children's literature, Translation Studies, bibliographical and archival studies, and publishing history. My primary research questions are: which Nordic children's fiction texts have been published in the UK since 1950 and to what extent do the British agent, publisher, author, translator and illustrator play a role in the process of Nordic text selection? Supplementary research questions are: what can paratextual features reveal about how publishing and marketing strategies contribute to the success of a translated text over time, and how does the range of UK translated texts compare to the diversity of children's literature published in the Nordic area?

My project focuses on children's literature written in Danish, Swedish, Norwegian, Finnish and Icelandic, excluding adaptations, myths and legends, H C Andersen, and picture books. These texts have the United Kingdom as their sole or joint place of location, and include translations into Welsh and Gaelic. A bibliographical approach has been used in gathering translation data from the *British National Bibliography*¹, with Frank² and Nelson³'s research forming a methodological framework, along with Polysystems Theory and André Lefevere's work on patronage from the field of Translation Studies.

Interim Research Findings

An initial analysis of translations listed in the British National Bibliography reveals 875 entries for Nordic children's literature texts, of which 606 are Swedish, 123 Danish, 112 Norwegian, 22 Finnish and 1 Icelandic.

The most issued author is Astrid Lindgren, followed by Alf Prøysen, Tove Jansson, Inger Sandberg, Ulf Löfgren and Gunilla Wolde. The most issued titles are Anne David's *I am David* and Astrid Lindgren's *Pippi Longstocking* and *Pippi goes aboard*, followed by Lindgren's *Pippi in the South Seas* and *The fox and the tomten*, Jansson's *Comet in Moominland* and Prøysen's *Little Old Mrs Pepperpot* and *Mrs Pepperpot's busy day*. The UK publisher with the largest output of Scandinavian children's literature titles was Methuen, followed by Penguin (including Puffin and Pelham Books), Hodder and Stoughton, Oxford University Press and Floris Books.

Future Research

Work is currently underway to locate editorial files for key texts and authors. These will hopefully reveal information about how texts were originally selected for translation and how decisions were made regarding their marketing and publication.

Given the patchy availability of such archive collections and the anticipated closure of very recent files due to commercial sensitivity, the existence of archival sources will dictate the future shape of the project by determining either a particular time frame, particular publishers, authors or titles. Once the core corpus for detailed work has been established and the archival analysis completed through a framework of case studies, contextual work

on paratextual features will commence, examining aspects such as design, illustrations, dust jacket blurb, presence/absence of publication, copyright and translation information etc. Research on the reception of the texts in the UK and their standing in the source countries is also anticipated, using book awards and reviews as a principal source. A further research output will be a detailed textual bibliography of the full corpus from 1950-2010.

Endnotes

¹ British Library. *1950- British National Bibliography*. London, British Library

² Frank, Helen T. (2007): *Cultural encounters in translated children's literature: images of Australia in French translation*. Manchester: St Jerome Publishing

³ Nelson, Karen A. (1975): 'The fidelity of the text and illustrations of selected Danish children's fiction translated and published in Great Britain and the United States, excluding the works of Hans Christian Andersen'. PhD thesis. University of Minnesota Graduate School

History, Literature and Cultural Interaction

Rome and the 'Barbarians':

Patterns of Interaction and Mutual Influence beyond the Northern Frontiers of the Empire (50 BC – AD 250)

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Classis mea per Oceanum ab óstio Rhéni
ad sólis orientis regionem usque
ad fines Cimbrorum navigavit,
quó neque terra neque mari quisquam
Romanus ante ide tempus adit [...]

