

An ‘Un-business-like Business’:
Publishing Danish Literature in
Translation in the UK
1990–2015

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DECLARATION

I, Ellen Kythor, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis provides a literary-sociological analysis of publishing Danish literature in English translation in the UK during a period of technological and market change. The early twenty-first century has seen a wave of British media and popular interest in Danish culture, partly inspired by the critical and cult appeal of Scandinavian crime fiction and television series including *The Killing* and *Borgen*. Translated literature represents a tiny fraction of books published in Britain annually, but the number of books translated from Danish has sharply risen since 2010.

A pivotal editor/translator in this field described how this ‘un-business-like business’ is driven by its relationships. Consequently, this thesis provides an in-depth examination of the agents facilitating the entry of books from Danish into the UK. Processes and agents investigated include Danish state funding for translated literature, British small publishers (including Christopher MacLehose), conscientious literary translators, and a positive northern exoticism (borealism) in marketing.

This thesis applies a descriptive theoretical framework with internationally-focused perspectives rooted in symbolic exchange of capital. Translated Danish books are regarded as coming from a semi-peripheral small nation entering a hypercentral anglophone market within the global literary system.

In-depth comparative publication journeys of Peter Høeg’s *Miss Smilla’s Feeling for Snow* (1993) and Jakob Ejersbo’s *Africa* trilogy (Exile, 2011; Revolution, 2012; Liberty, 2014) are presented to illustrate and contrast publishing processes across the period of study. This ‘un-business-like business’ does not always follow a routine pattern, exemplified in this thesis by Danish to English publication journeys of books by Jussi Adler-Olsen, Suzanne Brøgger, Jørgen-Frantz Jacobsen, Kim Leine, Alen Mešković, and Jesper Wung-Sung. The analysis is informed by a researcher-built corpus of books, archival materials and interviews with key individuals. The outcome is an original, comprehensive overview of the mobility of Danish books to Britain between 1990 and 2015.

IMPACT STATEMENT

The corpus data for this thesis (Danish literature published in the UK 1990-2015) is available as an ‘unpublished working document’: it has been viewed fifty times online and cited in at least two articles (Berry 2017; Thomson and Stougaard-Nielsen 2017). An interactive visual timeline of this data has been made available online and demonstrated during presentations to my funders and other stakeholders (Kythor 2015).

As the recipient of the first UCL Impact PhD Studentship in Danish-English Translation, my co-funder – the Danish Arts Foundation – set the remit of forming a network for literary translators of Danish into English, as one did not exist. Benefits were to fix one contact point for anglophone literary translators and to ensure state cultural funding to support translators was being dispensed in a manner that suited the recipients. An additional benefit was for my thesis research: identifying suitable translators to interview, and attending a variety of events in the field.

After liaising with translators at meetings in 2013 and 2014, I founded the network in 2014 with a website (danishtranslation.org) and private social media community (45 members as of May 2018). DELT meetings have been held in Denmark, the UK, and the USA, attended by between three to seventeen translators, sometimes coinciding with book fairs but also as standalone events such as book launches and a seminar day. In 2017, a founding committee of volunteers was established to ensure the future of the network. The network was relaunched with the name DELT (the Association of Danish-English Literary Translators) in early 2018.

Head of Literature at the Danish Agency for Culture, Annette Bach, contributed the following feedback in May 2018:

As Danish as a foreign language being taught abroad suffers cutbacks in many places in the world, including the UK, the collaboration between UCL and The Danish Arts Foundation’s Committee for Literary Project Funding (formerly known as The Danish Arts Council’s Committee for Literature) on this PhD has been of significant value. The work done so far by Ellen Kythor has been extremely useful and cannot be underestimated. The establishment of the connection with UCL and, on a more tangible level, the overview of Danish literature in English translation along with the formal formation of the DELT-network are and will be important tools for the Foundation in its continuous efforts to promote Danish literature in the UK market. [...] Due [to] the consistent work of Ellen Kythor, the network seems to have found a shape and structure, which we are now sure will prove sustainable and will benefit its members. We are confident, that [DELT’s] existence will help sustain the “food-chain” of literary translators from Danish to English, as it provides a place for these one-woman armies to share experiences, advice and to learn from each other.

DELT is an independent non-profit unincorporated association ‘for translators, by translators’ bringing together and representing literary translators from Danish to English worldwide, and actively building links with relevant cultural organisations, publishers, and other translators’ groups.

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I admire and appreciate all the founding members of the Association of Danish-English Literary Translators (DELT) – whom I shan't name individually for the sake of brevity – and especially the founding working committee. All are such brilliant enthusiasts for translating Danish literature.

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The thesis is dedicated to our children Daphne and Bertrand, my PhD babies.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	3
ABSTRACT.....	5
IMPACT STATEMENT	7
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	9
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	11
LIST OF TABLES	15
LIST OF FIGURES	15
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....	15
NOTES.....	17
INTRODUCTION.....	19
CHAPTER 1 – Theoretical Framework and Scholarly Context.....	35
1.1. Choosing a Lens: Fields of Cultural Production and Cultural Capital	35
1.2 The Global Literary System: A Small Nation’s Cultural Mobility.....	46
1.3 The Scandinavian Studies Context	56
1.4 Researching People	67
1.5. Conclusion: Summary of Theoretical Framework and Methodology	71
CHAPTER 2 – Cultural Context.....	73
2.1 The British Publishing Industry, Translated Literature & the Media Landscape.....	74
2.2 Danish Literature in the UK: My Corpus	85
2.3 The Market for Scandinavian Literary Exports in Britain	100
2.4 Conclusion	109

CHAPTER 3 – Funding: Danish State Funders and Danish Literature Abroad.....	111
3.1 Nordic State Support for Cultural Exports in Britain.....	111
3.2 State Support for Culture in Denmark.....	115
3.3 Danish Arts Foundation Support for Danish Literature in Britain in Practice..	131
3.4 Conclusion.....	145
 CHAPTER 4 – Publishing: Small Publishers and Books from a Small Nation	147
4.1 Small Publishers in Britain.....	148
4.2 Christopher MacLehose: Cultural Banker and Small Publisher	154
4.3 Publication Journeys of Danish Books in Britain: <i>Miss Smilla's Feeling for Snow</i> and the <i>Africa</i> trilogy	157
4.4 Conclusion.....	162
 CHAPTER 5 – Translating: Roles and Identities of Danish-English Translators ...	163
5.1 Working as a Danish-English Literary Translator	164
5.2 Professionalisation and Identity	174
5.3 Networking.....	184
5.4 Conclusion.....	193
 CHAPTER 6 – Promoting: The Dissemination of Danish Books in Translation	197
6.1 Translators as Ambassadors, Scouts, and Literary Agents	198
6.2 Public Relations in Book Marketing	204
6.3 The Significance of the Author	207
6.4 <i>Miss Smilla</i> : Exotic but Not Danish	209
6.5 The <i>Africa</i> Trilogy: Exotic but Not Borealist.....	211
6.6 Conclusion.....	217
 CONCLUSION	221

BIBLIOGRAPHY – Official Correspondence and Archive Materials.....	235
BIBLIOGRAPHY – Interviewee Abbreviations	237
BIBLIOGRAPHY – List of Works Cited.....	239
APPENDIX A – Corpus	267
APPENDIX B – Interview Transcripts.....	278

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 – Sample of LAF BNB Data 2000-2015	80
Table 2 – Most Frequently Appearing Authors in the Corpus	94
Table 3 – Most Frequently Appearing Translators in the Corpus	96
Table 4 – Sample of Successful Translation Fund Applications in the Corpus	133
Table 5 – Examples of Successful Applications outside the Corpus	136
Table 6 – Approved for Funding Twice: <i>Barbara</i>	138
Table 7 – Examples of Declined Applications	142

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 – Text Types of Translated Danish Literature in the UK (1990-2015 inclusive)	91
Figure 2 – Number of Danish Books Published in the UK by Year (1990-2015 inclusive)	99

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ALTA	American Literary Translators Association
ASLF	Anglo-Swedish Literary Foundation
BNB	British National Bibliography
FSG	Farrar, Straus and Giroux (American publisher)
DELT	The Association of Danish-English Literary Translators
DENT	Danish-English Network of literary Translators (now DELT)
DFI	Danish Film Institute
LAF	Literature Across Frontiers
<i>Miss Smilla</i>	The UK book <i>Miss Smilla's Feeling for Snow</i> by Peter Høeg (1993)
NBA	Net Book Agreement
SDU	University of Southern Denmark (Syddansk Universitet)
SELTA	Swedish-English Literary Translators' Association
<i>Smilla</i>	The Danish book <i>Frøken Smillas fornemmelse for sne</i> by Peter Høeg (1992)
SoA	Society of Authors
TA	The Translators' Association

NB: Abbreviations for interviewee citations are found under **Bibliography**

NOTES

Thank you to UCL's Centre for Publishing for facilitating access to Nielsen BookScan. Sales figures for books sold in the United Kingdom are from Nielsen BookScan (unless otherwise stated), obtained directly by the thesis author over the period of the thesis.

Unless otherwise stated, translations into English are by the thesis author.

INTRODUCTION

Opening Words: Danish Cultural Exports in Britain

A wave of interest in the popular culture of Denmark has been sweeping the British Isles. In the early twenty-first century, books promise to teach Brits how to live Danishly (Kingsley 2012; Russell 2015), online social networks keep fans at the bleeding edge of the latest television drama to cross the North Sea, and Sarah Lund's Faroese patterned knit jumpers are still *en vogue* years after the final episode of *The Killing* was broadcast on the BBC in 2012. This is in contrast to the late twentieth century, when a Danish researcher based in the UK wrote: 'Though Denmark is fairly well known in Britain for bacon, butter and beer, [...] On the whole the image of Denmark suffers from the "nice but boring" syndrome' (Pihl 1996, 215). British audiences' horizons have notably broadened over the last twenty years. Denmark has become strongly synonymous not only with bacon and beer, but also with high-quality popular cultural exports, including furniture, fashion, food, and fiction:

in Britain at least, Scandinavia had come to stand for the epitome of 'cool', symbolized by the prominence and accessibility of designer consumer goods, while at the same time retaining its popular image of being cold, remote and extremely expensive. (Hilson 2008, 12-13)

Enduring 1980s and 1990s perceptions from abroad of Scandinavian 'cool', including stylish functional furniture, environmentalism, liberal sexual attitudes, and fashionable restaurants, have been supplemented by the early-twenty-first century's critical success and cult appeal of subtitled Danish television series, Nordic Noir, and, later, the *hygge* lifestyle craze. These trends have recast the market and cultural context into which Danish literature in translation is imported into the UK.

My thesis has been supported by a timely studentship from *Statens Kunstfond* (the Danish Arts Foundation) in collaboration with University College London (UCL): the first of its kind from Denmark (two similar Impact PhD studentships at UCL have been supported by Swedish cultural agencies). The desire by the Danish state cultural agency to better understand the socio-cultural position and market for Danish literature in translation is a further indicator of the contemporary 'buzz' around Danish culture in the UK. The original advertised studentship title 'From Miss Smilla to Sarah Lund'

reflects a common narrative that *Miss Smilla*¹ is the most significant literary export from Denmark to Britain in recent years (cf. Kythor 2016). Journalist and reviewer Barry Forshaw, writing in the early twenty-first century, provides a typical illustration of the long-lasting fame of this particular book in the British perception of Danish literature:

The astonishing success of Peter Høeg's *Miss Smilla's Feeling for Snow* (1993) was a wake-up call: here was crime with all the cultural richness of literary fiction, opening up to readers a fascinating new region, Denmark. (Forshaw 2014a, 257)

Høeg's hit hybrid fantasy-crime novel did not immediately usher in more books from this 'fascinating new region' to eager readers in the United Kingdom, as my corpus later demonstrates. Yet Høeg's notoriety in the anglophone perception of Danish literature has resonated ever since, reflected again in a Danish-English translator's account of the professional significance for him personally in 2011, nearly twenty years after *Miss Smilla*: 'Getting asked to do Peter Høeg was a really big thing for me. I thought: wow, this could be a breakthrough! Climbing the rungs of the ladder in a way' (MA 2016).

Danish literature has long found its way to the British market. In the nineteenth century, various Danish novels, poetry, and drama were published in translation in the UK and influential literary publicists promoted Danish literature in publications such as *London Magazine*, *The Spectator*, and *The Academy* (Downs 1944, 262-6). The Danish 'classics' – Ludvig Holberg, Adam Oehlenschläger and Bernhard Severin Ingemann – were canonised by British critics by the late nineteenth century (Downs 1944, 266). Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tales achieved iconic status throughout the world as children's stories at their time of publication in the nineteenth century, and he has since remained a cultural phenomenon in Denmark and abroad (cf. Bom 2014). As a region, Scandinavia was a significant 'sub-centre' in the global system of world literature in the late nineteenth century (Thomsen 2008, 37-9), with the critic Georg Brandes and the dramatists Henrik Ibsen (Norwegian) and August Strindberg (Swedish) witnessing success internationally in their lifetimes. In the early twentieth century, Karen Blixen (pseudonym Isak Dinesen in anglophone countries) was influential both for her work and as a personality, becoming 'the most highly canonized female writer in Danish literary history' (Thomsen 2008, 47). Research

¹ *Miss Smilla's Feeling for Snow* (Høeg 1993) is referred to throughout the thesis as *Miss Smilla* for brevity; the original 1992 Danish book (*Frøken Smillas fornemmelse for sne*) is referred to as *Smilla*.

using the British Library's *British National Bibliography (BNB)* database indicates that in total 325 books of literature from Denmark were published in translation in the UK between 1950 and 2010 (Berry 2017, 64). Immediately after the Nazi-German occupation, Danish fiction in English translation experienced a lull (cf. Schroeder 1982; Berry 2017, 79). While the 1960s and 1970s saw a steep rise in numbers of books translated into English from the Nordic countries overall, many of these were Swedish children's authors (Berry 2017, 81). A handful of Denmark's 1960s generation of radical writers (cf. Mai 2014) only came to be translated into English in later decades. Denmark's Sven Hassel is the most published Nordic author of adult fiction in Britain during this period with 41 books (Berry 2017, 70), all on World War II themes, but in general Danish fiction is far outnumbered by Swedish and Norwegian translations. Danish authors Herman Bang, Martin A. Hansen, Dea Trier Mørch, Henrik Stangerup, and Leif Davidsen were all published in translation in Britain between 1980 and the early 1990s (Pihl 1996, 83). The Danish Literature Information Center's bibliographies covering 1980-1991 show only thirty-three books (excluding Hans Christian Andersen) from Denmark were published in Britain in this period, thirteen of which were novels (Pihl 1996, 82). Overall, it is clear that translated Danish literature reached the British market in the twentieth century, but not in huge numbers.

My corpus research takes up the mantle from these studies and focuses on the position of Danish literature in Britain since 1990. While Danish books are in the top ten of all languages translated from globally and at number seven of all source languages for books translated into English in the world (according to the latest *Index Translationum* statistics from the turn of the twenty-first century), Danish literature represents a tiny proportion of the small number of translated books in the British market. The British book market is one of the largest and most influential in the global literary system. Today translated literature makes up a very small proportion of the UK's entire book market – between three to five per cent is an oft-cited figure. It would be naïve but understandable to assume that the relative size of a foreign culture and its book market might dictate its proportional share of the translated English-language book market in the UK. But data about the representation of translated literatures in the UK highlight interesting anomalies. Denmark has a population of 5.6 million people and has around 15,000 new publications per year domestically (Statistical Yearbook 2014: Table 169). This is a higher ratio of books published to population size than in the UK: 1:350 in Denmark compared with 1:427 in the UK.

Literature Across Frontiers' (LAF) research based on *BNB* data shows that, grouped together, the Scandinavian and Nordic countries appear to punch above their weight in the British literary market. Even Iceland, which has a population of only 330,000, saw sixty-seven books published in translation in the UK between 2000 and 2015 (Trentacosti and Nicholls 2017, 7). One researcher of contemporary Scandinavian literature in Britain concludes from LAF data that '[t]he perception that there is a Nordic wave is most certainly accurate, as the languages outperform many of the big hitters' (Giles 2015, 42). Yet, aside from the cultural impact of *Miss Smilla*, very few of these recent books originate in Danish. My thesis sets out to both establish and investigate the situation for Danish translated literature in the British context in light of this optimistic enthusiasm about the overall picture for Scandinavian books in the twenty-first century.

Approaching Quantitative Studies of Books and their Roots

My first step in embarking on this project was to consider how to investigate the situation for translated Danish literature in the UK. In *Graphs, Maps, Trees* (2007) and *Distant Reading* (2013), Franco Moretti proposes a quantitative approach to literary history and studying a corpus of books. Asserting that one text cannot stand for a genre as a whole, Moretti's graphs, maps, and trees represent the quantifiable data of a vast number of published texts. Moretti borrows the metaphor of trees from historical linguistics where language evolution is commonly represented by diverging branches using the form of a tree:

a tree is a way of sketching *how far* a certain language has moved from another one, or from their common point of origin.

And if language evolves by diverging, why not literature too? (2007, 70; original emphasis)

Moretti uses the branching metaphor to demonstrate how various genres, forms, and literary devices have diverged in the popular novel over a period of time. Trees illustrate the development of particular literary devices as part of Moretti's project to quantify thousands of books by plot devices or motifs, for example the development of length and contents of book titles as per his 'Reflections on 7,000 Titles (British Novels, 1740-1850)' (2013, 179-210). Moretti describes each tree as representative of a single genre: 'the branches are also part of something much *larger* than any text, which is the *genre*: the tree of *detective fiction*' (Moretti 2013, 77; original emphasis).

Moretti's approach is to take a distant reading of literary history, looking at the development of genres and forms not by studying individual books in isolation, but as a group:

The very small, and the very large; these are the forces that shape literary history. Devices and genres; not texts. Texts are certainly the *real objects* of literature [...]; but they are not the right *objects of knowledge* for literary history. (2007, 76; original emphasis)

In an extension of Moretti's approach, I propose the *objects of knowledge* for the mobility of Danish literature into the UK are not only the physical books nor the text therein ('*real objects*'), but the *people* involved in their publication. Some of the agents may be involved in the publication journeys of more than one of the *real objects* of this thesis. These people, relationships, and networks are invisible to the eventual reader of the book, yet essential to its publication journey.

The 'un-business-like business' phrase in my thesis title originates from one of the key agents of my study talking to me about the world of publishing:

it does come down to people at the end of the day, right? [...] Because it is about relationships and taste and passion. It's such an unscientific and subjective and un-business-like business! (ED 2017)

These words illuminate the scene I am studying and succinctly summarise the essence of my approach. My research began by identifying a corpus of books as the objects of study, but I quickly established that the publishing industry is all about its people and relationships. Instead of investigating literary devices at a textual level, for instance, I took a step further 'up' to the macro level to consider how the books got to market, the connections (if any) between them, and the crucial invisible human agents involved. Moretti's trees metaphor mentioned above relates to linguistic and bibliographic aspects visible to readers of published books: literary devices, plot points, and titles. I propose extending Moretti's metaphor to designate people involved in literary publishing as the *roots* of the trees: the essential inputs that readers do not see, but that *must* be there for the tree and its branches to exist. Tree ecologists have likened networks of underground tree roots to neighbourhoods. What looks like a whole forest from above ground could really be just one single, sprawling organism, linked together by fused roots (Waller 2013). Roots of a forest therefore become an apt metaphor for the interwoven relationships between the many people involved in the publication of books from Denmark in the UK: the author, the translator, a literary agent in Denmark and/or the UK, an editor, a publishing house publicist, a funding decision-maker, another translator who offers advice to the book's translator, the bookseller who makes

a recommendation to a customer, and so on. There are many fused, interwoven roots (relationships between agents) under the surface connecting and supporting many trees and helping them grow. Books do not appear in a vacuum, and these roots will be the primary emphasis of my agent-focused thesis.

Original Contribution to Knowledge

My thesis looks to uncover *how* Danish literature comes to be translated into English and published in the United Kingdom during the period 1990-2015. After the first step of looking at which books are included in this set, I embark on an investigation into *who* has been involved in the processes of publishing Danish literature in translation in the UK. My thesis is a socio-literary descriptive project, investigating the participants in these publishing processes during a period of intense technological and market change. My thesis includes a researcher-built corpus providing a full and accurate record of literature translated for the first time from Danish into English and published in the UK between 1990-2015 inclusive (Appendix A). Primary research including interview data brings the corpus data to life, offering new insights into the mobility of Danish books into Britain, and increasing the visibility of translators in this field. The research adds to the breadth of data about the field of publishing translated literature in general in the UK and addresses many of the gaps in extant Scandinavian Studies scholarship. As Agnes Broomé concludes in 2014, ‘It is safe to say that the study of Swedish literature abroad is still in its infancy and that there is [a] wealth of knowledge left to be uncovered’ (Broomé 2014a, 249), and this is still the case for Scandinavian literature overall. My thesis fills a gap for many aspects of the Danish context specifically. No equivalent research into the contemporary field of Danish to English translation in the UK has been undertaken before on this scale.

I take a cross-disciplinary approach from within Scandinavian Studies, integrating aspects of Translation Studies, Comparative Literature, Cultural and Publishing Studies. As well as gathering quantitative data on the field (via the corpus, for example), I explore the applicability of notions of stereotypes and exoticism to a study of literature and translation specifically. I interpret the penetration of a small nation’s literature into the British publishing context using a descriptive theoretical framework with internationally-focused perspectives rooted in the symbolic exchange of capital. The timeliness of my study is illustrated by, for example, the nascent Nordic

World Literature collaborative research project at the Universities of Lund and Copenhagen. The Nordic World Literature project has emerged from establishing that, within Scandinavia, the impact of Nordic literature internationally is a remarkably under-researched field. A British collaborative AHRC research project in 2014-2016 based at the University of Bristol – Translating the Literatures of Small European Nations – investigated the market and ‘actants’ involved in twenty-first century translating and publishing of small-nation literatures into the British market, illustrating again the pertinence of my research. An international collaborative project within Publishing Studies on the intercultural transfer of fiction between the UK and Germany (1945-2010) identifies a paucity of research into the stakeholders involved in translating literatures between the world’s two largest book markets (by turnover and output) and welcomes much-needed comparative studies (Norrick-Rühl and Ramdarshan Bold 2016). In light of these ongoing research projects, my thesis gives timely insight into the field of translated Danish literature in Britain, and it offers an approach that can be drawn upon by scholars in a broad range of related disciplines.

The findings of my thesis will also be beneficial to various stakeholders within the field of Danish-English translated literature, such as publishers, translators, editors, literary agents, and state cultural agencies (including, but not exclusively, the Danish Arts Foundation). My thesis does not examine the reception of the books in the target market, nor suggest proposals for increasing the number of books published. Yet I offer a broad explanation of the field that might inform decision-makers who wish to ensure that new texts are translated, published, and publicised from Denmark for audiences in the UK. In addition – as described in my Impact Statement – the creation of the first formal association for Danish-English literary translators supports this field and provides a useful point of contact for stakeholders above.

Thesis Structure

This thesis focuses on the processes and people involved in the business of translating and publishing a Danish book in English in the UK during the period 1990 to 2015 inclusive. The thesis provides the in-depth context and theoretical framework upfront, followed by chapters focusing on key processes and agents bringing Danish literature into the UK. In the action of creating a structure for the thesis, I risk creating a linear narrative implying there is a ‘typical’ trajectory for a Danish book being translated and

published in the UK. Namely, the order of my chapters about the key aspects of publication might imply an accepted temporal order to each part of the process. Yet, as publication journeys described throughout the thesis make apparent, this ‘un-business-like business’ (ED 2017) of publishing does not always follow a routine pattern. For instance, instead of a publisher acquiring a book and then commissioning a translator, I have found it can also be the case that a translator introduces a book to a publisher thereby initiating the publishing process in a different order. Nevertheless, my thesis contents must be presented in a suitable logical order. Following the initial two chapters on theoretical and market context, my data and findings are presented under the headings of: Funding, Publishing, Translating, and Promoting.

Chapter 1 provides the theoretical toolkit for my thesis including terminology and concepts. Pierre Bourdieu’s field theory of cultural production including notions of capital are outlined first in this chapter as a lens for interpreting the interactions between all the agents involved in the publishing of Danish literature in Britain. The global literary system, including the hierarchy of languages and literatures globally, and the concept of cultural mobility are described next in order to aid interpretation of the context for Danish cultural exports reaching British audiences. Denmark is defined as a semi-peripheral ‘small nation’ given its linguistically, geographically, and culturally marginal position in the global literary system. A literature review positions my thesis within the Scandinavian Studies field leading to a discussion of the definitions of stereotypes and exoticism; concepts that assist in interpreting the overall scene of literature as part of a wider group of Danish cultural exports in Britain. Finally, I outline my methodology in finding sources and interviewing people. In essence, Chapter 1 presents my theoretical framework and methodologies.

Chapter 2 provides an overview of the context for Danish cultural exports entering the British market. The British publishing industry and the position of translated literature are described, including an overview of the market changes during this period. The scope and analysis of my corpus of books – Danish literature published for the first time in the UK between 1990 and 2015 inclusive – is outlined. The corpus starts in 1990 to show the immediate context surrounding *Miss Smilla*. It includes first-time publications (not re-issues/retranslations nor classic authors like Hans Christian Andersen) in order to focus on current publication journeys. My corpus comprises 125

books (fiction including novels, children's books, short stories or poetry in one bound collection, and drama). Around half were published between the start of 2010 and the end of 2015. Scandinavian crime fiction as a pervasive genre is appraised in light of the corpus findings, and Nordic Noir is defined in this chapter as a marketing genre subsuming many Scandinavian cultural exports.

The next four chapters focus in-depth on core agents and processes involved in publishing and disseminating Danish literature in the UK: state funders, publishers, translators, and promotion.

The Danish welfare state has, since its inception, provided financial and structural support for cultural endeavour in Denmark and, significantly, dissemination of culture outside Denmark. **Chapter 3: Funding** opens with an overview of Nordic state funding for cultural dissemination abroad, followed by a history of such endeavours within Denmark to provide context. This chapter then investigates funding for translated literature from the Danish Arts Foundation in practice. The Danish Arts Foundation is therefore both a hands-off funder of this project and an object of its research. Much of the material for this chapter draws on interviews with key staff and committee members and participation in translators' events organised by the Danish Arts Foundation. A sample of applications to the Translation Fund is used to examine aspects of the Danish Arts Foundation's support for translated books, including the policy of part-funding (rather than full-funding), expert committees, and notions of quality and market forces. This chapter identifies how these funding decision-makers are embedded in their source culture, and how reliant many books and publishers in the UK are upon state cultural funding from Denmark. Acquiring funding to support translation and publication can be the first step in ensuring a Danish book comes to market abroad, hence the positioning of this chapter as an extension of the cultural context given in Chapter 2 and the first of the key agents to consider in many publication journeys.

Each publisher in my corpus has its own position in the field of publishing Danish literature in Britain. **Chapter 4: Publishing** opens by examining the significance of small publishers. Niche literary projects published by independents Norvik Press, Dedalus, and newcomer Nordisk Books demonstrate how distinct publishers

consecrate the books they publish differently. In this chapter I introduce Christopher MacLehose, who has been described as having a magic touch for successfully introducing foreign fiction into the British market (including, from Scandinavia, P. O. Enquist, Stieg Larsson, Henning Mankell, Lars Mytting, and Jo Nesbø). A comparative case study of the publication journeys and marketing for two ‘MacLehose authors’ from Denmark starts in this chapter and forms a ‘red thread’ throughout the following chapters in order to practically illustrate crucial aspects within this field. Describing the publication journey of Høeg’s *Miss Smilla* provides context for various interactions and relationships described in my thesis, as it is still cited as a pivotal Danish book in translation. *Miss Smilla* famously sold over a million copies in Britain in contrast with Jakob Ejersbo’s *Africa* trilogy (*Exile, Revolution, Liberty*: 2011; 2012; 2014) which has sold only 600 copies in total to date, with very little publicity. This chapter gives an overview of the contrasting acquisition journeys for these books, emphasising the utmost importance from the start of the publishing process of ‘a network of professional friendships’ (Ries 1998, 38).

Chapter 5: Translating examines the roles and identities of Danish to English literary translators. The chapter opens by looking at their day-to-day work, in which I continue the practical comparative case study of the translation of *Miss Smilla* and the *Africa* trilogy by looking at the very different ‘transediting’ (Wirtén 2004, 48) processes in these publication journeys. Next, this chapter looks at aspects of the professionalisation and identity of these translators. Freelance literary translators must by necessity make efforts to find their next contract; typically, they undertake a lot of unpaid labour time to build up their careers. These efforts build up the prestige and status in the field of both the individual translator and their profession. Many (though not all) translators expend extensive additional unpaid labour time on networking and maintaining relationships with authors, other translators, editors, state cultural funders, and publishers. A crucial finding in this chapter – based on my extensive interviews with translators in the field – is that Danish-English literary translators can often be very involved in publishing processes beyond the translation of the text, including scouting, pitching, and promoting.

As established in Chapter 5, Danish-English literary translators often seem to have an unofficial role of acting as ‘scouts’ and *de facto* literary agents for British and Danish

publishers. **Chapter 6: Promoting** opens with examples of how translators can be such ambassadors for their books in this field. Next in this chapter I use the comparative case study of divergent ‘MacLehose books’ to examine promotional efforts by publishers in relation to PR, authors, and marketing strategies. I conclude this chapter by investigating the role of Borealism (a positive exoticism of the North) in the promotion of Danish books in translation in the British context. *Miss Smilla* was promoted as Boreal, but not particularly Danish, whereas the *Africa* trilogy was promoted as neither Boreal nor Danish. Using two contrasting publication journeys illustrates different aspects of the promotional process in practice, as well as the significance of key agents and concepts.

The resulting thesis is a detailed insight into the key agents involved in the processes of publishing, funding, translating, and promoting Danish literature in Britain. The analysis is illustrated using publication journeys resulting from my primary research (corpus and interviews). The thesis **Conclusion** summarises my key findings and suggests ideas for future research based on my data and other sources. The full data from my corpus research is presented in a table in Appendix A, and the transcripts of most of the interviews I conducted are in Appendix B.

Denmark as Part of Brand Scandinavia

Within the Nordic countries, a clear distinction is generally recognised between each nation (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden), the three Scandinavian nations (Denmark, Norway, Sweden), and the wider Nordic region. Norden has sometimes been constructed as a historical region and united mental construct by its inhabitants: ‘*Norden* is perceived as something non-European, non-Catholic, anti-Rome, anti-imperialist, non-colonial, non-exploitative, peaceful, small, and social democratic’ (Østergård 1997, 25: original emphasis). Indeed, some scholarship argues for eighteenth-century origins of Nordic Exceptionalism – the notion that Nordic people and societies share particular qualities that resulted in the Nordic Model and welfare state – especially by portraying the enlightened peasant as the foremost symbol of the Nordic *Sonderweg* (Sørensen and Stråth 1997, 1). This self-perspective perpetuates a notion of togetherness that is more nuanced in reality, concealing big differences

between the five main Nordic countries, in which societal change has been unpredictable and inconsistent (Hilson 2008, 17).

Outside the Nordic region, including from a British perspective, the terms Scandinavian and Nordic are often used interchangeably, ‘something that from an intra-Nordic self-image has been unthinkable’ (Harvard and Stadius 2013a, 2). For instance, in Chinese, the term *beiou* labels all of Scandinavia or Northern Europe (cf. Allen 2016, 218; JNF 2015). European values surveys conclude too that ‘[t]he Danish character [is] perceived and represented by other European countries as a part of a larger stereotyped Scandinavian character’ (Adriansen 2007, 140), grouping Denmark into part of a homogenous Nordic mass. This renders Denmark invisible in some international contexts: ‘Denmark has the “Scandinavian premium” (because Scandinavia is a powerful international brand), but [...] the country itself is relatively unknown’ (Anholt 2010, 51-2).

In my thesis, it is important to recognise that Denmark is perceived as part of a broader Brand Scandinavia. The concept of Brand Scandinavia is shorthand for the imagery and stereotypes associated with Scandinavia, especially by external observers such as British audiences for my purposes. Nation branding tendencies have increased over the time period covered by this thesis. Concerted efforts have been made by Danish state cultural agencies to project positive brand values via tourism campaigns and funding initiatives. Yet this is in conflict with the perspective that small nations ‘are culturally, socially, ethnically and politically more homogenous, with this making agreement about national representations easier’ (Browning 2015, 293), in fact there is no single Brand Scandinavia broadcaster, just as there is no single receiving audience abroad. State-funded institutions like the national arts councils, embassies, and tourism agencies, private companies like Lego, IKEA, and Carlsberg, and cultural exports including literature, film, and television programmes all have a part to play in fulfilling and creating Brand Scandinavia.

Understanding the imagery and values associated with Denmark aids interpretation of the selection criteria, promotion, and dissemination of translated Danish literature in Britain. Relevant concepts of stereotypes and the (generally positive) exoticism of Scandinavia by external observers are defined as part of the context-setting in Chapter 1 in relation to the dissemination and reception of Danish cultural exports. Throughout my thesis, I make references to the position of Denmark in relation to its immediate ‘brand neighbours’ Norway and Sweden (for instance,

comparing instances of literature in translation in Chapter 2, or the strength of their literary networks in Britain in Chapter 3). My focus on Denmark is thereby placed into its wider context throughout, while retaining my research aim of investigating the agents and processes in publishing translated Danish literature specifically. I explore nation branding, stereotypes, and Brand Scandinavia in more depth in a separate publication outside this thesis (Kythor forthcoming).

Reflection on Researcher Participation

Taking a literary-sociological approach to my thesis necessitated field research as well as research at my desk in the UK. Elements of ethnographic and bibliographic research were undertaken during my visits to Copenhagen, Odense, and even further afield to New York. The participatory methodology invites brief reflection as I have become one of the agents within the field being investigated.

As part of the Impact PhD studentship, I was asked by the Danish Arts Foundation to establish the first network for Danish-English literary translators. In fulfilling the role requested by the PhD co-funders to establish and chair the translators' network, I organised and participated in events directly and indirectly related to this community. I thereby soon became one of the active agents within the field of study, for instance co-organising an author/translator event at the Free Word Centre in London in 2014, and chairing network meetings at the Danish Embassy in London and *Kulturstyrelsen* (the Danish Agency for Culture) in Copenhagen. DENT (the Danish-English Network of Literary Translators) was founded informally in 2014, and soon its online community had around forty members. DENT was relaunched as DELT (the Association of Danish-English Literary Translators) in early 2018 as part of establishing its formal structure with its first committee (DELTmod 2018). DELT is an independent unincorporated association run by a volunteer committee and is open to membership for literary translators of Danish into English resident anywhere in the world. As the translators' network was established very late in the time period covered by my thesis, its impact on the field cannot be measured as the organisation is still new. It tends only to be mentioned by translators in my interviews in relation to my own capacity in setting up the network. For these reasons, it is not a significant component of this written thesis. Yet the ability to identify and meet translators for inclusion in my thesis (in interviews and other correspondence) resulted directly from

my efforts to create this network. Being the recipient of the PhD studentship also resulted in invitations from the Danish Arts Foundation to attend relevant events as an observer (such as the first translators' summer school in Roskilde in 2015), and from the Danish Embassy in London to book launches and similar cultural events. These were instructive for my immersive approach to researching aspects of the field.

Humanities research thrives on understanding social interactions – the dynamic relationships that cannot be investigated or illustrated solely with quantitative data. The researcher inevitably must draw their own biased conclusions: 'The researcher's role as both filter and interpreter is in equal parts the strength and weakness of ethnographic research' (Jenkins 2011, 31). Attempts at pure objectivity are fruitless and unnecessary in this type of project, as Richard Jenkins discovered in his one-year field study into small-town Denmark: 'While this closeness renders objectivity even more elusive than usual, it also offers the prospect of going beyond the blandness of official public reality, to move into the realm of unguarded moments and personal opinions' (Jenkins 2011, 32). The role of the thesis author as a participant in the field therefore results in the ability to take the research further than official published reports, marketing materials, or database results. Without my participation, it would have otherwise been very challenging for me to identify subjects for recorded interviews. I was able to learn about the publishing world first hand, be introduced to key contacts, and hear unguarded remarks enabling a nuanced broad understanding of the who, what, why, and how of translation and publishing in the field of Danish-English literature. This participation has been crucial to gain a thorough and legitimate picture of this field.

From the start of research for my thesis, and arguably earlier given my BA and MA degrees were also undertaken at the Department of Scandinavian Studies at UCL, I have been immersed in the context of the field of study. My supervision team, as associate professors in one of only two remaining university departments of modern Scandinavian Studies in the UK, are also immersed in this field of Danish-English translation in the British context. This is illustrated by some of the publication journeys uncovered later in the thesis (for instance, translator Paul Russell Garrett being introduced to Aurora Metro publishers by Jakob Stougaard-Nielsen), their research interests (Stougaard-Nielsen's *Scandinavian Crime Fiction*, 2017), and formal roles within the field (C. Claire Thomson is a committee member for the Anglo-Danish Society Scholarships, and a Director of Norvik Press). Thomson was the original

collaborator with the Danish Arts Foundation on establishing this first Impact PhD Studentship in Danish-English Translation at UCL, including writing the initial parameters for the overall project. Thereby – as is perhaps inevitable for research into small-language areas – the thesis author, DELT, the studentship funders, the thesis supervisors, and the project itself are all caught up in the scene being analysed.

CHAPTER 1 – Theoretical Framework and Scholarly Context

In order to interpret the process of bringing a book to the British market from Denmark, structure must be applied to unravel how a book is selected, translated, published, and marketed. This analysis must identify the key people involved in these decision-making processes. ‘Literature’ for the purposes of my research is defined in strict contrast to non-fiction, but this word is notoriously difficult to define and holds many connotations. Its Latin root *litteratura* means writing or scholarship. In English, ‘fiction’ is commonly used to denote works of ‘literature’ in contrast to non-fiction factual books (Kjældgaard and Simonsen 2013, 17), and the latter are excluded from my corpus. In common parlance, the label ‘literature’ is often used to ‘apply only to a selection of highly valorized, prestigious texts (the textual form of “high culture”)’ (Leerssen 2007c, 351). Revealingly, one Danish author and funding decision-maker expressed during an interview a value dichotomy between ‘*litterær litteratur*’ and ‘*lettere genrer*’ (‘literary literature’ and ‘lighter genres’: ALMJ 2015). This interpretation emphasises the negative correlation between ‘literary’ and ‘mainstream’ books; traditionally, the most highly-regarded cultural products are for the discerning few. Literature in my thesis includes works of fiction regardless of their consecration or mass appeal, although my research will portray and appraise the value judgements made by agents in this context. Even the fundamental definition of literature – a core component of my thesis – illustrates a hierarchical bias among readers and publishers. In light of these ingrained hierarchies, it is appropriate to explore the vocabulary and theoretical approaches that will most fittingly help me interpret the publishing of translated Danish literature in the UK.

1.1. Choosing a Lens: Fields of Cultural Production and Cultural Capital

The ‘un-business-like business’ (ED 2017) of publishing cannot be understood via capitalist economic theories alone, but rather via a form of cultural economics. Sociologist Pierre Bourdieu’s approaches have been central to research into publishing for this reason. Understanding Bourdieu’s model of interpreting culture and society

therefore firstly enables comprehension of a range of contemporary scholarship on publishing as his concepts have shaped various approaches. In the mid-twentieth century, Bourdieu's interpretation of literature in society tore down nationalistic interpretations of culture based in nineteenth-century Romanticism and challenged the notion of 'intrinsic value' in the beauty of art. Instead, Bourdieu offered the interpretation that the value of art was created by people and institutions as part of a wider struggle to assert a position and identity in society. A rationale for applying Bourdieu's field theory to a project such as mine stems from the fact that 'literary activity was central to Bourdieu's theoretical schema' (Bennett et al. 2009, 95). Pertinently, Bourdieu's approach offers me a lens through which to apply order to the complexity of publishing translated Danish literature in Britain. This section will explain terminology and the applicability of Bourdieu's field theory for my thesis, including its limitations and why nevertheless this has been chosen above alternative models.

1.1.1 Terminology and Definitions

Bourdieu's *field* as a unit of analysis provides a way of interpreting a national book market and how it fits into society's wider social and economic space. A field of cultural production in society might be, for instance, the artistic field, scientific field, or literary field, and is defined by Bourdieu as 'the system of objective relations between [...] agents or institutions and as the site of the struggles for the monopoly of the power to consecrate, in which the value of works of art and belief in that value are continuously generated' (Bourdieu 1993, 78). Perceiving the literary domain in this way emphasises to the researcher that the production of cultural objects cannot be removed from their societal context, including the hierarchies between participants within this network. Fields are specific to time and space. To map a literary field, its time (for instance, 'the nineteenth century' or 'post-WWII') and its space (for instance, 'literature published in Scandinavia') must both be delineated. The field investigated in my thesis is Danish literature published for the first time in English in the UK in the period 1990-2015.

The field is a dynamic (not static) social system or network. Bourdieu concedes that delineating fields risks creating a static formal model by strictly delimiting positions and institutions (Bourdieu 2004, 27). Yet such a map is a valuable aid to interpreting the interactions of participants or *agents* within it. The agents in the field

studied in my thesis are multifarious, including the publishers, editors, authors, translators, funders, and consumers, and a number are studied in-depth in later chapters. Bourdieu's approach has been justifiably criticised for not taking into account the individual human agents who constitute institutions (Jenkins 2002, 89-90). I find this limiting and my approach is to focus on individual agents (such as translators) and the people within institutions (such as staff at cultural funders or publishers) wherever possible.

Bourdieu applies concepts familiar from economic discourse – namely *capital* – to otherwise 'invisible' transactions within society and culture. None of the agents in the field have equal capital or power. Each agent (individual or institution) has a position or positions in the field of cultural production and wider field of society, and this position results from the accumulation of three categories of capital: economic, cultural, and social. Economic capital is the most tangible to observe: it is directly convertible into money and material goods. Cultural capital is intangible capital that can be embodied, objectified (in cultural goods), or institutionalised (Bourdieu 2004, 17); for instance, it 'may be institutionalized in the form of educational qualifications' (Bourdieu 2004, 16). Cultural capital 'is convertible, in certain conditions, into economic capital' (ibid.), because cultural capital is, at its root, a transformed and disguised form of economic capital (Bourdieu 2004, 24). Social capital is reflected by connections between people: the social exchanges within a durable network and membership within a group (Bourdieu 2004, 21). The term 'symbolic capital' envelopes both cultural and social capital as they are represented and recognised symbolically (Bourdieu 2004, 27). Symbolic capital is therefore recognised via 'a relationship of knowledge', which is more 'disguised' than tangible, material economic capital (ibid.). Throughout my thesis, the notion of symbolic capital is brought to the fore when pertinent in interpreting interactions between agents who are working to foster the market for translated Danish literature in the UK, as so often these interactions are not explained only by examining the quantifiable measures of economic capital.

Bourdieu outlines how a person's cultural, social, and symbolic capital combine to form spiritual capital, which in turn combines with economic resources to form one's personal patrimony (Douglas 1982, 129). An agent's personal patrimony is embodied in their *habitus*: their efforts to attain and maintain capital and position in the field through their actions and dispositions. Habitus exists as 'a socially constituted

cognitive capacity' (Bourdieu 2004, 27) for knowledge about the field and its participants, and thereby how to attain and maintain symbolic capital. Drawing primarily on the societal importance of reproduction and inheritance, Bourdieu's notion of 'habitus drew attention to how we come to habituate ourselves to certain routines and thereby reproduce practices' (Bennett et al. 2009, 13). Habitus can be described as an agent's conscious or unconscious 'feel for the game' (Johnson 1993, 5). No one enters the game to lose; there is a presumption that agents (seek to) possess the knowledge and skill to be accepted as a legitimate participant within the field (cf. Johnson 1993, 8). The unwritten rules of the field have been called *doxa* by Bourdieu (1996, 184-5). Bourdieu explains 'habitus is necessity internalized and converted into a disposition that generates meaningful practices and meaning-giving perceptions' (Bourdieu 1984, 170). Criticisms of the 'useful but often vexingly circular concept of habitus' (English 2005, 364) point to imprecise elements in definition: do individuals enter a field with their own embodied existing habitus, or does each field generate its own habitus for individuals to then acquire (Jenkins 2002, 90)? In practice both must be plausible owing to the exchanges of cultural and social capital in order to gain a position in the field. In my thesis, *habitus* refers to individual agents' dispositions and tendencies to assert an identity within the field and thereby legitimately be able to follow the *doxa* to 'play the game'. For example, in Chapter 4 I identify how the founder of newcomer Nordisk Books quickly learns these unwritten rules and gains position in the field by shoring up symbolic capital, and in Chapters 5 and 6 I describe how literary translators often strengthen their habitus via increased symbolic capital accrued from unpaid labour time activities.