My fleet sailed from the mouth of the Rhine
Eastward as far as the lands of the Cimbri
to which, up to that time, no Roman
had ever penetrated either by land or by sea [...]
AUGUSTUS, *Res Gestae Divi Augusti*, 26, 2, 4.
(Loeb Classical Library, 1924: 389)

During the NRN2010 Symposium I presented a poster in which I represented the basics about the PhD thesis I am developing at the University of Leicester under the provisional title *Rome and the 'Barbarians': patterns of interaction and mutual influence beyond the northern frontiers of the Empire (50 BC – AD 250)*. We tend to see the relationship between Rome and its neighbours as a unilateral process, probably biased by our own modern imperialist and colonialist experience, but the last few decades have provided the ground for a much more complex view of the interaction phenomenon. Why?

It is an established fact that Rome was active in areas far beyond her northern imperial limits. Roman material evidence has been found as far as

Scandinavia and existing textual sources (Pliny the Elder, *Naturalis Historia* IV, 39) attest contact with indigenous peoples in these northern latitudes, officially since the Augustan expedition of AD 5 (*Res Gestae* 26, 2, 4), although probably much earlier (c. 4th century BC).

The main aim of this research is to identify the nature, extent, motivation and patterns of interactions (especially martial ones) between Rome (as an imperial system) and the continental settlers beyond her northern imperial frontiers, during a period of three centuries (from Julius Caesar to the mid third century). The study will also look at aspects of group identity formation and ethnicity in the past and modern national traditions on archaeological interpretation of the North European 'Roman' past.

A geographical area of interest has been defined around the North Sea and at the moment two geographical areas will function as case studies: Southern Scandinavia and the mouth of the Rhine (The Netherlands), although other areas (North-western coast of Germany and Northern Britain) will necessarily be observed in the comparative perspective that will guide my efforts.

Within this broader comparative research on the Roman:Barbarian interactions beyond the imperial frontiers, Southern Scandinavia appears to be a perfect case-study. It is a closer and handy example of different kind of interactions: diplomatic, commercial, military and ideological.

The types of archaeological materials and the chronological consistency of their deposition show not only sporadic contact, but a long term process of interactions between the Romans and the peoples beyond the northern imperial frontiers. The extensive tradition of archaeological research and the archaeological richness of southern Scandinavian soil allow a proto-historical reconstruction of these interactions which shaped in many different ways the first steps of state formation in the Nordic area. The so-called 'Roman imports' (weapon deposits, coins hoards and 'prestige' grave-goods) are present all over the area and in many different deposition contexts, denoting a wide range of uses and a constant process of exchange and interaction between Rome and Northern Barbaricum. The aim of this part of the research is to evaluate their presence along the period 50 BC - AD 250 and their implication for the internal socio-political evolution of the region, from

a tribal system with its roots in the Bronze Age to the formation of states in the Nordic area around AD 1000. In Hedeager's words, the four centuries of close interaction with the Roman Empire functioned as a catalyst of a process that was already active (1987: 138). This period saw the birth of a chiefly elite that was ideologically united and sustained by the accumulation of prestige goods, now coming from the Roman world ('Roman imports', which need neither be imports in a commercial sense nor Roman in terms of its origin). Once the might of Rome declined, these outlying areas closely related to the Roman World also experienced subsequent socio-political and cultural changes. They were no longer 'in the shadow of the Roman Empire' but under their own guiding light. Thus, a process of increasing political centralization, embodied in certain settlement, trading and diplomatic changing features, derived into the formation of the earliest centralized states in the Nordic area.

The Persistence of Catholicism in Denmark after the Protestant Reformation, 1536-1629

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In my PhD dissertation I intend to examine the persistence of Catholicism in Denmark after the spread of the Protestant Reformation. My research will concentrate in particular on the period between the abolition of Catholicism in 1536 and the Imperial-Danish peace treaty signed in 1629 in Lübeck. This field has been relatively under-researched. Until now the mainstream view suggests that the Reformation spread in Denmark extremely quickly and that Catholicism offered very little resistance. My project will highlight and investigate, by contrast, the continuing presence of Danish Catholicism. It will be divided into two parts. The first will explore the survival of late medieval Catholic religious practices in the Danish Lutheran Church. The second will study the resistance in Denmark of Catholic believers after the

Reformation.

In his popular *History of Denmark* (1997), Kield Winding argues that ‘in less than 10 years’ following the first stirrings of the Reformation in Denmark ‘the power and the fame of the Catholic Church were reduced to nothing’. Winding’s account represents the conventional and still unchallenged scholarly position on the subject, which holds that the Catholic Church disappeared from Denmark quickly and without a struggle, leaving no significant traces behind. On closer inspection, however, it becomes clear that the demise of Catholicism in Denmark was a slow — and by no means simple — process.

There is significant evidence, for example, of a continued Catholic presence in Denmark even during the period following 1555, when the practice of Catholicism was declared a capital crime. Trial records survive from those years, as do accounts of ex-friars who continued to live as ‘Catholic hermits’ after the closing of their convents. Even less studied is the Catholic presence among merchants, despite the fact that we have ample evidence of Catholic practice among the merchant class in the great commercial cities of Copenhagen, Elsinore and Malmø. Moreover, many young Danes who attended the Jesuit schools newly established throughout Europe returned to Denmark as Catholic converts. King’s entourage, finally, contained several foreign Catholics.

Even more interesting, perhaps, and much less studied, is the persistence of late medieval Catholic practices within the Lutheran Church. Lutherans themselves used Latin in the liturgy, and partially maintained the cult of the saints, the veneration of holy images, and certain liturgical practices such as auricular confession, the employment of sacred vestments and baptismal exorcism. Catholic institutions often persevered as well: for instance, bishoprics, ecclesiastical tribunals, cathedral chapters (abolished only in 1783), and monasteries—religious houses, in fact, survived the initial years of the Protestant Reformation and lasted until 1584 (in the case of male institutions) and 1621 (female ones).

My research has two main objectives. First, I intend to examine the nature and identity of those people who continued to declare themselves Catholic in Reformed Denmark. How and where did such men and women

survive? What were their reasons for continuing to profess the Catholic faith? Second, I shall analyse the extent to which the late medieval Church persisted in the new Lutheran one. This research will be not conducted from a theological point of view, but will attempt instead to investigate and define the ways in which the new Church presented itself to the eyes of the old believers. Was it, indeed, really a new Church? What were the similarities and differences between Catholic and Lutheran practices, and how evident were they to the Danish worshippers? The survival of late medieval traditions in the everyday practices and administration of the Lutheran Church would certainly help to explain the lack of resistance that Lutheranism found in Denmark.

Nordic Regions of Culture:

Intercultural Links between Norway and Shetland after 1770

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(...) it's all a matter of definition, and who does the defining
(Wahl, B., Translators Foreword, in Valkeapaa, N.-A., 1983)

Historical, political and socio-cultural change all play an important part in the development of cultural identities and their representation and transformation within the language, literature and historical narratives of a cultural region. This Phd suggests a re-definition of the broad research area referred to as Scandinavian Studies, through the conception of trans-national Nordic 'regions of culture'. This is where both similar and disparate cultural identities are negotiated – often across national or linguistic borders. The main focus of my research is a case study of the continuity of Shetland's intercultural links with Scandinavia (Norway, in particular) after 1770 as recorded through both historical and literary cultural texts and practices.

The study will contribute to both interdisciplinary European Area Studies and Scandinavian Studies alike, by contextualising existing national historiographies within post-colonial dynamics and trans-national approaches. It will also contribute to area and regional studies of Northern Europe, by integrating previously excluded areas into the arena of Scandinavian Studies and suggesting a wider understanding of the 'Nordic region' of cultural interaction and intercultural landscapes.