The literary field is a dynamic, changing environment expressed by Bourdieu as a 'field of struggles' (Bourdieu 1993, 30) owing to the hierarchy of value. Value is produced by institutions, each with vested interests, and each with a position in the field (Bourdieu 1993, 34-5). The word consecration is typically used in a religious setting to refer to a service or ritual that sanctifies an object or person, and this metaphor has been adopted by Bourdieu to refer to producing value within the literary system: 'Cultural consecration does indeed confer on the objects, persons and situations it touches, a sort of ontological promotion akin to a transubstantiation' (Bourdieu 1984, 6). A field is a site of consecration 'in which the value of works of art and belief in that value are continuously generated' (Bourdieu 1993, 78). There are no objective measurable criteria for ascribing value to a work of literature. Value is based

purely on societal belief, produced and reinforced by agents in the field: ‘The work of art is an object which exists as such only by virtue of the (collective) belief which knows and acknowledges it as a work of art’ (Bourdieu 1993, 35). Consensus on the value of a literary text is created through a system of symbolic production. The commercial value of a book is not commensurate with only the economic cost of its material production, but rather its value as a work of art is

the product of a vast operation of *social alchemy* jointly conducted, with equal conviction and very unequal profits, by all the agents involved in the field of production, i.e. obscure artists and writers as well as “consecrated” masters, critics and publishers as well as authors, enthusiastic clients as well as convinced vendors. (Bourdieu 1993, 81: original emphasis)

Publishers produce value through the process of consecration by selecting and bringing a book to market. Institutions within the literary field including universities, critics, and cultural prizes privilege ‘sacred’ (consecrated) art and reinforce the production of symbolic collective belief (cf. Bourdieu 1993, 35). This all relates intrinsically to the concept of capital: different actors in the field bestow cultural capital onto a literary product, and capital itself is created and reinforced by collective belief. As such, a book is both a physical material object and a cultural object – ‘a living social institution’ imbued with value and a particular class of habitus (Bourdieu 2004, 27). The notion of the field of struggles makes explicit a power differential and hierarchy between agents involved in its publication. In the context of the field investigated in my thesis, value and consecration are important concepts in examining why particular books were considered suitable for publication by publishers, funders, and translators. For instance, cultural value is demonstrated as particularly significant for Danish state funding decision-makers in Chapter 3 of my thesis.

A publisher, not the writer, is the ‘true producer’ of the economic and cultural value of a book (Bourdieu 1993, 76). The role of the publisher is to exploit the labour of the creator (in this field, both the author and translator of a Danish book), make a judgement as to whether a book fits to bestow the desired capital on their business (economic, but also symbolic), and consecrate the product. Publishers consecrate differently depending on the position and capital they hold in the field (cf. Bourdieu 1993, 76-7). Within a field such as the British market, different publishers have diverse agendas that place weight differently on cultural and economic capital. Different books and genres are valuable to lesser or greater extents to different publishers depending on the capital publishers wish to accrue and the position they wish to attain in this field.

Large-scale cultural production has the primary motivation of economic capital, whereas ‘the field of restricted production tends to develop its own criteria for the evaluation of its products, thus achieving the truly cultural recognition accorded by the peer group whose members are both privileged clients and competitors’ (Bourdieu 1993, 115). Bourdieu’s analysis of restricted cultural production is beneficial for understanding the motivations of small publishers, for whom symbolic capital is held in higher regard than economic capital (cf. Bourdieu 1993, 102-3). There is a space for both large and small publishers in the book market as they generally have different outputs: ‘Avant-garde publishers and the producers of best-sellers both agree that they would inevitably come to grief if they took it into their heads to publish works objectively assigned to the opposite pole in the publishing universe’ (Bourdieu 1993, 96). The two types of cultural production do not hold neutral value: there is a hierarchy of commercial (mass-market) versus avant-garde (high-brow) cultural production. Bourdieu points to how ‘the practices and ideologies of consumers are largely determined by the level of the goods they produce or consume’ (Bourdieu 1993, 129), meaning that conspicuous cultural consumption of either large-scale or avant-garde cultural products also defines a consumer’s identity. This identification of society’s two sub-fields of mass and restricted production ‘offers the potential to make sense of a whole series of everyday actions and discourses in the making of symbolic goods’ (Hesmondhalgh 2006, 217).

Bourdieu’s concepts foreground the power relations and identity politics integral to my study and apply an appropriate filter through which to interpret the chaos of human interactions, giving a semblance of logic to an otherwise arbitrary and messy system. Bourdieu’s interpretation of the field of cultural production is still used enthusiastically by those analysing the book market today, so a summary of applications by relevant adherents within the sociology of literature² is briefly given next to emphasise the precedent and relevance of using Bourdieu in my thesis as well.

1.1.2 Relevant Applications of Field Theory

Bourdieu’s notions of capital, value, and consecration are tied to the society and time that he was analysing (nineteenth-century literature in France), therefore do not *directly* correspond with the complexities of culture and art in other contexts. Yet

² The ‘sociology of literature’ here is taken to mean the study of the publishing industry and bibliographies of books (e.g. McKenzie 1999, 5), not the 1970s Danish school (*litteratursociologi*) critiquing the means of production from a Marxist perspective (cf. Svedjedal 1996).

many academic disciplines have taken vocabulary and inspiration from Bourdieu's field theory. This section summarises some particularly relevant twenty-first-century applications.

In *Merchants of Culture* (2010), John Thompson draws explicitly on Bourdieu's concept of fields as an aid to understanding the publishing industry. For Thompson, field theory forces the observer to think in relational terms about a plurality of worlds (Thompson 2010, 4) and to recognise that the power of any agent involved in the publishing process depends on their resources, that is, economic, human, social, intellectual, and symbolic capital (Thompson 2010, 5). Thompson also applies Bourdieu's interpretations on valuing the valueless, for instance describing the 'web of collective belief' apparent in creating marketing buzz for 'Big Books' (Thompson 2010, 193). James English (2005) explains he uses Bourdieu's approach to the sociology of culture in his research into the growth of literary prizes because 'no other strain of contemporary scholarship has gone further in exploring the kinds of the questions that a study of cultural prizes needs to address' (English 2005, 8). English affirms that capital 'is used to designate anything that registers as an asset, and can be put profitably to work, in one or another domain of human endeavor' (English 2005, 9). English's application of Bourdieu enables him to conclude that literary prizes are the best instrument for negotiating transactions between cultural, economic, social, or political capital: 'they are our most effective institutional agents of *capital intraconversion*' (English 2005, 10; original emphasis). The rise of the literary prize demonstrates a more complex history of relationships between cultural capital and the book market than Bourdieu's high culture/mass culture dualist structure proposes (English 2005, 329). Every form of capital exists in varying relations to all other fields and all other types of capital (English 2005, 10), and this assertion that there cannot be pure autonomy is a facet of Bourdieu's approach echoed by Claire Squires (2009, 55-6). In *Marketing Literature* (2009), Squires works towards a theory of book marketing using field theory, establishing that the definition of literary fiction is fluid, but arguing that it cannot be interpreted from the dualist hierarchical value-laden binary of Bourdieu's fields of cultural production (Squires 2009, 57). In *Hvor Litteraturen Finder Sted* ('Where Literature Takes Place': Mai 2010-2011), Anne-Marie Mai presents a comprehensive history of literature in Denmark by focusing on its places of production and consumption. Volume II's final chapter *Refleksioner over litteraturhistorisk teori og metode* ('Reflections on Literary Historical Theory and

Method': 2010, 212-239) is inspirational for my approach as Mai describes her research parameters and methods *vis a vis* her study of book history. Mai explicitly draws on Bourdieu's field theory: 'Jeg benytter [...] Bourdieus begreb om det litterære felt, der kan medvirke til at kategorisere de komplekse moderne og postmoderne relationer og udvekslinger mellem læsere, forfattere, tekster og genrer i det 20. århundredes nye tider' ('I use Bourdieu's concept of the literary field which can help to categorise the complex modern and postmodern relationships and exchanges between readers, authors, texts and genres in the new times of the 20th century': Mai 2010, 237). In considering literature in the twentieth century, Mai proposes that 'bladhuset er centralt i konfigureringen af de moderne litterære felter' ('the printed press is central to the structure of modern literary fields': Mai 2010, 237).

Within media and journalism studies, Rodney Benson and Eric Neveu argue that the virtue of applying field theory is that it helps position journalism in its wider systemic environment. Fields are historically-bound and evoke relational social analysis: 'This relational approach helps us locate, situate and explain the very real differences among media outlets according to their possession of different types and quantities of capital' (Benson and Neveu 2005, 18). Field theory benefits journalism studies because of its consideration of the macro level of relations between and within fields, and also 'at the "micro" level, by inviting us to take into account journalists' primary and secondary education, the daily details of their interdependencies, and how their dispositions fit their objective positions' (Neveu 2005, 206). This application sets out the usefulness of Bourdieu's sociological toolkit in a manner whence I can draw immediate parallels with the agents in the field I am investigating (namely, translators, for instance). In an unrelated but similar vein, Rakefet Sela-Sheffy's (2014; 2016) extensive research into the professional identities and status of Israeli literary translators uses Bourdieu's notions of capital, habitus, and *doxa* to account for the behaviours of participants in this field; this provides inspiration for my approach to studying Danish-English literary translators in Chapter 5.

There are limitations to using Bourdieu's approaches. For instance, his heavily class-based interpretations of society tend to play down intersectional elements of gender and ethnicity (Bennett et al. 2009, 2). In addition, Bourdieu focuses less on the realities of contemporary, commercial publishing than on case studies of the restricted sub-fields of nineteenth-century French literature: 'It is simply astonishing how little Bourdieu has to say about large-scale, "heteronomous" commercial cultural

production' (Hesmondhalgh 2006, 217). To take into account the limitations of his original specific context, scholars have generally applied Bourdieu's concepts with caveats and the integration of other perspectives. For instance, in the three-volume series mentioned above, Mai also takes inspiration from Edward S Casey's 'place-worlds' (Mai 2010, 232), Moretti's 'mapping' of novels (235) and approaches to literary history from Ricœur and Valdés (227; 230). Additional examples of this multi-scholar approach appear in section 3.1 below on other existing scholarship on my field of study. For this reason, it is worth briefly exploring an alternative methodology I might have considered.

1.1.3 Alternative to Field Theory

An alternative approach to interpret how and why actions are taken within this world of publishing is Actor-Network-Theory (ANT). This approach to social science is proposed by Bruno Latour (*Reassembling the Social*, 2005, for instance) and John Law (2004). From Latour's perspective, using ANT as an analytical tool requires consideration of all 'actors' in the scene – human and non-human – as active participants, and a perception of the social world relationally rather than hierarchically. Law describes creating order from 'mess' in social science research (2004), as illustrated in practice by his study of the assemblages involved in the production of an aeroplane in *Aircraft Stories* (2002). The result of 'drawing things together without centering them' (Law 2002, 2) is a 'fractional coherence' (ibid.); a method which might be applicable to interpreting the assemblages of all manner of products including a book. It could be beneficial for a study like mine to consider equally all participants in a network, including, for example, the embedded researcher, the commercial printer, and the physical bound book. Several recent cultural studies in my field have used ANT approaches. For example, in Claire Thomson's investigation into Danish public information films, she found ANT valuable 'as a way of thinking' (Thomson 2018, 33) especially given the historical focus of her study. 'The story is all the more human, I venture, because of the non-human things' (Thomson 2018, 34), specifically, the technological and other practical challenges that required filmmakers to adapt their practice. Attributing agency to non-human actors in publication journeys in my thesis, including physical books or even the cargo container that carried printed manuscripts from Denmark to the UK, would create a much larger, more complex project, without necessarily improving my findings. While books are cultural objects imbued with

symbolic capital, they are not studied here as ‘actors’ comparable with people who consecrate them.

While ANT’s consideration of all participants in a network relationally is less antagonistic than the Bourdieusian assumption that there is inherently a hierarchy, there *is* observably a hierarchy of power between participants when translating and publishing a book. Furthermore, a heavily conceptual approach is likely to obscure the quantitative and qualitative findings in this data-rich thesis, inhibiting its dissemination to intended audiences adjacent to the academic sphere such as professional translators or state institutions in Denmark. Although Bourdieu’s approaches have traditionally been applied to a national rather than international field (as discussed further in the next section), Bourdieu’s concepts are nevertheless widely understood and accessible. The benefit of using Bourdieu’s key concepts of *field*, *agents*, *capital*, *habitus*, *doxa* and cultural *value* as terminology throughout my thesis is to keep the focus on the potentially inexplicable motivations of human participants. Bourdieu’s vocabulary can additionally be complemented by other theoretical approaches to consider the full publication journey from Danish into the UK, and these will be discussed below in section 2.

1.1.4 Applicability to International Cultural Exchange

The only paper in which Bourdieu addresses international exchange is ‘The Social Conditions of the International Circulation of Ideas’ (Bourdieu 1999; originally published in 1990), which focuses on academic schools of thought, rather than the commercial book market. In the paper, Bourdieu acknowledges that ‘the sense and function of a foreign work is determined not simply by the field of origin, but in at least equal proportion by the field of reception’ (Bourdieu 1999, 222). Bourdieu feels it is problematic that in the field of reception, texts circulate without their context from the field of production, so readers re-interpret texts within the context of the new field of reception (Bourdieu 1999, 221). Bourdieu mentions the ‘gate-keepers’ (this English term is used in his original 1990 article: Meylaerts 2005, 279) responsible for introducing a foreign text into a new field of reception – thereby consecrating it – yet does not elucidate much on how these agents are involved in the process of selection, labelling, and classifying the texts in their new field (cf. Bourdieu 1999, 222).

Significantly for my purposes, Bourdieu presented very little scholarship on *international* cultural exchange, preferring to focus on *intranational* themes in keeping

with sociological approaches at his time of writing (Meylaerts 2005, 278). For this reason, applying field theory has been demonstrably beneficial in contexts where the unit of analysis is nationally-bound, such as in the case of analysing newsrooms within media studies (Benson and Neveu 2005, 11). Yet I maintain that field theory can also provide a useful foundation for analysing relations between different international spheres, given its focus on the motivations of people.

Maira Inghilleri (2005) outlines how Bourdieu's approaches are increasingly useful within the discipline of Translation and Interpreting Studies by bringing the focus away from this discipline's typical textual analysis towards understanding translation as a socially-situated practice (Inghilleri 2005, 126). Johan Heilbron and Gisèle Sapiro (2007), in outlining their sociology of translation, concur that to understand translation as a social practice, all the agents involved should be analysed, rather than just texts (Heilbron and Sapiro 2007, 104). Heilbron and Sapiro agree with Bourdieu's interpretation that a purely economic approach to the book market is reductive, perceiving it too as a market of symbolic goods dissimilar to other commodities, yet they acknowledge the lack of recognition given by Bourdieu to translation (2007, 94).

Pascale Casanova (2004) draws direct inspiration from Bourdieu when considering capital and power differentials between cultures in the global literary system. As already stated, Bourdieu describes the struggle for power within fields of cultural production in a single national context. Casanova is a proponent of applying Bourdieu's notions to *international* contexts, stating that the boundaries, centres, and forms of communication of the 'literature-world' are independent from the political or economic world (Casanova 2004, 11). The global literary system works with currencies of symbolic capital much like the national field of cultural production: 'literary value' circulates in the market of the literary economy (Casanova 2004, 13).

To supplement Bourdieu's very limited work on international cultural exchange, other disciplines and approaches must be integrated. The next section of this chapter offers further elements of the toolkit for interpreting the transnational publication journeys in my thesis, complementary to Bourdieu's field theory.

1.2 The Global Literary System: A Small Nation's Cultural Mobility

This section looks at approaches to analysing the global dynamics involved in publishing translated literature. Technological developments in the Industrial Revolution, including ships, trains and telegraph, reduced the distance within and between languages (cf. DeLanda 1997, 242). English was one of the first languages to become standardised and widespread owing to Britain's forerunning position in industrialisation. English became the language of the majority of 'neo-Europes' (colonies) worldwide following British imperialism on almost every continent (DeLanda 1997, 241). While the UK was dominant globally during the Industrial Revolution, after the end of World War II, the USA rapidly gained cultural and economic dominance worldwide. English soon usurped the dominance of French in the arts and globally '[b]y the early 1950s, over 20 percent of all books were published in English (less than 10 percent in French), and 50 percent of the world's newspapers and 60 percent of the world's broadcasts were in English' (DeLanda 1997, 250). Books translated from another language now make up only around 3 per cent of British or American markets, compared with around 25 per cent in Sweden and up to 45 per cent in Greece, for example (cf. Svedjedal 2012, 213; Budapest Observatory 2011). In Denmark, the corresponding figure for the whole book market is 20 per cent, and literature that has been translated from another language into Danish represented 55 per cent of the Danish literary market in 2012 (Statistical Yearbook 2014, Table 168 and 169).³ The imbalance between literary translations into and from English globally has far-reaching causes and effects, beyond straightforward commercial interests, in particular in relation to the international dynamics of capital and cultural value.

1.2.1 Translation and Polysystems

A method of analysing the global circulation of texts in translation is Polysystems Theory, developed by Itamar Even-Zohar (1990a; 1990b; 1990c). Even-Zohar adapts Roman Jakobson's famous scheme of communication and language (cf. Jakobson 1960, 353) to draw a diagram of the macro factors of a Literary System, positioning its producers, consumers, institutions, and market (1990b, 31). Even-Zohar draws openly on Bourdieu when considering certain aspects of the Literary System, for instance:

³ In 2004, reportedly one in six books sold in Denmark was in English, which is a further illustration of the dominance of English in the global publishing context (Hawthornthwaite 2004, 10).

‘The nature of production, as well as that of consumption, is governed by the institution’ (1990b, 38). Significantly for the discipline of Translation Studies, Polysystems Theory advocates looking at the broader societal context for works of literature, rather than focusing on a text in isolation. Even-Zohar defines a polysystem as ‘a system of various systems which intersect with each other and partly overlap, using concurrently different options, yet functioning as one structured whole, whose members are interdependent’ (Even-Zohar 1990a, 11). There is not one centre and one periphery in a polysystem as each element might find itself in a different position in the hierarchy upon moving between systems (Even-Zohar 1990a, 14). Even-Zohar positions ‘translated literature not only as an integral system within any literary polysystem, but as a most active system within it’ (Even-Zohar 1990c, 46), while conceding that the ‘normal’ position of translated literature is nevertheless peripheral in many target cultures including anglophone markets (Even-Zohar 1990c, 50). Even-Zohar uses the term ‘polysystems’ to emphasise the multiplicity and intersections of the different positions. Theo Hermans states that ‘since all literary and cultural systems of any size may be assumed to be dynamic and heterogeneous, they are all polysystems’ (1999, 106) and therefore chooses to drop Even-Zohar’s ‘poly’ suffix as redundant and speak only of ‘systems’. This approach is adopted in my thesis when referring to the global literary system.

Even-Zohar’s Polysystems Theory is a useful starting point for considering translation beyond the written text and in its social context, yet in practice this theoretical approach tends not to be applied in isolation. Within Scandinavian Studies, for example, Ian Giles (2018) uses Toury’s Descriptive Translation Studies along with Polysystems Theory to inform an approach looking at the reception of translated books from Scandinavia in Britain, referring to national book markets as ‘literary polysystems’ (rather than fields as per my Bourdieu-derived definition), and Agnes Broomé (2014a) proposes a dense systemic conceptual model combining Polysystems Theory and Bourdieu’s field theory to interpret the field of Swedish literature in the British book market (both are included in section 3, below). Even-Zohar’s insistence that translated literature forms its own polysystem, which explains a translated book’s generally peripheral status in markets like the UK, disregards the mainstreaming of outlier cases of bestselling or canonical translated literature in the exported Scandinavian context such as Stieg Larsson’s *Millennium* series or *Miss Smilla*. A

supplementary approach looking at the exchange of translated literatures with more nuance is outlined next.

1.2.2 Peripheries and Centres

Drawing on Polysystems Theory and developing models devised by de Swaan (1993; 2001), Johan Heilbron's Sociology of Translation expresses the relationship between languages and literatures as a hierarchical global sociological system 'with central, semi-peripheral and peripheral languages' (Heilbron 2010, 309). Heilbron suggests today's global literary system might be imagined as a diagram with English at the centre in a 'hyper-central' position, as it is by far the language most translated from (by a factor of around five times more than the next 'most translated from' languages according to UNESCO's *Index Translationum*⁴). Then hyper-central English is neighboured by two 'central' languages, German and French, each with 10 per cent of all book translations globally (Heilbron 2010, 310). For example, Germany has one of the largest book markets in the world, with a market value of around €9,500 million – contrasted with the UK's smaller €3,900 million and the USA's colossal €27,400 million (Global Publishing Monitor 2014, 13). Germany and German tops *Index Translationum*'s statistics on target country and language for translated literature globally. While the British book market might not have as great a market value as Germany's, evidence of anglophone dominance in the global literary system is that literature imported from the USA and UK dominates other cultures. For instance, translations from English dominate the translated share of the German market at 69 per cent, or just under 3,000 translated literature titles from English per year (Budapest Observatory 2011, 62). A large proportion of all published literature in Germany is in translation – around 12 per cent (Frankfurter Buchmesse 2012), equating to around 5,300 books per year in all (Budapest Observatory 2011, 62). These hyper-central and central languages are surrounded by around six to eight 'semi-peripheral' languages representing those with 1-3 per cent of the total number of books translated in the world (Heilbron 2010, 310). Danish is one of the top ten languages translated *from* globally according to *Index Translationum* (the latest statistics are from 2008), therefore, by this definition, Danish has for many years filled the position of one of these semi-peripheral languages (Heilbron 2010, 310). Semi-peripheral languages are

⁴ Figures drawn from UNESCO's *Index Translationum* are indicative, but fallible, as different regions report differently and use different criteria to define a book and a new publication.

circled by an outer orbit of all other peripheral languages with less than 1 per cent of the world market, including, for example, Chinese. Despite a high number of speakers, titles translated from Chinese do not make up a large part of the translated literature market, leading to the marginal position of Chinese literature in the global literary system (cf. Wirtén 2007, 401). The number of speakers of a language is therefore no explanatory factor in the hierarchy of central, semi-peripheral, and peripheral languages in the global literary system (Heilbron and Sapiro 2007, 96).

Language itself is a core component of the global literary system, and ‘since language is not a purely literary tool, but an inescapably political instrument as well, it is through language that the literary world remains subject to political power’ (Casanova 2004, 115). As the UK and USA became leading powers in the neo-colonialist globalised world, the English language became economically and culturally central. Language and the status of translated literature categorises a literary system: ‘Maktbalansen mellan världens litteraturer påverkas av maktförhållanden mellan världens språk och nationer, relationer som kan delas in i tre huvudsfärer: politiska, ekonomiska och kulturella’ (‘The balance of power between the world’s literatures is influenced by the power relations between the world’s languages and nations, relations that can be divided into three main spheres: political, economic and cultural’: Svedjedal 2012, 210). The global imbalance of translations into and from English has a socio-cultural impact. Lawrence Venuti has attempted to analyse the personal – and, by extension, political – impact of translation trends in anglophone nations. Venuti states that the subordinate position of translation in the global literary system is ‘particularly embarrassing’ to the anglophone nations: ‘It calls attention to the questionable conditions of their hegemony, their own dependence on the domination of English, on unequal cultural exchange that involves the exploitation of foreign print and electronic media and the exclusion and stereotyping of foreign cultures at home’ (Venuti 1998, 159). Using similarly emotive language, he criticises ‘aggressively monolingual readerships in the United Kingdom and the United States, generally uninterested in translations’ (Venuti 2013, 159). Familiarity with the style or genre of a translated text increases the likelihood of a positive reception by the target reader and its selection by a publisher, who must consider commercial realities when choosing which and how many texts to translate: ‘Quite simply, a lot of money is made from translating English, but little is invested in translating into it’ (Venuti 1998, 160-1).

A primary consideration of my thesis is the position of Danish literature in the British market, and the next section will explain my interpretation of Denmark as a small nation and how it fits into the global literary system. This is followed by analysis of a small nation's cultural capital, taking into account the dominance of English, as described above.

1.2.3 Defining Denmark as a Small Nation

Power hierarchies in literary fields depend on the space being considered: Denmark has more influence within the Nordic literary field than in the European literary field or global literary field. To interpret exchanges of capital and value evident within publication journeys in my thesis, it is essential to consider the position in the global literary system of Denmark and the UK in relation to each other. The UK is part of the linguistic and literary centre in the global literary system owing to its dominance in the publishing world and the 'hyper-central' position of the English language. The position of Denmark is less clear cut. As mentioned above, Danish is one of the top ten languages translated from in the global literary market, therefore defined as semi-peripheral by Heilbrun. Yet, purely in terms of population size and GDP, Denmark is many times smaller than hundreds of nations globally.

Existing analyses in Film Studies of 'small nations' in relation to national cinemas is a beneficial starting point for approaching Danish literature in my thesis. Both film and literary production are artistic cultural endeavours, and academic disciplines seek to understand the socio-cultural role of each art form. There are fundamental structural and economic differences between the two fields. For instance, a film is vastly more expensive to produce than a literary product, and on transfer into another linguistic culture, film needs subtitles or dubbing while the images remain the same, whereas books need to be entirely rewritten (translated), reprinted and rebound. The introduction of Hjort and Petrie's *The Cinema of Small Nations* (2007) justifies the definition of small nations for their purposes, quickly establishing that '[t]he histories of power relevant to the small-nation status of such a range of specific places are complicated and do not lend themselves to easy generalisations or quick comparisons' (Hjort and Petrie 2007, 6). The authors identify four indicators of size to take into consideration: population, geographical area, gross national product (GNP) and domination/subordination (Hjort and Petrie 2007, 4-6). Each of these areas will be briefly considered here with reference to Denmark.

Firstly, population size influences the size of the country's consumer market, including its structures and processes, impacting on both the country's publishing sector and its social welfare state agency and support, for example (Hjort and Petrie 2007, 4). With a population of 5.6 million people, Denmark has a 0.09 per cent share of the world's population, in comparison with the UK's 0.96 per cent (approximately tenfold more). By population, Denmark is the 113th in the ranking of countries and territories by population size – the UK is 22nd – so strictly by population, Denmark is a much smaller nation than the UK and many other nations. As such, Denmark might be expected to have a smaller book market and related commercial structures than a larger country like the UK. Secondly, Hjort and Petrie take 'geographical scale seriously as an indicator of small nationhood' (2007, 5); Denmark is a geographically small nation, the 133rd largest by world rankings of land mass (considering Denmark alone, not its full Kingdom which includes the giant yet sparsely populated Greenland). Next, GNP shows a nation's income and output of its economy, including net income from its enterprises abroad (GDP – gross domestic product – measures only income/expenditure produced within the country). Denmark's GNP is \$86 billion. By comparison, the UK's GNP is \$2,590 billion (\$2,504 billion more than Denmark's) and the USA's \$5,077 billion (all USD, 2017: CEIC GNP). It is worth noting though, to put these figures into context, that Denmark ranks highly in the World Bank's and UN's lists of estimated GDP per capita, that is, wealth distribution (the country's GDP divided by its population): it is in the top ten, higher than the UK and USA, and it is labelled a 'high income' region by the OECD. Finally, on the factor of domination/subordination, historically Denmark has reigned over Iceland and Norway (fully reneged in 1944 and 1814 respectively). Denmark retains a sovereign relationship with 'the Unity of the Realm' (*Rigsfællesskabet*) comprising the Faroe Islands and Greenland, though both these nations separately gained home rule in the mid-twentieth century (and Greenland gained 'self-rule' in 2009). Superficial analyses conclude that these colonial elements make Denmark one of the more significant global powers, defined as a 'large nation' alongside France, Spain, and Germany, primarily because small nations were at some point subjected to foreign rule by a privileged class (cf. Hroch 1985, 9). In that interpretation, Norway is an example of a 'small nation', as it has been colonised by Denmark and Sweden, but Denmark would not be defined as a 'small nation', regardless of other factors such as the size of its population, geography, or GNP.

In my thesis, Denmark is defined as a ‘small nation’, rejecting single-factor interpretations of it being a large nation given its historical colonial relationships, and in line with contemporary film scholars’ perspectives including Hjort and Petrie’s reasoned definition above (cf. also Hjort 2005; Thomson 2018). Within Europe and the wider global system, Denmark is linguistically, geographically, and culturally marginal, by virtue of the size of its population and economy. Centres and peripheries change over time and also between places: a culture may hold a different position in its immediate region, within Europe, in the ‘West’, and in the world. So Denmark is by no means as small or peripheral as the Faroe Islands in the global literary system, as exemplified by Denmark’s relatively high rate of translated literary exports globally according to *Index Translationum* and Heilbron’s definition, yet equally it has not attained a central position such as France or Germany. Subordinate European languages and literatures such as Denmark’s could be referred to as ‘median literary spaces – ones that are neither central nor located on the remote periphery’ (Casanova 2004, 251). Within the Nordic literary field, Denmark holds a central position by virtue of the relative size of its book market and state structures (compared with the Faroe Islands again, for instance), yet in the European context it fits into such a ‘median literary space’, and in a worldwide context a marginal literary space.

1.2.4 Cultural Mobility

Stephen Greenblatt’s ‘Mobility Studies Manifesto’ (2010) inspires a researcher of book history to consider both the metaphorical and physical movement of cultural artefacts from one nation or culture to another. As defined above in relation to Bourdieu, books are both material objects and cultural objects, and mobility studies states that their mobility must be taken in a literal sense (Greenblatt 2010, 250). Danish books in translation in Britain are part of a wider collection of Danish cultural artefacts transferred across the North Sea to a new market: ‘Literature does not travel solo and nor does it travel light; it is carried and accompanied by films, television series, translators, publishers, state subsidies, and all manner of lifestyle goods stamped with Brand Denmark’ (Thomson and Stougaard-Nielsen 2017, 237). Drawing on Greenblatt’s metaphor for the ‘hidden’ processes and mobilisers (Greenblatt 2010, 250-1), throughout my thesis the movement of a book from Danish into English in the British market is referred to as its ‘publication journey’ to emphasise the focus on the process of its physical relocation. These publication journeys often illuminate the

‘contact zones’ where the exchange of cultural goods occurs between the agents that ‘carry’ literature across from Denmark to the UK (Greenblatt 2010, 251).

At the beginning of the time period covered by this thesis, the publication journeys of books would have included many more instances of *physical* movement of the texts, for instance, printed manuscripts and contracts being sent via the postal service between Denmark and the UK. Translator Barbara Haveland fondly reminisces about receiving hand-annotated manuscripts in Scandinavia from publisher Christopher MacLehose at Harvill in London, for instance, in the 1990s: ‘they would come back and they would land on the doormat with a great thump with Christopher's notes all the way through’ (BH 2017). Fax machines would have made transferring some documents less arduous, although long documents would be less likely to be transferred by this method owing to bandwidth restrictions. These methods of communication and mobility were vastly more time-consuming and expensive than current document transfer via electronic channels. The rapid spread of the internet and email from the mid-1990s is an enabler for the movement of literature, facilitating more data to be moved faster. The growth of the internet limits the potential pool of literature only to the amount of time a publisher has available to read manuscripts, rather than being additionally restricted by financial or time constraints of physical manuscripts as in the relatively recent past.

The mobility studies approach allows a researcher to apply Bourdieu’s definitions of agents and habitus to the physical and social conditions of transnational exchanges. This physical journey of books as objects has been referred to by B. Venkat Mani as ‘bibliomigrancy’. Mani recognises that ‘[t]ranslations of literary works into other languages and their circulation and reception beyond cultural or national origins do not happen in a historical, socio-cultural, or political vacuum’ (Mani 2017, 12). Mani’s bibliomigrancy approach joins Greenblatt’s mobility studies in focusing on the materiality of books, their physical venues of distribution, and the agents involved in their movement. Bibliomigrancy also takes into account consecration and the virtual migration of literature into new canons:

Along with translators, publishers, librarians, editors, booksellers, and a host of other actors, readers shape and inform bibliomigrancy. It is through bibliomigrancy that literary works that are identified—coded—as part of a national literature acquire new identities and are recoded as world literature. (Mani 2017, 10)

Therefore bibliomigrancy accounts for how books have a different position and value

in different national markets into which they are consecrated: ‘Bibliomigrancy will help us to understand consistencies and inconsistencies in book circulation, the existence of books in multiple literary systems’ (Mani 2017, 38). Bibliomigrancy challenges dominant world literature narratives such as the single-centre, Eurocentric monolithic assumptions evident in theorists including Bourdieu, Casanova, Moretti, and Venuti. Bibliomigrancy reinforces the perspective that the position of the cultural object and its consecration will be different in its receiving culture than in its source context. In combination, mobility studies and bibliomigrancy allow the researcher to consider the human *and* physical factors enabling the movement of books from one culture to another. This journey is not somehow impartial from its human context, and cultural capital is discussed next in relation to this international mobility.

1.2.5 A Small Nation’s Cultural Capital

The discussion so far of capital, peripheries, and the global literary system leads into a consideration now of how Denmark’s cultural capital interacts on a global scale, especially in the anglophone context. The position of small nations within the European cultural field is borne out of the historical development of the cultural scene: ‘within a group of relatable national literatures, such as the literatures of Europe, hierarchical relations have been established since the very beginnings of these literatures’ (Even-Zohar 1990c, 48). At the formation of the global literary system in the 1700s, ‘London became the center of the world economy, but it was Paris that imposed its cultural hegemony’ (Casanova 2004, 11). Britain was quick to create a national economic market with London at its centre as a key process of nation building (DeLanda 1997, 232), yet France – Paris specifically – maintained its cultural supremacy in Europe. Being published and embraced in Paris created literary value in ‘the chief place of consecration in the world of literature’ (Casanova 2004, 127). Literary capital rests on language (Casanova 2004, 17). English is recognised by Heilbron as having a hyper-central position in the global literary translation system, yet the polysystems approach to the sociology of literature insists that there is not always only *one* centre and *one* periphery as it is context-dependent. Despite the recognised dominance of English, there is no straightforward ‘dominant’ and ‘peripheral’ languages/literatures narrative; several positions can be conceptualised within such a multiple system (cf. Even-Zohar 1990a, 11; 14). For instance, according to Pascale Casanova’s (Eurocentric) perspective, Parisian publishers produce high

culture for the few, and anglophone publishers (New York/London) publish for the commercial masses (Casanova 2004, 127; 119). This provides an interpretation of the literary system that can ‘operate with the idea of two centres of world literature that have different values and outlooks’ (Thomsen 2008, 36).

Interpreting Denmark as a small nation foregrounds the existence of a global political, economic, and cultural hierarchy, that is, the field of struggles as per Bourdieu. All agents in the field of Danish to English translation in Britain participate in the exchange of symbolic capital and literary value, and it is not an equal exchange: ‘What the concept of small nation acknowledges is that the game of culture, be it film culture or some other form of cultural articulation, is more accessible to some groups than others, more hospitable to some aspirations than others, and, in the long run a process involving winners and losers’ (Hjort 2005, 31). The UK is less hospitable to Danish literature than anglophone literature, if market share is observed. Yet Denmark’s cultural capital in the global literary system is relatively high, exemplified by the aforementioned proportionately high translation rates of literature from Danish into other languages.

Heilbron’s diagrammatic approach to the field of translation ‘not only implies that translations flow more from the core to the periphery than the other way around, but also that the communication between peripheral groups often passes through a centre’ (Heilbron 2010, 311). Consecration ‘signifies the crossing of a literary border’ (Casanova 2004, 126) and in the global book market occurs when a work of literature is recognised by those centres with cultural capital and is able to reach a new market. Translation is a foremost example of consecration in the literary world (Casanova 2004, 133) because translation facilitates the entrance of a book into a new field, presupposing recognition and value of the book in question. After attracting interest in the ‘central’ languages (German and French) in the global literary system, books may arouse interest in ‘hyper-central’ anglophone publishers. For instance, Danish crime author Jussi Adler-Olsen was a bestseller in Germany before being published in English for American and British markets, and Swedish bestseller Stieg Larsson’s *Millennium* trilogy was published in France before being discovered by anglophone agents (cf. Craighill 2013a). Major canonised authors such as Jorge Luis Borges gained cultural capital by being translated into hyper-central English and gaining success in the anglophone publishing field, before being translated into peripheral languages. Yvonne Lindqvist speculates on types of consecration in the Swedish

translated literary market, defining for instance *konsekrationsöversättning* ('translation-as-consecration') as when a Swedish crime novel is translated into English for British or American markets, wins prestige, and attracts interest from other dominant central cultures, for instance France, where it is then translated and published in French (Lindqvist 2012, 203). A *dubbel konsekration* ('double consecration': Lindqvist 2012, 197) can also take place, when a text from a peripheral culture outside Europe (for example, Iran) is first translated into an influential language such as English (consecrated) before it is considered for translation and publication by publishers in a (semi-)peripheral culture within Europe (for example, Sweden). Consecration is nationally and culturally specific, in that symbolic capital of a cultural product does not automatically transfer between fields. Many authors considered part of the domestic cultural canon in Denmark do not transfer into other cultures with the same level of cultural value, and the majority of Danish authors canonised at home do not travel at all (cf. section 3.1 below). Most popular authors and bestsellers in Denmark never reach an international audience either (Handesten 2014, 14), despite many books from other predominantly anglophone markets attaining bestseller status across Europe including Denmark at the same time. Given the small number of books from Denmark that have been published in the UK, the fact of a book's translation contributes to its consecration. So few books from Denmark enter the British market that each title holds proportionally more capital in the representation of its literature. A book might not be high quality nor representative of Danish domestic canon, yet it comes to represent Danish literature to British audiences. Its translation becomes self-fulfilling consecration.

This section has provided an analysis of the position of Denmark, the Danish language, and Danish literature in the global literary system, applying notions of cultural capital and consecration to the scene. Next I place the thesis into its disciplinary context, which further justifies my methodology and approaches.

1.3 The Scandinavian Studies Context

1.3.1 Existing Scholarship on the Field of Danish Literature in the UK

This narrowly-focused literature review appraises some existing works specifically on Danish literature in the British market. A joint report by the British Council and the Publishers Association called 'Publishing Market Profile Scandinavia 2004' appraises

the publishing context in the Scandinavian nations as an industry guide for British publishers exporting anglophone literature (Hawksworth 2004), but no trade equivalent exists for Scandinavian publishers hoping to break into Britain. Just as in many mainland European countries, there is a tradition of popular national literary bibliographies appraising the contemporary book field within Denmark. These might provide a useful starting point for considering Danish literature in general. Traditionally bibliographies like these take a chronological or biographical approach by categorising literature by time period and author. This is apparent in the English-language publications *Twentieth Century Danish Literature* (Stecher-Hansen 1999) – structured by author – and *Danish Literature in the 20th and the Early 21st Century* (Mai 2017) – structured chronologically. *Engle i Sneen: Lyrik og Prosa i 90erne* (‘Angels in the Snow: Poetry and Prose in the 90s’: Skyum-Nielsen 2000) is broadly based on this chronological approach, divided into three sections: time period, authors by genre, and metaphors and themes (referencing the ‘angels in the snow’ of the book’s title). *Generationsmaskinen – Dansk Litteratur Som Yngst 1990-2004* (‘The Generation Machine: the Youngest Danish Literature 1990-2004’: Bukdahl 2004) too focuses chronologically, making the case for nineties authors being a shared generation, albeit a split ‘anti-generation’ which refuses to self-define (2004, 15). Mai has taken two less traditional approaches in studying the history of Danish literature, self-consciously to add novelty to a well-versed genre (Mai 2016, 11). *Galleri 66* (‘Gallery ’66’: Mai 2016) is divided into five chapters relating modern contemporary literature back to 1966 as its origin (an English-language article based on this approach exists: Mai 2014). As introduced above, *Hvor Litteraturen Finder Sted* (‘Where Literature Takes Place’: Mai 2010-2011) is a three-volume history of literature in Denmark without using a typical author-biography approach. Volume III – *Moderne Tider 1900-2010* (‘Modern Times 1900-2010’: Mai 2011) – is most directly relevant to the time period of my thesis, focusing on the physical places of modern literary production and reproduction. Mai appraises further publications exhibiting various ways of writing literary bibliographies in Denmark, from the traditional format of Gyldendal’s nine-volume green literary histories (published 1983-86) to newer approaches, highlighting that in most cases the structure is the same: author biographies, decades, or ‘isms’ (Mai 2010, 224). None of these literary histories makes much mention, if any, of Danish literature in translation outside Denmark. They focus

entirely on the domestic market and, as such, have limited application for my study beyond observing their format and theoretical approach.

While my thesis does not focus primarily on crime fiction, another embarkation for considering the current reception of Danish literature in Britain is nevertheless via analyses of twenty-first century enthusiasm for translated Scandinavian crime fiction. This phenomenon has captured the imagination of journalists and academics, resulting in a variety of bibliographies of Scandinavian books in the UK. Forshaw's *Death in a Cold Climate* (2012), for instance, serves a dual purpose in relation to my thesis: it is a source of information about successful Scandinavian crime fiction authors and books in the UK, and provides evidence of how Denmark and Danish literature is presented by a self-styled expert for British lay audiences. Its two chapters on Danish crime fiction include the following authors: Jussi Adler-Olsen, Mikkel Birkegaard, Sara Blædel, Leif Davidsen, Christian Jungersen, Michael Larsen, and the duo Lene Kaaberbøl and Agnete Friis. Each Nordic nation's literature is presented in distinct chapters, although notably Forshaw concedes that for the general British public, Scandinavia is probably still 'considered an indistinguishable entity' (2012, 168). In *Nordic Noir* (2013), Forshaw foregrounds Denmark's cult television programmes, and in *Euro Noir* (2014b), the chapter on the latest in Nordic crime fiction ('Scandicrime Revisited': 130-56) specifically names six Danish crime fiction authors, only one of which has not yet been published in English. Translators are foregrounded in Forshaw's books (including interviews in some instances) – Don Bartlett, Barbara Haveland, Tiina Nunnally, Laurie Thompson in *Death in a Cold Climate* (2012), for example. Elisabeth Böker (2018) studies Scandinavian bestsellers (especially crime fiction) in the German book market, providing an example of a comparable approach to looking at the penetration of translated Danish books in another market. The reception of Scandinavian crime fiction in the British context will be discussed below in Chapter 2 in the context of both my corpus findings and *Nordic Noir*.

Claire Thomson and Jakob Stougaard-Nielsen (2017) emphasise that not only crime fiction has crossed the North Sea to the British market. Their chapter in the edited volume *Danish Literature as World Literature* (Ringgaard and Thomsen 2017, 235-66) looks at twenty-first-century cultural mobility between Denmark and the UK, emphasising the impact of all cultural exports including cult popular television series like *The Killing* in the overall reception of Brand Denmark abroad. As my PhD supervisors, Thomson and Stougaard-Nielsen's chapter openly makes use of data

collected for my thesis, for example reflecting on the sales success abroad of Jussi Adler-Olsen. Peter Fjågesund (2017) presents a concise history of the perception and reception of Scandinavian literature in the UK, from Old Norse sagas to the eighteenth and nineteenth century canons and beyond. Fjågesund identifies that Scandinavia's inclusion in the global literary field shakes up traditional notions of periphery and centre, taking the perspective that Scandinavian literature in Britain has long been used to bolster nation building. Fjågesund expresses the view that a fruitful avenue of further investigation would be into the changing image and appeal of Scandinavian literary exports in the new millennium (Fjågesund 2017, 28-9), indicating the usefulness of my thesis.

A handful of PhD studies exist on topics close to my thesis. Early 1990s state support for translated literature between Denmark and the UK was investigated in Tina Pihl's thesis (1996). Pihl firstly provides the historical cross-cultural context in Denmark and Britain, before chapters on aspects of the publishing markets and the situation for cultural funding in both nations (from the values and traditions to the financial support schemes). Pihl takes a comparative methodology, comparing the book markets in Denmark and Britain throughout. While it will be necessary to outline the context for Danish state funding for translated literature later, overall my thesis will focus in-depth on the situation in Britain for Danish books and therefore does not investigate the separate field of publishing within Denmark as well. Yet Pihl's data and extensive interviews with key participants from the publishing industry and cultural funding system provide useful background information for the earlier period covered by my thesis (1996, 9).

Approaches in theses by Charlotte Berry (2013) and Broomé (2014a) to collating and using corpus data on British publishing of Scandinavian literature were useful starting points for my corpus research. Berry's in-depth investigation of Nordic children's literature in the UK between 1950 and 2000 offers some direct parallels with the initial corpus research for my thesis. Berry uses the *BNB* to create a corpus of applicable books. She includes reissued titles as a reflection of the enduring popularity of a title (2013, 108), whereas my thesis counts a book on its first publication only in order to mark its arrival in the UK (Chapter 2). Some oral history approaches were used to complete the corpus and case studies (2013, 66), but for practical reasons the majority of Berry's thesis is based on UK-based archival research (2013, 68). The result is a very detailed corpus and related bibliographical analysis, and Berry has

since developed this data to cover all genres including adult fiction (2017). The depth of archival research and resulting detail of Berry's corpus is beyond the remit of my thesis, yet it provides inspiration for presenting and using relevant bibliographical data. Another recent thesis on Scandinavian children's literature in the British market is by Elizabeth Goodwin-Andersson (2016). She applies a linguistics-based approach, comparing British and American English texts. Broomé (2014a) focuses on the contemporary market for Swedish literature in the UK. Broomé's is a project with many surface parallels with mine, especially given its status as resulting from one of the first UCL Impact studentships at the Department of Scandinavian Studies. Like Berry, Broomé first identifies and delimits a corpus of applicable literature (Swedish into English) using *BNB* data (2014a, 21-6), then presents the corpus data primarily as part of outlining the context of Swedish literature on the British market (43-9). Broomé goes on to construct a detailed theoretical framework developing a systemic Bourdieusian model for understanding the transmission of 'border-crossing' books, paving the way for four case studies of particular aspects of the proposed model and its applicability to the field of publishing Swedish literature in Britain (1998 to 2013). Rather than seek to demonstrate or test such a complex conceptual model, my thesis pursues a more descriptive literary-sociological analysis, albeit similarly drawing on Bourdieu's notions of field and capital, and a researcher-built corpus. Among other things, Broomé identifies that the study of the role of translators in the field of Scandinavian literature in Britain warrants urgent attention (2014a, 247): 'It need not be stated that translators are pivotal nodes in a network of translated fiction and that without knowledge of their behaviour the picture will inevitably remain incomplete'. My thesis shines a spotlight on the role of translators in this field (especially in Chapter 5).

Directly inspired by Peter Graves (2011), Giles (2018) investigates the reception of 'paradigm-shifting' Scandinavian authors in translation in the UK between 1917 and 2017, using a polysystems and function-oriented Descriptive Translation Studies approach. Giles takes a primarily reception-focused angle rather than the agent-focused approach of my thesis. Giles presents five case studies of well-received authors from Scandinavia in the British market – two from Norway, two from Sweden, and only one from Denmark: Høeg's *Miss Smilla* (for which a comparative publication journey features too throughout my thesis). The choice of this Danish case study is perhaps unsurprising as it has been such an impactful book. It is equally

typical that Giles provides only one Danish case study: bestsellers in Britain from the Scandinavian nations in the full time period covered by Giles are typically not Danish, and, equally, twenty-first century Nordic Noir most commonly encompasses Swedish and Norwegian (not Danish) books in translation (on which there is more below in Chapter 2). Giles concludes that there is still a need for further study of imported genres from Scandinavia into Britain aside from crime fiction, and that '[s]cholarly considerations of [state cultural] support provided for translations of Scandinavian literature are limited' (2018, 320). These conclusions illustrate the demand for the analyses presented within my thesis.

Scandinavian Studies scholars routinely attempt to analyse the image of Scandinavia within and outside the region. The following section will focus on relevant terminology and concepts used within Scandinavian Studies to help further my interpretation of the field of Danish literature in the UK.

1.3.2 Autostereotypes, Xenostereotypes, and Exoticism

Perceptions, imagery, and branding of Denmark and Danish cultural exports within the British market can be analysed via stereotypes. Stereotypes are fixed ideas that, once formed, are resistant to change (Beller 2007, 429), and one-sided, popular notions of other nations can impact on both the selection of texts and the manner of translation within the field of translated literature (cf. Soenen 1997). Grouping stereotypes into self-images and images-created-by-others enables researchers to study the origin and impact of these images and discourses. These two groups of stereotypes are not neatly distinct categories, despite often being discussed as such for ease of analysis, but rather they are interdependent and almost always overlapping. Imagology is an approach to exploring national stereotypes in literature and other forms of cultural representation, seeking primarily to understand discourses, not societies (Beller and Leerssen 2007, xiii). To aid analysis of the rhetoric of representation (cf. Leerssen 2007a, 353), national stereotypes are divided within imagology: self-images are called autostereotypes and 'standardized images of others' are called heterostereotypes (Beller 2007b, 429). Imagology sits within the field of comparative literature, and its scholars recognise that definitions of stereotypes differ from discipline to discipline (Beller 2007b, 431). Kazimierz Musiał's *Roots of the Scandinavian Model* (2002) focuses on the period of nation building in the early twentieth century after World War II, when Scandinavia started being recognised as a unified region by the outside world

(Musiał 2002, 120). Musiał attempts to understand the role of language, symbols, and stereotypes in the discursive construction of the progressive Scandinavian community:

This construction was shaped and enhanced by two dimensions: an external, foreign dimension, and an internal, native one. Progressive Scandinavia was constructed in the discursive field emerging as a result of a constant interaction between foreign images of Scandinavia, i.e. its *xenostereotypes*, and the images conceived among the inhabitants of the region, i.e. the *autostereotypes*. (Musiał 2002, 20-21)

Musiał (2009) goes on to discuss the role of autostereotypes especially in Nordic identity and region branding. In *Communicating the North – Media Structures and Images in the Making of the Nordic Region* (Harvard & Stadius 2013a; 2013b), the editors pen two chapters on historical and present-day mediation of the images of individual nations and the Nordic region as a whole, explaining that stereotypes stoke a national brand: ‘Images of regions are produced both within the areas themselves (auto-stereotypes) and on the outside (xeno-stereotypes)’ (Harvard & Stadius 2013a, 14). Within the discipline of Scandinavian Studies, the terms autostereotype for self-images and xenostereotype (rather than heterostereotype as per imagology) for images-created-by-others have commonly been used (cf. Giles 2018, Hilson 2008, Thomson 2018). In my thesis, too, the terms autostereotype and xenostereotype will be used when discussing imagery of Denmark and Scandinavia.

One result of pervasive national or cultural stereotypes is exoticism. Exoticism is when an audience appreciates another culture exclusively in terms of its strangeness (Leerssen 2007b, 325), often playing down or disregarding cultural similarities. Exoticism is a kind of ‘othering’. According to Edward Said, whose 1978 book *Orientalism* was pivotal in the origin of postcolonial cultural studies, the Orient is one of the West’s ‘deepest and most recurring images of the Other’ (Said 1991, 1). In Western culture, the divide between East and West has long been accepted and repeated in academic and artistic fields (Said 1991, 2). Orientalism is the essentialised depiction by Western (French and British) imperialist powers of primarily Middle Eastern and South Asian cultures in art and literature (Said 1991, 3). Said identifies how ‘European culture gained in strength and identity by setting itself off against the Orient’ (Said 1991, 3) as part of the process of nation building in the eighteenth century. Just as Egyptologists ‘created’ ancient Egypt, Orientalism is about the construction of images of the Orient by Western Orientalists; it is not an image of the Orient as such. Orientalism is ethnocentrism: an admiration of a simplified version of Eastern culture by Western audiences gazing with an air of superiority. Indeed,

exoticism can be interpreted as a by-product of ethnocentrism and potentially ‘a synonym for racial arrogance’ (Leerssen 2007a, 324). Another type of exoticism is an inversion of othering – ‘saming’ – proposed by John Mitchinson when considering the colonialism undertaken by Denmark in the Faroe Islands (Mitchinson 2010, 10). When similarities between the Faroese language and Danish have been emphasised by Danish colonisers, for instance, this ‘sameness’ has been used as evidence for a shared identity and justification for intervention from Copenhagen (Mitchinson 2010, 12). Yet exoticism occurs too when a foreign country or ‘strange’ culture is appreciated, valorised, and admired by a particular group, perhaps even seen as a preferable alternative to the domestic culture; the opposite of ethnocentrism (Leerssen 2007b, 325).

The positive form of exoticism outlined above is a useful perspective when analysing British publishing and marketing approaches to Scandinavian cultural exports. The concept of the (often positive) exoticising gaze northwards has been labelled variously as Nordientalism and Borealism, with slightly different connotations. Nordientalism and Borealism have been used by some scholars as interchangeable terms, and both share etymological origins in Said’s Orientalism. Yet the next sections both define and propose a distinction between these terms to fit the purposes of my thesis and relate them distinctly to autostereotyping and xenostereotyping.

1.3.3 Nordientalism

Hans Hauge proposes that the representation of Norden internally was created by Nordientalism (first written by Hauge as ‘*Norientalisme*’ and translated in the same bilingual article as ‘Northientalism’: 2001, 8). Hauge seems to have coined the term, self-consciously drawing on the word Orientalism, and slightly tongue-in-cheek (‘lidt af en spøg’/‘a bit of a joke’: Hauge 2003, 144). Nordientalism is an approach to analysing literary and cultural discourses about Norden (Hauge 2003, 148), and the ways in which these influence ‘den skandinavistiske konstruktion af de andre i Norden bosiddende’ (‘the Scandinavianist construction of those living within the Nordic region’: Hauge 2003, 149). As a Dane in Norden commenting on Nordic perspectives, Hauge uses Nordientalism to describe intra-Norden image-making. Nordientalism’s basis in Orientalism enables a reinterpretation of Nordic history: ‘Postkolonialisme gør det dermed muligt at betragte den nordiske, litterære tradition på

en anderledes måde' ('Postcolonialism makes it possible to consider the Nordic literary tradition in a different way': Hauge 2001, 10). Some Scandinavianist scholars have applied the term Nordientalism to the exoticising of Scandinavia from abroad as well, for instance, Kim Toft Hansen discussing the creation of and enthusiasm for Nordic Noir outside Norden (Årsmelding 2015, 22), and Hansen and Anne Marit Waade discussing neo-romanticism and 'norientalism' (attributed to Hauge) in relation to the same genre (Hansen and Waade 2017, 111). Stougaard-Nielsen (2016) also proposes using Hauge's term when considering the perception of Scandinavian cultural exports in the UK:

a 'Nordientalism' may describe the allure of Nordic noir in the British reception, where all-things Nordic have come to represent an imagined desirable elsewhere, sampling everything from Nordic social values, sustainable life styles and well-designed consumer products.

The term Nordientalism has also gained traction in other academic disciplines. For instance, geographer Graeme Wynn proposes the term to define 'northern exceptionalism in the Canadian imagination' of the Canadian arctic (Adcock and Roberts 2014, 314).

Yet I am not comfortable with transposing the term Nordientalism onto both internal (intra-Nordic) and external (exotic) perceptions of Nordic imagery. Primarily, it seems beneficial for precision to make a distinction between these two types of discourse. Secondly, Orientalism has its basis in power relationships between the dominant West and simultaneously oppressed and objectified East, and this power dynamic is less straightforward to transplant into British discourses on the Nordic region using the explicitly derivative portmanteau Nordientalism. Criticisms of Said's definition of Orientalism have focused on his monolithic treatment of the West, where imperialist powers Britain and France cannot be said to share the same perspective on the Orient as marginal western nations including Denmark (Oxfeldt 2005, 11). The Nordic construction of itself in the North (through imagery and autostereotypes) has its own history but does not display parallel power struggles with Orientalism's West/East dichotomy. The Nordic region was conceptualised in an era of western nation building by Germanic and Scandinavian philologists at the time of Orientalism (Hauge 2003, 149). While Scandinavian nations used Orientalism in nation building efforts, they did this through the lens of their more powerful imperialist neighbours (France, Germany, and Britain) rather than based on their own eastern colonies (Oxfeldt 2005, 12). Elisabeth Oxfeldt's study of 'Nordic Orientalism' problematises Said's notion of

Orientalism by examining how peripheral northern European nations including Denmark used Oriental imagery from cosmopolitan hubs such as Paris to position themselves in relation to central European nations (Oxfeldt 2005, 13). Denmark's own imperialism in the East was treated rather differently domestically, and in fact was effectively ignored until relatively recently (even its definition as a 'colonial' versus administrative power historically over its territories Greenland, Iceland, and the Faroe Islands is debated cf. Volquardsen and Körber 2014, 18). Thirdly, the colonised within the Nordic region – namely, the Sami in Northern Norway, Sweden, and Finland – do not feature in the Nordientalist discourses that built the Nordic region (although they feature in other ethnocentric and exotic discourses within the region), and this is problematic. Ultimately and pertinently, the term Nordientalism was coined by Hauge to refer specifically to discourses within Norden about itself. Nordientalism therefore distinctly refers to the autostereotypes created by opinion leaders within Norden both at the time of nation building and maintained since by intra-Nordic state bodies. Nordientalism should not be used to describe the external perceptions of the Nordic region; this should instead be defined using a separate term, leaving Nordientalism as a distinct phenomenon worthy of definition and study in itself. In my thesis, most analyses focus on the exoticism of Denmark from a British perspective. The word Borealism encompasses external exotic gazes northwards (embracing Canada, the Arctic, and the generic frozen north as part of the growing field of North Atlantic studies). As proposed next, Borealism is exoticism exhibited by audiences of Nordic culture outside the region.

1.3.4 Borealism

The term Borealism has similarly been inspired etymologically from Orientalism to provide a lens to interpret the imagery and representations of the North, drawing on the Greek word 'borealis' meaning 'north wind'. Unlike Nordientalism, which concerns image-making of Norden from within the region, Borealism here means the perception and imagery of the north from outside. Borealism has been used in disciplines outside Scandinavian Studies including anthropology and political science. For instance, Kjartan Fløgstad (2007, 13-14) proposes: 'Kanskje «borealisme» kan vera namn på dei sørlege fordommane om folk som bur under nordlege himmelstrøk?' ('Maybe "borealism" could be a name for the Southern preconceived ideas about those who live at northern latitudes?' [translation by Guy Puzey cited in Giles et al. 2016, 9]). The

term has increasing currency in the field of Scandinavian Studies internationally. For instance, in a special edition of the Francophone journal *Études Germaniques* in 2016 entitled ‘Le Boréalisme’, Sylvain Briens states: ‘Borealism describes the North as a discursive space, produced by and for the South’ (2016, 179). In this same special edition, Maria Walecka-Garbalinska (2016) applies Borealism to the work of three French language scholars in the mid-late 1800s, Jean-François Battail (2016) examines how a form of Borealism contributed to ‘L’Appel du Grand Nord’, and Daniel Chartier (2016) analyses images of the North from within and without. Briens has gone on to propose that Borealism would be a suitable title for a university research programme ‘to trace the history of displacements, transformations, circulations referring to the “North”’ (2018, 151). Kari Myklebost’s 2010 PhD thesis at the University of Tromsø, ‘Borealisme og kulturnasjonalisme’ (‘Borealism and Cultural Nationalism’), investigates imagery of the north in a study of Norwegian and Russian folklore at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Borealism is defined by Myklebost as ‘folkeminnegranskernes forståelsesrammer i møte med nordlige levested og kulturer, og deres speiling av det nordlige i det nasjonale’ (‘folklore researchers’ understandings of encountering northern lifestyles and cultures, and their reflection of the northern in the national’: Myklebost 2010, 15). A strong application of the term in the anglophone context is Kristinn Schram’s University of Edinburgh PhD thesis on the exoticised and internalised representations of Iceland by Icelanders abroad (Schram 2011). Borealism refers to images of an exotic north, specifically ‘the signification, practice and performance of the ontological and epistemological distinction in power between North and South’ (Schram 2011, 99). While conceding it is questionable to draw straight parallels with the postcolonial inferences of Orientalism when considering the relationship between North and South (as stated above in relation to Nordientalism), the term Borealism is validated throughout Schram’s thesis by examples of exoticism within everyday culture when looking at Iceland from outside (cf. 2011, 139-179). A recent Norvik Press publication uses the term in its title – *Beyond Borealism* (Giles et al. 2016). Its University of Edinburgh-based editors argue that while the word itself may as yet be unfamiliar to many, even within the field of Scandinavian Studies, Borealism is ‘most certainly a concept that many readers are likely to have engaged with in some form or another’ (Giles et al. 2016, 10). Giles (2018) refers to ‘British Borealism’ throughout his thesis on twentieth-century Scandinavian literature in Britain, describing ‘Britain’s love affair with boreal Scandinavia’ (2018, 55), though

again concedes that the term Borealism has thus far seen limited uptake in anglophone contexts.

In my thesis, while Nordientalism will refer to autostereotyping of the Nordic countries within the Nordic countries, Borealism will refer to xenostereotyping of the Nordic countries from outside the region. Schram (2011) above, for instance, uses the term Borealism focusing on Icelanders *outside* Iceland, and their ‘performing’ the north from abroad, thereby encapsulating xenostereotyping. In contrast, the term Nordientalism is usefully applied to the internal discourses and branding by agencies such as the Nordic Council, following this term’s original focus on the building of the Nordic region by its autostereotypes. These definitions are binary for the ease of analysis but naturally it is possible for imagery to fall into both categories. For instance, in the early twentieth century, the bestselling American book *Sweden: The Middle Way* (Childs 1936) promoted a xenostereotype of Sweden (and by extension Brand Scandinavia) to anglophone markets, fuelling Borealist discourses. The positive reception abroad of the Swedish Model was then utilised as an autostereotype to strengthen part of Sweden’s domestic identity and broader Nordientalism in the early-to-mid-twentieth century. All of these concepts hold particular relevance in relation to the publishing, funding, and translating of Danish literature in the UK, and are applied later in my thesis when discussing publication journeys in this field.

This section has summarised the disciplinary research context and relevant applicable concepts. Next I discuss the practical methodology of my field research.

1.4 Researching People

Researcher participation is reflected upon in the thesis introduction, where I identify that I am immersed as an agent in my field of study. A crucial source of knowledge for my thesis stemmed from my interactions with translators and other agents in the field via my efforts to form and establish a network for literary translators of Danish to English. This section outlines my interview methodology, beginning with an explanation of the novelty of foregrounding research into translators’ professional practices.

1.4.1 Translator Studies

In *The Translator’s Invisibility* (1995), Venuti associates the tendency for English translations to use a domesticated (rather than foreignised) style with the invisibility of

the role and agency of the translator in the journey of a book from one culture into another. Michael Cronin affirms this in his perspective that translators are mediators, and, since the aim of mediation is transparency and simplicity, this results in the invisibility of translation and the translator: ‘The suspension of disbelief which is central to the function of much fiction is also at work in the transactions of translation’ (Cronin 2003, 125). A prominent commentator on Scandinavian crime fiction in the UK is optimistic that with the increased popularity of crime fiction in translation, discussion of the translator has become a hot topic: ‘The day of the translator has unarguably arrived’ (Forshaw 2014a, 267). Yet in marketing materials for all genres of translated literature, the name of the translator rarely warrants a mention. The visibility of the translator is still in question, made apparent by current social media campaigns such as #namethetranslator on Twitter (started by Helen Wang via @translatedworld in 2014: ETN email) urging newspaper reviewers, retailers, and blogs to include a credit for the translator as well as the author where they usually do not.

Translation proper – interlingual translation – ‘is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of some other language’ (Jakobson 2000, 139). Unlike the two other kinds of translation identified by Roman Jakobson – intralingual and intersemiotic (that is, rewording and transmutation) – interlingual translation is the only subset requiring a third-party intermediary who can read both texts: the translator. The traditional tendency has been ‘to treat the translators themselves as a more or less transparent medium of textual procedures’ (Sela-Sheffy & Shlesinger 2008, 81), yet this human intervention is not neutral or value-free. Venuti agrees this must be recognised when considering the resulting target text: ‘We can more fully understand the translators’ different motives and methods by considering their translations in the context of their other work, their lives, and their different historical moments’ (Venuti 1995, 93). Yet despite the relative upswing of research into other aspects of identity in the humanities, there have been surprisingly few studies into literary translators’ professional lives (Sela-Sheffy 2016, 132). Translation Studies scholarship on the (in)visibility of the translator tends to focus on evidence from strategies in translating the text – the preference for domestication rather than foreignisation in anglophone markets, for instance, as per Venuti – or marketing materials such as the book cover where the translator is (not) named. The assumption that an ‘invisible’ translator inevitably leads to the profession being perceived as inferior is therefore ideologically-based, not based on ethnographical scholarship: ‘Having emerged historically from the

traditions of philology, linguistics, and literary studies, the leading paradigm of TIS [Translation and Interpreting Studies] that endorses this view of translation as an underrated profession has mainly focused on analysis of literary translations and their communicative contexts' (Sela-Sheffy 2016, 135). The emerging field of *Translator Studies* within Translation Studies has gained traction via the work of, for instance, Jeremy Munday (2012), Outi Paloposki (2016), and Anthony Pym (2012). Insight into the professional lives of literary translators from Scandinavian languages specifically is available in B.J. Epstein (2009; 2014) and Giles (2012), yet overall remarkably little literature exists on these intermediaries. As a direct result of my aim to investigate the agents and processes involved in the mobility of Danish literature into English in the UK, the roles and identities of translators are foregrounded. The next section outlines my methodology for selecting and interviewing translators among others.

1.4.2 Approaching and Conducting Interviews

Throughout my thesis, my own interviews supplement information obtained from bibliographical corpus data and archival research on key agents in the publication journeys. Semi-structured interviews took place with literary translators, publishers, and Danish state employees. Most interviews were conducted one-on-one, face-to-face, in public spaces (a cafe or hotel lobby) or professional settings (an office meeting room) and recorded by an unobtrusive portable digital audio recorder. Some interviews took place on Skype or on the telephone. Recordings were then transcribed by me into reconstructive transcripts ('polished' not verbatim, for coherence). Most of these full interview transcripts are available in Appendix B (as agreed to by the interviewees at the time of giving consent to being interviewed). Citations from interviews in the body of my thesis are edited and abridged for clarity. Initials are used in references for legibility and brevity, but no attempt is made to provide anonymity – the field is so small that participants will be identifiable to those who are familiar, and participants gave permission to be cited in this context. A flexible approach was taken to questions: generally the flow of conversation dictated which topic was addressed next. In most cases, the interviewee did not read the interview questions beforehand. Interviews took place sequentially so new knowledge and ideas inevitably came to light (via interviews or other sources) before the next interview took place, meaning the angle of questioning and knowledge shared in discussion changed somewhat from one interviewee to the next. Given the conversational nature and length of the interviews

(the shortest interview lasted thirty minutes and the longest nearer ninety minutes), the challenge faced is typical of that of any qualitative researcher: huge amounts of data must be presented in a structured, succinct format within my thesis.

My approach to interviews was informed by Svend Brinkmann's *Qualitative Interviewing* (2013). Because it is relevant for readers of interview reports to know how a study was conceptualised and interpreted by the researcher (cf. Brinkmann 2013, 56), I will briefly outline key aspects of the interview methodology in relation to my study of translators in particular. There are limitations to interviewing a small number of agents of a relatively sparse professional community. From perhaps forty suitable candidates in the field, I interviewed ten translators in 2016 and 2017. Information-oriented selection was necessary: a range of interviewees were selected and approached based on my belief that they could provide cases that were paradigmatic, critical, extreme, or provided maximum variation (Brinkmann 2013, 57-8). Specifically, it was imperative to speak to long-established translators (identified by number of publications in my corpus, but also by ethnographic knowledge of the field), early-career translators, and less-well-established, perhaps even critical, cases. The aim is not proportional representativeness, taking the maxim that 'fewer interviews that are thoroughly analyzed are preferable to many interviews that are only superficially explored' (Brinkmann 2013, 59). Besides, no attempt can be made at random selection and sampling in such a small group, where suitability for interviewing is instead dictated by practical factors such as availability. Sweeping generalisations must therefore be avoided – for instance, preferring to qualify statements as originating from a single translator where applicable, rather than claiming 'translators say...' (cf. Brinkmann 2013, 115). Before interviews began with translators, I took a deductive approach in the preparation phase in order to produce 'testable hypotheses from general ideas or theories, and then seeking to falsify these' (Brinkmann 2013, 54). The original pre-interview hypotheses were that translators are 'ambassadors' and fans of Danish literature, and there are typical publication story paradigms. These hypotheses were not revealed to translators during the interviews in order to ensure that data could be drawn out without explicitly leading the interviewee (that is, to avoid confirmation bias). The interview questions were prompted by themes emerging from discussions with individuals at the Danish Arts Foundation in 2015 (e.g. AMR 2015) and designed with the intention to cover a number of publication journeys. In most cases, the translator was presented with a physical copy of one (or

more) of their books as a conversational prop and asked to start by talking through its publication process from their perspective. The intention was to gain a frank *in medias res* insight into the translator's interpretation of their involvement in a book's publication journey and provide a basis for later questions. It soon became apparent that the broad hypotheses proposed before interviewing relied on untested assumptions. It had been appropriate to begin from a deductive approach in planning and analysis as '[t]here is no such thing as understanding something from nowhere, without presuppositions, for we always need some interpretive framework in order to distinguish significant from insignificant aspects of the material' (Brinkmann 2013, 64). The resulting findings do not follow my original hypotheses. Interview data is woven especially into Chapter 5 on translating, but also illuminates publication journeys throughout other chapters.

1.5. Conclusion: Summary of Theoretical Framework and Methodology

The connections between the many agents involved in the process of bringing a book to market were likened in my thesis introduction to the roots of Moretti's trees in the forest, intertwined and unseen. My thesis foregrounds the often-invisible human agents involved in publishing Danish literature in translation in the UK, combining Bourdieu's field theory with other approaches in order to interpret the complex business of human interaction within the industry. The study thereby goes beyond the primarily textual focuses of traditional Translation Studies theorists, away from a data-driven approach to the corpus and bibliographies, and further than the material, physical, economic elements of mobility. I interpret the market for Danish literature in translation in Britain as a literary field with agents who accrue capital, embody habitus, and jostle for position in relation to one another, using terminology and concepts from Bourdieu and in keeping with many other socio-literary approaches. ANT was rejected as an approach for this particular thesis owing to my preference to represent the hierarchy between human participants in the field as well as between high/low culture. Mobility studies and imagology take into account the physical artefacts and cultural context significant in the publication journeys, instead of applying ANT's alternative flat approach of analysing all inanimate and non-human participants equally. With an eye on the limitations of applying Bourdieu's concepts uncritically to this international

scene, other relevant terminology and concepts are taken from Polysystems Theory and Heilbron's Sociology of Translation. Ultimately, my thesis does not present a dense transmission model nor heavy theoretical application. Practical findings and data need to be at the forefront of my literary-sociological descriptive project to ensure accessibility for a diverse readership.

In my thesis, Denmark is defined as a small nation – semi-peripheral in the global literary system – and Britain is hyper-central owing to the dominant status of English globally, and the strength of its book market. In the literature review above, I have presented the immediate research context within Scandinavian Studies and defined the concepts of auto- and xenostereotypes, exoticism, Nordientalism, and Borealism. Autostereotypes are self-images; xenostereotypes are images created by others. In my interpretation, Nordientalism refers to autostereotyping of the Nordic region within the Nordic region, and Borealism refers to xenostereotyping of the Nordic region from abroad. British Borealism is a positive form of exoticism, where Norden and its xenostereotypes are valorised and admired by British audiences. In addition to the theoretical approaches and scholarly context, this chapter discussed matters relating to my methodology for researching key agents in the field, namely qualitative interviewing approaches.

This chapter provided the theoretical and scholarly context for my study of translated Danish literature in the UK. Next, Chapter 2 identifies the British market context into which Danish literature has been entering. The British publishing context including the overall position of translated literature in the British market is presented at the start of the chapter. Over the period covered by my thesis, the publishing industry has seen huge technological and market developments. Findings from my custom-built corpus of Danish-English literature published between 1990-2015 are presented to demonstrate the key agents in practice. An investigation of Danish books in translation in Britain cannot neglect a consideration of related cultural artefacts including television programmes and lifestyle goods, especially their impact on the broader brand of Denmark abroad; the marketing brand of Nordic Noir is defined and discussed towards the end of Chapter 2. These two opening chapters provide a foundation for the in-depth consideration of key agents and processes later in the thesis.

CHAPTER 2 – Cultural Context: Danish Cultural Exports in the British Book Market

In *The Oxford Handbook of Translation Studies* (Malmkjær and Windle 2011), the typical process for translating and publishing a literary text in the anglophone book market is outlined by a literary translator (coincidentally also a participant in the field of Danish-English literary translation: CB 2017):

most prose translations are commissioned by publishers. The translator can be freelance or employed by a publisher. Often the translator reads and reviews novels for a publisher who may not be able to read the original. The translator will provide a one- or two-page report which summarizes the plot and assesses the strengths and weaknesses of the book. The translator acts as a literary critic and can recommend or reject the book, but the commercial decision remains with the publisher, who may commission several reports on the same book and may also commission a sample translation. Translated novels are sometimes published with the aid of funding from their countries of origin, in the form of grants towards the translation, while the foreign publisher covers printing and distribution costs. However, the publisher's priority is to find a good book, whatever the language, which will add value and quality to an existing catalogue of publications. (Barslund 2011, 149)

This description is a good starting point for understanding publication journeys in my thesis. Generally, this publishing process correlates with my findings from interviews, although, naturally, with each book's trajectory, aspects will deviate from this typical model. As I discuss in later chapters, in contrast to this account, Danish-English literary translators I encountered are *all* freelance, and fairly often a different translator will write the book report and translate the eventual novel, for instance.

Following Chapter 1's focus on the theoretical and academic context for my study, Chapter 2 now sets out the cultural context for Danish literature entering the British market. Firstly, the publishing context in Britain is appraised, opening with an examination of publishers, then describing the evolution of marketing channels during the period studied, and the position of translated literature in general in the British book market. Then an analysis is given of the specific books in this field from my corpus findings: Danish translated literature published in the UK for the first time between 1990 and 2015. A publisher's priority, as stated in the citation above, is to add 'value and quality' to their catalogue, based on the wider market picture. The market context in relation to genre is outlined in the final section of this chapter, including the

argument that Nordic Noir has become a universal term for grouping all Scandinavian cultural exports in the UK.

2.1 The British Publishing Industry, Translated Literature, and the Media Landscape

2.1.1 Publishers in Britain

A variety of publishers are responsible for bringing Danish books to market in Britain, so an overview of the publishing industry as such is an essential starting point. Sections of *Merchants of Culture* (Thompson 2010) about the British book market provide an extremely relevant starting point to understanding the publishing industry. This book is a dense, detailed appraisal of English-language trade publishing, specifically only the USA and UK (not Australia, whose publishing volume and scale is comparably far smaller and therefore less influential). The size of a publisher is defined by revenue; this corresponds to their share of the book market, and usually consequently to their physical size (number of staff). For instance, large publisher Hachette has numerous imprints: ‘Hachette’s estimated UK trade revenues in 2007 of £298.8 million made it the largest player in the field of UK trade publishing, giving it a market share of 16.6 per cent’ (Thompson 2010, 122). A ‘medium-sized’ publisher in the UK can very loosely be defined as ‘publishing organizations that have annual revenues from trade publishing of [...] more than £10 million but less than £100 million’ (Thompson 2010, 173). By extension, a small publisher has less than £10 million in annual revenue. In the UK, there are large dominant publishing conglomerates – namely Hachette Livre, Random House, Penguin, HarperCollins, and Pan Macmillan (cf. Thompson 2010, 123) – and many small independent publishing houses, but only a handful of ‘medium-sized’ publishers owing to financial and structural pressures (cf. Thompson 2010, 173-178). There is a position for both large and small publishers in the market, owing to their different niches. A cursory glance at my corpus (Appendix A) suggests the main publishers of Danish fiction in Britain since 1990 have been Harvill/Harvill Secker and Vintage (both now imprints of Random House, the second largest publisher in the UK), and a variety of small independents such as Boyars, Norvik Press, and Soho Press (more analysis of my corpus data is in section 2 of this chapter, below).

More insight comes from *Marketing Literature* (Squires 2009), which positions itself not as a study of book marketing as a business practice (unlike, for example, Forsyth 1997 or Baverstock 2008), but as ‘an overview of the social, economic and cultural contexts for the production of contemporary writing in Britain’ (Squires 2009, 14). Squires aims ‘to analyse the effect of the marketing activity surrounding the production and reception of literature’ (Squires 2009, 48); marketing is the making of contemporary literature (Squires 2009, 16). ‘Literary fiction’ and the novel are genres defined from *outside* the text through the publishing industry’s structures and processes, namely via literary imprint, book prizes, cover design, media coverage, bookshop design, and bestseller lists (Squires 2009, 5). Unlike many other commodities, the publisher (that is, company name) might be significant to the bookselling retailer, yet of little significance to the reader (that is, consumer), as per the advice for marketers in one of the handbooks: ‘Your eventual customer meanwhile will probably be more familiar with your authors’ names than that of your publishing house or imprints’ (Baverstock 2008, 3). The author is often the brand, rather than the publishing house or imprint. The rise in the number of literary agents to represent authors’ needs (especially prevalent in anglophone markets) might be partly related to this; the author has become the star (cf. Thompson 2010, 63). Often the author’s name is incorporated into an array of marketing strategies surrounding the text (Squires 2009, 87). Many mainstream publishers hope for ‘big books’ by ‘brand-name authors’ (Thompson 2010, 189) which might become bestsellers, though all have ‘mid-list’ authors (Squires 2009, 37) and backlists to provide significant supplementary income and, crucially, cultural capital.

This background information about publishers in Britain provides context when considering my corpus findings below. The development from editor-led to customer-led business models in the publishing industry in the twentieth century can be succinctly summed up thus: ‘Publishing companies used to be run by editors; today they are run by marketers’ (Baverstock 2008, 4; see also Squires 2009, 47; Wirtén 2007, 397). The largest publishers tend to be part of transnational media conglomerates, where book publishing makes up only a small part of the company’s revenue: Time Warner Trade Publishing’s contribution to Time Warner’s total revenues is as little as one per cent, for example (Wirtén 2007, 397). The shift in the twentieth century to an increasing number of influential transnational media conglomerates has had a huge impact on the publishing industry, where for instance

licensing deals now include subsidiary rights ‘for everything from movies to duvet covers’ (Wirtén 2007, 397-8). Marketing and technological changes across the period covered by my thesis have impacted all the processes and agents in the publishing industry, and these will be discussed next.

2.1.2 New Marketing Channels

One of the most significant changes in the British book market between 1990-2015 – and perhaps even the whole twentieth century in the field of Scandinavian literature in Britain (Giles 2018, 322) – was the dissolution of the Net Book Agreement (NBA) in 1997. Since 1899, the NBA had allowed publishers to set the retail price of books. From the early- to mid-1990s, large retailers started to offer discounts as, in a free market, it was no longer considered in the public interest to fix book prices (Jordison 2010). Consequently, marketing strategies and book retailers diversified as sellers were able to start competing for consumers on price. The NBA was in force at the time of promoting *Miss Smilla*, for example, meaning there would have been less competitive marketing by suppliers as stores would not have been able to sell below the cover price, unlike today. The dissolution of the NBA prompted the introduction of books to supermarkets, where bestselling genre fiction is now regularly bought and sold at bulk discounts (Thompson 2010, 302-3).

The leading bookshop chain in Britain, after a number of mergers in the twentieth century, is Waterstones, which had around 275 branches nationwide at the end of my period of study (Armitstead 2017). Publishers and publicists work hard to get their authors featured in Waterstones’ stores. In-store marketing in bookshops includes window displays and prominent branding on shelves or tables within the shop. In the past, as reflected in some of the publication journeys described later in my thesis, publicists have been able to build relationships with booksellers and pay for commercial space in bookshops, but this has since been rescinded at Waterstones under new ownership (Armitstead 2017). Booksellers are some of many ‘opinion formers of marketing communications’ (Squires 2009, 110). For instance, Squires (2009) describes how the British publisher of the novel *Captain Corelli’s Mandolin* (Bernières 1994) devised a substantial marketing campaign heavily weighted on bookseller recommendation (Squires 2009, 110-1). Proof copies of the book were sent in advance to staff at bookshops for perusal in an example of what might be called ‘hidden marketing’, in contrast to visible advertising that was also used by the

publisher such as posters on public transport, point of sale display materials in bookshops, and an author tour (Squires 2009, 110). Rose-tinted reviews recounted that the novel gained popularity by word of mouth alone – ‘a valiant little book doing battle with market forces’ (Squires 2009, 114) – perpetuating an idealistic myth that the book’s straightforward appeal to readers was enough to result in its high sales figures. This example illustrates how the story of a book coming to market can be part of the book’s brand itself, and especially the significance in the 1990s of the relationship between the publicity team and bookshops in ensuring the success of a book. Promotional work directed at booksellers a year earlier also resulted in *Miss Smilla* being prominently displayed in the largest bookshops, Waterstones and Dillons. The publicity and marketing caught the attention of individual booksellers, who would then recommend the book to customers via word of mouth. As with *Captain Corelli’s Mandolin*, this marketing approach would have allowed the reader to feel a sense of responsibility for their ‘discovery’ of this quirky Danish novel (the full publication journey of *Miss Smilla* is described later in the thesis). Physical bookshops are less dominant now in the marketing mix in many regards owing especially to the rise of online book retailer Amazon, which has 16 per cent market share of all online stores in the UK (Ecommerce News 2017). Yet independent bookshops still have a large role to play in promoting translated literature via bookseller recommendation, with shops such as Daunt Books demonstrating ‘advocacy of traditional, “slow” bookselling based on seller expertise, building relationships with customers and the availability of physical books that customers want’ (Chitnis et al. 2017, 5). In a related development, the 2000s have seen the rise of literary festivals, where the traditional marketing technique of authors visiting bookshops for readings and book signings has been relocated and expanded to specific author-focused events. Literary festivals in the UK include the Hay Festival (launched in the late 1980s but hugely expanded in the mid-2000s, growing from 1,000 to 250,000 visitors in three decades: 20 Facts 2011), Edinburgh International Book Festival (changed to annual from biennial in 1997, now featuring 900 author events in contrast to 30 in its founding year: EIBF About Us) and Nordicana (a Scandinavian-focused festival in London, described in more detail in section 3, below).

Marketing strategies before the widespread use of smartphones, tablet devices, and affordable laptop technology (from the early 2000s) relied on print media, billboard adverts, posters, booksellers, and PR in print, television, or radio. In the early

twenty-first century, marketers can use all these ‘traditional’ channels in combination with new media channels online. New marketing channels bring new strategies focusing on quality over quantity. Blog readers, for instance, are a valuable self-selecting group of fans willing to be informed about a product. Unlike a roadside billboard poster where only a fraction of the resulting audience will be interested in the product, and a smaller fraction again will buy the product, almost every blog reader will be an engaged member of the target audience and is therefore strongly likely to become a customer. Marketing communications theory identifies that participants in the field have different roles in relation to ‘word of mouth’ marketing. Unlike traditional broadcast marketing practices, marketing is increasingly targeting people who get excited about the product – the ‘innovators’ – who will obsess and spread the word. Innovators – a small number of very early adopters, rather than the majority of consumers – are ‘opinion leaders’, tastemakers, or mass influencers. Opinion leaders are credible and trusted by those who listen to them and are now ‘regarded as more persuasive than information received directly from the mass media’ (Fill 2009, 930). Opinion leaders are found on blogs, discussion boards, unofficial fan websites, and social media including Facebook and Twitter: crudely, as per Thompson’s findings, these ‘big mouths’ include ‘review editors or feature writers or agents [...] “just people who talk a lot”, as one publisher put it’ (Thompson 2010, 247). When a publisher sends review copies of a book not only to paid newspaper critics, but to niche tastemaker bloggers, this reflects a belief that these opinion leaders will spread the word to their followers and create ‘buzz’. Many opinion leaders feature in more than one medium: within this socio-cultural field a consumer can quickly shift between the role of reader/follower and opinion leader owing to ‘the democratising effects of new media’; readers can participate in the publication journey of a book via ‘blogs, online forums, fan fiction and expos’ (Broomé 2014b, 278). For instance, a reader now may receive information about a new translated book via a social media channel such as Facebook and remain online to buy the physical book or immediately download the e-book (likely via Amazon). They might then write a review on their own blog or a book-dedicated social network such as GoodReads and publicise their review via another social media channel (Twitter, for instance). This is then received by another potential reader, or the publisher, or even the author or translator. Via this process, ‘[w]ord of mouth – that most effective retail commodity – is now cyber-propelled and digitally supercharged’ (Sutherland 2007, 110). Research into smaller nations’

literature in Britain confirms the impact of technological developments such as social media on this field, describing them as ‘central to the growth in translated literature’ (Chitnis et al. 2017, 2). These changes occurred not because of the internet *per se*, which existed at the start of the time period covered by my thesis, but specifically by how widespread, accessible, and mainstream it has become for consumers to access the internet several times a day on portable devices.

2.1.3 Supply-Driven and Demand-Driven Translations

Gideon Toury, proponent of Descriptive Translation Studies, conceptualised the motivation for translating books into a dichotomy of push and pull factors. Translation might be a way for the target culture to fill in ‘gaps’ in its literary field (Toury 2012, 21). This demand-led approach by the target culture motivates seeking out books that fit into a position in the market which otherwise would not have been filled by the domestic canon. For instance, in Germany, late-nineteenth-century Scandinavian authors including Ibsen were translated and published following ‘a genuine interest in the novel and radical voices of the source cultures’ (Vimr forthcoming). Ondřej Vimr (forthcoming; cf. Chitnis et al. 2017, 9) has applied Toury’s push and pull factors to small-nation literatures in translation by conceptualising supply-driven and demand-driven translations. Vimr is not reducing translation to ‘buy-and-sell’ definitions of economics, but rather observing that the whole transnational publication journey always has these two components of supply and demand: ‘For each translation, there needs to be supply (at least the original text) and demand (someone willing to execute the translation), with possible extra stimuli and motivations on both sides of the spectrum’ (Vimr forthcoming). Vimr’s approach is useful for conceptualising the motivations of different agents in the field.

Venuti opines that in order to better represent the literary and societal context of the source culture, ‘[p]ublishers should be prepared to translate several texts from the same foreign literature and to sample past and contemporary texts as well as texts that appeal to both elite and popular tastes’ (Venuti 2013, 164). To an extent, newcomer Nordisk Books (discussed in Chapter 4) appears to be fulfilling this remit, given its (small) catalogue’s mix of past and current Nordic literary writers imbued with cultural capital in their native countries. Venuti appreciates that his ideal (supply-driven) approach might take a lot of financial capital, especially initially, perhaps requiring assistance from national cultural agencies (Venuti 2013, 164). Indeed, there

are many examples of state cultural funders (the Danish Arts Foundation) supporting a supply-driven approach. For instance, funding academic projects from small niche publishers such as not-for-profit Norvik Press, where there is little demand by readers, but a desire by the publisher, funder, and translator to see the Scandinavian book in print in English for reasons of canonicity (more of these examples will be discussed in Chapters 3 and 4). This tendency has been found across small-nation literatures in Britain:

Our research highlighted that a significant proportion of the increase in published translated literature, particularly from smaller European literatures, can be attributed to translations motivated not by reader demand, but [...] by a desire to supply. Supply-driven translation sometimes arises from a wish to ensure that a particular classic or favourite text is available for posterity to English-speaking readers, should they one day discover they need it. (Chitnis et al. 2017, 9)

In a demand-led model, the target market dictates the cultural artefacts received from the other culture, which is why it follows that a bestselling translation reveals more about the target culture than its source culture (Venuti 1998, 125). My thesis at times uses Vimr’s terminology of supply-driven and demand-driven translations when describing publication journeys.

2.1.4 Defining the Success of Translated Literature in Britain

Defining success in the context of a small nation literature in the British market is not straightforward. The selected findings in Table 1 show the number of literary books (‘fiction, poetry, and drama’) published in the UK by year, translated from five languages.

Table 1 – Sample of LAF *BNB* Data 2000-2015

	2000	2005	2010	2015
Danish	7	13	7	9
French	77	95	84	104
German	57	47	60	74
Norwegian	6	17	16	23
Swedish	12	21	33	49

(adapted from Trentacosti and Nicholls 2017, 5)

Assuming that this snapshot represents a trend (which the LAF's full report indeed supports), the number of books published from Swedish and Norwegian increases in this period. The number of books from Danish, however, remains fairly stable. Emphasis in popular narratives on the rise of translated 'Scandinavian' literature in Britain in the twenty-first century overlooks this stagnation of Danish publications in this time period, in deference to grouping all three languages neatly into their existing regional brand. That said, titles translated from the three mainland Scandinavian languages added together do not equal either the most 'translated from' languages French or German (which are sourced from more nations collectively; for example Germany, Austria, and Switzerland for the German language, as well as a far larger domestic book market in the case of Germany in particular). Little can be concluded, however, from considering the raw number of books published without context. This snapshot data makes it look like books translated from French, for instance, might have a significant position in the British market. Yet the British book market is huge: between 150,000 and 180,000 books of all types are published in the UK every year on average (Booksellers Association 2014). Out of all literary publications in the UK, still only 'approximately 2.5% of all publications and 4.5% of fiction, poetry, drama (literature) are translations' (LAF Data webpage). So even the higher number of translations from French comprise a minute proportion of an already small part of the book market. That said, LAF findings consistently suggest that literature in translation is in a period of growth in the British market (Budapest Observatory 2011; Donahaye 2012; Büchler and Trentacosti 2015; Trentacosti and Nicholls 2017). Although, noteworthy for my project, evidence from the table above suggests Danish is not necessarily in such a period of growth in this time period. A study of smaller nation literatures in Britain concluded from LAF data that '[t]he widespread and enduring pessimism about the prospects for translated literature in the UK is outdated' (Chitnis et al. 2017, 1). The authors of this report, however, astutely highlight the limitations of focusing on the number of publications as a primary measure of success: 'Current studies offer limited information because they work with data about publishing, rather than sales, and therefore do not reveal how the diversity of translated literature actually being read by British readers compares with other countries' (Chitnis et al. 2017, 7).

If the number of books sold is to be considered a measure of success instead, it is essential to put sales figures into the context of the market as well. Sales figures can be considered in relation to all literary sales and, more narrowly, the translated fiction

market specifically. One perspective relevant to appraising Scandinavian translated fiction is that ‘for an English translation sales beyond 10,000 copies must in fact be reckoned as astronomical’ (Venuti 2008, 154). In the 1990s, for example, sales of Kerstin Ekman’s *Blackwater* of 16,000 copies despite minimal marketing was referred to in the press as ‘quietly successful’ (Feay 1996). Nielsen BookScan is a private commercial database established in the UK in December 1998 charting the volume and value of book sales, updated on a weekly basis. It collates ‘electronic point of sale’ data for ninety per cent of all print book sales in the UK, including online sales (but excluding e-books). Nielsen BookScan includes all books published in the UK with an ISBN. Its data is primarily available to business users for commercial purposes and is provided for national newspaper bestseller charts (*The Guardian*, *The Sunday Times*). I collected Nielsen BookScan data to elucidate some of the publication journeys in my thesis, so sales data is presented at times as a measure of a book’s reception and success. While Nielsen BookScan gives an accurate up-to-date picture of book sales data, its usefulness in the context of my thesis is limited by its records only starting in 1998, and it not recording e-book sales (for which publishers are generally secretive on commercial grounds). Also, it is a closed commercial database, so relying on its data restricts open comparative academic studies. More on both the usefulness and limitations of Nielsen BookScan can be found in Määttä (2014, 226-228) and Thompson (2010, 197-200).