Both the Shetland and Orkney islands were part of the Dano-Norwegian kingdom until they were transferred to Scotland as part of a royal wedding dowry in 1469. But, although part of the United Kingdom and Scotland for the past 500 years, aspects of Shetland's cultural heritage are clearly linked to a Nordic cultural region. The islands, located half-way between Bergen in Norway and Aberdeen in Scotland, have long been at the centre of maritime migration and trading routes, and have a complex history of cultural and geopolitical interaction. So, for example, the islands are also part of the Highlands and Islands, a satellite region within the United Kingdom, Scotland, and other peripheral North European 'regions' (Zachariassen, 2008, Storm, 2010). Shetland's regional historiographies and narratives about the past, are therefore closely associated with modern (and post-modern) 'regionalisation projects' that are about power, governance, but also about cultural 'belonging'.

So, for example, modern histories of the islands indicate that cultural contact between Shetland and Scandinavia, in particular Norway, diminished or even ceased after the fifteenth century. 'Phases' of linear chronology from Pict to Viking to Scot (ish) are emphasised, that align themselves with 18th and 19th century national histories, the 'imagined communities' of both Scotland and Norway (Benedict Anderson, 1991, Homi Bhaba, 1990). These homogenised representations of cultural history are at odds with a regional cultural identity created around what Hance Smith in *Shetland Life and Trade* (1984, p. 289) refers to as 'enduring cultural foundations' that connect Shetland to Northern Europe.

A continuous flow of objects, people and knowledge from Norway, in particular, have left their mark in the form of Nordic cultural heritage and traditions, from language and literature to maritime knowledge and boat building. Aspects of nineteenth and twentieth century Shetland literature,

in particular, illustrate the complex relationship between history, cultural memory and representation, with Nordic linguistic heritage and natural environment clearly providing a resource for the creation and expression of a distinctive, regional identity (Laurits Rendboe, 1986).

Rather than provide instances of 'cultural reproduction' of existing, underlying socio-political structures, regional culture actively engages in a trans-national, transformative process 'that reveals as it structures and contains' (Chris Jenks, 1993, p.118). A post-colonial approach, together with the definition of culture as a transformative social praxis, rather than reflecting geopolitical or ideological contexts (Joep Leerssen, 2006) will therefore provide new arenas for understanding the plurality of regional cultural expression within Nordic intercultural regions and beyond.

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**Nordic Italies:
Representations of Italy in Nordic Literatures
between the 1830s and the 1910s**

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My PhD thesis focuses on the analysis of representations of Italy in a selection of Danish, Finnish, Norwegian and Swedish literary texts written between the 1830s and the 1910s. Because of its history, art, natural and cultural landscape, Italy has been a popular destination for North-European travellers since the age of the Grand Tour. Yet, literary images of Italy are not all linked to the tradition of the journey to this country and cannot be labelled as a manifestation of Northerners' yearning for the Southern sun.

On the whole, the corpus of critical literature which deals with Italy in Nordic literatures is very wide but also fragmentary. The biggest chunk of critical literature on the subject is made of monographs about the relationship between Italy and some eminent authors, such as Henrik Ibsen and Hans Christian Andersen (Næss 1997; Rossel 2009). Critical material is also available on the connection between Nordic travellers and specific Italian locations, Rome being by far the most explored, and on the representation of Italy in one of the Nordic literatures (Eriksen 1997). Moreover, most of the material available on Italy in Nordic literature has remained linked to the tradition of Nordic artists travelling to Italy. As English and German travellers before them, since the beginning of the nineteenth century members of the Danish and Swedish aristocracy set on a Grand Tour, a journey to Italy for pleasure as well as for education. From the 1830s Italy (especially Rome) and the Nordic countries were linked by cultural societies and institutions that encouraged Nordic artists to travel to Italy.

With its comparative approach and multi gender approach, the purpose of this study is to initiate a dialogue between all the components of this multifaceted research area and to cast a new light on a selection of nineteenth- and twentieth-century representations of Italy. Taking into account texts of different genres – in particular poetry, drama and novel

– and focusing on theories of representation, space and intertextuality, I examine literary representations, namely how Italy is represented in Nordic literatures through language. Representations of Italy emerge as being created through different combinations physical and metaphorical elements (Lefebvre 1994: 42). Each representation is thus unique and individual, but also constructed from elements provided by collective cultural discourses that functioned as vehicles of representations of Italy, such as the travelling tradition, the circulation of previous representations of Italy, and the importance of classical education.