The vast majority of the books in my thesis do not fall into the ‘bestseller’ category in the UK. The limitations of measuring the success of a book by sales is demonstrated again by the difficulty of establishing a definitive formula for identifying ‘bestsellers’:

How then might we define a bestseller? In theory the answer is simple: the work of fiction sold in the most units (books in a given price range) to the most people over a set period of time. In practice the answer is extremely complex, running into difficulties as to the definitions of units (hardback; paperback; serialisation) and period of time (month of publication; a year; the twentieth century), the importance of the price at which it is sold (significance of cost of hardback or paperback) and the definition of fiction itself (whether the work is literary, popular, pulp). (Bloom 2008, 28)

The concept of the bestseller is the result of marketing discourse rather than a definitive quantitative figure. John Sutherland (2007) proposes that the word ‘bestseller’ is a misnomer: ‘The correct term would be “better sellers”, or “new books that are currently doing well until something newer comes along”’ (Sutherland 2007,

18). There is no such thing as a cumulative bestseller list, a fitting demonstration of which is that in the UK ‘the 1995 bestseller list did not include Peter Høeg’s *Miss Smilla’s Feeling for Snow*, which sold 400,000 over a two-year period’ (Bloom 2008, 99). Even though two years after its publication *Miss Smilla* was still selling steadily, this book was not on British bestseller lists because its weekly sales were not higher than other books in the same time period. Since the early 2000s, the Amazon Best Sellers list has become an influential chart that is more publicly visible than Nielsen BookScan data and related newspaper lists. Amazon is the largest online retailer of books in the USA and UK (and some other markets worldwide), and its Best Sellers lists (for books overall as well as by different genres) are updated hourly based on sales on Amazon’s website. Its visibility can become fascinating for authors themselves – it brings them closer to readers and consumers, bypassing traditional ‘gatekeepers’ of cultural value (newspaper critics): ‘What is the allure of the Amazon ranking? It’s the allure of the audience. A new entity, the audience, has entered the calculus of what is “good”’ (Seabrook 2001, 219).

Buying a new book is a measurable method of cultural consumption. Yet many readers also use public libraries. Information about public library borrowing – including annual totals of most borrowed titles and authors – is made available via the Public Lending Right UK which is responsible for distributing payments to authors based on library loans (PLR website). In 2009, Nielsen launched LibScan for tracking public library loans, so libraries could collect and compare library borrowing data (LibScan website). The experienced Danish-English literary translator cited at the start of the chapter describes the buzz of the certainty of being read:

one of the ways I measure success is when I’ve read my PLR statement every year and I can see how many thousands of people took out a book I’ve translated. And it may be a book that also sold well, but it isn’t always. It could be a different book. That really delights me, to see that that book got read by people. (CB 2017)

Similarly, reviews in newspapers, magazines and online also reflect a book’s critical reception (as well as the PR push). Traditional marketing impact assessments such as measuring newspaper column inches or more current digital techniques such as Google Alerts data or collating social media mentions (on *Facebook*, *Twitter*, *Instagram*, for instance) provide insight into audience reception. As my thesis is primarily concerned with the agents of production in publication journeys, rather than readers, there is not scope to investigate these aspects of audience reception in-depth. But it is necessary to

note these measures of success as part of understanding the wider cultural context for Danish books entering the British market.

Book prizes are a marker of cultural value and prestige used by publishers in marketing materials and interpreted positively by authors, readers, and reviewers. Literary prize winners often receive monetary reward, but more significant is the cultural capital conveyed by the prize: being awarded a cultural prize is ‘not an *economic* transaction in the narrow sense of the term’ (English 2005, 5). The number of national and international prizes continues to rise; in fact, in the UK ‘the ratio of prizes to new titles has risen tenfold since the 1920s’ (English 2005, 324), maybe even up to 400 (English 2005, 326). Since 2013 there has been a prize specifically for Scandinavian crime novels in English in the UK: the Petrona Award. It might be assumed that literary prizes ‘have helped bring about an ever closer alignment between the works recognized as “best” or “most important” and those which are simply bestselling or most popular’ (English 2005, 329) – indeed, in some cases, the resulting publicity and prestige has an impact on sales (Thompson 2010, 277). Yet prizes still hold primarily symbolic value by consecrating a book. There is divergence between prize-winners and bestsellers. Horace Engdahl – former Secretary of the Swedish Academy, responsible for the Nobel Prize in Literature – describes how this world-renowned prize arouses interest and raises cultural prestige, but it does not necessarily result in widespread bestseller status: ‘The Nobel brand is strong, but if it has not been able to induce mass consumption over a hundred years, it is not likely to do so in the future either’ (Engdahl 2008, 211). Receiving the Nobel Prize transfers the book and author into a consecrated space in the global literary system. The mismatch between bestselling and prizewinning titles is part of the wider system of cultural capital, consecration and canonisation. As well as for publishers and critics, literary prizes hold significance for consumers as a measure of a book’s literary value. Research into British class and culture suggests that in the current market-oriented field of literary production, the literary prize ‘has a quite specific impact upon the professional middle-classes’ (Bennett et al. 2009, 101). The significance and consecrating power of literary prizes is even understood by so-called non-readers: ‘While the propensity and capacity to form opinions on book prizes vary with reading and with knowledge of the prizes, a good number of those who do not read books (especially not prize-winning books), and who have no knowledge of literary prizes, nonetheless state an opinion about them, and on the whole a favourable one’ (Bourdieu 1984, 319). More on awards in

the British book market specifically can be found in Squires (2000; 2007) and on the significant cultural capital of literary prizes in general in English (2005). Prizes feature as shorthand for prestige and success in application to the Danish Arts Foundation's Translation Fund, as analysed next in Chapter 3.

The concept of 'success' could be put into context with its antonym, 'failure'. Karl Berglund's collative definition of measuring 'success' of detective fiction within Sweden is as follows: 'the number of received literary prizes and awards (canonization); the number of crime fiction publications (quantity); library lending frequency (popularity); translations (international impact); and the number of film adaptations (impact in other media)' (Berglund 2012, 40). Data about all of these five aspects might potentially be applied to a corpus of books in a similar manner to sales data to attempt a comprehensive quantitative impression of the success of a book. Yet can it be said that a book has 'failed' if it has not achieved a high measure in a quantitative scale such as Berglund's? Assessing the book's position in the nation's cultural canon and its value perception by readers and the industry are difficult-to-quantify. A purely quantitative scale cannot provide a full account of canonicity – it could be possible for a book to sell proportionately few copies but enter the cultural canon with high cultural capital imbued from positive critical response, for example.

My thesis investigates the processes and agents involved in various publication journeys, but does not seek to measure their reception nor compare the 'success' of these books in the British market. Quantitative data such as sales figures are included where illustrative later in my thesis, but generally a qualitative approach to reconstructing publication journeys is taken in later chapters. That said, as a basis for my investigation, my corpus collates a quantitative picture of the publications in this field in this time period in order to provide a basis for my study. Corpus findings are provided next as context for publication journeys later in this thesis and as a point of comparison for other literatures.

2.2 Danish Literature in the UK: My Corpus

This section presents general observations about the key agents represented in my corpus of Danish literature published for the first time in English translation between 1990 and 2015. Describing key findings from the corpus contextualises the remit of my thesis overall and provides a basis for discussion of publication journeys and key

agents later on. First, I explain the parameters of the corpus such as its timeframe and which book types are counted, then I describe how I collated the data. Findings are presented next in clear sections: the number of books and text types, authors, translators, publishers, and observations about the timeline.

2.2.1 Justifying the Parameters of the Corpus

The start date for the corpus is 1990. Immediately preceding this start date seems to have been a quiet period for this field: ‘All in all 16 Danish novels were published by British publishers between 1980-1993’ (Pihl 1996, 82-3), at least three of which were post-1990, including *Miss Smilla*. As discussed in the thesis introduction, this novel has consistently been identified as the most significant Danish-English book published in the past few decades (cf. Mai 2011, 341; Forshaw 2014a, 132; Giles 2018, 9), so the intention of my timeframe was to investigate its immediate context and what followed. My corpus includes data up to the end of 2015. For each entry in my corpus, the following bibliographical information is included: Danish author, Danish title, year of publication in Denmark, UK title, year of publication in UK, translator, UK publisher (Appendix A). The inclusion of the name of the British publisher only is owing to my focus on the target market, rather than publication journeys of the source books in Denmark. The corpus is used throughout my thesis for identifying key agents thereby providing an essential starting point for describing who enables the transfer of Danish literature into the UK. Corpus data also illustrates the changes in the publishing industry in this period, for instance providing evidence that imprints at larger publishing houses that were formerly standalone publishers (namely Harvill) continue to publish Danish authors.

My corpus attempts to present a full overview of all Danish literature first translated and published in English in the UK during the period 1990 to 2015 inclusive. Books written in English by Danes are not included (for instance, *Salinger’s Letters*, Schou 2015), but the corpus includes literature translated from the Danish language, so the decision was made to include Faroese or Greenlandic authors who write in Danish. Novels, drama, short stories or poetry in one collection, and children’s literature have all been included in the corpus. To ensure clear parameters, the following were excluded: factual, non-fiction texts (biographies, histories, self-help, technical or academic textbooks); compilation anthologies of short stories or poetry from a selection of authors and languages that did not appear in that form in Danish;

and re-publications. In general, printed bound books were included in the corpus, although shifting modes of publication mean that it was a challenge to decide whether to include the international e-book publisher AmazonCrossing and the iPad story app *Wuwu and Co.* (they are included; for more on augmented reality literature, see Mygind 2015). Morten Søndergaard's *WORDPHARMACY* (2012; translated by Barbara Haveland) is poetry in a physical form imitating cardboard medicine boxes; it is a concrete art-poem and arguably 'literary', but does not appear in book form, so the decision was made to exclude it from the corpus. Books are included if their publication between 1990 and 2015 was the first known publication in the UK in order to maintain a focus on near-contemporary publication journeys, regardless of their first Danish publication date. For instance, Faroese writer William Heinesen's novels from the mid-twentieth century that were first published in the UK in the early twenty-first century are included. Reissues or re-translations are excluded. For example, not in the corpus is Meir Goldschmidt's *En Jøde* (1852; titled both *A Jew* and *The Jew of Denmark, A Tale* in English) which was published contemporaneously in English in 1852, but has since been retranslated and published in 1990, and the original translation has also been reissued and circulated by antiquarian booksellers since 2010. Another author from Denmark whose works were excluded owing to first publication being before 1990 is Sven Hassel, whose World War II military novels still sell well in English and are regularly reissued. Hassel is one of Denmark's few 'bestselling' twentieth-century authors in the UK, as mentioned in the thesis introduction.

I decided to exclude publications by Hans Christian Andersen from my corpus. A simple search of the *BNB* indicates that around 255 titles by Andersen have been published in the UK since 1990. This is a notably large number of books: my entire corpus, which excludes Andersen, is around half of this number. Andersen is number four in the top ten of all authors translated into English according to *Index Translationum*.⁵ Almost all of these are his fairytales, either standalone or as collected works, and all are categorised under 'children's literature' in the *BNB*. Some are picture books, and some are reissues of the nineteenth-century translations, while others are new translations. Andersen is undoubtedly a significant part of the Danish literary canon and Denmark's image in the UK, yet his works have been excluded from my corpus because almost all were originally published closer to their first Danish

⁵ excluding 'et al.' which is listed in position 1

publication date while he was alive in the nineteenth century, even if they have been reissued in new collections more recently. Including re-issues or new collections of Andersen's fairy tales would complicate the corpus; his fairy tales stand apart from other Danish literary translation as their own genre. Comparable studies of Scandinavian literature in translation in the UK have also taken this approach and concluded it is too complex to include Andersen in such a corpus owing to his many adaptations and re-writings (cf. Berry 2013). In addition, the distinctive academic discipline of Andersen scholarship adequately covers aspects of this field (cf. Bom et al. 2014). Children's literature is included in my corpus because it is part of the Danish literary translation field, though very few publication journeys of children's books feature later in my thesis. Children's books generally circulate in a different field to literature for adults – there are specialist children's publishers, bookshops, and marketing strategies. Recent PhD theses on the topic of the translation of Scandinavian children's literature include Berry (2013) and Goodwin-Andersson (2016).

My corpus comprises books published in the UK, rather than all books translated from Danish into English – this latter definition would include books published in North America, not all of which have also been published in the UK. As a Scandinavianist based in the UK, responding to a request from my studentship co-funders for an investigation into the British market context in collaboration with a British university, my corpus focuses on the UK to give clear relevant parameters to the study. Descriptions of publication journeys throughout my thesis inevitably include cases of overlap where agents have been active in both the American and British fields. The British and American publishing fields are still distinct, despite technological developments during this period such as e-books and online publishers, and the increasingly multinational conglomerate structure of large publishers. In general, it has been possible to collect data for the British market discretely.

2.2.2 Identifying the Publications

No complete list of translated literature from Denmark published in the UK in this time period already existed. *Dania Polyglotta* published a list of Danish literature in translation annually from 1969 until the late 1990s (DP 1970-1998); its editions relevant to this corpus between 1990 and 1997 were viewed at the British Library. The Danish Arts Foundation has made attempts to keep a searchable list on its website DanishArts.dk, yet this relies on sporadic updates based on its contact with publishers

and translators who have applied for translation grants. In 2015, the Danish Agency for Culture (*Kulturstyrelsen*) commenced a project to collate fuller data on literature translated from Danish into any language as part of its Literature Department's International Strategy (*International Strategi 2014–2017*). At the time of writing in 2018 this project is ongoing to create a complete backdated list of Danish books published in translation abroad since 2008.

Two substantial publicly-accessible databases were used as a foundation for assembling my corpus: UNESCO's *Index Translationum* and the British Library's *BNB*. *Index Translationum* attempts to be a complete list of all books translated worldwide. It has limitations when collating data for this purpose: for instance, type of text or original title is not always included in the bibliographical data, and it does not distinguish between publications in the UK or USA. Primarily, as illustrated already in my thesis, 'UNESCO statistics, incomplete because countries fail to report data and inconsistent because they follow different definitions of what constitutes a book, can still be useful for indicating broad trends' (Venuti 1998, 160). Searching *Index Translationum* for Danish to English translations of literature published in the UK between 1990 and 2013 (in 2013; my first search) revealed exactly one hundred titles, though some entries were duplicates, and some did not fit the aforementioned parameters for this project (re-issues, for instance). There is no straightforward way of searching the *BNB* by source language. My initial search of the *BNB* in 2013 using the criteria of 'Danish fiction' published since 1990 resulted in fifty-two titles, some of which were duplicates or re-publications. This search was expanded to include all 'Danish literature' and 'Danish children's literature' and Dewey number 839.8138 ('Danish fiction since 2000'). These searches uncovered more books. Using *BNB* data, LAF research identifies that 159 books from Danish were published in the UK between 2000 and 2015, though the report's authors have not released the detailed bibliographic data, only the quantitative totals (Trentacosti and Nicholls 2017, 5). I suspect based on my use of the *BNB* that their figure includes republications, duplications and misclassifications.

Index Translationum receives its data from the UK directly from the *BNB* (Donahaye 2012, 10). This means mistakes or omissions in the *BNB* are amplified by being replicated in the *Index Translationum*. This was exemplified by the erroneous categorisation at the time of my initial search as 'Danish fiction' of *One Night Stands* (UK: 1993; original Finnish title: *Yhden Yön Pysäkki*, 1985) by Rosa Liksom in both

the *BNB* and consequently the *Index Translationum*. The novel is about Copenhagen and the author has lived there, but it was originally written in Finnish. At the time of writing in 2018, the error has been corrected on the *BNB* record (presumably directly following my use of the *BNB*'s Report Catalogue Error function), but it is still erroneously labelled 'Danish fiction' on other databases such as global library catalogue WorldCat.

The *BNB* records all publications in the United Kingdom; it is incredibly comprehensive but it relies on data supplied by publishers so it is potentially incomplete (Donahaye 2012, 8). To fill in gaps in bibliographical data where *BNB* records were incomplete, such as to find the date of first publication in Denmark or the original Danish title, the following websites were used for additional bibliographical data: GoodReads, Amazon, WorldCat, *Litteratursiden*, and *Forfatterweb*. These websites then occasionally illuminated other titles by authors which had not been found in the initial *Index Translationum* or *BNB* searches. The Danish Agency for Culture's biannual publication *Danish Literary Magazine* has a section 'Recently Sold Abroad' (listing forty-six books sold to UK publishers between 2012-2015 inclusive, for example), so available issues of this were used to check if any titles had been overlooked. Since the initial corpus data was collated in 2013 it has been possible to expand it and keep it up-to-date via observation of publishers' marketing channels, *Danish Literary Magazine*, occasional repeat searches on the *BNB*, and personal correspondence with translators and other agents in the field. The result is therefore a comprehensive and clear corpus of Danish literature published in English in Britain for the first time between 1990 and 2015 inclusive. The full set of corpus data is in Appendix A, and observations and findings follow next.

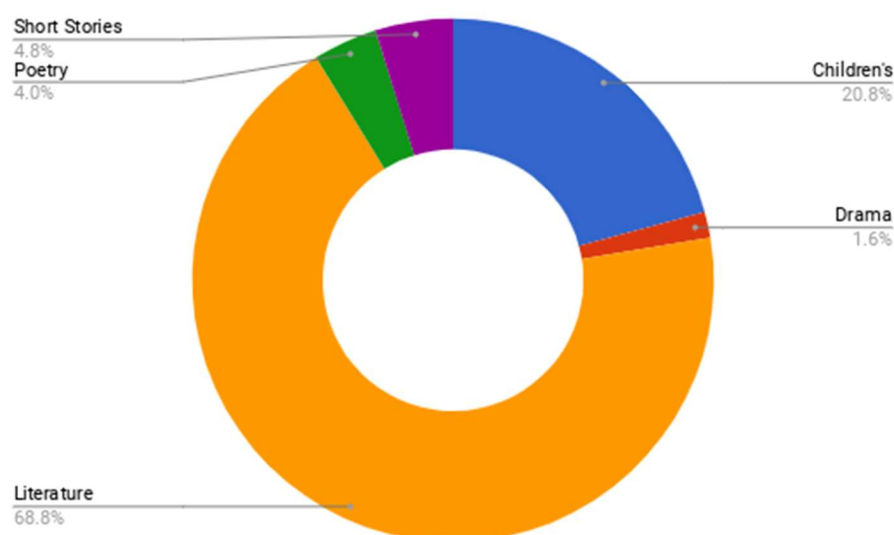
2.2.3 Number and Type of Books

I have identified 125 books defined as literature from Denmark which have been published in English in the United Kingdom for the first time between 1990 and 2015. To put this into context, in Denmark just over 16,000 books were published in 2012 (Statistical Yearbook 2014), and, as mentioned above, between 150,000 and 180,000 books are published annually in the UK (Booksellers Association 2014). Both the proportion and number of books translated and published from Danish in the British book market is therefore miniscule and statistically insignificant. Yet it can still be useful to take a quantitative approach to book history by looking at numerical data like

this, as the field of literature is a collective system to be understood as a whole, not via individual texts. Moretti posits this in *Graphs, Maps, Trees* (2007), reflecting that ‘the study of national bibliographies made me realize what a minimal fraction of the literary field we all work on: a canon of two hundred novels, for instance, sounds very large for nineteenth-century Britain (and *is* much larger than the current one), but is still less than one percent of the novels that were actually published’ (2007, 3-4). A comparable issue presents itself in my corpus: the resulting figure of a little over one hundred books is a miniscule part of the wider British book market. But nonetheless the data is significant for the field being analysed here, and *relative* success factors and trends can still be identified.

Of the one hundred and twenty-five books in the corpus, eighty-six books (just over two thirds) are classified as a novel of any genre (‘Literature’ in Figure 1). Other types of book in the corpus are: five poetry books, two plays (‘Drama’), six short story collections, and twenty-six children’s books (twenty per cent of all books). The children’s books include one iPad app and four graphic novels. Children’s literature therefore makes up a large proportion of the corpus, representing one fifth of the books.

Figure 1 – Text Types of Translated Danish Literature in the UK (1990-2015 inclusive)



2.2.4 Authors

There are sixty-two authors in my corpus. This figure comprises all credited author names; pseudonyms for co-authors are counted once (for example, ‘Sander Jakobsen’ is counted as one author, though it is a pen-name for Dagmar Winther and Kenneth Degnbol), but co-authors are counted individually (for example, Jan Kjær and Merlin P. Mann count for two author names).

Judging by forenames, nineteen of the sixty-two authors are women and forty-three are men. This is a large disparity; the majority are male authors. Similarly, eighty-two (two thirds) of all books in the corpus were originally written in Danish by individual men, compared to thirty-two (twenty-six per cent) by individual women. The remaining eleven books are credited to joint authors: male-female duos (siblings Lotte and Søren Hammer, and pseudonymous Sander Jakobsen mentioned above), male-male duos (Jan Kjær and Merlin P. Mann and pseudonym A. J. Kazinski: Anders Rønnow Klarlund and Jacob Weinreich), and a female-female duo (Lene Kaaberbøl and Agnete Friis). This results in a grand total of eighty-eight books by male authors and thirty-five by female authors. *Danmarks Statistik* publishes detailed, searchable annual data on book types and genres, but does not include a breakdown of authors by gender, so it is not easy to find data about the Danish source market to assess how representative the translated books are of the source market. Looking instead at a comparable source market and specific genre, Karl Berglund identifies that in the early 2000s, one third of crime fiction authors in Sweden were women, and that there was near gender parity of bestselling crime fiction authors (Berglund 2012, 44).

Data on gender disparity in the translated literary field in general is sparse. In 2017, Chad W. Post on the *Three Percent* blog published initial findings that broadly demonstrated that just under thirty per cent of books translated from any language into the USA between 2008 and 2018 were by originally written by women (Post 2017). A *Words Without Borders* article suggested the figure of women authors in translation was twenty-six per cent (Anderson 2013). So my corpus findings reflect wider trends of an inequity of male-female authors in translation (even if data does not exist to assess representativeness). Only fifteen per cent of PEN Translation Prize winners were women in the last twenty years, and for the preceding three years of Open Letter’s Best Translated Book Award only twenty-one per cent of shortlisted books were written by women (Anderson 2013). The American research organisation VIDA (subheaded ‘Women in Literary Arts’) conducts an annual ‘VIDA Count’ of all major

literary publications and newspaper book reviews (including for instance *The New York Review of Books*) to assess gender disparity (VIDA Count website). Reviewers are key agents in the literary field, impacting on both sales and publishers' decision-making and marketing. The VIDA Count has consistently found that in all literary publications, book reviewers and authors reviewed are both overwhelmingly likely to be male. Initiatives have been established to redress the balance by providing publicity for publishers, reviewers, and other influencers such as bloggers to focus on women authors in English translation. The inaugural Women in Translation Month took place in August 2014 (About WiT) and The Warwick Prize for Women in Translation was established in 2017 (TWP Website). *And Other Stories* independent publishers dedicated 2018 as 'A Year of Publishing Women' (AOS 2015). This discussion of gender distribution of translated literature puts my corpus findings into context; my corpus adds to the pool of data about male/female authors in English translation.

Some authors' publications represent more than one book type in my corpus. For instance, Inger Christensen was a well-known poet in Denmark whose poetry is represented by two titles in the corpus, alongside her novel *The Painted Room* (2000). Lene Kaaberbøl writes both children's literature and – as a duo with Agnete Friis – crime fiction novels for adult readers. Kaaberbøl is the most frequently occurring author in my corpus (Table 2). British publications of Pia Juul and Benny Andersen both demonstrate an interesting anomaly. Juul's only book in the corpus of translations is crime fiction novel *The Murder of Halland* (2012; Denmark: *Mordet På Halland*, 2009), and Andersen's is the play *The Contract Killer* (2012; Denmark: *Lejemorderen og Andre Spil*, 1970), yet in Denmark both authors are better known as prolific poets, rather than a novelist or a playwright respectively. Even if an author features in this corpus, his or her catalogue might still be disproportionately (under or over) represented in comparison with their number of publications or critical position in Denmark. For example, Helle appears only once in the corpus of books (*This Should Be Written in the Present Tense*, 2014; Denmark: *Dette Burde Skrives i Nutid*, 2011). This perhaps seems remarkable from the Danish perspective given Helle's prominent position in the contemporary Danish domestic canon where she is critically acclaimed for popularising the 'novella' genre, her signature minimalist style, and not least because she has published at least ten books since the late 1990s (cf. Skyum-Nielsen 2000; AMM 2017).

Table 2 – Most Frequently Appearing Authors in the Corpus

Author name	Number of books
Lene Kaaberbøl	10 ⁶
Jussi Adler-Olsen	7
Peter Høeg	7
Kim Fupz Aakeson	5
William Heinesen	5
Stig Dalager	4
Leif Davidsen	4
Jan Kjær and Merlin P. Mann	4
Henrik Stangerup	4

2.2.5 Translators

There are fifty-two individual translators in my corpus. This figure comprises all credited translator names; again the two-person pseudonym Sander Jakobsen is counted once. ‘Anonymous’ pseudonyms where the translator has since been identified are not counted again (namely, Tiina Nunnally is credited by name and as Lisa Hartford and F. David, but counted as one translator, with a resulting six books attributed to Nunnally in the corpus). Thirty translators appear only once in the corpus, having translated only one book in this period. Table 3 shows that the most prolific translators in the corpus have translated around ten titles each: Martin Aitken, Charlotte Barslund (two of which as co-translator with Don Bartlett, and another co-credited with an editor), Anne Born, and Barbara Haveland. These four translators have therefore translated nearly one third of the total books in the corpus.

Of the fifty-two total translators named, twenty-eight are women, and twenty-four are men (interpreting by forename). This is a fairly even split. Forty-five of the books are translated by individual men (thirty-six per cent of the corpus), seventy-one

⁶ Three of these co-authored with Agnete Friis.

books (fifty-seven per cent) by women. Of the remaining nine books, eight are translated by joint translator duos (six of these by mixed male-female duos), and it has not been possible to identify the translator for one illustrated children's book, for which it is suspected to have been an unidentified editor at the Danish publishers (according to Susan Bestow, Floris Books, email to thesis author, 27 November 2014). Intriguingly, the percentages of books translated by male or female translators are almost a direct reversal of the male-female author ratio: the majority of books in the corpus are translated by women. The suggestion that translation is commonly 'a pink-collar profession' (Sela-Sheffy and Shlesinger 2008, 80) has been advanced as one reason for its marginalisation as a career and identity (discussed below in Chapter 5).

Nationality or native tongue has some bearing on the translator's potential contacts in publishing and the literary world, but where they live will likely have more influence on the contemporary literary field in which they participate. For instance, books translated by an American translator are often but not always first (or only) published in the USA before the UK, such as Sara Blædel's books translated by Seattle-based American duo Erik Macki and Tara Chace. Adding demographic data about whether a translator is a native English speaker to the corpus would be complicated by geographical mobility, how to define native-level bilingualism, and the fact that this data cannot be assumed from their names (as in the crude generalisations made above about gender). This data has therefore not been extrapolated for my corpus as it would require labour-intensive further research.

In addition to *Miss Smilla*, six more books by Høeg were published in English by Harvill in the UK in this time period. The translator is not the same each time: Barbara Haveland translated four of these books, Nadia Christensen one and Martin Aitken one (and incidentally also *Effekten af Susan* [Denmark: 2014], published in the UK as *The Susan Effect* in 2017, after the timeframe for my corpus). Unlike Høeg, who has had four translators in this time period, some of the translators' totals are weighted by particular authors' collected works. For instance, W. Glyn Jones translated all five of William Heinesen's classic novels, four of which were published in fairly tight succession within the period of the corpus (2006-2011). Hence Heinesen and Jones appear in both Table 2 and 3 respectively. There are some 'self translators': Lene Kaaberbøl has translated into English one of her crime fiction books and most of her children's literature (seven books in total), and crime author duo Sander Jakobsen translated their novel *The Preacher* into English. Self translation is an interesting

phenomenon and subject of a wide field of research within Translation Studies, although space and remit of my thesis does not permit investigation of the phenomenon here. The Danish Arts Foundation's Translation Fund was not open to authors or publishers for translation abroad if the author translated the text themselves (fuller analysis of state cultural funding for translation is in the next chapter).

Table 3 – Most Frequently Appearing Translators in the Corpus

Translator name	Number of books
Martin Aitken	10
Charlotte Barslund	10
Anne Born	10
Barbara Haveland	9
W. Glyn Jones	8
Lene Kaaberbøl	7
John Mason	6
Tiina Nunnally	6

2.2.6 Publishers

The definition of a large and small publisher features earlier in this chapter. In the UK, generally speaking, 'large publishers' have the greatest revenue (over £100 million annually) and correspondingly greater market share, and 'small publishers' proportionally a very small market share, under £10 million revenue annually (Thompson 2010, 173). The British publishers in the corpus range from large publishers and their imprints such as Penguin (named publisher of five books), Hodder (four books) and Macmillan (two books) to small independents such as Boyars (four books) and Norvik Press (eight books). Some of the publishers were smaller or independent at the time of publication, but have since merged with or been acquired by large conglomerate publishers: namely, Harvill accounts for a noteworthy thirteen books in the corpus, fifteen if imprint Vintage is counted too. (Indeed, Harvill is by far the most prolific publisher of adult fiction books from all the Nordic languages in

Britain between 1950 and 2010: Berry 2017, 64.) This complicates definitions somewhat as it is not as straightforward as labelling Harvill as a ‘large’ publisher for the duration of the corpus; the nuance and change in the industry should be noted. Small independent publishers are well-represented in my corpus including for example Barefoot Books, Bloodaxe Books, Boyars, Dedalus, Norvik Press, and Serpent's Tail. Chapter 4 focuses in-depth on publishers, including the significance of small publishers in this field.

Many books in the corpus have been translated and published in the American market as well as being published in Britain, sometimes a year before or after depending on publication rights or marketing schedules, but always using the same translator (albeit not always credited with the same name, cf. *Miss Smilla*, for which the ‘transediting’ process is described in Chapter 5). Some of these books have different titles in the USA and UK, for example Sara Blædel’s *Kald Mig Prinsesse* (2011) is called *Call Me Princess* (2011) in the USA, and *Blue Blood* (2013) in Britain (a title evoking an icy-cool Borealism, crime fiction, and royalty in one stroke in British English). Books one to five of Adler-Olsen’s Department Q series have very different titles in the UK and USA, despite having the same translator for each book in each market. Neither the British nor American titles is a ‘literal’ translation of the Danish titles (cf. Kythor 2016, 194). The trend seems to be towards having the same titles in both markets later in the ten-book series (books six and seven so far) reflecting changes in the publication process at Penguin (WF 2016). In 2014 the American title of the first in the series – *The Keeper of Lost Causes* – was chosen for the UK circulation of the Danish film adaptation (more on this publication journey is found in Thomson and Stougaard-Nielsen 2017, 245-7).

Without input from committed cultural intermediaries such as engaged specialist publishers and Danish state support for translation, many of the books in my corpus may not have reached the UK at all, despite many being canonised ‘career authors’ in Denmark. Authors outside the expected model of Denmark’s literature abroad – radical thinkers or immigrant ethnic ‘others’, for instance – might be considered too challenging to market or might not fit into any corresponding genre conventions in the target culture. Ethnic or other minorities seem underrepresented in my corpus. Yahya Hassan – a Palestinian Danish-born poet whose eponymous poetry collection became an unprecedented bestseller in Denmark in 2013 (cf. Handesten 2015, 126-9), and whose domestic popularity reached the international press (Bury

2013; Smale 2014) – has not yet been published in English. This book may not be considered a marketable commodity by any British publishers for a multitude of reasons, not necessarily purely a reluctance to engage with diaspora literature within another culture. Perhaps the issue is with the author's or agent's choice of Danish-English translator, the author's need for security at public readings (therefore a complicated publicity strategy), or the fact that poetry is marginal and niche in the British book market.

2.2.7 Timeline

In the majority of cases, books in the corpus have been published almost contemporaneously in Denmark, that is, first published in Danish far within the immediately preceding decade. Notable exceptions are Suzanne Brøgger (*A Fighting Pig's Too Tough to Eat* [UK: 1997, Denmark: 1979] and *The Jade Cat* [UK: 2004, Denmark: 1997]), William Heinesen (UK: 1992-2011, Danish-language: 1934-64), and Inger Christensen (UK: 2000 and 2007, Denmark: 1969 and 1981). Books are not always published in the UK in the same order as in Denmark, especially where the success of one title has caused the British publisher to delve into the author's back-catalogue and translate and publish previous books. Prime examples are Høeg's *The History of Danish Dreams* (UK: 1996, Denmark: 1988) and *Tales of the Night* (UK: 1997, Denmark: 1990) following the success of *Miss Smilla* (1993) and Adler-Olsen's *Alphabet House* (UK: 2014, Denmark: 1997) following his Department Q series (UK: 2011-14).

While *Miss Smilla* is the logical starting point for my thesis, it apparently did not immediately usher in a huge number of translated Danish books into the British market. Between 1994-1999 inclusive (i.e. immediately after the year *Miss Smilla* was published), the corpus lists twelve Danish books entering the British market. Between 2010-2015 inclusive (the same time period snapshot), sixty-three Danish books appeared in the British market. For the full decade of the 1990s, the mean number of books translated and published from Denmark in the UK was 2.4 per year, and the actual number per year only rose into double figures in 2011. Fully half of the books in the corpus were published since 2010. By arranging the corpus on a visual timeline, for example using an online tool such as Tiki-Toki (Kythor 2015) or a graph (Figure 2), one quickly observes a sharp increase in relative terms in the number of publications after 2010.

Figure 2 – Number of Danish Books Published in the UK by Year (1990-2015 inclusive)

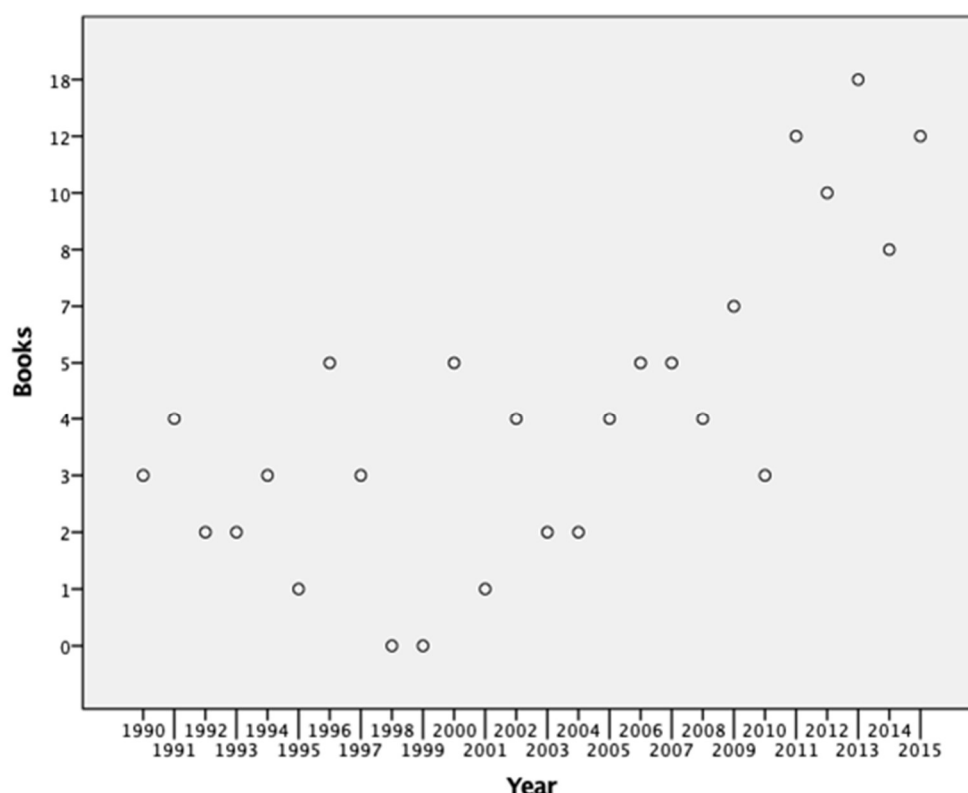


Figure 2 illustrates at a glance that the number of books published annually from 2011 onwards rises. While this is admittedly a small data set, there are statistical methods for checking whether this increase from 2011 represents a turning point or is just part of a general trend across the whole time period. The data can be split into two groups (before and after 2011) and tested to check whether there is a significant difference between these two groups. In this case, a Mann-Whitney U Test indicates that the number of books published from Danish in Britain post-2011 (mean = 12) is greater than the number of books published from Danish in Britain pre-2011 (mean = 3) ($U = 105$, $p = 0.001$, $r = 0.67$).⁷ The low p-value indicates that there is only a 0.1 per cent chance that the difference between the two groups (numbers of books published pre-2011 and post-2011) is a general upward trend. This analysis strongly suggests that there is a statistically significant difference between the number of books published from Danish in the UK before and after 2011.

⁷ Many thanks to Ruth Hand, University of Bath, for help with this statistical analysis of my corpus data.

The relative upturn after 2010 correlates with the rise of related Scandinavian cultural exports, especially Swedish/Norwegian crime fiction bestsellers at the end of the 2000s and into the early 2010s. In the Danish context specifically, it correlates with the broadcast of popular subtitled television series *The Killing* on BBC4 in 2011. This finding makes it appropriate to focus in-depth on specific genres and relevant market trends, including Nordic Noir, in the next section of this chapter.

2.3 The Market for Scandinavian Literary Exports in Britain

2.3.1 Genres of Danish Novels in Britain

Novels ('literature') comprise the largest proportion of all books in the corpus, at nearly seventy per cent. For the purposes of my thesis, genres and themes of particular novels are discussed with more nuance and subjective interpretation than the publishing industry's standard BIC (Book Industry Communications) categories. My subjective categorisation is to aid broad analysis, though admittedly might prove problematic for other researchers in attempting comparative work with other literary fields. Social realism (*hverdagslitteratur*) is a popular genre in Denmark, and four novels in this genre by Jens Christian Grøndahl have been published in the UK. Magical realism and elements of fantastical storytelling are represented by books in the corpus by Høeg, Peter Adolphsen, Henrik Stangerup, and Svend Åge Madsen. The most popular genre in Denmark is the historical biographical novel (Handesten 2013, 105-8), yet my corpus suggests few of these have reached the UK to date: approximately twelve per cent of all books in the corpus, depending on the interpretation of the genre.

Many contemporary Scandinavian books in translation in Britain represent a hybridity of genre (cf. Giles 2018, 332). On the one hand, *Miss Smilla* has been attributed with being the first Danish breakthrough crime fiction novel: a commercial precursor to the current Scandinavian crime fiction trend (Thomson and Stougaard-Nielsen 2017, 241). Indeed, most reviews in the contemporary 1990s British press pegged *Miss Smilla* as a thriller (Pihl 1996, 109), and it has been described as a faithful crime novel by scholars (Persson 2011, 152). Its publisher MacLehose called it 'a pastiche of many different crime thriller writers' works' (Engles 2009, 72). Yet, on the other hand, there have been multifarious analyses of the genre of this book:

Miss Smilla has been given many labels, for example, ‘essayistic crime novel’, ‘philosophical thriller’, ‘parody’, ‘thriller’, and ‘mystery’. Critics came to discuss and debate its genre with fervour. (Persson 2011, 151)

It fitted into the contemporary British book market as a postcolonial hybrid with cold, snowy landscapes; a ‘transatlantic weather book’ (Giles 2018, 227). The relation between the genre, themes, and contemporary marketing of *Miss Smilla* will be analysed in-depth in Chapter 6.

Using a subjective combination of available *BNB* data and book blurbs, thirty-six of the eighty-six novels in my corpus have been identified as crime fiction or thrillers. This is the largest single genre of novel: forty-two per cent of all novels in the corpus, and twenty-nine per cent of all books in the corpus. This data is interesting in light of the wider translated Scandinavian crime fiction trend in Britain since the early twenty-first century, which will be discussed next.

2.3.2 Twenty-First Century Scandinavian Crime Fiction and Danish Literature

The two crime fiction authors with the most titles in the corpus are Jussi Adler-Olsen – ‘one of the most highly regarded and best-selling Danish crime authors’ (Forshaw 2012, 162) who is ‘conquering Germany’ (Forshaw 2014b, 143) – and Leif Davidsen – a ‘Danish institution’ according to Forshaw (2012, 172). Yet these Danish authors represent only a small fraction of the whole Scandinavian crime fiction market in the UK. It has been claimed that outside Denmark, especially in Germany, ‘Danish crime novels have been widely read: Leif Davidsen’s political thrillers, Steen Christensen’s police procedurals, and Michael Larsen’s metaphysical detective stories’ (Nestingen 2009, 204-5). But mostly in describing Scandinavian crime fiction exports, it is specifically Swedish writers being discussed (Forshaw 2012, 173). Davidsen himself agrees with the appraisal of so-called ‘Scandinavian’ crime fiction: ‘It is my strong impression – when I follow discussions about the Nordic crime-wave outside Scandinavia – that what is really being talked about, again and again, are Swedish writers, who reign supreme’ (cited in Forshaw 2012, 173). Anne Holt in a lecture stated there is no such thing as ‘Scandinavian’ crime fiction: ‘It is Norwegian and Swedish crime fiction that make up Scandinavian crime fiction’ (Nestingen and Arvas 2011, 5). Indeed, the highest selling contemporary authors in anglophone markets are Stieg Larsson (Sweden), Henning Mankell (Sweden), and Jo Nesbø (Norway); no Danish crime fiction authors have gained similarly iconic status in the UK.

Three quarters of the Danish crime fiction novels in the corpus were published

after 2010: twenty-seven out of thirty-six. Other studies reflect my statistical findings (in section 2.7 above) that this is a statistically significant difference in comparison with the years before. Analysis of LAF findings for the Nordic context, for example, confirms there has been an upswing in publications of translated Scandinavian literature in Britain since the late 2000s/early 2010s (Giles 2015). From around the late 1990s, Scandinavian crime fiction gradually began being promoted abroad as a unified international marketing brand following the success of bestselling authors such as Mankell and Larsson (Nestingen and Arvas 2011, 14). The first four of Mankell's *Wallander* series (Harvill Press, 2000-2005) sold an exceptional 100,000 copies each in Britain, and the first of Larsson's *Millennium* trilogy *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* (2008) became a bestseller with a phenomenal 2.3 million copies sold in Britain to date. The commercial popularity of Scandinavian crime fiction in translation in Britain in the twenty-first century has been described as 'remarkable' (Venuti 2008, 154). Success – as evidenced by bestseller status, sales figures, marketing buzz, adaptation to other multi-medial modes, for instance – affects discerning readers' value judgements resulting often in an inverse correlation of economic capital (commercial success) and cultural capital (critical peer judgement) (Bourdieu 1996, 114). For some participants in the literary field, long after the nineteenth century of Bourdieu's analysis, this negative correlation between success and prestige still exists. Cultural and class hierarchies are sustained only in relation to other cultural products and classes, so the discerning still position themselves in opposition to popular culture and bestsellers: 'Bestselleren er suspekt og vulgær, fordi pengene, der følger med den, angiveligt korrumpere den kunstneriske integritet og aura' ('The bestseller is suspect and vulgar because its accompanying money purportedly corrupts the artistic integrity and aura': Handesten 2013, 102). Crime fiction in general is received as a popular, commercial genre with a broad readership. Danish state cultural funders take the position that publishers can take a demand-led approach to translating crime fiction from Danish to English because market forces will ensure they at least cover the costs of publishing the book. This has been given as a reason by the Danish Arts Foundation for declining Translation Fund grants for this genre – if the committee considers the book can hold its own in current market conditions, then it will not receive state subsidy (examples are given in Chapter 3).

While Moretti's *trees* are rooted in their own national literary field, another metaphor used by Moretti – the *wave* – sweeps through and saturates every market:

‘Trees and branches are what nation states cling to; waves are what markets do’ (Moretti 2013, 60). For instance, Moretti cites the dominance of Hollywood films across many national film markets globally as an example of a wave sweeping through and engulfing one market after another (ibid.). Waves result in uniformity. Moretti therefore supposes that in world literature there is one centre and multiple peripheries, so a successful global genre – in this case, crime fiction – can only be accounted for as a single-origin sweep through the global market, rather than as drops and ripples across many markets. The common inference that Scandinavian crime fiction has its origin in the Anglo-American crime fiction tradition is a fine example of this assumption: ‘The British and American canon of crime fiction has exerted an enormous influence on foreign novels in the genre, including many that have been translated into English’ (Venuti 2008, 159). Venuti makes the case for translated crime fiction in anglophone nations being simply an extension of the successful English-language genre (Venuti 2008, 159), arguing that successful Scandinavian crime fiction in the British market has been able to align itself with existing genre expectations, tropes, and market position. Paul Engles’ thesis and article title ‘Selling Ice to the Eskimos’ (2009; 2010) likewise refers to foreign crime fiction as the rebranding of an Anglo-American genre. Detective crime thrillers (‘ice’ in Engles’ metaphor) are supposedly traditionally a mainstay of British and American popular literary cultures, and this genre is being written in other nations, translated and ‘resold’ back to the core originators of the genre (‘Eskimos’ – a somewhat questionable term with a Boreal flavour, meaning here anglophone audiences). Forshaw reinforces this perspective by recounting that Swedish crime author Camilla ‘Läckberg is known to be inspired by British crime writers [...] suggesting that crime horizons now stretch from Oxford to Oslo and back’ (Forshaw 2014a, 257-8). These narratives suggest that crime fiction as a genre has swept like Moretti’s wave metaphor from hypercentral anglophone markets into national literary markets across the world. Yet Moretti’s wave metaphor comes crashing down when considering transnational markets in relation to (semi-)peripheral nations. This interpretation of international trends ignores the parallel development of the crime fiction genre in the Scandinavian nations, which have a strong history of crime fiction from the nineteenth century onwards. In addition, the development of the distinct target market sub-genres of Scandinavian crime fiction and Nordic Noir exhibit how these books have not merely aligned themselves into an existing genre, but rather carved a new niche.

2.3.3 Scandinavian Crime Fiction as a Gateway Genre?

The popularity of translated crime fiction in anglophone markets has been remarked upon as unrepresentative of the success of translated literature per se. Venuti interprets the popularity of translated crime fiction in anglophone markets with cynicism and remarks that translated crime fiction does not ‘introduce a significant difference into British and American cultures’ (Venuti 2008, 159). This stems from his perspective, discussed immediately above, that translated crime fiction is an extension of the existing anglophone crime fiction oeuvre. Expressing a desire to see a stronger injection of foreign literature into anglophone markets, Venuti laments that: ‘The popular audience is not crossing over to elite foreign literature, where, it might be argued, a more incisive representation of foreign cultures is likely to be found, unconstrained by the generic demands made by crime writing’ (Venuti 2008, 155).

There is, however, an opposite belief that readers of one genre of translated literature may crossover to reading other genres in translation based on their positive experience. As Danish-English translator Aitken put it in 2018: ‘Maybe we needed noir to bring the key and open the door’ (Silkstone 2018). MacLehose, publisher and proponent of translated literature in Britain, has repeatedly put forward the view that readers of translated crime fiction move onto reading other genres of translated literature (Engles 2009, 73; Djurberg 2017, 16). A quantitative survey in the UK with seventy-seven respondents found a quarter of crime fiction readers had read a translated literary novel after reading a crime fiction novel from that language (Engles 2009, 53). Thirty per cent of those who had not yet said they might in future – not a majority but, optimistically, a ‘significant minority’ (Engles 2010, 38). A positive interpretation then is that readers of Scandinavian crime fiction might go on to read other genres in translation, prompted by their positive experience with crime fiction: ‘One publisher supplied the metaphor of readers being “contaminated” by their exposure to foreign crime novels and going on to explore foreign fiction in general as a result’ (ibid.). The author of the study cited above, Engles, later came to be an editor at MacLehose Press, and his conviction was put into practice with Ejersbo’s coming-of-age novel *Exile* (2011). Marketing materials for *Exile* included the slogan ‘From the publishers of the Girl with the Dragon Tattoo’, for instance (a full analysis of its marketing is in Chapter 6).

British marketing has subsumed Scandinavian books of all genres into the successful Scandinavian crime fiction genre, perhaps in an attempt to motivate the

‘contamination’ described by Engles above. For instance, British publisher Quercus targeted fans of crime fiction in its marketing for Swedish horror novel *Let the Right One In* (Lindqvist 2007) including Scandinavian crime fiction tropes on the cover designs (Broomé 2014a, 144-5). MacLehose criticises ‘this silly term Scandi Noir’ (CM 2017) for embracing both those he considers literary geniuses such as Icelandic novelist Arnaldur Indriðason and more commercial authors. Yet the boundaries have changed of what consumers interpret as so-called Scandinavian crime fiction, precisely owing to marketing practices relating to the belief that readers might crossover from crime fiction into other genres. This interpretation has been espoused by researchers in the field too, for example: ‘[r]eading Scandinavian books does not necessarily encourage readers to move onto other books translated from non-Scandinavian languages, but [...] it does seem likely that they are encouraged to engage with more Scandinavian books’ (Giles 2018, 347). *Scandinavian* crime fiction in particular has evolved into becoming its own broad genre or ‘brand’, embracing books with any Nordic themes rather than necessarily crime fiction tropes. This marketing phenomenon even encompasses other Scandinavian cultural exports, and this is discussed next.

2.3.4 Nordic Noir as a Marketing Genre

‘Scandinavian crime fiction’, ‘Scandi Crime’, and ‘Nordic Noir’ have all been used as broad shorthand for popular fiction from all the Nordic nations (including Iceland and Finland) rather than exclusively the three traditional Scandinavian nations of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden (cf. Broomé 2014b, 269). The term ‘Nordic Noir’ seems to have originated only in the mid- to late-2000s, likely from the name of a book group started at UCL, adopted by the BBC for the title of a documentary on the phenomenon (Thomson and Stougaard-Nielsen 201, 235; Hansen and Waade 2017, 5). Though the genre is united by its origin in the Nordic countries, in fact there is little textual cohesion that automatically links all Nordic Noir books (Broomé 2014b, 270). It only became known as a single cohesive genre upon being embraced abroad; it was simply ‘crime fiction’ (*krimier*; *deckare*) in each of its native Scandinavian nations (Stougaard-Nielsen 2016).

In Britain, Nordic Noir in the early twenty-first century has become a marketing phenomenon in itself set apart from the wider genre of crime fiction. The brand imagery of the genre manifests itself in the marketing materials surrounding

each novel. The trend with book covers, for example, is towards cold colours and ‘a narrow range of motifs drawing on the snowy emptiness of the imagined Scandinavian landscape’ (Broomé 2014b, 274), thereby drawing on typically Borealist imagery. Consequently, ‘[t]he branding has created specific expectations – soggy weather, social restraint, overworked detectives, moments of interpersonal explosion, social and political criticism – which are often reflected in the book jackets of these novels, with their unpeopled landscapes, placid lakes and leafless trees’ (Nestingen and Arvas 2011, 14-5). The resulting unity of the book covers and related marketing materials results in a single genre readily identifiable by its fans. Attention is intentionally drawn to its foreign status by using Scandinavian brand imagery and Borealism to market and reinforce the genre. Marketing tactics draw on its status as a foreign cultural product, using a heterogenization approach (cf. Saldanha 2014), thereby contradicting Venuti’s assertion that Scandinavian crime fiction is purely received as a sub-genre of anglophone crime fiction (Venuti 2008, 159).

Nordic Noir has come to refer not only to books about or from Scandinavia, but has encompassed other Nordic cultural and media exports marketed under this unified brand. The unprecedented success of a run of Danish television series, first broadcast in Britain on BBC4, is worth briefly emphasising here as significant contributor to both the Scandinavian crime oeuvre and Nordic Noir genre in the UK in a different medium. BBC4 effectively created a Saturday night ‘slot’ for foreign television drama, starting with the moderately successful *Spiral*, a French production, paving the way for Danish and then other Scandinavian television programmes (Redvall 2013, 163-4). Journalists remarked at the time of broadcast about the high audience figures for *The Killing* (*Forbrydelsen*), especially for such a niche channel (between 500,000 to one million viewers: Redvall 2013, 163). Unlike in Denmark, where *The Killing* was broadcast on the primary national channel DR1 to large mainstream audiences, through the British gaze, ‘The Killing is suddenly exclusive and exotic programming on a niche channel rather than the major prime-time series’ (Redvall 2013, 159). Fandom of *The Killing* became synonymous with a certain section of society, parodied by a sketch in popular British sitcom *Absolutely Fabulous* in 2011: ‘Jennifer Saunders as the self-absorbed Edina, is suddenly watching subtitled series as yet another “accessory” to endorse her with cultural capital’ (Redvall 2013, 201). The collective belief around Danish cultural exports bestowing cultural capital on discerning middle-class Brits such as Edina is discussed outside this thesis (for example, Stougaard-Nielsen 2016;

Kythor 2018). Here it is mentioned to emphasise the contribution of Danish television series since 2011 to the field of Danish cultural exports in Britain and the Nordic Noir genre more broadly. Other Danish programmes such as *Borgen* and *The Bridge* followed in subsequent years on BBC4 with similar critical and cult appeal. While Danish literature is overshadowed in Britain by that of its Scandinavian neighbours, Denmark's television drama is of key importance when considering the broader cultural context. Specifically, it is television exports rather than book thrillers that have most greatly contributed to the image of Denmark in Britain in the early twenty-first century (Thomson and Stougaard-Nielsen 2017, 263).

Nordicana was a festival of Nordic television drama and fiction organised by DVD distributing company Arrow Films under its imprint of 'Nordic Noir and Beyond' (formerly 'Nordic Noir TV'). This event is described here as a short case study of branding in relation to the Nordic Noir marketing phenomenon. Nordicana took place in London in 2013, 2014, and 2015 (Nordicana website), during arguably a 'peak' in Britain of Scandinavian crime fiction, television, and film. The two-day events featured screenings, discussion panels and interviews with Scandinavian actors, book and DVD signings, and food stalls. Nordicana was founded after the Marketing Director at Arrow Films, Jon Sadler, observed the popularity of actors meeting fans and signing DVDs at the Arrow Films' stand at the London expo The Scandinavia Show in 2011 and 2012 (JS 2017). Their sold-out cinema screenings of the final episode of *Borgen* in 2012 in Edinburgh and London, featuring an interview appearance with its lead actress Sidse Babett Knudsen, further reassured Arrow Films that there was a receptive audience willing to pay to participate in event marketing like this (JS 2017). Crucially, the events reportedly did not make money, but the purported purpose of Nordicana was mostly brand-building. Sadler describes Nordicana as a 'publicity driver' to sustain interest in the 'genre' of Nordic Noir generally and Arrow Films' 'Nordic Noir and Beyond' DVD brand specifically (JS 2017). At the time Sadler joined Arrow Films in early 2012, the company had successfully been selling DVDs of series one of *The Killing* and three series of the Swedish *Wallander*, *Borgen* was just about to be released, and the *Millennium* series of books and films had recently been hugely successful:

So there was a real palpable sense of there being a movement which was called "Nordic Noir" – or that phrase had [just] been coined – so it occurred to me that we should really try and build a label that could

become a brand, that people could associate with anything to do with the genre. (JS 2017)

Accordingly, Nordicana demonstrates how a small independent agent in the field can have a significant role in capitalising upon and maintaining a brand, thereby setting the context for the field of cultural exports. Nordic Noir was in this instance treated as a marketing genre by Arrow Films, not only embracing various Scandinavian crime fiction books or television series under one marketing trend (cf. Broomé 2014a, 98-115), but also encompassing various other cultural exports, including political television dramas, tourism, and lifestyle aspects such as food, *hygge*, and home furnishings. The Nordicana events and promotional materials – mainly on social media, but also in targeted print publications such as the *Radio Times* and *The Guardian* – brought many aspects of contemporary Scandinavian cultural exports under one heading. This would have strengthened the broad Nordic Noir brand in audiences' perceptions, whether they attended the events or only saw the publicity. Related print materials such as the free bi-annual *Nordic Noir* magazine (edited by crime fiction critic Forshaw and included as a supplement with *The Guardian* in some regions of the UK) and the book *Nordicana: 100 Icons of Nordic Cool and Scandi Style* (Arrow Films and Kinsella 2015) also worked to build and maintain Nordic Noir as a generic brand. The book's back cover blurb states that: 'The Nordicana brand celebrates all aspects of Scandinavian and Nordic culture [...] Nordicana showcases the best TV and film dramas coming from those regions, and offers a platform for writers, clothing brands and food companies too' (ibid.). This demand-led marketing focus resulted in the boundaries of Nordic Noir being expanded to fit various cultural artefacts as deemed desirable by multi-modal marketers and receptive audiences. Nordicana broadened and strengthened the British notion of the marketing genre of Nordic Noir.

In my thesis, Nordic Noir is used as a catch-all term for the broad marketing genre of Scandinavian books, television, and film and its shared tropes and themes. This is consistent with recent scholarship: Nordic Noir has been identified as an inclusive brand name (Hansen and Waade 2017, 6) which is more 'sexy and appealing' than the term Scandi-crime (Hansen and Waade 2017, 8). Danish television series on the BBC were arguably labelled Nordic Noir by British journalists 'not simply as a means of classification but rather as a seal of quality for sophisticated foreign television drama' (Hochscherf and Philipsen 2017, 99). Furthermore, brand building

by commercial entities such as Arrow Films demonstrates that the genre encompasses far more than crime fiction: 'Nordic Noir is not a clearly defined genre, but a concept with genre affinities' (Hansen and Waade 2017, 9).

2.4 Conclusion

Limitations of my corpus data were recognised in this chapter, in particular the implications of focusing on the number of books published as a measure of success (rather than sale or other measures of reception), and the intricacies of deciding whether or not to include particular books or genres in the corpus. That said, the resulting clean and precise data in my corpus makes it the first with such accuracy in this field covering this time period. Throughout the chapters that follow, the corpus will be used as a basis for qualitative publication journeys and analysis.

In summary, one hundred and twenty-five books of Danish literature were published in English translation in Britain for the first time between 1990 and 2015 inclusive. Half of the books in the corpus were published since 2010. These figures demonstrate that Danish books comprise a tiny proportion of both the overall book market and translated fiction market in the UK, but that the number of books published from Danish in Britain seems to be on a rising trajectory. Most of the books in the corpus were originally written by men. Most of the books in the corpus were translated by women, though the ratio of men and women translators overall in the corpus is an even split. Four translators translated one third of all books in the corpus. Most of the books in the corpus are novels, and most of these novels are in the genre of crime fiction or thriller, even though Danish books are not well-represented in the overall Scandinavian crime fiction oeuvre in anglophone markets. Three-quarters of the crime fiction novels in my corpus were published after 2010.

Danish books in translation in Britain are part of a wider collection of Danish cultural artefacts transferred across to a new market including films, television, fashion, food, and home furnishings. Nordic Noir has been identified in this chapter as a marketing genre into which Danish literature and other cultural exports have been grouped as a unified brand. The shift in the publishing industry to a tendency towards multi-channel, multi-media, and multi-product marketing described at the start of this chapter is all demonstrated by the Nordic Noir brand in Britain.

A number of agents are involved in the processes of a book's publication journey from Denmark into the UK. Authors, translators, literary agents, publishers, state funders, journalists, DVD distributors, readers, and fans, among others, all have a part to play in bringing Danish literature to the UK. These agents are addressed in the next chapters, drawing on aspects identified in this chapter including a fundamental understanding of the British market context. In the next chapter, I analyse the input of Danish state cultural funding from the Danish Arts Foundation specifically, as their financial and practical support enables so many of the books in my corpus to reach British audiences. This is followed by a chapter focusing on the (small) publishers of Danish literature in the UK, then a chapter exploring the work of Danish-English literary translators, both of which draw inspiration from the corpus findings analysed above in this chapter. My final chapter on promoting Danish literature features analysis of publication journeys based on this chapter's interpretation of Nordic Noir.

CHAPTER 3 – Funding: Danish State Funders and Danish Literature Abroad

Human decision-makers at state cultural funding institutions comprise some of the unseen supportive roots sustaining the tree of Danish translated literature in Britain. Corpus data in the previous chapter highlighted the prominence of small publishers in this field. Funding for literature in translation from the Danish Arts Foundation is essential for these small anglophone publishers especially; many books would not have come to market in the UK without both their inputs. In the small field of Danish literature entering the British market, state cultural funding initiatives from Denmark have therefore had momentous results. With this in mind, this chapter on funding is suitably placed in advance of my chapter examining publishers.

Because cultural funding for literature in translation is part of a wider picture of Danish – and Nordic – state support for the dissemination of culture abroad, this chapter opens by examining the scene for state-supported Nordic cultural agencies and networks in Britain. Then I examine the history and structure of Danish state support for cultural production to provide context for funding decisions identified in later publication journeys. In the final section of this chapter, I use actual examples from one particular Danish Arts Foundation grant, the Translation Fund, to describe how these decisions and dissemination happen in practice.

3.1 Nordic State Support for Cultural Exports in Britain

This chapter primarily focuses on initiatives by the Danish Arts Foundation (*Statens Kunstfond*) to support Danish literature in translation. This state cultural support is part of a wider collection of initiatives to support Danish culture abroad. From 1957, the Danish Cultural Institute – an independent non-governmental organisation – organised cultural events on music, art, film, literature, and design in Edinburgh and further afield within the UK. In 2015 the Danish Cultural Institute closed in order to focus on emerging markets in Brazil, China, and India (Buchan 2015). Its closure represented a loss of opportunities for disseminating Danish cultural exports to general public audiences (in contrast to academic audiences), including a reduction in the face-to-face networking and associated social capital that supports the field of Danish literature in

the UK. The Danish Embassy in London was left as the sole cultural representative body of Denmark in the UK. The Danish Embassy, along with the Danish Ambassador to the UK, hosts numerous cultural and business events including lectures, book launches, and workshops, generally at its premises in Knightsbridge. The Cultural Attaché is a member of the Embassy's Communication, Culture and Public Diplomacy section; a clear indication of the role given to culture and arts in projecting an image of Denmark abroad. In 2015, the Nordic Council of Ministers asked the Nordic Embassies worldwide to propose a cultural project in their city in 2017. After strong competition, the Danish Embassy in London won this funding for a collaborative season of events at the Southbank Centre called Nordic Matters (LBC 2017). The Danish Cultural Attaché expresses the positive effect of Denmark being represented with its neighbouring nations: 'It sometimes makes sense to do it "Nordic": you can go bigger, and there's more interest in doing something with a higher profile' (LBC 2017).

NordLit is an informal association under the Nordic Council of Ministers which links literary arts councils (including the Danish Arts Foundation) and authors' associations from all the Nordic nations. It was established as an initiative in the early twenty-first century to promote Nordic literature abroad as one brand. *NordLit* presents a unified Nordic presence at international industry fairs such as the London Book Fair and Book Expo America; rather than each nation having its own separate stand as in the past, the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, and related regions the Faroe Islands, Greenland and Sápmi) share a larger single stand. The *NordLit* collaboration at book fairs was prompted by a joint invitation to the Nordic countries to take a shared stand at the Paris Book Fair in the late 1990s. At the London Book Fair, the Nordic countries first decided to have a shared stand in 2013 (Klavs Nordstrand, email to thesis author, 26 August 2014). Sometimes, at more peripheral book fairs, the state cultural agencies are the only representatives of Denmark when publishers do not attend (AMR 2015). Exhibiting together at book fairs is a development in line with previous Nordic Council projects including *Nordic Literature* magazine, published between 1993 and 2006 bilingually in Danish/Scandinavian and English and distributed at international book fairs. The Nordic countries have since returned to individual national publications, such as the Danish Arts Foundation's *Danish Literary Magazine* (which was published in English bi-annually to coincide with London Book Fair in the spring and Frankfurt Book Fair

in the Autumn). The *NordLit* initiative shows a remarkable acceptance of Scandinavia's unified brand image (as mentioned in the thesis introduction). Rather than pushing against the conglomeration of their nations and trying to promote distinct national images, they are using the 'Scandinavian premium' (Anholt 2010, 51) to their advantage to cross-promote authors from across the region. As representatives of small(er) nations, the arts councils of the Nordic region clearly often find it efficient to collaborate and embrace these common values and brand perceptions. This might also be a contemporary nod to Nordic exceptionalism: an agreement by the Nordic arts councils that there is a brand commonality (or perhaps even superiority) between all Nordic nations, using to their advantage the lack of discernment that many international audiences make between these nations.

In the previous chapter, it was established that Swedish literature especially outnumbers Danish literature in publications and sales in the British market during the period covered by my thesis. I propose that strong Swedish cultural and social networks in the UK may have a large impact on this. For instance, the Anglo-Swedish Literary Foundation (ASLF) was founded in 1925 at the behest of Irish playwright George Bernard Shaw who donated his prize money from the Nobel Prize to further Swedish literature in translation in Britain. The triennial Bernard Shaw prize for translations of Swedish literature into English was established in 1991 and is administered by the Society of Authors. The Bernard Shaw prize lends prestige and cultural capital to its nominees and winners in the wider literary field. Post WWII, the ASLF supported the reconstruction of UCL's Swedish (now Scandinavian Studies) library and it has funded visits by British translators to Sweden and by Swedish writers to Britain (Holroyd 1997, 812). SELTA (the Swedish-English Literary Translators' Association) receives an annual operating grant from ASLF (more about SELTA is in Chapter 5). The practical measures that have been provided by ASLF offer advantages to Swedish literature that have not been matched in the field of Danish literature in the UK currently or historically. No equivalent independent funding body exists for supporting Danish translated literature in Britain. A comparable but non-equivalent agency is arguably the Anglo-Danish Society, which exists to promote relations between Denmark and Britain. The Anglo-Danish Society hosts cultural networking events for members, such as evening receptions with Danish touring musicians, as well as annual scholarships for postgraduate students (ADS website). Unlike ASLF it does not offer any direct support for Danish literature in translation specifically. The

Swedish Institute is a state institution analysing and marketing the image of Sweden which also does not have an equivalent in the Danish context. The Swedish Institute promotes the image of Sweden abroad in the areas of culture, education, science and business (SI website). For a number of years during the period covered by my thesis, the Swedish Institute was also responsible for distributing funding to disseminate Swedish literature in translation abroad (Broomé 2014a, 213).

During the early twenty-first century, the number of British higher education institutions teaching Scandinavian languages as part of degree programmes has decreased, leaving Scandinavian Studies as a single honours programme available only at the specific university departments in Edinburgh and London (UCL). The University of East Anglia in Norwich and the University of Hull both disbanded their Scandinavian Studies departments in the early 2000s. The Centre for Nordic Studies at the University of Sheffield appears to only offer Swedish to undergraduate students, the MA Translation programme at the University of Surrey features Norwegian and Swedish including *ab initio* Norwegian classes, and both the Universities of Highlands and Islands and Aberdeen offer historically-focused Scandinavian Studies programmes (cf. Anderman 2002). The dwindling provision of Scandinavian languages – especially Danish – at British universities leads to a decrease in social and cultural capital of tutors and staff with connections to Scandinavia, and therefore a reduction in the opportunities to disseminate Danish culture via state-supported networks. Denmark's Lecturer Scheme (*Lektoratsordningen*) places Danish language teachers at higher education institutions in around seventy institutions worldwide (UFM website). In Britain, established positions are held in the departments of Scandinavian Studies in Edinburgh and London (UCL). These 'lektors' abroad not only teach Danish, but also create an enthusiastic personal link between the institution in which they are based and Denmark. They enable promotional opportunities for Danish cultural exports: for instance, they might arrange for Danish authors to participate in seminars or public engagement events. Danish Professor of Literature at the University of Southern Denmark, Anne-Marie Mai, points out how in her perception the *lektorat* system may be an underappreciated part of the field of Scandinavian literature abroad:

Jeg kender afdelingen for skandinavistik i Polen i Gdansk, hvor man har haft en dansk professor i dansk litteratur, og han har for eksempel været en vigtig formidler af dansk litteratur i Polen, og har udgivet ting på polsk af danske forfattere og digtere, som han har været optaget af. Man kan sige, at det hviler på noget meget subjektivt, men det virker, og det er vigtigt. Når

man skærer ned på det dansksprogede, videnskabelige personale, så mangler det. (AMM 2017)

(I'm familiar with the Department of Scandinavian Studies in Gdansk in Poland, where there has been a Danish Professor of Danish Literature, and he has been an important disseminator of Danish literature in Poland, and has published things in Polish by Danish authors and poets who he has been interested in. You might think this is something very subjective – but it works and it is important. When you cut back on Danish-speaking academic staff, something's lost.)

The comparatively strong position of Swedish in the British context might partly be the result of more widespread teaching of Swedish than Danish in higher education institutions. The Danish Lecturer Scheme has lost significant funding from the Danish government in recent years which risks reducing this support and network for Danish culture abroad. Initiatives such as the *lektor* scheme are part of Denmark's wider state support for culture. The next section of this chapter gives some context and background for Danish state support for its cultural output, before I explore support for Danish literature in translation abroad specifically.

3.2 State Support for Culture in Denmark

There are three main ways a state supports national cultural endeavour: 'Direkte og indirekte fordeling af statsstøtten til forskellig kulturområder; fordelingen til skabende, formidlende og uddannelsesmæssig virksomhed; fordelingen til kunst- og kulturinstitutioner, til personer og til aktiviteter' ('Direct and indirect distribution of state funding to various cultural areas; distribution to creative, intermediary and educational enterprises; distribution to art and cultural institutions, individuals, and activities': Bakke 1988, 115). Denmark is a small nation with an engaged reading public and variety of publishing houses. From a global literary system perspective (cf. Chapter 1), semi-peripheral Denmark has much in common with more central countries with high literary prestige:

Literary 'prestige' also depends on the existence of a more or less extensive professional 'milieu', a restricted and cultivated public, and an interested aristocracy or enlightened bourgeoisie; on salons, a specialized press, and sought-after publishers with distinguished lists who compete with one another; on respected judges of talent, whose reputation and authority as discoverers of unknown literary texts may be national or international; and, of course, on celebrated writers wholly devoted to the task of writing. (Casanova 2004, 15)

Denmark's welfare state supports authors who wish to write as a career. To an extent, this state support to enable a professional class of authors might be a response by a

government that believes the arts would not be able to sustain themselves solely commercially in a small nation. *Kunstfonden* ('the Arts Fund') has existed since the 1960s to support Danish artists, including authors, and it is seen as a crucial part of societal support provided by the social democratic welfare state (Mai 2013, 16). The result is that state institutions therefore have the means of consecrating culture by being the gatekeepers enabling the viability of particular projects. As I will illustrate later in this chapter, a challenge faced by state funding decision-makers supporting translation in particular is that cultural value, capital, and consecration are culturally-bound. After starting with a brief history of the Danish Arts Foundation for context, this section focuses on human agency in the funding process, namely the committee model, as well as support offered specifically for translated literature to be disseminated outside Denmark.

3.2.1 History of State Support for Culture in Denmark

This section provides an overview of the history and roles of the Ministry of Culture and the Danish Arts Foundation (*Statens Kunstfond*), in order to elucidate the intertwined relationship between nation branding and state funding for the arts. It especially provides context for the examples later in this chapter where funding has been received from the Danish Arts Foundation by publishers and translators for translated literature in the UK.

State support for cultural endeavour in Denmark is enmeshed with the creation and maintenance of its social democratic welfare state. Since the abolition of the absolute monarchy in 1848, the Ministry of Cultus (*Kultusministeriet*) had been responsible for church, culture, and education (Pihl 1996, 125). The Ministry of Cultus was replaced by both the Ministry of Church and the Ministry of Education in 1916, and its legacy was to link the patronage of the arts with the state (Pihl 1996, 126). Government support for culture in Denmark relates to the longstanding societal notion of *dannelse* (closely related to *Bildung* in German): lifelong personal development based around education and cultural enrichment. Grundtvig's late-nineteenth-century teachings included a focus on the role of literature in nation building and the notion of meaningful leisure time, and to this day, ideologically, 'Danish cultural policies have a philosophy based in Grundtvigianism' (Pihl 1996, 115). Grundtvig proposed the founding of folk high schools (*folkehøjskoler*) for popular education, and the first opened in 1844. By 1910, Denmark had seventy-nine folk high schools providing a

variety of adult education classes with 7,000 students in total, comprising up to a third of the rural population aged 20-25 (Mai 2011, 61). Danish folk high schools became a significant institution and cultural movement which continues to the present day. Libraries complemented the promotion of and enthusiasm for lifelong learning by providing free access to books for the burgeoning ‘enlightened’ educated classes. Copenhagen’s metropolitan public libraries opened in 1885 (Mai 2011, 59), the first public library act (*bibliotekslov*) was in 1920 (*ibid.*), and by 1948 Denmark had 1505 public libraries in total, with around sixteen million loans annually (Mai 2011, 60). *Tipsfonden* (approximately ‘Danish National Lottery Funding’) for libraries and authors was and still is a core part of Denmark’s national funding for literature (Bakke 1988, 138).

When the Left Reform Party (*Venstrereformpartiet*) was voted into power in 1901, laws and institutions were modernised, including expanding compulsory universal education (*skoleloven*) in 1903 (Mai 2011, 21). In combination with the folk high schools and established free public libraries described above, this reform brought about a literate and engaged reading public. Education became important to the Danish national self-image and was thereby integrated into its Nordientalist autostereotypes. The modernisation of laws and institutions by the Left Reform Party at the turn of the twentieth century paved the way for the workers’ movement in the 1930s, when Denmark and other Scandinavian nations were acutely aware of the role of culture in nation building. In the 1930s a ‘culture debate’ came about in Denmark, prompted by the extreme political ideologies gaining strength across Europe: ‘Kampen mod nazismen var oplagt en kulturkamp, og der blev sat mange kræfter ind i 1930’ernes righoldige litteratur og litteraturdebat’ (‘The fight against Nazism was obviously a cultural struggle and a lot of effort was put into abundant literature and the literary debate of the 1930s’: Mai 2011, 23). Poul Henningsen, an artist, writer, designer, and proponent of cultural radicalism, wrote *Hvad med kulturen?* (‘What About Culture?’) in 1933. This book was a polemic emphasising the importance of arts and culture in the fight against fascism, urging the Social Democrat government to provide stronger support for the arts. His approach was to contrast the Nazi government in Germany with the passive Social Democrats in Denmark, arguing that government support for culture need not be automatically equated negatively with propaganda, because art is always powerful and never apolitical: ‘Der foreligger faktisk ingen fri kunst – ingen kunstværk, som ikke er præget og begrænset af sin tids økonomi og regeringsform’

(‘No free art actually exists – no artwork that is not influenced and limited by its era’s economy and government’: Henningsen 1968 [1933], 8). Moreover artists needed state assistance to ensure a broad range of art and innovation: the result of a market-led cultural sector would be art produced only for profit which limits the resulting product: ‘Enhver, der skriver, maler, filmer for succes og penges skyld, vil skabe konservativ kunst automatisk’ (‘Anyone who writes, paints, films for the sake of success and money will automatically create conservative art’: Henningsen 1968 [1933], 29). Henningsen and other commentators agreed that arts and culture should be seen as indispensable in society and were referred to as a cultural whole: ‘Kulturbegrebet samler de forskellige forhold under ét og kæder kunst, politik, og ideologi sammen’ (‘The term “culture” brings together different relationships, linking art, politics, and ideology’: Mai 2011, 24).

A worker’s or people’s culture was considered integral in society, and cultural democracy rather than democratising culture was expounded; hence there was a focus on culture from the very beginning of the 1930s Social Democrat welfare model and social reform. The manifesto of prime minister Thorvald Stauning’s Social Democrats in 1934 was *Danmark for Folket* (‘Denmark for the People’). The notion of ‘kulturpolitik til alle’ (‘cultural policy for everyone’, that is, not for one particular social class) was consistently promoted from Social Minister K. K. Steincke in the 1930s to Minister for Culture Niels Matthiasen in 1976 (Bakke 1988, 43). Social Democrat and later Minister for Culture Julius Bomholt pushed to establish a state fund for culture (Bakke 1988, 51), and with his 1932 book *Arbejderkultur* (‘Workers’ Culture’), ‘Bomholt førte kulturkampen ind i litteraturhistorieskrivningen’ (‘Bomholt brought the cultural struggle into the writing of literary history’: Mai 2011, 25). Following World War II, the Social Democrats published their ‘Denmark of the Future’ (*Fremtidens Danmark*) manifesto, partly inspired by the economist John Maynard Keynes who advocated strong state regulation of the economy. Support for culture was central to the manifesto: ‘Formålet med den økonomiske Politik er at skabe Muligheder for en Udvikling og en Uddybning af Folkets kulturelle Liv’ (‘The purpose of the economic policy is to create opportunities for the development and broadening of the cultural life of the people’: Socialdemokratiet and Krag 1945, XII). Keynesianism smoothed the way for the welfare state policies of the 1960s. The Commission for the Arts (*Kunstkommissionen*) was appointed in 1954 (Bakke 1988, 51) under the Ministry of Education, soon replaced by *Statens Kunstfond* (‘the

National Arts Foundation’; referred to in my thesis by its English name, the Danish Arts Foundation) in 1956. In 1961, *Statens Kunstfond* moved to be under the Ministry of Culture, still with a focus on promoting visual arts. The Ministry of Culture was established in 1961 in the context of the Social Democrat government’s reform. It was founded as the Ministry for Cultural Affairs (*Ministeriet for kulturelle anliggender*) and remained under this name until 1987 when it was renamed Ministry of Culture and Communication (*Kultur- og Kommunikationsministeriet*). Soon after it became simply the Ministry of Culture (*Kulturministeriet*), as it has been known since 1988 (kum.dk website). The Ministry of Culture is a governmental department responsible for policy in relation to education, creative arts, and cultural heritage. In 1964, the original *Statens Kunstfond* was replaced by one with the same name but with a wider focus on all Danish creative arts including visual art, music, and literature (Hertz and Mogensen; Lov om Statens Kunstfond 1964). *Statens Kunstfond* is entirely funded by the Ministry for Culture, yet funding has been distributed by this arms-length organisation since its establishment in 1964-5 because, in essence, ‘Kunsten trives bedst i frihed’ (‘art thrives best in freedom’: Hermann 2011, 8). Crucially, the arms-length principle dictates that consultants and committees are conduits between the government and recipients of the funding. These decision-making committees will be discussed in the next section.

In January 1965, the first of the Danish Arts Foundation’s three-year career stipends were awarded (20,000 DKK annually) to 6 authors, 2 composers, and 7 artists (Kastrup and Lærkesen 1979, 9). *Arbejdsstipendiater* (‘career stipends’) and *produktionspræmier* (‘production awards’) from the Danish Arts Foundation support emerging artists, however:

[w]hen the stipends and awards were announced it caused an uproar among the population. These grants-in-aid were mainly given to young modernist authors whose writings often seemed incomprehensible to the average reader. (Pihl 1996, 137)

The establishment of these career stipends in the 1960s triggered a ‘white-hot’ debate on the judgement and definition of art itself (Mai 2014, 66). In February and March 1965, a protest movement erupted against the founding of *Statens Kunstfond*. Named ‘Rindalism’ after Peter Rindal, a member of the Progress Party (*Fremskridtspartiet*) in Kolding who started the campaign against state support for elite abstract art, a number of protests took place in towns across Denmark. Protesters nationwide gathered 54,000 signatures against *Statens Kunstfond* (Kastrup and Lærkesen 1979a, 204). Three

quarters of signatories were from Jutland, the rural mainland of Denmark (ibid.). Urbanisation in the 1950s and 1960s provided a societal basis for Rindalism (Kastrup and Lærkesen 1979a, 360) – opponents to *Statens Kunstfond* were motivated by social indignation towards a financial policy perceived as cosmopolitan, metropolitan, and elitist (Kastrup and Lærkesen 1979b, 10). Rindal was not against state funding for culture *per se*, but felt it should be accessible to all, given that welfare legislation in place from 1966 ‘laid down that art was for the benefit of everybody in society’ (Mai 2014, 66). In response, in the 1970s the focus of state agencies ostensibly shifted from high culture to cultural dissemination (*kulturformidling*). During the 1970s – the welfare state’s so-called Golden Age (Mai 2013, 54) – the literary market expanded and fragmented, becoming ‘både mere populær og mere eksperimenterende og elitær end nogen sinde tidligere i det 20. århundrede. Det var i disse år, billigbogsboomet og bestsellerne for alvor overvældede bogmarkedet’ (‘both more popular and more experimental and elitist than ever before in the twentieth century. In this decade, paperback books and bestsellers seriously overwhelmed the book market’: Mai 2013, 54). There emerged a new wave of popular authors: feminists such as Suzanne Brøgger (Mai 2013, 54-5) and media-savvy celebrities like Dan Turèll (‘Han lavede sig selv om til happening!’ [‘he made himself into a “happening”!’]: Mai 2013, 55).

In 1987 the Authors’ School (*Forfatterskolen*) was founded, and many of its alumni have gone on to become canonised authors in Denmark. This offers parallels with the field of cinema: Denmark’s Film School (*Den Danske Filmskole*) has produced Danish directors, producers, and scriptwriters of international renown, and both institutions are provided with state support. Just like literature, state funding for film comes under the remit of the Ministry of Culture and Danish Arts Foundation. Because in the mid-twentieth century television overtook film as an entertainment medium, ‘by the early 1970s it was clear that the very survival of Danish film depended on the possibility of significant state support’ (Hjort and Bondebjerg 2001, 8). The Film Act 1972 was a turning point for state support for film by establishing the framework for publicly subsidised national film production and promoting and distributing art films at home and abroad (Hjort, Jørholt & Redvall 2010, 26). The Danish Film Institute (DFI) was founded in 1972 to administer state subsidies for Danish film production, replacing the former *Filmfond* established at the time of *Statens Kunstfond* in 1964. Commercial success is considered paramount to strengthen and maintain the position of Danish film on the world stage. Writing about film in

2010, Hjort, Jørholt & Redvall claim a result of the last two government Film Accords is that '[t]here is less and less space, it is widely agreed, in the landscape of Danish film, for the practices that support film as art' (28). Yet for literature, in contrast, it seems support for literature-as-art (or 'high culture') prevails over and above commercial literature. Grant decision-making committees can (and do) choose to decline grants to books or authors they consider will sell well in prevailing market conditions (examples of this are below in section 3).

During the period covered by my thesis (1990-2015), literature has been supported by differently named and structured departments within the Ministry of Culture and Danish Arts Foundation. Between 1990-2003 *Dansk Litteraturcenter* ('Danish Literature Information Center') focused on promoting Danish literature abroad including translation grants. A parallel institution, *Litteraturrådet*, between 1996-2003 focused on domestic literary projects. In the early 2000s, the Minister of Culture 'Brian Mikkelsen oversaw the reorganisation of Danish subsidies for art and culture, and centralised them in a new unit, The Danish Arts Council. The Council's main task was to upgrade and coordinate international cultural exchange' (Mordhorst 2015, 242). In 2004, Foreign Minister Per Stig Møller stated that marketing Denmark culturally would bring positive attention internationally (Mordhorst 2015, 242), illustrating how in the twenty-first century, the Danish government has re-framed state funding for art and culture as part of cultural diplomacy and soft power. In July 2003, *Dansk Litteraturcentret* and *Litteraturrådet* merged into *Statens Kunstråd* *Litteraturudvalg* ('the Literature Department within the Danish Arts Council') covering both domestic and international projects. Between 2003-13 *Statens Kunstråd* (the Danish Arts Council) held responsibility for visual arts, literature, music, and theatre. The current *Statens Kunstfond* was founded on 1st January 2014; a merger of the existing *Statens Kunstfond* and *Statens Kunstråd* (Danish Arts Foundation and Danish Arts Council) (Om Statens Kunstfond webpage). *Statens Kunstfond* comprises twelve specialist committees steered by respective directors; six of the committees deal with funding of international projects and six solely with domestic Danish projects. Applicants for funding from the committees do not apply directly to *Statens Kunstfond*; the administrative aspects are the remit of the secretariat, the Danish Agency for Culture and Palaces (*Slots- og Kulturstyrelsen*). A regrouping in 2014 into *Statens Kunstfond* resulted in two literature committees: *Projektstøtteudvalg for Litteratur* ('Committee for Literary Project Funding') and *Legatudvalg for Litteratur*

(‘Scholarship Committee for Literature’). The next section elucidates this expert committee model.

3.2.2 Consultants and Expert Committees

The Danish Arts Foundation has expert committees to make decisions on funding and grants. Each committee’s members are nominated in varying ratios by both the Danish Arts Foundation and the Ministry of Culture, and each committee changes annually or after a set period of a policy. For example, many departments operate with four-year strategies and corresponding committees (Lov nr 458 2013). Having formed the Danish Arts Foundation as an arms-length state funding body, it was clear that its decision-makers must make judgements about the value and quality of the literature and art placed before them; from its inauguration in the 1960s it was considered correct that ‘forfattere, forlæggere og eksperter, ikke politikere og samfundsøkonomer, definerer kunstnerisk kvalitet, sætter dagsordenen for litterær fornyelse og skaber litterære grupperinger og skoler’ (‘writers, publishers and experts, not politicians and socio-economists, define artistic quality, set the agenda for literary innovation, and establish literary groups and schools’: Mai 2013, 26). The expert committee members are expected to be capable and experienced enough to be able to independently discern ‘quality’ (however that intangible concept might be defined):

de skal have en indsigt i litteratur, som sætter dem i stand til at genkende kvalitet, uanset hvilke personlige præferencer de måtte have. De må ikke være smagsdommere, som lader sig styre af egne idiosynkrasier, men skal nøgternt kunne vurdere, om en tekst eller et projekt er af høj kunstnerisk kvalitet. (Hermann 2011, 26)

(‘they must have insight into literature that enables them to recognise quality regardless of personal preference. They should not be arbiters of taste guided by their own idiosyncrasies, but must be able to accurately assess whether a text or project is of high artistic quality.’)

For literature, at the time of writing, in accordance with *Kunstfondsloven* (Lov nr 458 2013), there are three committee members for the *Projektstøtteudvalg for Litteratur* (‘Committee for Literary Project Funding’), which is responsible for the grants applied for by publishers, authors, and translators – for instance, the Translation Fund, Sample Translation Fund, and other general funding including mentorship schemes – and five committee members for *Legatudvalg for Litteratur* (‘Scholarship Committee for Literature’), which is responsible for career stipends for authors and translators. As per the requirement described above, members of these decision-making committees for literary grants are authors, translators, and practitioners working in the field of

literature – for instance, from January 2013 to December 2017 the chair of the Committee for Literary Project Funding was Thomas Harder (interpreter, translator, author) and from January 2014 to December 2015 the chair of the Scholarship Committee for Literature was Anne Lise Marstrand-Jørgensen (author) (TH 2015; ALMJ 2015).

The expert committee model for literary funding has endured since the Danish Arts Foundation's inception. For literature, Danish Arts Foundation advisors (*konsulenter*) at its secretariat the Danish Agency for Culture receive applications for stipends and grants and ensure they are complete and eligible, before presenting these to the relevant expert committee for a decision. In contrast to this Danish arms-length organisation model, at Norway's autonomous support agency *NORLA*, the advisors who receive applications make decisions themselves. There is a different process too for applications to Danish state funders for film. A material factor of difference between literature and funding is the volume of applications: there will be many more applications for various literary funding pools than for making feature films, owing to the high production costs and complex mechanisms for the latter. The DFI eschewed its former model of having academics as committee members; instead 'the "new" DFI has tended to appoint practitioners – writers, editors and dramaturgists – as its consultants' (Hjort, Jørholt and Redvall 2010, 26). The DFI's model streamlines the comparable two-step process undertaken by the Danish Arts Foundation's literature department:

Ansøgningerne sendes direkte til den konsulent, som ansøgeren selv vurderer, at det vil være bedst at henvende sig til, og det er denne konsulent alene, der afgør, om projektet skal indstilles til støtte (indstillingen skal dog godkendes af direktionen). Ansøgere, der har fået afslag, er frit stillet til at søge igen hos en anden konsulent. (Hermann 2011, 28)

('Applications are sent directly to a consultant considered by the applicant themselves as the best to appeal to, and that consultant alone decides whether the project receives approval for support (though this recommendation must be approved by the Executive Board). Applicants who have been declined are free to apply again to a different consultant.')

In the case of film, this means that networking, ongoing positive relationships, and the resulting increased social capital between applicants and funding advisors are *directly* rewarded with a receptive decision-maker approached by a knowledgeable applicant. Jo Hermann, formerly a committee member for one of the Danish Arts Foundation's literature departments, wonders whether an individual rather than a committee might be able to make some of the decisions on funding for literature just as effectively as an

expert committee (as it happens with film and the DFI). While the consensus committee model appears fair, one of its drawbacks is that committee members will strive to avoid conflict to protect their symbolic capital (Hermann 2011, 29). The decision-making processes and structures for state funding for exported literature are fraught with the perception of unsuitability within small nations: ‘In some cases, panels of literary experts were bypassed by civil servants more anxious not to offend any of the publishers applying for funding; in others, on the contrary, the priorities of domestic expert panels were privileged over, for example, the prospects for international cultural promotion or commercial success’ (Chitnis et al. 2017, 12). The latter situation is exhibited regularly in the Danish context, as illustrated in my examples below.

The Danish Agency for Culture advisors have diverse roles encompassing a domestic and international focus: ‘Så vi har en tvedelt rolle i at vi promoverer en masse støtteordninger og litteratur i udlandet, samtidig med at vi behandler ansøgninger på vegne af udvalget herhjemme. Derudover så servicerer vi Kulturministeriet og ministeren selv på vegne af litterære spørgsmål som der skal besvares politisk set’ (‘So we have the dual role of promoting a lot of support schemes and literature abroad at the same time as processing applications on behalf of the committee at home. In addition, we serve the Ministry of Culture and the Minister herself with regard to political questions on literature’: AMR 2015). As mentioned, staff at the Danish Agency for Culture receive applications to funding pools such as the Translation Fund and pass them on to the applicable decision-making committee: ‘Vi har ingen beslutningskompetencer, det er udelukkende Udvalget. Men vi formidler blot beslutningerne efterfølgende’ (‘We have no decision-making powers, that is exclusively the committee. But we convey the decisions subsequently’: MHD 2015). Yet these staff advisors in practice are not an invisible conduit between applicants and decision-makers; they are present in meetings and called upon by committee members to provide their knowledge about publishers and translators: ‘Vi kan naturligvis give et bidrag til, hvis de stiller spørgsmål, udvalget undervejs i en sagsbehandling, og vi har kendskab til forlag, oversættere, værk eller noget som vi kan bidrage med, oplysninger som er rent objektivt til brug for deres beslutning, om at de ønsker at give støtte til værket eller ej’ (‘Of course, we can contribute if the committee asks questions in the course of considering a case: if we have knowledge of publishers, translators, works or anything else, we can offer them information that is purely objective in order to aid

their decision as to whether they want to grant support to the work or not': AMR 2015). As it is generally staff not committee members who meet key agents in the field of Danish translation including translators, publishers (abroad and in Denmark), and literary agents, they are able to offer their impressions and knowledge to committee members who then decide on whether funding is approved. The low turnover of staff (especially in contrast to the deliberately time-limited committees) ensures that their institutional memory will likely be called upon to remember and research previous interactions with the applicant(s). Social and cultural capital held by translators, publishers, and related applicants in their interactions with Agency staff therefore has an influence on the decisions made by committee members who rely on staff members' judgements and knowledge to inform their decisions.