The main criterion behind the structure of the thesis is that of literary genre. When it comes to representations of Italy in Nordic literatures, each literary genre seems in fact to have followed a different development. Certain genres appear to have remained attached to specific themes and to have originated from a set of different cultural trends. Throughout the nineteenth century dramas about Italy, for instance, appear to have been shaped by a series of traditions such as the *commedia dell'arte*, the Italianate play, and the opera.

The way Italy is represented should be generally seen in connection with the literary movements and cultural trends of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. There is no doubt that some of the most recurrent literary stereotypes about Italy, among which that of Italy as a mythical Arcadia, originated during the Romantic age, an image that we find in texts such as the collection of poems 'Fra Italien' (1867) by Andreas Munch and the novel *Den fallna* (1848) by Wendla Randelin. However, the issue of how to renew the way in which Italy was represented was already topical at the beginning of the nineteenth century: authors were challenged by the feeling that everything there was to say and write about Italy had already been said and written. Some writers tried to introduce a greater degree of realism through rhythms or social themes, as in Snoilsky's poetic travelogue *Italienska bilder* (1865) and Selma Lagerlöf's novel *Antikrists mirakler* (1897) respectively. In line with the ideas of the Modern Breakthrough some texts also started showing a clear engagement with contemporary society referring for instance to the events of the Italian Risorgimento or introducing gender issues (see for instance *Faustina Strozzi*, 1875, a drama by Jonas Lie). Towards the end of the nineteenth century the question of how to update and even subvert the

Romantic myth of Italy becomes entangled with fin de siècle literary trends. This leads to the attempt to convey the image of a modern Italy but also to the end of the idea of an idealised Italy. We only need to mention Sophus Claussen's novel *Valfart* (1896) and poetry collection *Djævlerier* (1904) and Verner von Heidenstam's novel *Hans Alienus* (1892).

The relationship between Italians and foreigners has proved to be one of the most prominent themes going beyond genre distinctions. In most texts Nordic characters recognise their status as foreigners while in Italy and prefer to observe the Italians while remaining attached to their own communities and avoiding direct contact with local people. This is for instance what happens in Sigrid Undset's novel *Jenny* (1911). When interaction between Italians and foreigners does take place, as *Antikrists mirakler*, this is often followed by extreme consequences either for the individuals involved or for their entire communities.

On the whole, my thesis tries to reconstruct at least some of the Italies made in the Nordic countries and the mechanisms employed to create them. The gap in this field is by no means closed. There are certainly many more Italies to discover or rediscover in Nordic literatures. This is just a fraction of the primary material at hand, some of which definitely deserves more attention.

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Language, Literature and Power

Finding a Periphery:

Understanding and Comparing Language Activism in Italy and Norway¹

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In my forthcoming doctoral thesis, I will compare the nature of language activism in Norway with the politicisation of dialects in northern Italy. In order to understand the political alliances formed by language movements in these two contexts, and the broader corpora of lifestyles and ideologies allied to them, reference will be made to the theories of the Antonio Gramsci, including his treatment of hegemony and his militaristic metaphors of 'wars of position' and 'wars of manoeuvre'. I will also refer to this Italian philosopher's less widely known linguistic writings. In my framework, Gramscian theory will be combined with the Norwegian social scientist Stein Rokkan's discussion of the relationships between centres and peripheries, and his model of cultural-political cleavage structures. Through extensive reference to activist journals and party newspapers, I have documented the specific constructs and relationships highlighted by Gramsci and Rokkan as central strands shaping the traditions and defining the ideologies of the movements studied.