Authors, translators, publishers, literary agents, and staff and committees at state institutions all make a value judgement about what comprises 'quality' literature. The Danish Arts Foundation's official legislation refers to 'kunstnerisk kvalitet og talent' ('artistic quality and talent'). From its inception, the Danish Literature Information Center put literary 'quality' first in its criteria of supporting literary exports, followed by consideration of diversity and whether a book would be understood or transfer well abroad (not necessarily the same thing as considering whether people would buy it) (Pihl 1996, 220). The requirements for the Translation Fund applications also explicitly name 'the quality of the work in question' first as an influencing factor. In my interviews with staff and committee members at the Danish Arts Foundation, the term 'quality' is repeated in many contexts: a translator's language must be of good 'quality', likewise an author's language and work must be 'quality', the translator's (or publisher's) choice of text must be 'quality', and particular genres are – mostly implicitly – considered 'quality literature' or not (AMR 2015; MHD 2015; TH 2015; ALMJ 2015). 'Quality' is taken as implicitly understood between participants in the conversation and therefore not distinctly defined. It has been suggested that expert committee members interpret 'quality' on a spectrum, comparable with job applications, where candidates are pitched against each other:

Hvis man gennemlæser årsberetningerne, og hvad der er skrevet af artikler om udvalgenes arbejde, giver de samstemmende indtryk af, at kvalitet i praksis måles på to forskellige måder. I hver ansøgningsrunde er der en top og en bund, som udvalgsmedlemmerne hurtigt kan blive enige om: noget er af så indlysende høj kvalitet, at det med sikkerhed bør støttes, og tilsvarende er noget så kunstnerisk uinteressant, at det med det samme kan sorteres fra. Tilbage bliver så en mellemgruppe, som kræver diskussion og

forhandling. Inden for denne gruppe er kunstnerisk kvalitet derfor noget, der findes i et kontinuum fra god til bedre, og de forskellige ansøgninger bliver holdt op imod hinanden. (Hermann 2011, 33)

(‘If you read the annual reports and what has been written about articles about the work of the committees, they give the consistent impression that quality is measured in practice in two different ways. In each round of applications there is a top and bottom that the committee members can quickly agree on: something is of such obvious high quality that it should certainly be supported and similarly something so artistically uninteresting that it can be sifted out immediately. Left behind then becomes an intermediate group that requires discussion and negotiation. Within this group, artistic quality is therefore something that is found in a continuum from good to better, and the various applications are pitted against each other.’)

Given that decisions on applications to funding pools are made concurrently in the same committee meeting (AMR 2015), finding such parallels is reasonable; inevitably applications will be viewed in comparison with each other and in light of the funds available for distribution. Applicants are subjected to good or bad fortune as to whether their application is (unofficially) pitched against stronger or weaker applications in that meeting.

Decision-makers and those supporting them rely on their own value judgements based on their experience and background in the national field of Danish literature. Danish authors – many educated at the Authors’ School (cf. Hermann 2011, 37) thereby benefiting from cultural capital – receive career stipends from the Danish Arts Foundation to enable them to produce their art, especially if they are considered to be producing ‘quality’ literature. A state cultural body may consider a (high) quality book or author to be of such cultural significance that they ought to receive state support for translation and international publication, especially if there is indication that publication cannot be solely achieved via commercial backing. These state-funding decisions are therefore made by experts immersed in the Danish literary field in Denmark, with a focus on domestic cultural value and consecration, not economic capital. Decisions are based on notions of value and quality that are very much rooted in the Danish context. Yet cultural value and capital do not transfer equally between two national fields. Danish Arts Foundation staff admit they rely on external stakeholders to understand potential target markets for them (for instance, British or American publishers or translators). This source-culture focus of state funding decision-makers will be illustrated especially in practice in section 3 of this chapter. To round up this section on the context of state support for literature in Denmark, the next

section outlines the funding measures in place at the Danish Arts Foundation to translate, publish, and promote Danish literature abroad.

3.2.3 State Support for Danish Literature in Translation

The Danish Arts Foundation, at the time of writing in 2018, provides seven different financial support schemes for literary projects, five of which have a direct relationship with translation *from* Danish: the Sample Translation Fund, Translation Fund, Literary Events and Marketing Abroad Programme, International Research Programme, and Literary Exchange Fund. All provide grants to support intercultural relationships and promotion of Danish literature internationally. Applications are completed electronically via the Danish Arts Foundation's website, kunst.dk. Data is openly published online about the successful recipients of these funds, and the application process is consistent and transparent. Through the *NordLit* initiative (described above in section 1), Danish Arts Foundation staff are proactive about publicising these schemes to stakeholders abroad:

det kan også være nogen hvor vi kan se at rettighederne er købt, men at vi aldrig har mødtes med, hvor vi lige ville hjælpe dem lidt på vej og sige "Prøv at hør, vi eksisterer vi laver de og de ting, har du tid at mødes på London eller Frankfurt eller hvor man nu skal mødes næste messe, så fortæller jeg dig om vores støttemuligheder". (AMR 2015)

(‘there might be someone where we can see the rights have been bought, but we have never met them, where we just want to give them a little help along their way and say “listen up, we exist, we do such and such, do you have time to meet in London or Frankfurt or whichever book fair, and I’ll tell you about our support programme.”)

Many of the grants available to support Danish translated literature have equivalents at other Nordic cultural funding agencies. For instance, the Swedish Arts Council currently offers translation grants for publishers comparable with Denmark's Translation Fund and travel grants for translators akin to Denmark's Literary Exchange Fund. (A full description and analysis of the contemporary market for Swedish literature in the UK, including a chapter on the history of Swedish state support from the Swedish Institute and Swedish Arts Council for literature in translation, is available in Broomé: 2014a, 194-232.) Grants exist for literary translators from non-state funding agencies too, for instance, English PEN in the UK which offered £250 towards a sample translation of up to 5000 words through its PEN Samples programme, 2009-2015 (PEN Samples).

Between 2013-2017 as part of its International Strategy, The Danish Arts Foundation officially focused a great deal on supporting Danish literature in translation

beyond the remits of its support schemes listed above. This period featured the introduction of a translators' summer school (*sommerskole for oversættere*), inaugurated in Roskilde in 2015, intended to alternate biennially with the fifteen-year-established funded visit for translators to the annual Copenhagen Book Fair (*oversætterbesøgsprogrammet*) (*International Strategi 2014–2017*). The translators' summer school was partly inspired by similar projects hosted by neighbouring Scandinavian countries (AMR 2015) and partly based on the Chair of the Committee for Literature's professional experience of EU interpreters' summer schools in a similar vein (TH 2015); inspiration had been taken from best practice of similar institutions. Alongside immersive workshops and meetings with publishers, the stated purpose of the biennial summer school is to give translators resident outside Denmark insight into culturally and socially embedded terminology which they might not fully be able to comprehend from a visit as a tourist or even to the annual book fair programme: 'Altså de kommer jo til København, og så bor de på et hotel, men de fleste af os er opvokset [i] et parcelhuskvarter, hvordan ser sådan et område ud? Kolonihave, hvordan ser det ud?' ('So they come to Copenhagen and then they stay in a hotel, but most of us grew up in the suburbs, what does an area like that look like? Allotments, what do they look like?': AMR 2015). The Danish Arts Foundation and its administrative arm the Danish Agency for Culture are not faceless organisations at the events they host: staff and committee members attend and meet translators as part of the programme, especially to promote the various grants and funds available for translating literature. Building these professional links becomes useful for both translators and arts agency staff, just as one translator recalls after attending the inaugural summer school: 'It was a good way to realise that if you want to make this a career, you're going to have to make more of an effort to find out who are the people where your money comes from' (WF 2016). Translators acknowledge they are pleased to be known by staff at the state funding agency and even believe that it even helps smooth the way for their applications for financial support (cf. PRG 2016; BH 2017). The translators' summer school and seminar programme during the Copenhagen Book Fair (*BogForum*) both aim to help build translators' industry knowledge and relationships. At these events, literary translators are invited to participate in face-to-face meetings with Danish publishers and literary agencies, networking dinners, linguistic and cultural workshops, and free entry to the Copenhagen Book Fair. These occasions therefore become physical spaces where a translator learns the *doxa* (how to

play the game), establishes habitus, and acquires cultural and social capital – that is, participation lends prestige and a sense of professional and community identity. Translators become a recognised as a member of this field by the fact of her or his attendance, consecrated by being invited for participation by the state cultural funders. There is therefore legitimacy afforded by being recognised as being a participant of this field by the state funders.

The principle is that these events are beneficial linguistically, culturally, and professionally specifically for those who do not live in Denmark. Therefore both the translators' summer school and book fair programme have only been open to applications from literary translators from Danish who are resident in a country outside Denmark. This distinction in eligibility for translators based within and outside Denmark appears to be unusual from a Nordic state cultural funding perspective. The Danish Arts Foundation's justification is that it is the role of language/nation-specific translator networks to organise their own similar initiatives, with the option of applying for financial support from their recently-established Networking Fund. Similar events already exist with different eligibility criteria, such as writing retreats and meetings at the Danish Writers and Translators Center in Hald Hovedgaard, Jutland, organised by *Dansk Oversætterforbund (DOF)* exclusively for its members. But this residency eligibility requirement for Danish Arts Foundation events has caused consternation among translators who live in Denmark: 'I think it's a bit daft that we don't get invited, because we're very much a part of that network, and we feel an affinity with *Statens Kunstfond*, we feed off each other. I think we should be there' (MA 2016). This established translator emphasises how, given he is an active agent within this field, he does not want to be excluded. Translators who are excluded from these events are not bestowed with the requisite cultural and social capital to help them negotiate their position in the field, perhaps putting them at a disadvantage. In attending these events, translators become part of the wider supportive community of practice of both literary translators of Danish (into any language) and of English specifically.

For an application to the Danish Arts Foundation's Sample Translation Fund, there is no discrimination between genres of literature as long as it fulfils the specified criteria, and as long as the translator's CV suggests s/he has adequate qualifications and experience to suitably translate the text (MHD 2015). Sample translations are extracts (from a few pages to many chapters) used to either pitch the book directly to

publishers in order to sell the rights, or after the rights have been obtained for a translator to showcase their ability and style to gain the full book contract. Sample translations are often used as well to widen the potential international readership. For example, Danish publishers or agencies produce English-language sample translations for international book fairs such as Frankfurt Book Fair. It is extremely rare now that a book would not be translated from the original Danish, but in order to sell the rights internationally, it is equally rare that readers outside Scandinavia would be expected to read a Danish sample and not an English sample instead. In some cases, even full books can be translated into English without any anglophone publishers buying the rights, primarily as a promotion tool for the book entering other markets, such as Michael Katz Krefeld's *Derailed*, which has sold to twenty countries but not the UK or USA (PRG 2016). With English being the hypercentral language in the global literary system (as discussed in Chapter 1), funding sample translations into English therefore has far-reaching impact not only in the culture of the applicant's intended full publication (that is, the UK or USA), but also in cultures where a Danish book might be considered on the basis of an English-language sample, for instance China or Eastern Europe. This is an example in the global literary system of how a semi-peripheral language such as Danish must pass through (hyper) central languages to reach other (semi) peripheral languages. For most of the 2010s, the Danish Arts Foundation's Sample Translation Fund offered a maximum of 8000 DKK for a sample of 25 pages. At the time of application, the translator must have obtained permission from those who hold the rights to the text (usually a Danish publisher or literary agent) (AMR 2015) and notably 'Vi giver kun tilladelsen en gang per værk per sprog' ('We only grant approval once per work per language': AMR 2015). Either translators or publishers can apply to the Sample Translation Fund, but in practice the vast majority of applications come directly from translators (90% as a rough estimate by staff: AMR 2015). In contrast, in Sweden a much higher proportion of applications to their equivalent state sample translation fund come from literary agents (Bidrag för Kulturexport website). My discussions with translators emphasise that producing sample translations is a core part of a translator's career (as illustrated in Chapter 5). Naturally, a larger part of a translator's career is translating a full-length publication, and the next section of this chapter will focus especially on the crucial input of the Danish Arts Foundation in the process.

3.3 Danish Arts Foundation Support for Danish Literature in Britain in Practice

The previous section described the history and context for state support for Danish culture both in and outside Denmark, emphasising how human agents are involved in the decision-making processes. This section drills down to focus on specific state-funding decisions made for supporting Danish literature in English translation. Firstly, I describe the empirical data available to me from Translation Fund applications, then evidence is divided into sections on key aspects of the application and decision processes. Data from these applications illustrates in practice complex aspects of the state funding mechanism, from practical measures such as the tendency towards part-funding, to an exploration of the notions of ‘quality’, value, and symbolic capital. Many of the examples below illustrate the mismatch between aspects of the Danish domestic cultural field and the field for Danish literature in the UK, as identified in section 2 above. Notions of nationally-bound cultural capital and value are demonstrated to be problematic in considering the mobility between these two fields.

Grants from the Translation Fund are awarded to publishers of Danish literature in translation abroad to help them cover their translators’ fees. The Translation Fund is always awarded for translation of a book, in contrast to the more bespoke, varied projects described in applications to the Literary Exchange Fund or the Literary Events and Marketing Abroad Programme, for which it would be more difficult to gather direct comparisons. Excerpts from a selection of application forms from anglophone publishers to the Translation Fund were provided to me by specialist publisher Norvik Press and the Danish Agency for Culture in 2015. These examples give scope to compare applications by different publishers. For an application to the Translation Fund, the following information was requested on the Danish Arts Foundation’s online application form:

1. Contact details
- 2. Description of the project**
- 3. Information about language and the author (and other possible sources of funding)**
4. The translator’s CV
5. 3 pages of the original text
6. Sample translation of those 3 pages
7. Contract with the translator
8. Bank details

For privacy and copyright reasons, only the short paragraphs from parts 2 and 3 (as emphasised in bold) have been made available to me. The small selection provided by the Danish Agency for Culture specifically was attributed to unavoidable practical constraints, as described in correspondence:

Grunden til at du har fået de eksempler, som du har fået, er den, at vores sager og ansøgninger ligger i mange forskellige databaser på tværs af hinanden, og at der ikke findes én simpel måde at søge de[m] alle sammen frem på. Jeg har derfor bare fremsøgt nogle eksempler. Det vil være for omfattende for mig i forhold til mine andre arbejdsopgaver at skulle fremsøge alle de ansøgninger, vi har fået fra britiske forlag. Desværre er vores databasesystem ikke moderne nok til at gøre det på en smart og effektiv måde. Det har derfor bare været tilfældige ansøgninger, jeg har fundet til dig. (Maria Dyrberg Kjeldsen, email to thesis author, 2 November 2015)

(‘The reason you’ve got these examples is that our cases and applications are found in various separate databases and there is no simple way to search all of them. I have therefore just pulled out a few examples. It would be too time-consuming for me in relation to my other tasks to look for all the applications we have received from UK publishers. Unfortunately, our database system is not modern enough to do it in a smart and efficient manner. So I have only found random applications for you.’)

This explanation reveals an inconsistent approach to record keeping at the Danish Agency for Culture. The reorganisation of the Danish Arts Foundation and Danish Centre for Literature outlined above in section 2 were not merely renaming exercises, but involved IT restructuring and the physical relocation of paper records between offices. Regardless of limitations, for the purposes of this chapter, the small sample will be suitably instructive and illustrate various elements of the Danish Arts Foundation’s state funding for literature in translation.

3.3.1 Illustrating Funding Criteria Using Successful Translation Fund Applications

Of the sixteen relevant Translation Fund application forms available as a snapshot for this research, thirteen were approved for funding. This is not necessarily representative of overall application success rates, rather only of the outcomes of the sample of applications made available to me during my research. Several of the books named on these applications feature in my corpus (Appendix A) as they fit the parameters of having been published in the UK for the first time between 1990 and 2015, and a sample of these is outlined in Table 4.

Table 4 – Sample of Successful Translation Fund Applications in the Corpus

Year of Application	Danish Book Title	Author	Application Made By	English Book Title	Translator	Amount applied for (amount granted) in DKK
2005	<i>Under solen</i>	Hanne Marie Svendsen	Norvik Press	<i>Under the Sun</i>	Marina Allemanno	[unknown] (20000+10 000)
2012	<i>Tilfældets gud</i>	Kirsten Thorup	Norvik Press	<i>The God of Chance</i>	Janet Garton	74000 (30000)
2012	<i>Lejemorderen</i>	Benny Andersen	Norvik Press	<i>The Contract Killer</i>	Paul Russell Garrett	7000 (7000)
2013	<i>Liberty</i>	Jakob Ejersbo	Quercus	<i>Liberty</i>	Mette Petersen	100000 (30000)
2013	<i>Den kroniske uskyld</i>	Klaus Rifbjerg	Norvik Press	<i>Terminal Innocence</i>	Paul Larkin	40000 (30000)
2014	<i>Salamandersol / Trækfuglens kompas</i>	Pia Tafdrup	Bloodaxe Books	<i>Salamander Sun and other poems</i>	David McDuff	18000 (18000)
2015	<i>Fryser Jeg</i>	Martin Kongstad	Serpent's Tail	<i>Am I Cold</i>	Martin Aitken	117000 (35000)
2015	<i>Profeterne i Evighedsfjorden</i>	Kim Leine	Liveright Publishing Corporation (USA)	<i>The Prophets of Eternal Fjord</i>	Martin Aitken	101302 (30000)

Firstly, it is worth noting the prevalence of independent publishers in this (admittedly non-representative) list, if only to reiterate the finding of research into smaller nations' literatures in the UK that: 'Independent publishers of translated literature repeatedly highlighted to us the importance for them of state, supranational and third-sector funding, without which translators could not be paid or books produced and distributed' (Chitnis et al. 2017, 11). The prevalence of small publishers in my corpus was already noted in Chapter 2, and the role of small publishers in this field will be described in-depth in Chapter 4, below.

While the country of the applicant (the publisher) is usually indicative of where the book is going to be published first in English, reference is sometimes made in the application to the fact that the Translation Fund only needs to be used once for the English version. For instance, Liveright's application to cover the translation of Kim Leine's novel states: 'We are publishing alongside Atlantic Books in the UK, and they are also pursuing funding opportunities. Atlantic Books is aware we have applied for this grant, and will not be duplicating our efforts' (SKLP14.2015-0068). This example demonstrates what is already evident from the corpus: one translator's work is used for both the American and British publications, even if by a different publisher in each market. Sometimes the text is edited accordingly, although it was not in the case of Kim Leine (cf. Kythor 2016, 203).

The translator must be named as part of the application form, and their CV enclosed. One of the most important considerations for the Translation Fund is the translator's professional qualifications: 'vi støtter os i høj grad til det CV eller den værkliste som en oversætter medsender, i forhold til at vurdere om vi mener at oversætteren er i stand til at oversætte det pågældende værk der søges om' ('we place particular emphasis on the CV or the list of publications that translators submit in relation to assessing whether we believe the translator is able to translate the work in question': MHD 2015). An individual's symbolic capital is understood by the decision-makers to be represented by written evidence of their competence. This chimes with the notion that an academic qualification is 'a certificate of cultural competence [...] It institutes cultural capital by collective magic' (Bourdieu 2004, 20). Qualifications (and previous publications) certify that a person has received a certain level of education and therefore prestige, imbuing them with a correspondingly stronger position in the field. Yet this reliance on traditional measures of written evidence of suitability for the job actually demonstrates how the Danish funders makes

assumptions based on domestic literary and translation practices. In the state funder's interpretation, based on their domestic practices, the translator's commitment to and experience in the career should be borne out by a formal qualification, just as it would be in Denmark. Yet it is extremely common for anglophone translators in this field to forego formal academic translation-specific qualifications (as explained later in Chapter 5).

Some applicants emphasise the translator's positive reputation and experience in part 3 of the form to add weight to their application. For instance, Martin Aitken is described as 'a very talented and well-respected translator' by Serpent's Tail (SKLP14.2015-0097) and Paul Larkin's experience translating similarly canonical authors is exaggerated by Norvik Press in their application for a translation of a Riffbjerg novel (KIK20.2013-0146). These elements of cultural capital are emphasised by the target-culture publishers on the understanding that the funding decision-makers might expect and infer a similar value from the information. The mismatch of expectations of what constitutes being 'qualified' to translate literature emphasises the limitations of a nation-bound interpretation of capital and prestige.

Prizes are used as shorthand to convey information about cultural prestige of particular literary works. A cultural prize comes to define a 'cultural worker' above all else: for an author, a prize is a noteworthy achievement worthy of mention on a grant application above 'more or less nonassessable, indescribable, or at least unreportable cultural accomplishments' (English 2005, 21). This explains why literary prizes seem to be listed commonly in the small space allotted in applications to the Translation Fund – the prize conveys the cultural prestige of the novel or author in its source context in a concise manner. Awards and prizes feature in the following Translation Fund application forms, for instance: Broken Dimanche Press for Ursula Andkjær Olsen's *Det 3. Årtusindes Hjerte* (*Montanas litteraturpris* 2012 among others), Norvik Press for Dorrit Willumsen's *Bang* (Nordic Council Literature Prize 1997), and Serpent's Tail for Martin Kongstad's *Fryser Jeg* (Debutant Prize 2009) (SKLP14.2015-0120; SKLP14.2014-0576; SKLP14.2015-0097). Because of the very limited space in this particular application process, prizes were considered shorthand for the prestige of these books and authors, and the applicant named the prizes to appeal to the Danish Arts Foundation's sense of 'quality' and cultural value. Kim Leine's *Profeterne i Evighedsfjorden* (2012) (*The Prophets of Eternal Fjord*, 2015) received the Nordic Council Literature Prize in 2013 and Denmark's Golden Laurels

booksellers prize (*De Gyldne Laurbær*) in 2012. Both of these prizes were named on the application form to the Translation Fund by Liveright Publishing Corporation (USA) (SKLP14.2015-0068). The book was published in English in 2015 and promoted in 2016 (for a more detailed account of its publication journey, see Kythor 2016, 201-4). Yet the sales volume has been rather low: 1,242 print copies were sold in the UK by the end of 2016. According to Leine's translator, the anglophone publisher was disappointed it was not long-listed for the Man Booker Prize (MA 2016), which would have resulted in more visibility and more cultural capital in the target context. Prizes in the source culture can result in domestic canonisation and be a marker of consecration respected by funding gatekeepers, but it takes a variety of factors to ensure consecration or economic capital in the target market too.

Table 5 – Examples of Successful Applications outside the Corpus

Year of Application	Danish Book Title	Author	Application Made By	Country of Applicant	Translator	Amount applied for (amount granted) in DKK
2014	<i>Bavian</i>	Naja Marie Aidt	Center for the Art of Translation	USA	Denise Newman	17220 (10000)
2014	<i>Bang</i>	Dorrit Willumsen	Norvik Press	UK	Marina Allemanno	84000 (40000)
2014	<i>Ukulele-jam</i>	Alen Mešković	Poetry Wales Press (Seren)	UK	Paul Russell Garrett	75956 (30000)
2015	<i>Det 3. Årtusindes Hjerte</i>	Ursula Andkjær Olsen	Broken Dimanche Press	Germany	Katrine Øgaard Jensen	25000 (25000)

From the sample of successful applications outside the corpus (Table 5), *Bavian* (USA: *Baboon*, 2015) and *Det 3. Årtusindes Hjerte* (Germany [in English] and distributed in the USA: *Third-Millennium Heart*, 2017) have been published in English elsewhere but not yet in Britain. *Bang* was published in Britain in 2017, and *Ukulele-jam* in early 2018. If a book does not come to market in the target language within a couple of years (perhaps because partial funding is insufficient), the Danish Arts Foundation can request the funds are returned by the publisher, on the condition that the translator has been paid for the work they have already undertaken (AMR 2015). In the next section, I explain the discrepancy between the amount requested and received in the final columns of Table 4 and Table 5.

3.3.2 Part Funding (Rather Than Full Funding)

Part funding of cultural projects has a long history in Danish arts funding. The premise is that if a cultural project is worthwhile, state funding will be at least matched by finance from private sources, in order that popular interests are served (cf. Hjort & Bondebjerg 2001, 19). For instance, the tradition was in place with *Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek* art museum in 1954: ‘en aftale (i lovs form) om, at museets drift skulle dækkes af stat/kommune/eget fond i forholdet 33%/33%/33%’ (‘an agreement (in legal form) that the museum’s operation should be covered by the state/municipality/own funds in the ratio of 33%/33%/33%’: Bakke 1988, 53). The 1989 Film Act 50/50 policy and subsequent 1997 60/40 policy also exemplifies the tradition of part funding in state cultural funding strategies. The Translation Fund usually covers a proportion of the publisher’s proposed costs for translation and the publisher is expected to provide the remainder of the costs. (The final columns of Table 4 and Table 5 illustrate this suitably.) Chair of the Committee for Literature Thomas Harder explained in an interview in 2015 that the decision-making committee thinks in absolute numbers, not relative numbers, as they have a set pool of funding to distribute (TH 2015). This means larger projects might receive up to half of their costs, whereas financially smaller projects might receive all the funds requested, in order to spread the overall funding across more books and authors. This is an explanation why the short play *The Contract Killer* received the entire amount requested by Norvik Press – the play itself is seventeen pages of a forty-six-page bound book in its English translation (Table 4; Norvik Press Andersen). The Translation Fund website criteria states: ‘Applications can be made for a grant to cover all or part of the translation fee. Usually, however,

grants will cover only a proportion of the translation fee' (Translation Fund webpage). The sample of applications suggest publishers generally apply for the full estimated translation budget, and then receive a proportion. Yet there is an element of unpredictability to this part of the process. Indeed the application form submitted by Seren for *Ukulele-jam* requests their full budget of 75,956DKK and they were awarded 30,000DKK (Table 5). The translator remarks that part funding was unexpected and caused delays for the small, independent publisher as they then had to find the remainder of the fee from other sources:

The publisher [Seren] got less than they'd hoped for, I think they applied just after there was a new panel, the new *udvalg* [...] and they decided to give smaller percentages of translation [funds] for books, but to more authors. (PRG 2016)

In this case, Seren then applied to another funding body to cover the remainder of their translation costs – English PEN – and was fortunate to be awarded this grant too (PRG 2016).

3.3.3 Re-Funding a Classic

Table 6 – Approved for Funding Twice: *Barbara*

Year of Application	Danish Book Title	Author	Application Made By	Translator	Amount applied for (amount granted) in DKK
2013	<i>Barbara</i>	Jørgen-Frantz Jacobsen	Dedalus	W. Glyn Jones	25000 (20000)

Barbara is a curious application to discover. Originally written in Danish by a Faroese author in 1939, *Barbara* was published in English in the UK twice before this application by Dedalus, firstly by Penguin in 1948 (trans. Estrid Bannister⁸), and then by Norvik Press in 1993 (trans. George Johnston). The 1993 edition is excluded from my corpus owing to the existence of the 1948 publication. In 1992, Norvik Press was

⁸ Apparently Estrid Bannister was also the muse for the book's protagonist ('Professor Batty' 2017)

granted 12,000 DKK (noted in the margins as equating £1288 at that time) by the Committee for Literature Exchange with Foreign Countries at the Danish Literature Information Center – the erstwhile equivalent of the current Translation Fund at the Danish Arts Foundation – for its edition of *Barbara* (Letter ‘Barbara’). The Norvik Press edition from 1993 is in fact one of this publisher’s bestselling titles and was reissued in a second edition in 2014. It finds particular success in the Faroe Islands where it is sold in the tourist information bureau. Yet this recent application from Dedalus nonetheless received funding from the Translation Fund for a third English version (Table 6). According to Nielsen BookScan data (late 2017), the Dedalus version (trans. W. Glyn Jones) was published on 30th September 2013, and 29 copies have been sold. The 2013 application form from Dedalus to the Translation Fund reads as if they are unaware of the other English versions and they are making the case for translation of this book for the first time: ‘Barbara is a great read which will delight English readers [...] There is a Danish feature film based on the novel’ (KIK20.2013-0040). This is further borne out in marketing materials for the Dedalus version; a critic’s review featured on the Dedalus website indicates that the publisher is either disingenuously or mistakenly marketing this as a first-time translation in English:

Praise must go to the sparkling contemporary prose of translator W Glyn Jones. And to Dedalus **for rescuing this novel from cold storage and bringing it to English speaking readers.** (Barbara Reviews 2013: emphasis added)

In correspondence, Dedalus explained their reasoning for re-translating and publishing *Barbara*: Jacobsen’s book was finished after his death by the notable Faroese author William Heinesen, and the translator W. Glyn Jones had already translated five other Heinesen books for Dedalus: ‘we considered [*Barbara*] as part of the Heinesen oeuvre and we wanted to publish all of his novels’ (Eric Lane, Managing Director, email to thesis author, 17 April 2017). Norvik Press’s poor visibility owing to its lack of marketing budget might account for Dedalus (and by extension the Danish Arts Foundation) apparently not being aware of its still-in-print 1993 edition.

Unfortunately, the Danish Arts Foundation does not keep records of why a book receives approval for the Translation Fund (only the reasons for declining where applicable). In this case, they can only offer in explanation ‘at udvalget har fundet, at ansøgningen var relevant og levede op til tilsagnskriterierne’ (‘that the committee had found the application was relevant and met the approval criteria’: Maria Dyrberg Kjeldsen, email to thesis author, 5 August 2015). It would have been instructive if a

record had been kept as to why the 2013 application was approved. Superficially, this points at lack of institutional consistency and related patchy record keeping. Crucially, the outcome suggests that cultural capital is relied upon unquestioningly by advisors and committees in their interactions with publishers, translators, and authors. The Danish Arts Foundation's existing relationship with the small publisher Dedalus and the established academic translator (both of whom had received Danish state funding before) had a positive impact on the decision-making process, in addition to the high cultural value of the book itself in the Danish-language canon. These factors blinded the funders to additional market considerations, including, fundamentally, examining whether this book already existed in English in the British market. The next section further illustrates the ways in which domestic symbolic capital influences decision-makers at the Danish Arts Foundation.

3.3.4 Danish Cultural Capital Leading Decision Makers

In the case of *Legatudvalg for Litteratur* (the Scholarship Committee for Literature), this same expert committee awards career stipends for both authors and translators. Decision-makers for career stipends are therefore aware of decisions made to support domestic literature, so there is likely correlation between authors supported in Denmark and supported in translation. Chair of this decision-making committee in 2015, Anne Lise Marstrand-Jørgensen, explains in interview how they are less inclined to support what she calls 'lettere genrer' ('lighter genres') including 'Chick Lit', preferring instead to support authors and translators who write quality 'litterær litteratur' ('literary literature') (ALMJ 2015). In a semi-professionalised occupation without a formal appraisal process, recognition can be received via the economic and, most importantly, cultural capital endowed by prizes and stipends. One established translator describes the career stipends (*arbejdslegater*) he has received from the Danish Arts Foundation, for which literary authors and translators can annually apply for general artistic endeavour (they are not linked to specific projects): 'That's been three years now and I've been lucky enough to get money. I got 150,000 [Danish kroner] the first year which is amazing, then I got 100,000 and last year or this year I got 75,000' (MA 2016). He then talks about whether he has yet received the three-year career stipend: 'That's really prestigious. Funnily enough, I was talking to Helle [the Danish author Helle Helle] the other day and she said, you must be on your way to getting the three-year grant. Wow! *{laughs}* That would be really nice' (MA 2016).

This slightly immodest statement indicates the symbolic capital endowed by being known to have received the three-year stipend especially. A translator can be the recipient of both a career stipend and their publisher eligible to apply to the Translation Fund for a particular book. Indeed, in addition to a successful Translation Fund application (Table 4), this translator applied for extra support via the career stipend pool:

translators could apply for *arbejdslegat*, but only if the project they were working on was particularly difficult or demanding or whatever. So on that basis I did apply when I was doing the Kim Leine book [*Profeterne i Evighedsfjorden*] because that's a very dense text, slightly archaic language, takes a long time. So I actually applied for money then and they gave me 75,000 kroner which I was absolutely over the moon with. (MA 2016)

In interview, Marstrand-Jørgensen also emphasises her positive impression of Aitken's skills as a translator – 'han kan dansk ligeså godt som engelsk' ('he can speak Danish just as well as English': ALMJ 2015) – illustrating the importance of an individual's social and cultural capital in this field. In this small field, the recipients and decision-makers tend to soon get to know one another. Being awarded a career stipend would undoubtedly have an impact on the decision-making process for other Arts Foundation funds, too, owing to the related prestige.

The value placed on translation in Denmark is demonstrated by how its funding is written into statutes of how state cultural funding should be spent (cf. Lov nr 458 2013). Yet from the Danish source culture perspective, a significant value of being translated (into English especially) is the gain in capital for Danish authors at home in Denmark. The committee decision-makers, who are themselves artists (authors, translators, writers), are firmly based within the context of a small nation's literary field. Dedicated institutions including *Forfatterskolen* (the Authors' School) and the Danish Arts Foundation are well-respected as sites of consecration by providing qualifications and awards to particular writers. Denmark even has its own official national 'culture canon' (*Kulturkanonen*, developed in 2006-7 by the Danish Ministry of Culture: Mordhorst 2015, 238), demonstrating the extent to which it projects a cohesive image of its consecrated authors. The perceived prestige of having received state-backed support influences decision-makers for other state cultural funding awards. State funders are concerned with supporting authors considered high quality within the domestic market over taking into consideration the demands of the target market. For small publishers abroad broadly following a supply-led model by

identifying canonical texts in the Nordic source culture to translate and publish, their selected books are likely to meet the approval of decision-makers, as illustrated by examples in this chapter from Dedalus and Norvik Press. The next section elaborates on the Danish Arts Foundation's insistence that it supports 'quality' literature over market-led genres, without taking into account the status of all genres of translated literature in anglophone markets.

3.3.5 Genre and Market Forces

Table 7 – Examples of Declined Applications

Year of Application	Danish Book Title	Author	Application Made By	Country of Applicant	Translator
2014	<i>*Krossmessa</i>	Jógvan Isaksen	Norvik Press	UK	John Mitchinson
2015	<i>Vildheks Ildprøven</i>	Lene Kaaberbøl	Pushkin Press	UK	Charlotte Barslund
2015	<i>Serafine</i>	Jakob Melander	House of Anansi Press	Canada	[unnamed]

*Note: *Krossmessa is written in Faroese.*

All three of the books in Table 7 have since been published in English, but their applications to the Translation Fund were declined. The application for funding for Kaaberbøl's children's fantasy book *Vildheks Ildprøven* (Denmark: 2010) was declined on the basis of her previous publications in English: 'With respect to your application, the Committee has determined that to ensure that also new and upcoming writers are being translated the committee has prioritized in order to ensure the spreading of support' (Letter SKLP14.2015-0103). Kaaberbøl is indeed the most featured author in my corpus, primarily for her children's books, so she is neither a new or upcoming writer in Denmark nor in the corpus of books from Denmark in the UK. It appears from the kunst.dk website that no previous Kaaberbøl books have received funding from the Translation Fund for translation in English, although the Literary Exchange Fund has been successfully awarded for attending author events in the USA. *Vildheks*

Ildprøven is the first in the *Vildheks* series, and in 2016 four of the *Wildwitch* series were published in the UK by Pushkin translated by Charlotte Barslund (the translator named on the application: SKLP14.2015-0103). In this case, the Danish Arts Foundation reasonably concluded that the anglophone publisher had chosen a potentially commercially-successful series of children's books by an established author, so it did not require state support to bring it to market.

According to the Norvik Press application to the Translation Fund (Norvik Press Krossmessa), Isaksen's crime fiction novel *Krossmessa* (2005) was to be translated by John Mitchinson from Faroese to English. The Danish Arts Foundation website in Danish and English at the time of my initial investigation in 2015 specifies the Translation Fund is for literature being translated 'from Danish', but conversations with the editorial assistant at Norvik Press at this time suggest that she is certain this was not the case at the time of their application in May 2014. (Unfortunately, previous versions of the website are not archived or available to view according to the Agency.) The reasons given for declining a grant from the Translation Fund for *Krossmessa* by the Danish Arts Foundation were twofold:

Publications from faroeish [sic] to a foreign language, is not within a subsidy with the Danish Arts Foundation.

A support criteria is that a translation should be to or from Danish.

the work in question has substantial potential to perform on commercial market terms. (Letter SKLP14.2014-0506)

Norvik Press subsequently applied for funding for translation from other sources and eventually *Walpurgis Tide* was published in 2016, translated by Mitchinson as per the application (under the pseudonym John Keithsson). This seems a straightforward case where a fundamental aspect of the application did not meet the key criteria of the fund – that the source book being translated is written in Danish. Yet the attitude towards Faroese literature by the state funders seems inconsistent: the Danish Arts Foundation has been named as funding Isaksen to participate in a 2017 'Northern Noir' literary event in London as the only author representative of 'Denmark' (Sarah Death, email to thesis author, 18 July 2017), and Jacobsen – classic Faroese literature written in Danish – was funded twice in the timeframe of my corpus, as illustrated above (section 3.3).

As for the second reason given for declining, the Translation Fund application for *Serafine* by Jakob Melander was rejected by the decision-making committee for the same reason: 'the work in question has substantial potential to perform on commercial

market terms' (Letter SKLP2015-0062). The fact that *Serafine* is part two of an existing series seems not to be the reason for the application being declined: *Liberty* (Table 4) is the third in Ejersbo's *Africa* trilogy yet it received funding from the Translation Fund, ostensibly to complete the publication of the trilogy in English according to the application form. *Liberty*, however, is not in the crime fiction genre, so this is the likeliest factor in declining the translation funding for both Melander's *Serafine* and Isaksen's *Krossmessa*. *Serafine* (Melander 2014) is the second novel in the series about detective Lars Winkler. Melander's first in the series, *The House That Jack Built* (Canada: 2014. Denmark: *Øjesten*, 2013) was also published by House of Anansi. *Serafine* (English: *The Scream of the Butterfly*) was published in Canada by House of Anansi in late 2015, so the publisher has been able to fund the translation regardless of this declined application.

All application decisions are officially made on the basis of the published criteria for the Translation Fund and based on the financial means available to the Danish Arts Foundation. As committee chair Thomas Harder explained in an interview, there is a limited amount of funding so the committee must prioritise based on factors such as whether the book would be able to hold its own in the market or whether the genre is important to promote at that time (TH 2015). Yet these elements are less clear-cut than other criteria; for instance, as above, a source book not written in Danish is automatically declined. If a book is in a supposedly popular, mass-market genre such as crime fiction, it may still be approved, as there are no clear criteria against this, but being a market-led genre generally appears to be a factor for being declined. Officially, advisors explain that the decision-makers' reasoning is based around an expectation that popular genres such as crime fiction are effectively 'self-sufficient': 'hvis man vælger at udgive en krimi, så har man en forventning, om at den kan klare sig på markedets vilkår, hvorimod en *Smilla* bog eller en mere litterær bog generelt vil have det meget svært ved at klare sig, på næsten ethvert marked. Så der er man i høj grad tilbøjelig til at give støtten' ('if choosing to publish crime fiction then there is an expectation that it can handle market conditions, whereas a *Smilla* book or a more literary book generally will find it harder to cope in almost any market. So there they are inclined to give support.': MHD 2015). The basis for declining on the assumption that crime fiction 'has substantial potential to perform on commercial market terms' is perhaps a simplistic perception of anglophone target markets where translated literature in any genre is likely to be at a market disadvantage. *Smilla* here is

reflected upon briefly in nostalgic hindsight as a literary underdog, even though at the time of publication in Denmark, Høeg was already a rising star, and substantial marketing was put in place in both the USA and UK for the English editions (as described in the following chapters). Danish Arts Foundation staff and committee members rarely if ever have insight into numbers of copies sold in markets abroad. In terms of inferring whether a book of any genre is successful, they get an impression of success or otherwise from the after-effects of an application to the Translation Fund: ‘Men vi har jo en fornemmelse af at hvis der er stigende antal ansøgninger fra et land, så har vi en antagelse om at det nok er gået godt med de første værker de har købt, og derfor er de villige [til at] udgive mere dansk litteratur’ (‘But we get a sense that if increasing numbers of applications are coming from a country, then we assume that it went well with the first works they bought, therefore they are willing to publish more Danish literature’: MHD 2015). This vagueness about the target market, especially in terms of the commercial outcome for books they have supported, is consistently illustrated by publication journeys in my thesis. In the following chapters, for instance, I go on to focus especially on Jakob Ejersbo’s *Africa* trilogy which received various grants from the Danish Arts Foundation based primarily on its significance in the Danish domestic canon. The reliance on the target-market applicants to demonstrate requisite capital and market knowledge is a weakness in the decision-making process.

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter illustrated how and why Danish state funders are a significant agent in the process of bringing a book from Denmark into the British market. While translation into English is not officially prioritised over other languages by the Danish Arts Foundation, I have recognised that English sample translations are used by translators and publishers to widen the readership for Danish literature globally. Funding sample translations into English therefore becomes doubly beneficial for enabling the promotion of Danish books to anglophone as well as other international markets. Supporting translators to participate in the field via visits to book fairs and the bespoke summer school bolsters their symbolic capital and, by extension, supports their career. More about the roles and identities of Danish-English literary translators will be discussed later in Chapter 5; suffice to say here that Danish state cultural funding has a large input into various aspects of their work.

Analysing the sample of Translation Fund applications above indicated practical and intangible aspects of state funding decision-making processes and wider considerations in this field. A significant finding in this chapter was how immersed state cultural funders are in the context of Danish domestic cultural capital and value, rarely adequately considering the position of Danish literature in a new market abroad. The canonicity of the book in Denmark and the prestige of Danish awards (including career stipends or graduating from the Authors' School) is highly regarded by decision-makers. Quality is often considered in a comparative manner, given that the decision-making committee model arguably 'pitches' applicants against each other. State funding decision-makers, embedded in the domestic source culture, admit not having expertise in understanding the capital and cultural context of the target culture. Quantitative measures such as sales volumes abroad appear not to be collated nor taken into consideration. Staff therefore value the symbolic capital of translators, publishers, and similar agents when handling funding applications: second-hand information given by applicants on the status of Danish literature abroad is trusted, translators' qualifications and experience are considered paramount, and personal judgements based on previous interactions inform decision-making committees. Nationally-bound notions of cultural capital and value are hereby demonstrated to be limiting in considering the mobility between the two fields.

Danish state cultural funding is a catalyst in bringing many books from Denmark to the UK. Although admittedly an unrepresentative sample, this chapter has featured books brought to market by several small independent publishers such as Atlantic Books, Dedalus, Norvik Press, and Seren. As illustrated in several examples in this chapter, state cultural funding can be crucial for translating and publishing a Danish book in the anglophone market for small publishers especially. Publication journeys throughout my thesis regularly illustrate the input of the Danish Arts Foundation's funding initiatives. In the next chapter, I examine the work, capital, and significance of small publishers in this field. I will also focus on the celebrated British publisher of translated literature, Christopher MacLehose. Books by two 'MacLehose authors' are compared side-by-side in-depth starting in the next chapter, both of which received assistance in various ways from Danish Arts Foundation funds.

CHAPTER 4 – Publishing: Small Publishers and Books from a Small Nation

Veteran publisher Christopher MacLehose has been quoted as saying the following about translated literature in the British market:

I find it almost inexplicable that it is tiny houses with no money that are still doing most of the work. MacLehose [Press] has translated books from 19 languages in its first five years. Harvill – in its free [independent] days – published books from 32 languages. (Wroe 2012)

This observation is indeed corroborated in this field: in my corpus (as outlined in Chapter 2), the most common publisher is Harvill, alongside a high proportion of diverse small publishers. MacLehose himself has often been attributed as pivotal in bringing commercially-successful translated literature into the UK in his long career at several publishing companies. Significantly in the context of my thesis, MacLehose had a hand in Harvill bringing *Miss Smilla* to the British market in the early 1990s. No modern Danish literature since *Miss Smilla* has had such a cultural or market impact in the UK. As Høeg's breakthrough in English, *Miss Smilla* is considered part of the Danish literary canon from an international (European) perspective. High sales figures and the blockbuster film adaptation in 1997 ensured that *Miss Smilla* had a longstanding impact on the worldwide perception of Danish literature and Denmark. *Miss Smilla* maintains a reputation by readers and the industry as one of Denmark's most prestigious popular cultural exports. The 1990s success of Høeg, alongside Norwegian Jostein Gaarder and Swedish Kerstin Ekman in the same era, was a boost for Scandinavian book rights being acquired abroad (Giles 2018, 244-6). Merete Ries, Høeg's publisher at Rosinante, recalls how immediately after the worldwide success of *Smilla* in translation, international publishers were clamouring after 'the other Peter Høegs' (Ries 1998, 38).

For these reasons, covering the publication journey of *Miss Smilla* is crucial for giving the context of other cases and relationships mentioned throughout my thesis. Starting in this chapter, I take a comparative approach to Høeg and a later 'MacLehose author' in English translation, Jakob Ejersbo. This builds on the substantial body of scholarly work that exists on *Miss Smilla*, but contextualises and illuminates it in a different way. In creating a comparative case study, I emphasise the parallels and differences between the publishing and marketing context for the publication of these

two authors in their respective time periods. In the period between the early 1990s and the later era covered by my thesis, new technologies and communications channels changed conditions in the book market. In the twenty-first century, the Nordic Noir marketing genre further created a new receiving context for Danish cultural exports. Studying Ejersbo's *Africa* trilogy (2011-14) comparatively with *Miss Smilla* also offers a clearer basis for understanding why these books might have been selected for translation and publication by MacLehose Press in the first place. In relation to this case study, this chapter looks specifically at the role of the publisher in acquisition and bringing the book to market, before other chapters later look at the books' translators and marketing (including other crucial elements such as the different approaches to Borealism). In this sense, these publication journeys function as a thread to illuminate the processes of bringing a book to market in this field across different time periods and with different receptions.

Following MacLehose at the open of this chapter, many of the publishers bringing Danish books to the British market are 'tiny houses with no money' (Wroe 2012). Many small independent publishers feature in my corpus as publishers of Danish books in Britain, and I start this chapter by looking at three of these 'tiny houses'. Each publisher has its own focus, and correspondingly different position in this field, but for all symbolic capital is absolutely critical to their existence.