The struggle between the two official standards of Norwegian (Bokmål and Nynorsk) has long provided a veritable ideological battleground for activists and has inspired political debate drawing heavily on both nationalistic and social argumentation. The situation is complicated by the existence of other factions both within and beyond the two major camps. Alliances with political parties have been of key importance in the Norwegian language struggle. The Nynorsk movement has generally been aligned with radical or left-wing groupings, while the campaign for Bokmål has been reactionary in character, as was especially the case for its predecessor Riksmål, now a non-official standard in its own right. Samnorsk, a consolidatory standard originally

intended to unite Bokmål and Nynorsk, was created as the brainchild of the Norwegian Labour Party. The campaign for the promotion of dialects in all domains of spoken language, which was particularly fervent from the late 1960s to the 1980s, was also largely left-orientated.

In northern Italy, the Lega Nord (Northern League) has attempted to appropriate the campaign for dialects there to legitimise and further their own cause. The ideological orientation of this populist regionalist political party is quite different from that of that of the dialect movement in Norway. Analysis of the centre-periphery dichotomy will show that the differing realities of peripherality in the two cases go some way to explaining the differences that do exist, while also revealing some similarities. The Nynorsk movement can, for example, perhaps justifiably claim to be serving the interests of a counter-hegemonic language primarily in peripheral regions. Meanwhile, the Northern League has attempted to portray itself as a counter-hegemonic party fighting for the north as a deprived periphery of the political centre, Rome, although southern Italy is more traditionally viewed as a peripheral region, and northern Italy has, on the contrary, major concentrations of power, of economic and cultural capital. Furthermore, much of the political elite in Rome hails from the north.

The thesis will reveal how two generally concordant linguistic ideologies can have become allied to two quite divergent extra-linguistic ideologies and how language activism has become part of the cultural cleavage structures in Norway and Italy. The study will also aim to determine whether these different ideological alliances have benefited or harmed the language campaigns in question.

Endnotes

¹ I would like to acknowledge the financial support I have received during my doctoral studies from the Arts & Humanities Research Council and from the University of Edinburgh.

Danish in the Faroe Islands: A Post-Colonial Perspective

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My Ph.D. research examines from a post-colonial perspective the position of the Danish language in Faroese society. In addition to established ideas within post-colonialism, from scholars such as Louis Althusser (1918-90) and Gayatri Spivak (1942-), three new concepts – saming, language othering and linguistic autonomy – are developed and used in the analysis of linguistic developments that have taken place on the islands since Danish was introduced. Many academics have concluded that Danish is now a ‘foreign language’ rather than a ‘second language’ on the islands. I argue, however, that this is not an accurate representation of the situation that has emerged, and propose that a perspective which focuses on the colonial history of the Faroes provides the best structure within which to analyse the linguistic developments. Recurrent themes in language research on the islands, both historical and contemporary, such as *Gøtudanskt* and the local pronunciation(s) of Danish, are contextualised within the post-colonial framework. Similarly, topics which have received little attention, such as the role of the Danish-influenced Suðuroy dialect, are also analysed from this perspective.

A considerable part of the investigation stems from large-scale field research (predominantly questionnaires): surveys were undertaken in four schools across the islands and a postal survey was carried out in Tórshavn, the capital. In total, 938 people took part in the Faroese field research.

The thesis suggests that the Faroes constitute an atypical case within post-colonial studies due to the common cultural/linguistic heritage of the coloniser and the colonised. The non-standard characteristics of post-colonial Faroese society can perhaps only be appreciated in comparison with a ‘typical’ post-colonial society, and Greenland is proposed as this standard example. Further field work was therefore undertaken in Greenland, and the final chapter provides a comparative study between the

language situations in the two societies. This thesis aims to demonstrate that post-colonial theory, which originally emerged as a methodology for literary analysis in the 1970s, offers a framework within which very different post-colonial linguistic scenarios, such as those in the Faroes and Greenland, can be analysed and compared.