4.1 Small Publishers in Britain

Enthusiastic small publishers ensure a range of both canonical and marginal authors find their way to the British market. Small publishers of Danish literature are sometimes translated literature specialists (some even with a specific Nordic focus), but sometimes translated books are only part of their overall output. Generally each publisher has found their 'fit' or position in the field with related cultural capital and prestige, and in the dynamic of their key relationships with funders, translators, and cultural institutions. Small publishers in the UK are defined in Chapter 1 as having turnover of less than £10 million in annual revenue, and correspondingly usually few salaried staff, very few practical resources such as physical storage space, and low marketing budgets. Small publishers tend to be heavily reliant on grants and other support from state and cultural funding agencies. Despite structural challenges, one perspective is that 'literary' books will always have publishers in Denmark and abroad

as long as they can receive support from cultural funding bodies like the Danish Arts Foundation who invest in ‘quality’ culture and support a supply-driven model (cf. examples in Chapters 2 and 3). This assistance is essential for most small publishers that have published recent literary translations from Danish into the UK (as illustrated above in Chapter 3): ‘it is certain that the proportion of Danish “quality literature” would be lower were it not for the extensive subsidies provided to foreign publishers by the Danish Arts Foundation’ (Thomson and Stougaard-Nielsen 2017, 261).

Norvik Press is currently based at UCL in the Department of Scandinavian Studies. It moved from its founding institution, the University of East Anglia (UEA), in 2010. Norvik Press originally specialised in publishing Scandinavian literature under two distinct strands: ‘Scandinavian Literary History and Criticism’ and ‘English Translations of Nordic Literature’ (Norvik Press homepage). Since 2010, Norvik Press has primarily focused on the latter. Norvik Press is a not-for-profit independent publisher, and as such relies on arts grants to cover publication costs (examples of funding received by Norvik Press from the Danish Arts Foundation’s Translation Fund feature in Chapter 3). Norvik Press explicitly aims to supply the British market with significant books from the Nordic region, including (from my corpus) popular-in-Denmark crime fiction by Dan Turèll (UK: 2013, Denmark: 1981) and philosophical short stories by Villy Sørensen (UK: 1991, Denmark: 1955). Norvik Press therefore has an established ‘niche’ in the field.

Two of Suzanne Brøgger’s books have been translated and published in the UK in the time period covered by my thesis: *A Fighting Pig's Too Tough to Eat* in 1997 (Norvik Press trans. Marina Allemanno. Re-issued by Norvik Press in 2018. Denmark: *En gris som har været oppe at slås kan man ikke stege*, 1979) and *The Jade Cat* in 2004 (The Harvill Press trans. Anne Born. Denmark: *Jadekatten*, 1997). Both were published in Britain a long while after the Danish publication date, and notably both were published by (at the time) small independent publishers. Brøgger is a prominent Danish feminist author and journalist who has published copiously in Denmark since the 1970s. Marina Allemanno, an accomplished scholar in Scandinavian Studies in Canada, explains that all three of the books she has translated, including *A Fighting Pig's Too Tough to Eat*, were not commissioned by publishers, but were on her own initiative, in order to aid her teaching of Scandinavian literature (Marina Allemanno, email to thesis author, 27 April 2017). Allemanno says that literary translation is not lucrative – for translator or publisher – and the purpose of translating these books is to

widen the field for Scandinavian literature in English:

All in all, translations [sic] of ‘serious’ Danish literature is an academic business. For the most part, translators, editors and publishers are associated with a university and don’t rely on the income from the publications. Most of us simply benefit from the publications by adding them to our cv. (ibid.)

As Allemano intimates, producing these works also increases cultural capital for herself as a translator, and moves consecrated works from one culture into another. As such, this explains the drive of this kind of niche publisher of significant literature from the Nordic region.

It is not uncommon for translators of Scandinavian literature into English to be involved in academia. Another canonical Danish-language author published in English primarily for reasons of scholarly interest is William Heinesen. Heinesen was a Faroese author who wrote in Danish. Heinesen’s novels, written and published in the mid-twentieth century, won literary prizes and esteem at the time of publication in the Faroese, Danish, and the Nordic literary fields. Despite his potentially marginal status as a Faroese author, Heinesen has therefore been canonised as a seminal Nordic writer within the region. *The Black Cauldron* (Denmark: *Den sorte gryde*, 1949) was first published in English in the UK in 1992. Five more of his books were published in English in the UK in the early twenty first century (2006-2018), over half a century after publication in Denmark and the Faroe Islands. In all cases, the translator was W. Glyn Jones, and Dedalus was the publisher. Dedalus is a small independent publisher based in Cambridgeshire founded in 1983. It receives Arts Council England Funding (Flood 2010) and many grants from national cultural agencies, including the Danish Arts Foundation’s Translation Fund for some of its Danish-English books in the time period of my thesis (Bang 2015; Heinesen 2011; Jacobsen 2013 – the latter not listed in my corpus, as explained in Chapter 3). W. Glyn Jones was a British Scandinavian Studies scholar: translating and publishing these works was a personal academic project (an attempt to represent one author’s entire catalogue in English). This project started as part of the publisher’s Dedalus Europe series:

We wanted to do 2 translations of the then languages of the European Union⁹ in 1992 and selected Heinesen’s *The Black Cauldron* as the first book to represent Danish and got Glyn to translate it. (Eric Lane, Managing Director, email to thesis author, 17 April 2017)

⁹ The Faroe Islands are not a member state of the EU, but the Danish language apparently takes precedence for this British publisher as representative of the wider realm of Denmark in this instance.

Dedalus is an example of an established small publisher of British and European literature with a self-defined niche suitable for this kind of project: ‘the bizarre, the unusual, the grotesque and the surreal meld in a kind of intellectual fiction which is very European’ (Dedalus website).

The examples above of scholarly translators (Allemano and Jones) illustrate the emphasis placed by some agents in this field on symbolic capital of translated literature over economic capital. These translators and publishers saw the cultural necessity and significance of translating these canonical books from Danish into English, primarily in order to widen their readership and increase cultural capital within the overall field of translated Scandinavian literature in the UK. Examining the motivations of these translators and publishers using notions of capital offers an interpretation of why they have taken a supply-driven, rather than a commercial, demand-driven model. The small publishers saw their task not as selling commercial products and relied on state cultural funding to publish. Norvik Press is a pertinent yet unusual example of a not-for-profit business model: commissioning, editing, and proofreading is done for free by non-salaried staff and directors, while admin and some publicity is covered by a very minimal salaried staff. Instead of working to directly accrue economic capital, the directors of Norvik Press must be working for cultural capital – embodied and objectified – that is, for themselves and for the greater field of Scandinavian literature in English.

Writing in 1996, in an era unrecognisable to the present day’s saturation of the internet with its related marketing channels and the ease of online purchasing, a PhD researcher of Danish literature in the British market states:

Most Danish novels [...] will either be mid-list publications or published by small publishing houses not only without a publicity or marketing department, but without a promotion budget. This will hinder their availability since the bookshops either will not stock them or will only stock a few copies for a short while. Without reviews and hidden away on the shelves, they are not likely to come to the attention of their potential readership and they are not likely to sell. (Pihl 1996, 114)

This illustrates an enduring perspective that small publishers and their minimal marketing clout hinder the visibility (thereby success) of Danish books abroad. Authors, publishers, and critics from Denmark appraising the British receiving market may desire that books they perceive as canonical or highly valued are published by large publishers with a correspondingly large market share, audience reach, and marketing budget. Criticism levied in the Danish press against British newcomer

Nordisk Books for publishing Tom Kristensen's *Hærværk*, first published in Denmark in 1930, is a recent illustrative example (cf. *Politiken*: Hansen 2016). Founder Duncan Lewis was disparagingly described as '[e]n engelsk bankmand og fritidsforlægger' ('an English banker and hobby publisher': Hansen 2016), demonstrating at first glance the perception that all publishers consecrate differently, and small publishers somehow stifle Danish books abroad. Lewis had no experience of publishing, perhaps apparent by the business name itself being so similar to the long-established British specialist publisher Norvik Press. Nordisk Books hopes that its uniqueness will be to publish contemporary literary Scandinavian books which revel in their Scandinavian-ness: 'no books from Denmark about Thailand' (DL 2016), for instance.¹⁰ Having identified a 'classic', canonical book from Denmark he wished to see in print in the UK, Lewis investigated the process of how to acquire the rights by contacting the Danish publisher Gyldendal, after quickly setting up a Nordisk Books website and email domain. No one enters the game to lose, and in this case Lewis sought to gain a position in the field by participating in the conventional process to present legitimacy and seriousness of his intent by emulating aspects of cultural capital already demonstrated by established publishers. Exploiting social capital had a role to play, too: by using personal contacts to ensure the resulting rights contract was adequate and the printing would be feasible, Lewis then felt ready to register Nordisk Books as a company in the UK. *Havoc* (Kristensen 2016) was published using the 1968 American translation by Carl Malmberg (the rights to which were owned by Gyldendal and acquired by Nordisk Books), edited by Lewis himself. Criticism was expressed about this approach in the Danish press (despite the journalist writing pre-publication, without an advance copy, according to Lewis). Gyldendal was considered irresponsible for not undertaking a closer quality control role in safeguarding this canonical text; likewise concerns were raised that the Danish Arts Foundation had not done due diligence, when in this instance they had not even provided financial support or endorsed the book (Hansen 2016). Danish criticism implied Lewis lacked the credentials in the field as a translator or established publisher to ensure a solid future for this classic of Danish literature. Yet this interpretation demonstrates a limited understanding of transcultural exchange, where canonicity will not automatically cross

¹⁰ This may well be a good approach in the current market given the popularity of the all-encompassing Nordic Noir marketing genre (cf. Chapter 2) and will be vindicated in my case study later focusing on Ejersbo's trilogy.

national borders from Denmark into Britain. Lewis points out in his defence that if there had already been a demand for *Hærværk* in the British market, it would have been picked up earlier by larger, more established publishers (DL 2016).

Not long into Nordisk Books' first year in business, Lewis was critical of many other small-scale publishers. In his view, very few people want to buy obscure or academic titles, so niche publishers of this type of literature will not make money, in contrast with his goal of making a profit by publishing books of literary value that people want to *buy* (DL 2016). This positions Nordisk Books in contrast to not-for-profit Norvik Press, for instance. Yet this stated aim is at odds with his supply-driven self-selection of 'classic' books rather than pursuing a commercially, demand-driven model. A way of interpreting this is that, as a newcomer, Nordisk Books' position in the field is still to be fought for, and its status as primarily a commercial or cultural business remains to be secured. While the website and company were set up in haste, Lewis later attended cultural events such as Danish Embassy receptions, applied for grants from the Scandinavian cultural agencies in order to cover translation fees and attend the major Scandinavian book fairs, and hosted book launches in cultural venues. He therefore appeared to quickly learn the *doxa* of the field, in which symbolic capital is convertible into economic capital. A novel each from Norwegian and Swedish were published by Nordisk Books in 2016 and 2017.

The small publishers relying on symbolic capital to ensure their status as highly-regarded publishers of 'literary' literature are now more able to eschew economic capital (high sales figures, for instance) owing to technological developments. Small publishers today have much lower overheads than a couple of decades ago, owing to the advance of new technologies and media, perhaps thereby making it even easier for them to stay afloat. Newcomer Nordisk Books proves the case: in 2016, Lewis was cheaply and quickly able to establish a new publishing company, instantly launching a website, using software to typeset his first book himself, commissioning short-run specialist printers (and print-on-demand as an option), and primarily using online social media for promotion. Likewise, Norvik Press has shifted to a broadly print-on-demand model to ensure it only pays for books sold, and no longer needs costly distribution structures nor physical storage space for stock.

In translating and publishing books canonical in their respective source cultures, British publishers consecrate these artefacts into a new national field. As mentioned in this chapter's opening lines, an individual publisher who famously has a

knack for successfully publishing translated literature in the UK is MacLehose. He is the focus of the next section, in which I make the case that he functions like a small publisher in himself.

4.2 Christopher MacLehose: Cultural Banker and Small Publisher

MacLehose's career has spanned five decades. He has been involved in the introduction of many translated books into the British market via his position at Harvill (part of HarperCollins between 1989 and 1996, an independent publisher between 1996 and 2002, and an imprint of Penguin Random House since 2002), where he worked from 1979 (Wroe 2012), and then MacLehose Press (an imprint of Quercus) since 2008. MacLehose sees part of his role as contributing to the field of translated literature in Britain: 'I bought *Miss Smilla* simply because I thought it was a great book and I remember saying to a colleague at the time that, if nothing else, we were doing our bit for Danish literature' (Crace 2009). MacLehose describing 'doing his bit' to bring literature from Denmark into the British market exhibits the value he ostensibly places on cultural capital over economic capital. This shows parallels with the outlooks of small publishers such as Norvik Press and Dedalus above (section 1), where emphasis is placed on moving a canonised book in the foreign source market into the anglophone market for the benefit of the wider field.

Each publisher consecrates differently depending on their position and capital in the field. Because they function as the go-between between artist and marketplace and produce the value of a cultural object, publishers have been defined within the literary field as "cultural bankers" in whom art and business meet in practice' (Bourdieu 1993, 75). MacLehose appears to have a talent for spotting good literature for translation into the British market judging by his track record and has been credited as having a magic touch: 'In the case of MacLehose, lightning can and has struck more than twice' (Giles 2018, 311). Well-known authors in translation introduced to the British market by MacLehose in his position at various publishing houses include Umberto Eco, Pierre Lemaitre, and Haruki Murakami. His fêted status in the field of translated literature in Britain puts him into a category of cultural banker, whose celebrated successes have been repeatedly attributed to his individual input.

Miss Smilla's impact on MacLehose's career should not be underplayed.

MacLehose's personal role in the success of *Miss Smilla* in Britain was described in 2017 by Steven Williams, the Publicity Director who oversaw Harvill's marketing campaign for the book, as:

Absolutely pivotal. [...] He is pre-eminently one of the, if not *the*, best publisher that there is around at the moment in the UK. Even twenty, twenty-five years ago, you'd have had to have described him then as visionary because the successes, in terms of how many books were sold, didn't come along very often. *Smilla* was a vindication of his vision if you like. (SW 2017)

In a sense, MacLehose has effectively embodied the function of 'small publisher' as an individual at a succession of companies. MacLehose recalls that later in the 1990s, as a result of the success of Høeg in English, anglophone publishers were invited by state cultural agency the Danish Literature Information Center to Denmark to meet with a number of publishers and authors (CM 2017). During this visit he acquired rights for Harvill to Christensen's *A Painted Room* (2000). Around fifteen years after Høeg's breakthrough to the anglophone market, MacLehose's vision was indeed again vindicated when he introduced Swedish crime author Stieg Larsson to the British market as a launch author for MacLehose Press. MacLehose claims to have acquired the rights to Larsson's series after it had been turned down by many other anglophone publishers (CM 2017; Craighill 2013a, 26). Closely trailing Henning Mankell's *Wallander* series (also introduced to the British market by MacLehose), Larsson's *Millennium* trilogy especially has been credited with firmly establishing the Scandinavian crime fiction phenomenon in Britain: the books were bestsellers – selling more than six million copies in the UK alone to date – and received cross-medial popularity after being successfully adapted for film in Sweden and the USA. The success of Larsson's series was pivotal in the growth of its imprint, turning 'Quercus into Britain's fastest-growing publisher, emulating the success of Bloomsbury [...] and the Harry Potter books' (Clark 2010). MacLehose has been named as the key protagonist in the publisher's success:

The turning point for [Quercus founder, Mark] Smith came when he recruited Christopher MacLehose, who had a reputation as a master at finding foreign fiction by writers such as Henning Mankell and Haruki Murakami and turning them into English language hits. (Clark 2010)

MacLehose has therefore been attributed with making small publishers big in his successful selection of foreign (especially Scandinavian) literature. He thereby embodies the role, traits, and capital of a highly-regarded 'small publisher' himself within a succession of publishing companies. This chimes with the perspective that the

physical printing equipment and office space are less significant in ensuring the future of a publishing house than its continued symbolic capital: ‘To possess the machines, he only needs economic capital; to appropriate them and use them in accordance with their specific purpose (defined by the cultural capital, of scientific or technical type, incorporated in them), he must have access to embodied cultural capital, either in person or by proxy’ (Bourdieu 2004, 20). MacLehose’s ‘embodied’ symbolic capital has been crucial for the success of the books he has selected and his ongoing strong position in the field, even as he has moved between different publishing houses. The symbolic capital he brings to each publishing house is put into practice in the human relationships he has built up over the years (as demonstrated throughout the publication journeys of *Miss Smilla* and *Africa* to follow). MacLehose’s longstanding reputation consecrates the books he selects. Sales successes with *Miss Smilla* and Larsson’s trilogy were impossible to predict. Bestseller status resulted both from exploiting MacLehose’s social and cultural capital in the relationships he had with authors, translators, publicists, and other agents, but also resulted from luck and investing economic capital in huge marketing campaigns (cf. Chapter 6). As an established big player in the small yet highly-regarded field of translated literature in the UK, MacLehose has become more able to ‘risk’ his symbolic capital owing to past successes; though books also require a suitable investment of economic capital to back up his vision.

The prestige associated with bestsellers and economic capital has resulted in a sustained narrative of MacLehose as a ‘superstar’ publisher in the field of translated literature in Britain (arguably perpetuated by this thesis as well). An indicative comparison is that Norvik Press was co-founded by Professor Janet Garton, a Scandinavian Studies scholar and translator, who remains a director. Garton and Norvik Press have enabled many Scandinavian novels to reach Britain in English translation, perhaps as many foreign books as MacLehose has ushered into English. Yet Garton has not been fêted in the same way as MacLehose, likely owing to her gender, role as academic and translator, and non-profit Norvik Press’s primary focus on cultural capital rather than commercial success. At a glance this demonstrates how, in the field of translated literature in Britain, economic capital can in fact convert into high cultural capital and prestige for niche commercial publishers including MacLehose, perhaps closely related to his individual attributes as an industry-expert male. Likewise, the input of MacLehose’s wife Koukla – polyglot literary agent and

scout – has been eclipsed by attention on her husband, but she clearly offers expertise and influence upon his decision-making processes (often demonstrated in person, cf. CM 2017). Her input undoubtedly will have resulted in the publishing successes attributed to MacLehose in his embodiment as one-man small publisher.

4.3 Publication Journeys of Danish Books in Britain: *Miss Smilla's Feeling for Snow* and the *Africa* trilogy

Høeg's *Miss Smilla* (1993) and Ejersbo's *Africa* trilogy – *Exile* (2011), *Revolution* (2012) and *Liberty* (2014) – are used here and later in my thesis in a comparative study of Danish books brought to the British market by the same publisher (MacLehose) in separate time periods. In this section I focus on the acquisition of the books by the publisher, before looking at the processes and agents involved in translation and promotion in later chapters.

The success of *Miss Smilla* has been described as a surprise by critics and even its own British publisher (Crace 2009), yet this oft-repeated narrative obscures the considerable marketing and PR push behind the hit. MacLehose acquired *Miss Smilla* for Harvill by judging its suitability for the imprint's typical output of quality foreign fiction: 'Harvill's editorial policy has traditionally been to introduce to an English-speaking readership the best of Continental and world literature' (Waldman 1997). Promotion started well in advance of the book being published in Autumn 1993 (Pihl 1996, 111). Given its 'slow seller' pattern of sales, it has been argued *Miss Smilla* was not a conventional 'bestseller' (Bloom 2008, 99), despite its notoriously high eventual sales figures and critical success. The first print run of 10,000 copies sold out quickly (Pihl 1996, 113), and four months after publication *Miss Smilla* had sold 21,000 copies (Pihl 1996, 106). It went on to sell 400,000 by year two after publication (Bloom 2008, 99), and by the late 1990s reputedly over a million copies in the UK (MacLehose 2004, 109). The feature film was released in 1997 and *Miss Smilla* still sells steadily well, around 40,000 copies since 2001 according to Nielsen BookScan data (up to the end of 2017). These sales figures are exceptional for a translated book in the British market (cf. Chapter 2).

Ejersbo's *Africa* trilogy saw critical and sales success in Denmark but had extremely low sales figures in the UK: only six hundred print books across all three books in total, 399 of those for the highest-selling first book in the series *Exile* (2011)

from publication to mid-2017. The *Africa* trilogy has not (yet) been published in other anglophone markets. The reasons for the lacklustre reception and sales figures of the Ejersbo books are multifaceted, but crucially there is little evidence of a coherent multi-channel marketing strategy for the Ejersbo books, which will be discussed in Chapter 6 below. Here the initial acquisition of these books will be described to examine the role of the publisher.

As time passes, recollection of *Miss Smilla*'s anglophone publication journey and success gains a nostalgic hue with a suggestion there was something groundbreaking and unique about this 'outlier', ignoring the considerable market factors that aligned to create the hit. In Denmark, Høeg had publishing successes with *Forestilling om det tyvende århundrede* (1988; UK: *The History of Danish Dreams*, 1996) and *Fortællinger om natten* (1990; UK: *Tales of the Night*, 1997). Therefore, when Rosinante published *Smilla* in 1992 in Denmark it was an anticipated novel by a promising established author (Ries 1998, 36).

Høeg's Danish publisher Merete Ries at Rosinante explains how a native Danish editor at Farrar Straus & Giroux (FSG) in New York, Elisabeth Dyssegaard, keenly recommended acquisition of the book before it had even been published in Denmark in April 1992, following Høeg's previous successes and hype in his native Denmark (Ries 1998, 37). Dyssegaard had been keeping abreast of Danish literature from New York with regular visits to Denmark and maintaining relationships with Ries and other Danish publishers. Ries had been suggesting Danish books to Dyssegaard at FSG until striking it lucky with *Smilla* (Ries 1998, 37), and Dyssegaard has been cited as saying 'I was quite excited about an earlier [Høeg] book but I was waiting for something to come along that would travel' (Wirtén 2004, 41). Dyssegaard contributes to the nostalgic narrative in recollecting that her passion for *Smilla* was instant:

This book came in to me, and I read it in two seconds because it was so incredibly compelling. [...] so I got to the end of the book and I was like, this can't be the end of the book! And it wasn't in fact, there was a page missing! I was like, *{exaggerated}* send that page right away! There was fax, so they just faxed it. (ED 2017)

Her enthusiasm was contagious: the English-language rights were bought by FSG for the American market before the book was published in Denmark (Wirtén 2004, 41), and 'things started hotting up' once FSG's sales and marketing teams had seen a first draft translation (Ries 1998, 37). The resulting promotional campaign in the USA was

notably ‘remarkable for a translation’ (Wirtén 2004, 43). *Smilla* was edited into two anglophone books (as discussed in detail below in Chapter 5). Both the American and British versions were published in the same year, and in the pre-Amazon bookselling era, it was easy to keep the versions separate: the British version was not marketed in the USA, nor vice versa.

An interpretation of the reason for the two simultaneous English-language versions of *Smilla* is to consider the symbolic capital invested in ongoing professional relationships in this field. As demonstrated above in nurturing her link with Dyssegaard, Ries attributes the success of *Smilla* and Høeg in many international markets first and foremost to networking and contacts, namely: ‘the respectful relationships that evolve over long periods of time within the international publishing community, building a network of professional friendships among people who come to trust each other’s judgement, in spite of preconceived ideas about what it takes to make an international success’ (Ries 1998, 38). Accounts suggest that MacLehose believed he had secured World English rights to *Smilla* for Harvill from Ries, hence the subsequent agreement between Straus and Harvill: ‘when we [FSG, USA] bought World English rights to the book, we committed to selling it to Harvill because Merete Ries also had a relationship with Christopher MacLehose and she said you can have the rights, but, you know, sort of a gentleman’s agreement’ (ED 2017). Here Ries’s ‘network of professional friendships’ had apparently led to a scenario where two anglophone publishers believed they had World English rights. This might have resulted in conflict, but instead their resolution ensured no damage was done to the social and cultural capital of those involved in the exchange. This was possible given the national (not multinational) focus of each anglophone publisher.

The publication journey into English of Ejersbo’s *Africa* trilogy (2011-14) is somewhat different to *Miss Smilla*, yet also highlights how ‘a network of professional friendships’ influenced the decision-making processes about acquisition and publication. Ejersbo’s debut novel *Nordkraft* (2002) met critical acclaim in Denmark, with high sales figures of over 100,000 copies, and won The Golden Laurels prize (*De Gyldne Laurbær*, a Danish booksellers prize: Skarum 2015). *Nordkraft* remains unpublished in the UK, but it was translated by British translator Don Bartlett and published in English in Canada by McArthur and Co. with the same title in 2004. Ejersbo died young in 2008 resulting in the posthumous publication in Denmark of his *Africa* trilogy, left written but unpolished before his death. *Eksil*, *Revolution*, and

Liberty were all published by Gyldendal in sequence in 2009. *Eksil* was considered finished by Ejersbo by the time of his death (Skarum 2015). Creative judgement was used by Gyldendal editor Johannes Riis to decide in which order the three novels would be published and even how the stories would be presented in the remaining books (for example, *Revolution* is a series of short stories told from the perspective of different protagonists) (Skyum-Nielsen 2016, 425). All three *Africa* books were reportedly in Denmark's top ten bestsellers of 2009 (Skyum-Nielsen 2016, 430). The editor of Ejersbo's trilogy at MacLehose Press – admittedly having joined after the book rights had been acquired – says that the decision to buy the rights must have been influenced by the remarkable sales success in its home market: 'It was *loads*, considering the population. It was like a book here had sold 2 million' (PE 2017). The 'justification' paragraph for the application to the Danish Arts Foundation's Translation Fund for *Liberty* focused on the book's success in the source market too (KIK20.2013-0312).

Manuscripts received by a publisher for acquisition are judged not only on their contents, but upon who has introduced the work to them (cf. Bourdieu 1993, 134). MacLehose and his wife Koukla (cf. section 2 above) places great emphasis on the ongoing relationships with their literary contacts globally: 'it is of inestimable value to be able to depend upon the discreet wisdom of your own authors and translators, your regular correspondents the publishers and critics in Europe, the best readers in all the languages you need' (MacLehose 2004, 112). This seems particularly typical in the context of the UK, because 'where few publishers read more than one language fluently, translators are often key to what actually gets published: they know what's out there' (Leith 2017). This illustrates the significance in the publishing process of maintaining 'a network of professional friendships' with those imbued with cultural capital, including a large pool of professional readers and respected established translators in the field. MacLehose recounts that he would have asked a reader to give both a perspective of where the author fits into the context of Danish contemporary literature, and their personal opinion – 'what does this book do for YOU?' (CM 2017). From this he could ascertain insight into the quality of the book, drawing on his strong relationship with the reader in question. MacLehose reportedly sought opinions from several sources including the eventual translator, native Dane Mette Petersen, before deciding to buy the rights to Ejersbo's *Africa* trilogy for MacLehose Press. Petersen remarks that she understood the fit and position of the books for MacLehose, based on

her enduring professional relationship with him: ‘I knew the publishing house, knew what their profile was. Even if I didn’t know as much about the British market as I would like, I certainly knew what my publisher liked. What they wanted, what kind of books they wanted to publish’ (MP 2016). Petersen plays convincingly modest in describing her impactful role in the acquisition:

When [MacLehose] asked me to read Ejersbo, I told him he had to buy them. As I recall, he dithered for a while, because *Liberty* was such an enormous book. He thought it might be slightly too long. [...] I had a conversation with him – he called me after reading the report and said ‘Is this something your mother would read?’. [...] As it happened, my mother had just read it and *loved* it. So I could tell him honestly that she would, and that she would be reading the next book. I don’t know if that swung anything... (MP 2016)

Petersen’s and other readers’ feedback played an important part in dissipating MacLehose’s uncertainty about acquiring such an epic trilogy (PE 2017). The acquisition of the books therefore relied on the typical process of consulting MacLehose’s network of professional friendships. Petersen’s account emphasises her ongoing high symbolic capital in the industry; this was likely accrued from her status as being the first employee of Portobello Books, London, in the mid-2000s (MP 2016), as well as an occasion previously where she had proofread a translated manuscript for another Danish book:

I was first on their list to be the translator for this one because I think Christopher MacLehose had wanted me to do a translation for him for a while. At that point certainly he trusted my judgement and thought that I would be able to do it. [...] I think he thought he could trust my grasp of the English language and my taste. (MP 2016)

The dedication to and by the translator appears to have had a large impact on this publication journey. While Bartlett, aforementioned translator of *Nordkraft* (Ejersbo 2004), submitted a sample translation of *Eksil* to MacLehose, he soon became too busy with other projects to commit to translating the full trilogy (DB 2017; CM 2017). On more than one occasion there was talk of either publishing only part of the trilogy or cutting one of the longest books, though neither idea transpired (PE 2017; MP 2016). (This would not have been unprecedented for MacLehose; at Vintage/Harvill, he published Carsten Jensen’s *I Have Seen the World Begin* [2002], but did not take on the second part of the lengthy travelogue [*Jeg Har Hørt et Stjernesbud*, Jensen 1997]: BH 2017)

Petersen’s apparent significant input into the acquisition of Ejersbo’s books by MacLehose Press contrasts with the publication journey for *Miss Smilla*. In that case,

Dyssegaard, Ries, and MacLehose among others were crucial actors in bringing the book into the two respective anglophone markets; translator Tiina Nunnally's role in the publication journey was marginal and limited to producing the American English manuscript. A comparison of the account of the translation and editing of both Danish authors into English is given in the next chapter as part of a demonstration of the varying roles of translators in this field.

4.4 Conclusion

Interpreting interactions of publishers through the lens of symbolic capital suggested an explanation for many of the 'hidden' interactions influencing translated Danish literature in the UK. Both this chapter and Chapter 3 illustrated how the myriad of small publishers in this field thrive on a combination of high cultural capital to find their niche and state funding to ensure economic viability. Notions of market-led, commercial books versus canonical literature are demonstrably different between Denmark and the UK as illustrated by funders' and publishers' attitudes to supporting specific authors.

As demonstrated by MacLehose's illustrious and celebrated career, economic commercial success appears not to have a detrimental effect on a publisher's cultural capital in the field of translated literature in Britain. I attributed MacLehose's significant impact to his behaviour as a 'small publisher' in himself at various imprints in sustaining his ongoing relationships with relevant contacts in the industry. Yet I also emphasised that no single person works alone in this field; the 'roots' of translated Danish literature are fused, relying on supportive networks of many agents. The start of a comparative case study of two Danish authors introduced to the British market by MacLehose demonstrated in practice the input of symbolic capital in this 'network of professional friendships' (Ries 1998, 38). The publication journeys of these books will be used throughout the thesis to illustrate processes within this field. After acquiring the international book rights, typically the next step to consider in the process of publishing a book from Denmark in Britain is translating. Next, Chapter 5 looks at the roles and identities of literary translators in this field.

CHAPTER 5 – Translating: Roles and Identities of Danish-English Translators

Since 2010 the number of new books translated from Danish and published in English in the UK has increased to a modest dozen per year from only one or two at the turn of the millennium (as demonstrated by my corpus data: Chapter 2). Even the most experienced literary translator has a hard limit of how many books they can translate in one year. Prolific and experienced translator Charlotte Barslund estimates four books per year alongside a couple of plays or smaller texts, for instance (CB 2017). So this increase in the number of publications has arguably presented an opportunity for more literary translators to find work translating Danish books into English as publishers' demand increases: 'the two translators that were working before can't possibly keep up with all of the stuff. I think that's a positive thing as well. It's given me a bit of break: a way in' (PRG 2016).

The two preceding chapters described the input of state cultural funders and publishers in bringing a Danish book into the British market. This chapter shines a spotlight onto one of the particularly hidden 'roots' in the process: translators. Literary translators both translate the text and perform extra roles to shore up their career and the field overall. Data from this chapter stems primarily from my interviews with translators (methodology for which is described in Chapter 1). All literary translators of Danish into English I have identified are freelance, not salaried employees. Some work on literary translation full-time, but some work alongside other paid jobs (including non-literary translation). Key determinants enabling someone to successfully develop a career as a freelance literary translator of Danish into English include relationships with editors and publishers, membership of professional associations, state support, and translators' own interests.

This chapter investigates translators' roles and identities in the field of Danish-English literary translation. I have been inspired by Sela-Sheffy's extensive studies into the profession, identity, and status of Israeli literary translators (2014; 2016). Sela-Sheffy also uses Bourdieu's notions to interpret motivations of professionals in the field of translated literature. Most translators (much like writers or artists) do not enter the cultural field to fail: they are at pains to learn the 'rules of the game' (*doxa*) to ensure success for themselves and their cultural products. In her chapter entitled

‘Translators’ Identity Work: Introducing Micro-Sociological Theory of Identity to the Discussion of Translators’ Habitus’ (Sela-Sheffy 2014), Sela-Sheffy emphasises how translators’ ‘identity work’ – activities that shore up cultural and social capital – is crucial for their individual and collective success. In this chapter I start by describing certain elements of the everyday work of translators in this field, including the editing process where I continue my analysis of the publication journeys of two ‘MacLehose authors’. Then I discuss and analyse elements of translators’ career identity and the nature of the profession overall. As in previous chapters, relationships with other agents within this field are identified as crucial, so this chapter finishes by investigating aspects of networking.

5.1 Working as a Danish-English Literary Translator

5.1.1 Sample Translations

Sample translations are short extracts of a book produced for the purpose of either pitching to an international publisher to sell the rights, or after the rights have been obtained for the translator to showcase their ability and style to gain the full book contract. Translators can be paid for sample translations by the Danish publisher (or agent or author) if commissioned, or – especially if they are following their own initiative – a translator can apply directly to the Danish Arts Foundation’s Sample Translation Fund (as mentioned above in Chapter 3). Occasionally they will not seek reimbursement. For literary translators, particularly at the start of their career, sample translations form part of a ‘typical’ day’s work, to keep a regular income coming in. ‘Bread and butter’ is a repeated metaphor used by translators, foregrounding a pragmatic focus on earning a crust and projecting the validity of this career as a viable profession: ‘I’d been doing loads of samples for Gyldendal – that was my bread and butter for a while’ (PRG 2016). Yet sample translations are about more than just the short-term economic capital gain. Social capital earned by making contacts with editors, authors, and publishers is crucial to strengthening a translator’s position in the field, as demonstrated by another translator’s account about an editor who had moved between Danish publishers: ‘we continued our relationship in the sense of she feeds me good samples. That’s my living, that’s my daily bread and butter, I do commissions for her’ (LFR 2016).

A large incentive for completing a sample translation is that the same translator might then be considered for the full book translation: ‘if a book is sold on the strength of a sample translation then obviously you’re in the front line. It’s a decent enough translation, “let’s ask him”’ (MA 2016). Yet this is not inevitable. Anglophone publishers tend to commission more than one reader’s report, for instance, which may include a sample translation. The publication journey of Ejersbo’s *Africa* trilogy at MacLehose Press is an example of this: the anglophone translator of Ejersbo’s first novel also submitted a sample translation, yet was not the eventual translator for the series (as described below in section 1.3). Given that a translator receives remuneration for their sample translation, there is no official obligation on the part of the publisher to further their relationship for the remainder of the full book because both sides have technically fulfilled their part of the agreement. An established translator describes the process with a slight self-conscious false modesty when it becomes clear that another translator would have paved the way for his eventual involvement:

I’m ashamed to say I’ve probably translated books that other people have done the sample translation [for]! What happens is that I’ll just get an email one day [from the anglophone publisher] saying we’ve bought the rights for this book and we’d like you to translate it, would you be interested, have you got the time? (MA 2016)

Ongoing high social and cultural capital with the cultural gatekeepers ensure this translator is sought after for a full book contract. Here, existing symbolic capital (interpreted as ‘trust’) strongly motivates publishers in choosing their translators, tallying with what has been witnessed in other small fields of translation in Britain: ‘publishers will tend to stick with a translator they know and trust – meaning that smaller languages might only have one or two go-to people’ (Leith 2017). This illustrates how and why this field relies on a small number of high-profile translators (as demonstrated by my corpus data findings in Chapter 2). While translators accept completing a sample translation is not strictly a gateway to the full book contract – ‘It might happen, but you *can’t* have that feeling of ownership that just because you’ve done the sample, they should ask you first’ (CB 2017) – the unspoken hope of the translator is that they will receive the commission for the full book. For emerging translators, this two-step process is part of the challenge of breaking into the industry. It can be a professional and even emotional setback for those trying to build up their reputation and position in the field:

[The anglophone publisher] really liked my [sample] translation, they thought it was a great translation. And then they chose another translator.

[...] I felt really... it was really painful, I was really gutted actually. It was still fairly early on and I hadn't been exposed to some of the tough decisions that happen in publishing so it felt really personal. (PRG 2016)

In consistently delivering (good) sample translations and maintaining relationships with editors and agents, translators gradually accrue symbolic capital and are able to develop their careers.

5.1.2 The Myth of the Solitary Translator

The image brought to mind of the daily practice of a translator is of a person writing in solitude at their desk, much in common with stereotypes of authors (Ben-Ari 2010; Kaindl 2016). Fictional representations tend to portray translators as marginal, dissatisfied, and as wishing to become authors (cf. Ben-Ari 2010), thereby subsuming stereotypes about frustrated writers. The community of freelance translators is indeterminate and marginalised professionally (contributing to their 'invisibility' according to many commentators, such as Cronin 2003 cf. Chapter 1), so popular culture representations should not be discarded as trivial:

Even if they are only vaguely and loosely related to reality, novels and films can have a major impact on society due to their popularity. The movie *The Interpreter*, starring Nicole Kidman, for example, has perhaps influenced public opinion about interpreters more than any scientific study. (Kaindl 2016, 73)

Established translators in the field of Danish-English literary translation fairly often reinforce stereotypes of the solitary translator when talking about their careers – 'I'm quite happy to sit at home on my own!' (MA 2016); 'we're naturally quite solitary! That's why we're translators' (CB 2017); 'as a translator you're on your own. All day, every day, months at a time often' (BH 2017) – even joking that it might have had an impact on their ability to communicate with others in person: 'Because when you work on your own for so many years you always wonder whether your social skills are, well, awkward!' (CB 2017). Yet this latter translator actually speaks at length in the same conversation about the various relationships she successfully fosters with editors at publishing houses, directly with authors, and even another translator with whom she has co-translated books. While it is superficially true that freelance literary translators generally undertake their everyday work alone at a desk, relationships are crucial. This solitary image perpetuated by translators could be part of (subconscious) identity work ensuring their community of practice has a consistent narrative. Reinforcing this stereotypical habitus seems to be part of the *doxa* of the field.

Translating the text is not an entirely solo pursuit. Interviews uncover a number of examples of the translator acting as another editor following their own thorough consideration of the source text. For instance, an established prolific translator whose output is around fifty per cent crime fiction explains her approach to the source author's text: 'I love going through the timeline and the locations and making sure it absolutely works. Often I find things that have slipped through the edits in Danish or Norwegian and I am learning to point that out without coming across as a smartarse!' (CB 2017). An example outside the timeline of my corpus illustrates this process, too, where the publication in English of the latest Høeg title (*The Susan Effect*, 2017; Denmark: *Effekten af Susan*, 2014) was delayed owing to fact-checking prompted by the Danish-English translator: 'I noticed when translating it that there are a lot of mistakes and things that don't, sort of, hang together. [...] The British editors are really stringent in their work; they just see everything that doesn't fit. There's a character in there that is supposed to have worked with Niels Bohr at some time, but if you go back and figure out how old she was, she was only about 6 years old or something as it turns out' (MA 2016). According to the translator, this then prompted the British publisher to go back to the Danish editor and author for clarification, prolonging the translation and editing process into English.

The translating and subsequent editing process necessitates questions and conversation between the translator, the editor, and sometimes the author. Translators have different approaches to collaborating directly with the Danish source author on the English text, based on their own or authors' preferred working styles. One established translator professes he prefers not to consult the Danish author at all: 'I never *work* with authors at all. I like to do things myself. Most authors are pretty happy with that as well' (MA 2016). In this case, interaction would occur with the editor as conduit or mediator: the translator would discuss textual issues with the editor who would raise questions with the author as needed and then give feedback (this seems a fairly typical model cf. ED 2017). Another established translator prefers instead to communicate with the Danish author directly wherever possible, bypassing the editor in initial discussion about aspects of the text:

I can go to a Danish or Norwegian author and say, 'I am almost certain they [the anglophone publisher] are going to ask about *this*. If we do need to change it, what would be acceptable to you?'. (CB 2017)

This translator's preference to forge a working relationship with the author was inspired by a previous bad experience of using an editor as an intermediary:

The editor changed a lot of the swear words in my translation, and then the author thought I'd done it and was furious. 'Actually', I was saying, 'but I did translate the swear words'. But you are always the weakest point in that triangle: the publisher, the translator, and the author. The author thought, 'well, I can't be dealing with this, the editor tells me you didn't and you're saying that you did'. And the editor just threw you under the bus because you're just a translator and they can afford to! *{smiling}* But I realise, much as I want to blame the editor, it was also my fault for not having gotten in touch with the author earlier and creating a bond of trust, so that when there was a problem, he didn't know what to think. (CB 2017)

The dynamic between publisher/editor, translator, and author is a microcosm of a power struggle based on mutual respect and capital in this field; all the participants are working to ensure a successful rendering of the text, with slightly different methods and priorities. Her interpretation of her weak position reinforces the projected identity of the translator as invisible and lowly-valued (as per the stereotypes by academics such as Venuti, described in Chapter 1). This perception is reiterated by many translators' accounts of their interactions with editors, publishers, and authors in this field. Examples of different approaches to the 'transediting' process are described in-depth in the section below in relation to *Miss Smilla* and Ejersbo's *Africa* trilogy.

Co-translator relationships illustrate another dynamic of sociability in the translation process. Accounts by both Bartlett and Aitken of their working relationship co-translating Karl Ove Knausgård (from Norwegian) provide evidence of the mutual respect based on each translator's mutually high cultural capital in the field (DB 2017; MA 2016). Barslund, too, has collaborated with Bartlett on translations, including Danish crime fiction author Elsebeth Egholm. Barslund recalls the experience fondly, illustrating how mutual respect and trust within a successful working relationship results from being 'between two equal partners. I don't think either of us felt that we were carrying the other, that wouldn't have worked' (CB 2017). These working relationships function as a form of on-the-job professional development, alongside specific training and networking seminars attended in a translator's own time (such as those described in Chapter 3).

Relationships with other translators, authors, editors, publishers, and funders therefore all feature prominently in translators' narratives of how they embarked on and established their careers. This inherent compulsion towards sociability to succeed in this field is demonstrated in the following account of how one well-established translator got his first job via a domino effect of social interactions:

what happened was [Danish author and acquaintance] Helle Helle's *eksmand* [ex] actually, Peter H. Olesen, who is a writer as well, musician and

stuff, he passed my name on to Simon Pasternak who was an editor and a writer as well... Simon passed my name onto Gyldendal's Agency, Sofia Voller. So Sofia Voller called me up one day – they're always wanting people to do sample translations, they always need somebody – so she called me up one day and said 'I've heard you'd be interested in doing sample translations?' 'Yeah I'd love to!' 'Well okay we've got this Janne Teller' 'Great'. So I did a sample translation of a book by Janne Teller which Janne Teller was very, very pleased with, apparently. And that just happened to coincide with – that book: *Nothing* – the rights being sold to Simon & Schuster in the States. So because Janne Teller was pleased with what I'd done and recommended me, and Gyldendal said yeah that's good – so I got that job. (MA 2016)

This chain of events illustrates succinctly how, even from the start, translation is not a solitary job. Time expended via 'an unceasing effort of sociability' (Bourdieu 2004, 22-3), gaining social and cultural capital through networking without initial financial compensation, often eventually results in economic capital from paid translation work. Making connections, building relationships, and developing trust is all part of the process of accumulating symbolic capital in the field. Sociability is by no means a natural pursuit for every translator, but is recognised as a necessary part of establishing a career in this field: 'you have to be a little bit cheeky and a little bit forward and go outside of your comfort zone and do things that might feel a little bit awkward' (PRG 2016). An editor can trust a translator with whom they have a long-standing relationship – 'They know that the book will be in safe hands with me' (BH 2017) – much like the author can trust an editor with whom they have an established connection. Research into the wider field of small nation literatures in Britain reinforces this interpretation: 'At our British Library workshop, [Portuguese translator] Margaret Jull Costa highlighted the benefits for translated literature of long, trust-based relationships between translators and publishers' (Chitnis et al. 2017, 11). In the next section, I use two publication journeys from Denmark to illustrate two very different dynamics between translator and publisher.

5.1.3 Transediting

The credited translator of the British publication of *Miss Smilla* is 'F. David'; a pseudonym invented by Harvill Press as Tiina Nunnally 'repudiated' Harvill's heavily altered British version and was therefore unhappy putting her name to it (Satterlee 1996, 15). Nunnally recalls: 'I was furious to learn that they had used a fictitious [sic] translator name, which made it seem as if there were two totally different translations of the book' (Follin 1997, [letter inserted after 34]), when in fact the British version was an edited version of her American manuscript. The pseudonymous translator

credits in the British publications of both *Smilla* and the *Millennium* trilogy¹¹ suggest tension in the professional relationship between particular translators and MacLehose. Yet the publisher as gatekeeper always deems it necessary to adapt the text for their market as their loyalty lies with their target reader. MacLehose says ‘I do think that almost every translation of a certain literary density has to be treated like an original text’ (Wroe 2012), expressing that, for him, the editing process for a translation should be as ruthless as if the manuscript was in an author’s source language text.¹² This fairly common editing process in publishing translated literature can be referred to as transediting:

Combining translation with editing, ‘transediting’ indicates instances when an editor – with or without the participation of author or translator – rewrites a text for the purpose of achieving a more fluent or, in his/her eyes a more suitable translation. (Wirtén 2004, 48)

Some translators endeavour to take an active role in the transediting process in an attempt to ensure some of the style and idiosyncrasies of the source text are retained in the English version:

[The editor] had just taken a pencil and gone *{mimes crossing out with a pencil}* chht, chht, chht, chht, chht all the way through. I had to go back and say, hang on a minute, you cannae do that! You mustn’t do that! This is the author’s work, you’re not allowed to do that. So in a way I tend to see myself also as the person who has to defend the author’s work at times when people want to sanitise it sometimes or want to take out all of the stuff that makes it what it is. (BH 2017)

Transediting and the relationship between publisher, editor, author, and translator in both *Miss Smilla* and the *Africa* trilogy is described in this section as an overview of this process in practice.