Although the thesis focuses on Danish in the Faroes and not Faroese, it is impossible to ignore developments that have taken place in the Faroese language for several reasons. Obviously, as Faroese grows to incorporate new linguistic domains, Danish suffers 'domain loss'. Questionnaire responses also made it clear that the thesis would need to acknowledge Faroese purism. Danicisms, real or perceived, are often discouraged in Faroese, and this might have a bearing on how familiar Danish is to Faroese schoolchildren, for example. If the next generation are to hear only *firvaldur* ("butterfly"), rather than *summarfuglur*, the Danish word *sommerfugl* will become more alien to them. Conversely, there is also a suggestion that Faroese purism strengthens the position of Danish on the islands: the thesis gives evidence of this. It is, therefore, impossible to consider Danish in the Faroes in isolation.

The questionnaires also highlight the fact that a considerable number of Faroese people use the terms *danskt* ('Danish') or *donsk orð* ('Danish words') almost metonymically to refer to Danish elements that have been incorporated into Faroese, and not just to the separate Danish language. The 'Danish' of the thesis title has then, in a Faroese context, two interlinked meanings and both are considered.

The thesis does not attempt to describe Danish influence on the Faroese language – other works have already investigated this well. This study places itself within the field known as the sociology of language, which focuses on the macro aspects of language in society. Throughout the thesis, however, specific 'micro' examples will be given to exemplify the general 'macro' observations.

In summary, the thesis addresses the following research questions:

1. How valid are post-colonial theories when considering the position of a former colonial language with a given society?

2. To what extent can post-colonial theories be used to analyse the position of the former colonial language in an 'atypical' former colony, such as the Faroes?
3. Post-colonial theories aside, to what extent is consideration of the colonial past useful when analysing the position of Danish in the Faroes today?
4. Is any value to be discerned in comparing the position of Danish in the Faroes to that in Greenland?
5. In small post-colonial societies, such as the Faroes, what methods have the locals developed for making the (necessary) continued use of the colonial language in various spheres acceptable? Has the common cultural/linguistic heritage of Denmark and the Faroes affected this process there?
6. To what extent does empirical data from the Faroes and Greenland agree with local research on the position of Danish in the two societies? To what extent does it support the rejection of the second language/foreign language dichotomy and endorse the new concepts proposed by the thesis, such as 'saming'?

Endnotes

¹ The concept of 'saming' as I have used it in my research is introduced in the first article of the present issue.

Gender Discourses in Scandinavian Modern Breakthrough Literature

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My PhD thesis, *Transgressive Femininity: Gender in the Scandinavian Modern Breakthrough*, deals with how new discourses on gender developed in Scandinavian literature during the Modern Breakthrough, 1880-1909. Political, economic and demographic changes put pressures on the existing,

conventional gender roles, which literature reflects; however, literature also renegotiated, created and introduced new discourses on gender.

When defining the categories 'masculinity' and 'femininity', this is often done through dichotomies, defining each gender by what the other is not, and the boundaries they must not transgress. Therefore, when extracting gender discourses from Danish, Swedish and Norwegian novels, I have chosen to focus on transgressive female characters, which I have seen as indicators of emerging new forms of femininity at the time.

I have examined how gender was represented and used in literature to promote certain images of gender, and especially femininity, as 'proper' or 'improper'. Part of the project has been to examine the debates these representations caused in the Scandinavian societies, and the reactions of the literary critics.

The thesis shows how the transgression of gender boundaries is used in the novels when (re)presenting what femininity is, should be or could be. In addition to analysing the textual strategies in the representation of these 'deviant' literary characters, I have examined how the relevant texts were received by critics and reviewers at the time, as reviews are in themselves discursive constructs.

The theoretical base informing this study has mainly been Michel Foucault's discourse theory¹⁾, Chris Weedon's feminist poststructuralism²⁾ and Yvonne Hirdman's theory of gender binarism³⁾. I have also used concepts from several literary gender theorists and historians in the separate analyses. The following novels are analysed in the study:

1) Danish author Herman Bang's early decadence novel *Haabløse Slægter* (1880), where I use a queer theory perspective, Dag Heede's expertise on Bang⁴⁾ and Judith Butler's theory of performativity⁵⁾ to examine aspects of non-humanity, vampirism and cross-dressing.

2) Norwegian author Ragnhild Jølsen's *Rikka Gan* (1904), where the strong elements of pre-psychoanalysis are analysed, as well as the textual strategy of gaps and silences, bad mothering and infanticide. Here I mainly make use of theorists Claes Ahlund⁶⁾, Ebba Witt-Brattström⁷⁾ and Elisabeth Badinter⁸⁾.

3) Swedish author August Strindberg's *Le Plaidoyer d'un fou* (1887-88),

where I make an examination of the hysterical male narrative voice, using Susan S. Lanser's feminist narratological theory.⁹⁾

4) Swedish author Annie Quiding's *Fru Fanny* (1904), analysed as an example of 'negative' New Woman literature, where I among several other theorists use Christina Florin¹⁰⁾, Sally Ledger¹¹⁾ and Ann Ardis¹²⁾.

The thesis shows how Scandinavian Modern Breakthrough literature represented and introduced new forms of femininity, often in the form of ambiguous female characters, and often to the disapproval of the critics. This is valid whether the novel took a conservative or radical stance in gender issues. It also shows that gender discourses were much alike within Scandinavia in the Modern Breakthrough. Furthermore, my study lays bare the normative discourses of femininity at the time, of which the most dominant were a non-existing sexual desire, feminine immobility/containment in the home and an imperative, self-sacrificing motherliness.

Behind this prescription for 'proper' femininity looms its constant shadow: 'proper' masculinity, being the binary to femininity. The texts do not only expose the frustration of women at the time because of all the social restrictions applied to their sex. The novels also expose the pressure on men, having to constantly do all that women must not, and to keep women in check.

Endnotes

¹ See for example: Foucault, Michel (1998), *The History of Sexuality 1: The Will To Knowledge*, transl. by Robert Hurley. London: Penguin. Foucault, Michel (1979), *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, transl. by Alan Sheridan. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.

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³ See for example: Hirdman, Yvonne (2004), *Genus: Om det stabila föränderliga former*, 2nd ed. Stockholm: Liber. Hirdman, Yvonne (1988), *Genussystemet: Teoretiska funderingar kring kvinnors sociala underordning*. Uppsala: Maktutredningen.

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⁵ See for example: Butler, Judith (2006), *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, 2nd ed. with an introduction by the author. London; New York: Routledge. Butler, Judith (1993), *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of 'Sex'*. New York; London: Routledge.

⁶ Ahlund, Claes (1994), *Medusas huvud: Dekadensens tematik i svensk sekelskiftesprosa*. Uppsala: S. Academiae Ubsaliensis.

⁷ Witt-Brattström, Ebba (2007), *Dekadensens kön: Ola Hansson och Laura Marholm*. Stockholm: Norstedts.

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⁹ Lanser, Susan Sniader (1992), *Fictions of Authority: Women Writers and Narrative Voice*. Ithaca; London: Cornell University Press. Lanser, Susan S. (2004) 'Sexing Narratology: Towards a Gendered Poetics of Narrative Voice'. In Mieke Bal, ed. *Narrative Theory: Critical Concepts in Literary and Cultural Studies* Vol. 3. London; New York: Routledge, pp. 123-39. Lanser, Susan Sniader (1981), *The Narrative Act: Points of View in Prose Fiction*. Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press.

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¹¹ Ledger, Sally (1997), *The New Woman: Fiction and feminism at the fin de siècle*. Manchester; New York: Manchester University Press.

¹² Ardis, Ann (1990), *New Women, New Novels: Feminism and Early Modernism*. New Brunswick [N.J.]: Rutgers University Press.