Paul Engles, the editor at MacLehose Press who worked on all three Ejersbo books, describes his concern that transediting might have impacted negatively on his relationship with the translator (perhaps in an unuttered recognition of the cases mentioned above). Though he goes on to confirm that transediting is usual practice:

With *Liberty* I thought maybe she [Petersen] did say ‘there were times when I thought you’d been a bit heavy-handed, but then everything you took out you put in somewhere else’. [...] In translation, editing is a bit of a minefield, and people outside of publishing will be very briefly scandalized if they heard that you just change things in a book. [...] If you just think,

¹¹ Reg Keeland, the credited translator of Larsson’s trilogy (published by MacLehose at Quercus), is a pseudonym for Steven Murray. For a full explanation of this anglophone publication journey, see Giles 2018, 268-70.

¹² MacLehose’s approach is that his editors do not read the source language text (cf. PE 2017), unlike specialist publisher Norvik Press, for instance, where target texts can be edited and cross-checked with the source text by language specialists.

‘well, that sentence doesn’t really make sense’; [...] cutting sentences that you don’t think are necessary. (PE 2017)

This process in fact seems fairly standard judging by translators’ accounts of other publication journeys (e.g. BH 2017; CB 2017; WF 2016). In elucidating the transediting process for Ejersbo’s books, Engles describes in interview how MacLehose edited the first book in the trilogy with handwritten notes, and Engles undertook those edits on screen (PE 2017). The translator expresses how pleased she was with the efforts expended by the editor and the resulting British versions:

I think they’ve done a *fabulous* job. Paul Engles, who did most of the work on *Revolution* and *Liberty*, I thought he did *enormously* well and was very patient with me! [...] He did brilliant work. And was very passionate about it, and came to Copenhagen, and interviewed, and videotaped, did all sorts. (MP 2016)

Both Engles and MacLehose enthusiastically report a positive working relationship with Petersen based on her drive and skill: ‘Mette was a good choice because she was really passionate about the books [...] She’s quite a presence, I thought’ (PE 2017).

Remarking on the choice of Petersen as translator in the first place, MacLehose says:

I think she’s *extremely* good as a translator. I like her very much. She worked very, very hard to deliver to whatever our schedule was. [...] It was an absolute belief [in her] because she’s formidably clever, this woman, apart from being enormously likeable. (CM 2017)

These accounts demonstrate how Petersen’s habitus – that is, dispositions and behaviours in order to maintain a position in the field (cf. Chapter 1) – was crucial in maintaining a solid professional relationship with those at MacLehose Press.

Petersen’s individual cultural capital was therefore significant not only in the acquisition (described in Chapter 4 above), but also the transediting process in the publication journey for the Ejersbo trilogy.

Petersen translated all three books, which were translated and published sequentially. MacLehose Press applied to the Danish Arts Foundation’s Translation Fund (cf. Chapter 3) for all three Ejersbo books. The Danish Arts Foundation did not award this grant for the first book; Petersen did not have the requisite work experience to meet the Fund’s criteria, having only been published in English once before (Husum 2010). Books two and three, *Revolution* and *Liberty*, received support from the Translation Fund ‘because by then, having done *Exile*, she did have sufficient experience’ (PE 2017). Petersen’s symbolic capital in the target market counted for everything for the editor and publisher at MacLehose Press as illustrated by her involvement above in acquisition and transediting, but, in contrast, for the Danish Arts

Foundation, this social capital did not meet their expectations from a source-culture-embedded perspective. Their funding eligibility criteria required that Petersen embodied specific cultural capital in the form of adequate experience. Notions of symbolic capital therefore are complex when applied to international, cross-cultural exchange such as this; capital is perceived and accrued differently by different agents in different national fields.

The account of *Smilla*'s publication in two English versions has claimed notoriety, especially in academic circles, and has become part of the wider narrative of the book. Not long after its initial anglophone publication, researchers comparing the language of the American and British versions 'discovered' the controversial account of the transediting of the British version (Satterlee 1996; Thomson 1997; Follin 1997; Malmkjær MS). *Smilla* was translated into English by Nunnally commissioned by Dyssegaard at FSG. Nunnally is a native American English speaker and at the time was already an established, prize-winning literary translator of Scandinavian languages (Wirtén 2004, 47). Nunnally's version published by FSG for the American market was called *Smilla's Sense of Snow*; Høeg expressed dissatisfaction with this title at the time, but was reportedly told by FSG that he had no say on the matter (Høeg on Radio 4 bookclub 2017; Follin 1997, 36). Years later, Dyssegaard recalls positively the editor-author relationship she had with Høeg when working on *Smilla* for FSG:

He was pretty involved in the American version too. [...] Yeah, he obviously speaks English extremely well and he was very engaged with it [...] He very much weighed in on the American version too. (ED 2017)

Nunnally reportedly incorporated some edits suggested by Høeg (Follin 1997, [letter inserted after 34]), in a fairly typical example of interaction between translator and author (cf. section 1.2 above). Crucially, however, she felt 'unable to accept [all] alterations he requested' (Waldman 1997). Having acquired the rights for publication in the UK, including Nunnally's English translation, MacLehose at Harvill reportedly sought feedback again from Høeg, resulting in heavy editing and rewriting, reputedly by Høeg himself and 'friends' including his Danish publisher Ries (cf. Follin 1997, 34-37; MacLehose 2004, 109; Malmkjær MS, 5; Satterlee 1996, 15; Waldman 1997). The two *Smilla* books differ markedly, beyond only substituting American terminology with British English (cf. Satterlee 1996; Thomson 1997; Follin 1997). In Harvill's opinion, their resulting British version 'is closer to the author's and his Danish editor's wishes than the American' (Waldman 1997). The respect accorded by MacLehose to Ries – 'a great scholar [...] whose English is beyond flawless' (CM 2017) – ensured he

gave weight to her proposed changes to the text. FSG chose to proceed with Nunnally's approved translation despite having seen Harvill's version (that reflected Høeg's and Ries's edits). Despite Høeg's initial misgivings, in the USA, *Smilla's Sense of Snow* (Høeg 1993) received unprecedented critical acclaim and 'qualified in 1997 as the most widely sold novel by a non-English-speaking author in the United States to date' (Wirtén 2004, 41). Harvill, however, took the approach that they had paid for Nunnally's text and would integrate edits as they saw fit; Nunnally was reportedly told 'that's the version of your translation that we would like to use' (CM 2017). At the time, Nunnally approached professional translators' associations including PEN America for advice on how to proceed. The outcome was that the copyright for the American text lies with FSG, and for the British version jointly with FSG and Harvill Press (Wirtén 2004, 49). Although credited as the translator of the American version, Nunnally lost out financially by not receiving royalties when the book went on to sell in many reissues in English worldwide over the years, because her 'work-for-hire' contract meant she was paid by the word without claim to later copyright (Wirtén 2004, 49; Follin 1997, [letter inserted after 34]). Additionally, Nunnally has no claim on the text which was used as the basis for the film screenplay by Ann Biderman (Maslin 1997); the 1997 film was an international box office success. The translator has since used what she labels the 'Smilla debacle' when guest lecturing at the University of Washington as a 'cautionary tale' about the importance of getting the best terms in a translation contract (Tiina Nunnally, email to thesis author, 28 November 2017).

This account of the transediting of *Miss Smilla* demonstrates again the pivotal importance of what Ries refers to as 'a network of professional friendships' in publishing translated literature. Symbolic capital and habitus can cross national boundaries, as in the cases of MacLehose with both Ries and Petersen in separate eras and contexts. Yet, in contrast with the Ejersbo books, Nunnally's high cultural capital as an established translator was discarded by MacLehose and Harvill in relation to *Miss Smilla*, with arguably no impact on the eventual high sales and positive reception of the book. This section has illustrated various interactions of symbolic capital and practices in the everyday working lives of Danish-English literary translators. The next section analyses identity and status of translators in this field, especially considering the unpaid work often undertaken to shore up their position.

5.2 Professionalisation and Identity

Arguably, the nature of freelance employment lowers the societal status of translation as a career: ‘the part-time, secondary or occasional character of much translation work is likely to reflect negatively on the solidity of the translation profession’ (Dam and Zethsen 2016). The fragmentary, insecure nature of the work, combined with, typically, a lack of vocational schooling in contrast to professions like law or education, results in an under-professionalisation of the field, rendering translators ‘a rather “invisible” occupational group and their trade a marginal professional option’ (Sela-Sheffy & Shlesinger 2008, 80). In a sector such as this, then, ‘[t]here is no other criterion of membership of a field than the objective fact of producing effects within it’ (Bourdieu 1993, 42). The under-professionalisation results in an emergence of a community of practice, defined as ‘the informal interactions through which people acquire knowledge related to their job’ (Sela-Sheffy 2014, 45). In such a loosely delineated informal professional field, it has been mooted that the dynamics of the community of practice develop through its *doxa* and each agent’s *habitus* (cf. Sela-Sheffy & Shlesinger 2008). *Habitus* refers to the set of mental and physical dispositions, tendencies, and practices that are internalized and exercised by group members in order to gain and maintain capital in their field (Sela-Sheffy & Shlesinger 2008, 83). In this section of the chapter, I will describe how aspects of the community of practice for Danish-English literary translators relate to their individual and group identity. Translators in this field are native Danish, British, American, Canadian, South African, and so on, and often resident in different places from their upbringing or citizenship. Each translator has different understandings of social class and enters the field with different *habitus*, yet they must all strive to learn its shared *doxa* and accrue capital. A translator’s approach to their work is tied up with amassing social and cultural capital in the field in order to establish themselves:

Similarly to what Bourdieu shows with reference to other loosely defined fields (notably the arts), accumulating the field’s symbolic (rather than material) capital is a very real force that determines translators’ chances of being considered competent, getting a job and bargain for conditions and payment. (Sela-Sheffy 2014, 48)

Significantly, these aspects of identity and symbolic capital are ascribed to the individual translator personally. Unlike a company or institution, each person develops, lives, and dies with their own *habitus* and capital. This section opens by

describing characteristics of participants in this field before investigating tendencies and behaviours.

5.2.1 Qualifications

Very few Danish into English literary translators take a direct path of undertaking a professional translation qualification straight from secondary or tertiary education then embarking on a career in literary translation. This appears to have little bearing on their success or otherwise in the field. Masters-level qualifications in translation with a focus on literature are one route into starting a career, which was an approach favoured by now well-established translators such as Barslund and Bartlett as ‘mature students’ (that is, undertaken later in life than as an immediate graduate). Yet many of the translators in this field do not have translation-specific academic credentials at all; for instance, this translator’s experience is not atypical: ‘I’ve never studied translation, I don’t think about it in a theoretical way, and I just do it [...] For me it was an instinctual thing, and I enjoy language, I enjoy writing, to me it just worked’ (KS 2017). Another established translator describes how MacLehose felt like a mentor during their editing process at the start of her career: ‘I was terrified every time his notes came in, but, by God, I learned! That was my tuition, that was my education in translation, to have him. [...] Even now I still have him on my shoulder when I’m doing anything’ (BH 2017). An empirical study into Scandinavian translators (literary and non-literary) reinforces this perception: surveys found that nearly ninety per cent of translators of European languages (French, German, Italian, Spanish) into English are trained or qualified in translation, compared with only fifty-seven per cent of Scandinavian into English translators – a statistically significant difference (Giles 2012, 41).

Academic qualifications and work experience can be interpreted as part of ‘[t]he accumulation of cultural capital in the embodied state’ (Bourdieu 1986, 18), in that an individual agent’s cultural capital cannot be handed down (unlike economic capital). This is astutely observed by a long-established literary translator:

When I stop working, when I’m seventy or eighty, I don’t have a business I can sell to another translator and go, hey, buy me out. It dies with me. So you can spend your entire life creating a business that has no value and can never grow beyond a certain point. (CB 2017)

Unlike in non-literary translation (or many other professional fields), this agent cannot simply sell her client list on: her ‘embodied’ cultural capital ends with her. This points to a fragility of this small field of translation. When this translator retires, her (not

insignificant) cultural output will remain (at least unless replaced by another translation), but her ongoing contribution to the field entirely ceases. Despite the increase in books published and active translators over the time period investigated by my thesis, the Danish-English field of translation is still reliant on a small number of people who must embody adequate symbolic capital to gain work and, by extension, success. This is not unique to Danish into English translation; for instance, a similar situation has been remarked upon in relation to translator Peter Bush dominating the field for Catalan into English, and the late Laurie Thompson with Swedish. Small-nation literatures in English translation tend to rely on a very few prolific people with high symbolic capital whose names become synonymous with good reception by critics and other agents in this field (for instance, cultural funders, cf. Chapter 3). Cultural gatekeeper MacLehose, after relying on only one or two Scandinavian translators in the 1990s, recalls advising *NORLA* and the Danish Literature Information Center twenty years ago that ‘steps have to be taken to identify Danish translators, Norwegian translators, in order that the great writers that you both have can escape into English’ (CM 2017). In these small, loosely-defined fields, there are so few like-for-like qualifications, and so few agents, that it is not possible to simply swap one translator for another by relying on qualifications as the universally-recognised symbols of cultural capital. The methods of gaining a strong position in the field rely less on formal qualifications and mostly on identity work activities to gain capital, as will be described below.

5.2.2 A Pink-Collar Profession

Sela-Sheffy and Shlesinger’s study of occupational identities of translators connects the marginalized status of the profession with ‘the fact that translation/interpreting is largely a pink-collar profession’ (Sela-Sheffy and Shlesinger 2008, 80). In contemporary Western society, women’s labour and cultural capital is arguably valued less highly than men’s, as demonstrated by the correlation between the dominance of women in any profession resulting in the lower status and lower wages of that sector (cf. Levanon, England and Allison 2009).

As stated in Chapter 2, the majority of the fifty-two translators in my corpus are women. Two of the established women translators I interviewed made explicit the positive aspects of establishing their freelance careers flexibly around their small children (BH 2017; CB 2017). This echoes prolific Swedish-English translator Sarah

Death's lived experience too: 'I was a very, very part time literary translator. I was a hundred and ten per cent a clueless mother for the first time and the translating had to fit in around the edges' (Death and Giles 2017, 25). Notably, these are examples of translators who became established in this field nearer the start of the time period covered by my thesis. Within the traditional family unit, where outgoing childcare costs are minimised by the mother staying at home, and presumably there is enough to live on from a partner's income, these women were able to 'risk' testing the waters in starting up as a literary translator, taking on prestigious jobs and accruing symbolic capital with their time rather than focusing primarily on accruing economic capital. In Bourdieu's interpretation, potential artists (writers; translators) benefit from having private means to support themselves to create their art and establish a position in the field:

Those who do manage to stay in the risky positions long enough to receive the symbolic profit they can bring are indeed mainly drawn from the most privileged categories, who have also had the advantage of not having to devote time and energy to secondary, "bread-and-butter" activities.
(Bourdieu 1993, 68)

Translators like Haveland and Barslund were afforded the lifestyle to allow them to enter the field as newcomers with minimal initial commitment and outgoing expense (in time expended away from home and formal childcare costs). This is not to say these career-changing new mothers are strictly 'privileged' as per Bourdieu's interpretation above, but his interpretation offers an explanation for how these educated mothers benefitted so strongly by being able to take a risk in starting a freelance skilled career. Establishing a career in translation in this field for all participants almost always involves efforts expended on activities that are not financially remunerated, and the next section presents an analysis of this phenomenon.

5.2.3 Unpaid Labour Time

I have borrowed the phrase 'unpaid labour time' for my thesis from academic research into freelance writers; a profession which has plenty in common with freelance translators. Both freelance writers and translators must expend energy and time securing their next contract, requiring 'substantial self-promotion and marketing' (D'Agostino 2011, 22). Unlike salaried employees, freelancers feel compelled to expend this unpaid labour time to establish and maintain their career. One translator interviewed refers to the process of actively pursuing work as a 'hustle':

The thing about the hustle is, the best year I had was when I had three books lined up in a row, and I knew that once I finished this book, I had another one, and then after that I had a third. And that's pretty nice to know, because you don't have to do any hustles then! (KS 2017)

Indeed, this same translator later ascribes the 'hustle' as a primary reason for stepping back from the profession later: 'it's not a bad life – translation – but it's just more of a hustle than I really wanted right now' (KS 2017).

Freelance writers make a living by selling specialised, heavily researched articles and are often paid by the word count (D'Agostino 2011, 22), exhibiting parallels with the work of translators. Studies of freelance writers have pointed to how the nature of remuneration by word count or article (rather than by time expended) results in many hours of unrecognised unpaid labour time:

purchasing completed works means that publishers do not pay for the time workers spend developing and researching ideas, pitching stories, conducting interviews, or for time spent editing and re-writing. The arbitrary fees publishers pay freelancers, determined by word count, do not account for the large quantities of unpaid labour necessary for conducting the work of producing writing and maintaining a freelance career. (Cohen 2013, 81)

The concept of symbolic capital that I have been using to interpret interactions in this field can usefully be mapped onto this notion of unpaid labour time. For instance, Bourdieu identifies that, in a capitalist society:

From a narrowly economic standpoint, this [unpaid labour time] effort is bound to be seen as pure wastage, but in the terms of the logic of social exchanges, it is a solid investment, the profits of which will appear, in the long run, in monetary or other form. (Bourdieu 2004, 25)

This offers an explanation for a translator's efforts towards sociability (described in section 1 above) – the result is increased symbolic and (as a consequence) economic capital. Unpaid labour time activities undertaken by the freelance literary translators interviewed ranges from aspects that might be considered part and parcel of accurately translating a text – for instance, visiting the city in Scandinavia where the book is set for research purposes (DB 2017) – to extra-textual tasks including pitching, networking, and direct and indirect marketing.

An example of how unpaid labour time gains work is given by a well-established Danish and Norwegian translator. She tells of starting her career by being 'bold' and approaching Merete Ries at Rosinante directly after the success of *Miss Smilla* and the notorious relationship breakdown between the American translator and anglophone publishers (outlined in section 1.3 above): 'I wrote to her and just presented myself, and said "this is me and what I've done is, I've taken just the first

pages of this book by Peter [Høeg] and I've translated them and I wanted you to have a look at them because if you were interested in having it translated I would be really keen to have a go" (BH 2017). Haveland's assertive approach worked: she went on to translate Høeg's *Borderliners* (1994), *A History of Danish Dreams* (1996), *The Woman and The Ape* (1996), and *Tales of the Night* (1997), all published by Harvill, based on the initial unpaid labour time efforts of producing and sharing sample translations unsolicited. Haveland had also already shored up symbolic capital in the field of publishing by being known to Harvill's MacLehose via her previous job as a bookseller in Glasgow (BH 2017). By meeting Ries' approval, Haveland was a strong candidate for selection by MacLehose for the English translations of Høeg's books. Social and cultural capital were crucial in her gaining these contracts. Unpaid labour time is part of a translator's habitus developing hand-in-hand with their identity, resulting in the accrual of symbolic capital to establish a position within the field of Danish-English literary translation.

5.2.4 In it for the Money?

My presumption when preparing for interviews was that translators would exhibit a romanticisation of their input into the publication journey, especially in testing my hypothesis of their role as ambassadors and fans (cf. Chapter 1 on interview methodology). To an extent this has been borne out in studies of other groups of translators; for instance, research into Israeli literary translators who embrace a 'translator-artist' image and 'a *vocational* ethos of devotion, personal attachment, inspiration and creativity, as well as despise [sic] for material considerations, which, in their eyes, distinguishes them from their allegedly "merely language technicians", materially oriented peers [commercial translators]' (Sela-Sheffy 2014, 51; original emphasis). This conjecture risks emboldening a perception of translation being a labour of love, rather than a profession like any other. Interviews for my thesis, conversely, suggested that, on the surface, Danish-English literary translators project themselves as pragmatists. At various points some of the translators profess that they embarked on their career to earn a living from their linguistic aptitude, rather than from a passion for literature:

I think in contrast to many people who are translators, it's just because I do have Danish language skills and I would like to be able to use those skills. It's just for the money. I'm not a huge lover of – I'm not a huge reader, I'm not a huge literature buff. It's just a career. It's just a way of making money. (WF 2016)

I was looking for something else, [...] partly out of desperation because I'd stopped working my other job and needed to make a living. (PRG 2016)

This focus on the mercenary aspect of the job was an unexpected reversal of what had been anticipated before interviewing people. Literary translators are rarely openly self-confessed 'fans' motivated by a passion for the job. Yet reciting that translation is a job like any other – primarily for money, regardless of evidence of an interest in literature (revealed later in interviews) – may actually be an attempt to increase the perceived professionalisation of the field:

Although translators are by no means a stigmatized group, their occupational status is largely uncertain, in view of such parameters as low and insecure income, instability and irregular working conditions, mistrust of editors or clients, etc. In the absence of regulation and measures of achievement, they are much more dependent, in comparison with established professional sectors, on identity work for producing and maintaining their symbolic capital. (Sela-Sheffy 2014, 50)

For new translators in this field, translation is a route to earning a living based on their skills and availability (without a 'guaranteed' income of a salaried job). As such, in describing their work, some Danish-English literary translators emphasise the financial viability of their career choice, arguably to validate the profession and the field.

One of the most prolific translators in the corpus who earns a living translating literature full-time is now able to play down the significance of the financial aspect of the job, given the strong position and symbolic capital he has accrued by becoming an established name in this field: 'I've been really, really fortunate, I mean just the idea of being able to work for yourself full time translating Danish literature into English, it's just ludicrous! But I'm not a "money person". As long as I can say there's money there and there's some money coming in' (MA 2016). Obtaining the self-assurance that results from economic capital is essential for becoming less precarious. Such audacity and indifference to profit is arguably only possible 'with the flair associated with possession of a large social capital and the corresponding familiarity with the field' (Bourdieu 1993, 68). In this instance, stating the career is not only for the money is only possible because he is in a stable enough position in the field to do so.

Aitken, Barslund, Bartlett, Garrett, and Haveland – all with a prolific output in this field (Appendix A) – seem to work at least equally if not more often from Norwegian into English according to both interview data and their CVs, despite all starting out primarily in Danish into English literary translation. This is a result not only of the closeness linguistically of Scandinavian languages, and therefore an overlapping aptitude, but also of being able to transfer symbolic capital across from

one international field into another. One of the more established translators interviewed mentions that there was simply not enough work from Danish at his time of starting in the industry at the turn of the twenty-first century, hence the shift to a successful career working from Norwegian (DB 2017). *NORLA* provides strong incentives for translation from Norwegian (as the Danish Arts Foundation does for Danish cf. Chapter 4), especially offering extensive financial and structural support in the build-up since 2016 for Norway's 'Guest of Honour' status at the Frankfurt Book Fair in 2019. Another established translator perceives a huge contrast in the warmth towards translation at the Danish and Norwegian state cultural agencies: 'The Norwegians are fantastic! [...] They're enormously keen to promote their literature and their activities and they are everywhere. Their hospitality, their generosity, is just unparalleled' (CB 2017). Ultimately, the motivation for these full-time literary translators is earning money, which is why they also translate from Norwegian. Their careers are at the behest of demand from both anglophone publishers and adequate financial support from state cultural funders.

5.2.5 Love of the Job?

In order to ensure a steady income, full-time translators cannot always be led by their own whims and interests, but rather by other factors such as time and funds available, their own expertise, and publishers' commercial considerations:

Very few translators are in a position to translate a complete novel as a labour of love, and even if they do, the chances of its being published and thus available to a wider audience are small. (Barslund 2011, 144-5)

Yet my interviews uncovered a conflict between what some Danish-English literary translators say about their work – that they are doing it to make a living, 'it's just a career' (as directly above, section 2.4) – and their deep-seated enthusiasm for translating literature. Most, though not all, translators in this field cultivate an interest in current Danish literature based on their personal tastes, cultural knowledge, and contacts. This incongruity has been openly addressed by some of the translators I spoke to; for instance:

I'm trying to make money, and sometimes I'll take on jobs that I don't necessarily like that much because I need to pay the bills. But I also love Danish literature and I love Denmark and Danish culture. So it's that dual role. [...] There is a passion for doing it as well. (PRG 2016)

After claims to the contrary (cited in section 2.4 above), another of the emerging translators in fact professes that he has books in mind that he would translate if money were no issue, hinting at a hidden passion for Danish literature:

At the moment I wouldn't be able to afford to do a book that I just fell in love with and spent two or three months doing it, I don't have the financial capacity to spend time doing that. Not just now anyway! I would like to, there are Danish books that I'm very keen on, I have a lot of books that I'd like to translate, mostly from younger authors who've come up through *Forfatterskolen* [Authors' School] in Denmark and who I have communicated with and we've agreed that that would be a good thing to do in the future. I'm very reticent about doing it, because I don't see myself as being able to sell or pitch the books to a publisher in the UK and I don't know how to do that. (WF 2016)

This translator is reluctant to undertake more unpaid labour time than necessary, though he admits to being a literature fan. Translators in this field seem to avoid open romanticism about the field by projecting a mercenary approach, yet actually they engage in a degree of romanticisation of the profession by carrying out multifarious 'extra' activities unpaid, in part to consolidate their own career, but also demonstrating a passion for the field despite themselves. These unpaid labour time activities are demonstrated again by translators' approaches at industry book fairs, which are addressed in the section on networking below (section 3.2).

5.2.6 The 'Humble' Artist

More than one translator I interviewed expresses a reluctance to even glance inside the finished publication, owing to a fear of either finding their own mistakes or being uncomfortable with the editing. For instance, an established translator remarks on her first book:

But I have never looked at [*Borderliners*], I don't dare. I don't dare go back to it. [...] No, because you're sure that the first page you open it at there'll be a *great* big mistake going *boom-boom-boom* at you! (BH 2017)

Another established translator also suggests that mistakes are the reason he would not scramble to reread his work: 'whatever happens you're always going to find a mistake somewhere, a typo, or something ... urgh, I hate it!' (MA 2016). One less-experienced translator points to how a negative experience of an atypical editing practice makes him reluctant to read what has become of his text:

Have I read my translation since I translated it? [...] Never. [...] I've seen bits of it. There are a lot of editing issues with the book. [...] One of the things with the book is that I don't get to see the edited proofs before it's published. (WF 2016)

A superficial interpretation is that these stories demonstrate how translation can be just like any other job; once the job is complete, there is no need to read the published version again on unpaid time (they are 'in it for the money' cf. section 2.4). Yet, looking deeper, these statements might instead be perceived as perfectionism and

modesty; valued facets of identity in a professional community which provides symbolic capital based not on ostentatious bragging but humility. This appears to be another attempt to reinforce the norms or *doxa* of the community of practice, in which gloating about one's success might be perceived as inappropriate. While this tendency could be equally apparent upon study of other professions (such as academia, writers, designers), noteworthy here is how this feeds into the notion of the translator's invisibility (cf. Chapter 1). Many translators report with frustration their apparent invisibility in the field, for example:

The British publishers put you on the title page, which is fine. The American publishers tend to put you on the title page and on the cover as well, which is nice. I think that recognises what we do: it's not an algorithm, it's not like you put something in at one end – here *{points to mouth}* – and it comes out somewhere else *{laughs}* Sort of an identical copy just in another language. It's not computerised. We're creative writers. Basically I've written this book in English. Obviously within certain very well-defined constraints. [...] The translator should be recognised as a co-writer basically. (MA 2016)

This translator confidently projects his occupational identity and the job as a whole as a creative profession, calling for less humility about the translator's role as he would like appropriate recognition. This tallies with other research into literary translators' attempts at status improvement and the 'emphasis on the individual-centeredness, intellectual stature and creative skills' (Sela-Sheffy & Shlesinger 2008, 85). Yet paradoxically the tendency of many translators towards humility causes a tension between this desire to increase the visibility and legitimacy of the profession, and the practice in this field to perform an identity as modest, polite, and unassuming.

The status of the translator, self-perceived or otherwise, as 'the weakest point in that triangle' (CB 2017) of author-translator-editor (cf. section 1.2 above) might account for the regular self-deprecation apparent in interviews. One translator exhibits self-deprecation when explaining that he tends not to communicate directly with authors: 'Of course, I don't know what happens in the background sometimes, maybe they're having arguments with the editor about this rubbish translator, I don't know! But I never hear anything' (MA 2016). Given this particular translator's fruitful ongoing relationships with editors and copious publication output, the scenario he describes seems unlikely, nor does it seem likely he believes it to be true. Likewise, an emerging translator diffuses his admiration and self-consciousness at being recognised by a staff member of the Danish Arts Foundation: 'maybe it's for the wrong reasons that they remember who you are(!)' (WF 2016). Another translator plays down a

compliment received from a well-regarded British publisher: ‘Harvill Secker had said they really loved it, it was a really good sample translation – so either that means they’re used to getting not very good ones, or it was exceptionally good’ (PRG 2016). Examples of this tendency towards self-deprecation also include a playing down of unpaid labour time expended, by not admitting or openly recognising that the work they do beyond the text has an impact on the wider field. For instance:

EK: Do you get involved in any of the marketing side of things? -

MA: No not at all -

EK: Or are you asked to... are you asked your opinion?

MA: No pretty much never.

EK: What about these events that you’ve done: they’re not really “marketing” I suppose, but things like the Free Word Centre or any translation slams? -

MA: Ye-eah, they’re not really marketing – I suppose they are indirectly, but... sometimes I get asked to do stuff with an author or on my own, readings or talk about the translation or whatever, which I like doing. (MA 2016)

Translators describing their career as mostly ‘for the money’ (section 2.4, above) might also be part of this general trend towards self-deprecation. If translators in this field were genuinely in it for the money, they might pragmatically instead take on more lucrative non-literary translation projects, as arguably in literary translation ‘the money is not good – let’s say it upfront, it’s just rotten’ (BH 2017). Recent research into the lives and work of current emerging translators appears to evince this tendency towards humility and self-deprecation (cf. studies in Vorderobermeier 2014). It is not unusual for people to respond to questions of motivation by citing practical reasons to rationalise their decision-making process, rather than provide or acknowledge an emotional basis. Self-deprecation and being humble seems to be a function of the target culture and has become part of the *doxa* in this field. Danish-English literary translators establishing their position in a loosely-defined profession seem to understand humility should be part of their habitus.

5.3 Networking

As the accrual of social and cultural capital is the critical reason for the unpaid labour time taken by Danish-English literary translators, this section focuses in-depth on aspects of forging relationships with other agents in the field. Firstly, I look at the role

of professional networks (similar to trade unions or guilds), before a short study giving examples how book fairs are used by translators.

5.3.1 Formal Professional Networks

The Translators' Association (TA) for literary translators in Britain, founded in 1958, is a section of the Society of Authors (SoA), founded in 1884. In the UK, there is also the Institute of Translation and Interpreting (ITI; founded 1986) and Chartered Institute of Linguists (CioL; founded 1910), whose members tend to mostly focus on 'commercial' rather than literary translation, though in practice some translators are members of more than one association depending on which contracts they pursue. In Denmark, the *Dansk Oversætterforbund* (DOF; Danish Translators' Association), founded in 1944 as part of *Dansk Forfatterforening* (Danish Authors' Society) exists for translators of literature into and from Danish. In 2014 the Danish-English Network of literary Translators (DENT) was founded (by me, as commissioned by the Danish Arts Foundation, described above in the Introduction). In January 2018, DENT was relaunched as DELT, the Association of Danish-English Literary Translators, with just over 40 members.

The literary translators of Danish into English that I interviewed had varying levels of participation in these optional professional networks. One interviewee leaving full-time translation for another career admits finding translators' networks useful, but that some of the discussions in the American Literary Translators Association (ALTA) were 'a little highbrow': 'there's a great deal of snobbery in translation. To the point where it's just annoying' (KS 2017). Benefits of membership of a formal professional translators' network include the option to join face-to-face seminars and online forums to build one's network of peer support. Another of the advantages is the legitimacy afforded by appearing on the list of members on that organisation's website (cf. MA 2016), as well as increased visibility to other agents in the field:

we have profiles on their [TA] website, and a Swedish publisher, a Swedish agent, had found me through that. They just happened to search for Danish translators and they found me. [...] I did a short sample for them and they liked it – so yeah, I've got a job [from] being a member of the Translators' Association. A whole book translated because of that. (PRG 2016)

Membership thereby imbues the translator with cultural capital, in some cases directly leading to being offered work, and importantly also buys access to a network of

professionals to develop social capital: all crucial in maintaining a position in this field.

Established translators I interviewed generally had some experience of one or more formal professional networks and expressed the view that they could see the benefit of membership for new, emerging translators (BH 2017; CB 2017). Some of these experienced translators were disheartened by interaction with the two main formal professional networks, the TA and DOF: 'it just seemed to me that actually they weren't doing that much for translators [...] every time I had a contract I had to fight for my own terms, and I had to fight to get the right fee, and there was no back up from there at all' (BH 2017). This disenchantment was echoed by another translator who recounts contacting one of these networks about not being credited on a published book: 'The way she wrote back to me, it was as if she was representing the publishers and not me, y'know, "wait a minute, I'm a member here, you're supposed to be nice to me," but she was basically saying forget it!' (MA 2016). As a result, one of these translators describes the existence of an informal 'little support group' of established full-time translators who communicate privately via email: 'occasionally if somebody has a little issue with a publisher or is unsure what to do, they contact the others and get a little bit of feedback' (BH 2017). This translator opines that it is still unusual and challenging to be a full-time translator in this field: 'really there aren't that many translators who are doing it full time, who aren't retired academics, or who have another job alongside and work on translation part time' (BH 2017). The unwritten criteria for joining this informal 'support group' is being one of the full-time literary translators with whom she has connected (as an established translator with embodied high symbolic capital), mutually reinforcing each other's position in the field of Scandinavian-English translation. This self-selecting unofficial network demonstrates the persistence of a divide in the literary field between 'professional writers' and those who are making a living primarily from 'odd jobs' of journalism, publishing, and teaching (Bourdieu 1993, 59). Social capital and professional identity form the prerequisite for entry into this kind of unofficial network.

The enthusiasm and willingness of translators to share information through (informal or formal) networks is evidence that translators in the field of Danish-English literary translation are not in direct rivalry with one another, but instead competing for a position and identity in a growing field via increasing their cultural and social capital. An emerging translator interviewed confirms this conclusion when

asked about DELT: ‘I guess you could say we’re effectively competing against one another, but I don’t think we are. I think there’s a lot of different types of translators in the group, people doing different things, that I don’t think that is necessarily the case’ (PRG 2016). This correlates with findings of researchers into the status of smaller European nations’ literatures in the UK: ‘We encountered many examples both of networks of translators and other advocates of translated literature, and of effective collaboration between different kinds of advocates, notably literary agents, translators, publishers, booksellers and academics, who were not competing for credit but committed to the quality of the outcome’ (Chitnis et al 2017, 13). There are examples within the DELT online community and in interviews (cf. KS 2017) of translators passing work to one another, which illustrates how expansion of the field and mutual support takes precedence over a sense of rivalry or exclusivity. There also seems not to be a scarcity of work. An established translator of mostly Norwegian literature into English expresses that this camaraderie is perhaps particular to the field of Scandinavian into English translation: ‘I think it’s very unusual among Danish and Norwegian translators that there is such a nice atmosphere. I know in other countries among translator groups, it can be quite cold and aggressive’ (DB 2017).

SELTA – the Swedish-English Literary Translators’ Association – was founded in the UK in 1982 and appears to be one of the only formal associations in Britain for translators of a single language (in contrast to, for instance, the TA or ITI which are open to translators of any language combination). SELTA now consistently has over fifty members (Geddes 2011, 2), and at present around 70 members (SELTA News). SELTA members are resident across the world (mainly Sweden and the UK) although membership excludes North America where since 2004 there has been an equivalent association: STiNA, Swedish Translators in North America. Norvik Press publishes SELTA’s *Swedish Book Review* magazine biannually (online and printed, distributed at book fairs and other cultural events) featuring book reviews, articles about translation and books, and interviews. SELTA functions as an independent unincorporated association and receives an operating grant from the Anglo-Swedish Literary Foundation (ASLF; mentioned in Chapter 4), in addition to levying membership subscription fees. *Swedish Book Review* is funded separately via an annual stipend awarded competitively by the Swedish Arts Council. This visible professional network will have had some impact on the field of Scandinavian literature in Britain. While it is not realistic to establish a straight causation between SELTA

going from strength-to-strength and the ongoing rise of Swedish literature in English translation in Britain, its founder Geddes perceives a correlation:

SELTA's impact on publishers or the wider world of books is impossible to assess, but in the thirty years of its existence at the time this article is being written, there has been a significant increase in the numbers of Swedish books published in English translation annually, and this was true even before the very recent surge of interest in the genre of crime writing, where Swedish and Scandinavian literature has acquired a dominant role among foreign titles on the English-language and international market. (Geddes 2011, 5)

SELTA enables translators of Swedish into English to network and share information virtually via its email list and at its twice-yearly meetings. SELTA actively asserts its identity by organising workshops and author events, and via its online social media channels. SELTA's Directory of Members on its website makes it easier for publishers, literary agents, or authors to find competent translators (consecrated as such by virtue of being listed as a member of SELTA). *Swedish Book Review* disseminates reviews and sample translations to the anglophone market. SELTA therefore has facilitated the translation and promotion of Swedish literature in the UK by translators and other related agents in a way that has thus far not been replicated by other Nordic language communities including Danish. SELTA is undeniably a positive asset to Swedish literature in the UK. In forming and establishing an identifiable dedicated professional network, DELT imitates SELTA's model by using the capital of its members to generate group identity and cultural and social capital for the positive benefit of the field of Danish literature in English translation. While it might be difficult to directly measure DELT's impact on the book market, establishing DELT will almost certainly have a positive impact on the overall capital in the field by facilitating contact between all its agents. Like the TA, DELT and SELTA benefit from the unpaid labour time of their members as the committees consist of volunteers: as one translator says, 'it makes a busy career even busier' (PRG 2016).

An established and prolific translator, however, demonstrates it is possible to be successful without participating in any professional translators' networks at all:

taking part in workshops or any sort of event is always expensive and difficult to organise childcare, so I thought what's the point of belonging to organisations when I don't have time to take part in the things they organise and I rarely have time read newsletters. [...] But I realise it can make me seem standoffish. It's not because I don't want to join, it's just that again, maybe I just really need to keep the focus on what I *can* do. (CB 2017)

This translator's self-aware analysis leads to a crucial conclusion about professional translators' networks: unlike maintaining relationships with gatekeepers such as publishers, these peer-support groups are 'nice to have' and strengthen the field itself as per the example of SELTA, but are not compulsory for ensuring an individual translator's strong position in the field. It is primarily relationships with key decision-makers in the field that increase cultural capital, prestige, and – as a result – lead to work for the translator, as evidenced in sections 1 and 2 above. Participation in industry book fairs also aptly demonstrates this aspect of networking with other agents in the field, which is described in the next section.

5.3.2 Book Fairs

This short study of interactions at trade book fairs ties together evidence of translators' individual symbolic capital, unpaid labour time, networking, and roles as *de facto* literary agents, illustrating many aspects of this chapter as a whole in practice.

The annual Frankfurt Book Fair and London Book Fair (LBF) are commercial trade fairs, explicitly not open to the public. Attendees work in the publishing industry, including literary agents and representatives from publishing houses such as editors and sales executives. From a publisher's and agent's perspective, book fairs are crucial and extremely busy for buying and selling publishing rights: 'Rights sellers attend book fairs armed with information and material on existing and forthcoming projects and work under considerable pressure; usually no more than half an hour is available for each appointment' (Clark and Phillips 2008, 222). With regard to international rights, most book rights at the LBF are being sold from English to other publishers abroad, rather than into English. It is unlikely at these trade fairs that someone would be able to strike up a conversation with someone in the industry without having arranged a time to speak in advance – generally editors and agents fill up their diaries with formal meetings. Typically, attendees of LBF arrange meetings at a specific location and time in advance, such as this translator who illustrates what many other interviewees reiterate:

London's a bit different [from Copenhagen Book Fair] because it's a trade fair. So it is more business-oriented so I do have a few more meetings. Generally with people I've worked with before, possibly not met, but I also do a lot of the networking with other translators or there's sometimes events going around, there's dinners and things like that where you get a chance to mingle with the publishers and meet them which is also quite useful. (PRG 2016)

Many Danish-English literary translators attend the Copenhagen Book Fair (*BogForum*). The three-day annual *BogForum* first took place in 1992 and it is open to the public. As a public book fair it features many commercial marketing aspects such as book signings, discounts, merchandise, author readings and interviews. For this reason, some Danish-English translators use it as an opportunity to keep up-to-date with the latest Danish authors and scope out potential authors to work with. One translator likens it to a space for ‘scouting’ and sociability (LFR 2016), in contrast to the hectic formal atmosphere of LBF.

Since the early 2000s, the Danish Arts Foundation has hosted a day of meetings and related events to coincide with *BogForum* (the Copenhagen Book Fair) for literary translators who reside abroad (discussed in Chapter 3). Literary translators apply to attend this programme a couple of months in advance and if they meet the criteria, invitees’ full travel, accommodation, some meals, and entrance fee to the book fair are covered by the Danish Arts Foundation. Translators are not directly paid to attend. State funding from the Danish Arts Foundation thereby supports translators in what would otherwise be unpaid labour time of professional development. The programme of events enables translators to network with each other, as well as the Arts Foundation staff and Danish literary agents and publishers, and furthermore meet authors at *BogForum*, thereby conspicuously increasing their social capital. Attending book fairs also builds a translator’s profile with publishers, agents, and funders by bestowing and conveying cultural capital. An aspiring Swedish-English literary translator illustrates the significance of book fairs to learning the *doxa* of the field in microcosm after his visit to the Gothenburg Book Fair: ‘The first visit is about learning the rules, but once you understand how it works there is a lot to be gained from being there’ (Death and Hinde 2015, 30). Participation in book fairs has thereby become an expected rite of passage for translators to demonstrate that they are seriously engaging in the profession.

The Literary Translation Centre (LTC) increases the visibility and status of translation at the LBF. The LTC premiered in 2010 and particularly attracts translators who use this physical space to network and learn from seminars. The LTC is also used by representatives of translation-focused agencies for meetings, for instance English PEN and the Free Word Centre. The LTC is especially beneficial to translators at the start of their career, according to one Danish-English translator:

2014 I went for the first time, all those lectures I found very, very useful. Going there [the LTC] and simply collecting business cards so that I had people to pitch to after the fair. From the publishers who were on the panel. I simply approached them after they'd finished and made some other comment about that, and I found them very approachable, which was very positive because without knowing I thought you couldn't approach them. (LFR 2016)

The existence of the LTC legitimises the translation profession and demonstrates the community of practice in action, as attendance reinforces a translator's identity, habitus, and cultural capital. LTC provides a space to assert both a translator's individual position in the field, and support the collective status of translators as a group. Translators use the LTC to learn the *doxa* – rules of the game – formally via the seminars or informally via networking, and position themselves as a legitimate agent in the field simply by being in attendance. Attending the book fairs in Copenhagen or London functions in lieu of the capital-endowing properties of a 'typical' vocational route (for instance, at university) that might occur in other professional fields or even other language pairs.

With the emergence of faster communication technologies and the resultant ability to transmit written conversations electronically across time zones and send large documents digitally, most interactions in publishing now occur virtually rather than in person. Maintaining contact with other professionals is therefore less exhaustive of time and resources than ever before. Yet international trade book fairs show no sign of dwindling, and the interactions that take place there cannot be substituted by electronic modes:

The book trade in general and the rights business in particular are both contact-intensive and communications-oriented operations of relative complexity. Any possibility that the real Frankfurt Book Fair could ever be replaced by an Internet clone is purely and simply a figment of some futuristic visionary's fertile imagination. (Weidhaas 2007, 268)

When asked why they attend book fairs, many translators interviewed emphasise the straightforward importance of meeting people face-to-face and affirming professional relationships, consequently shoring up symbolic capital. An established Danish-American translator/editor (who was crucial in the acquisition of *Miss Smilla*, as described in Chapter 4) emphasises that one benefit of attending book fairs is to stay front-of-mind: 'Certainly with publishing internationally, there's a lot of fallow periods. Then all of a sudden a book pops up that is "that book". You want people to remember you when that happens' (ED 2017). Another established translator in Copenhagen, in a self-deprecatory manner (cf. section 2.6 above), plays down the

significance of attendance by referring to meetings as ‘just’ sharing a drink, albeit helpfully with influential contacts in the field who are likely to offer him more work in future:

BogForum is just having a beer with a couple of people – I’m only going to be there tomorrow. A couple of authors that I know, and just doing the rounds and saying hello to people. Editors, agents, people like Sofia Voller, Jenny Thor, Monica Gram, the agents who are working here, who are very important because they know me and I know them, of course they know of other people as well, so I get asked to do sample translations... (MA 2016)

A similar example comes from an experienced translator who emphasises why she meets people at the LBF. Again, it is not primarily about gaining contracts there and then, but about maintaining existing relationships:

To see people I normally only hear from via email. I don’t really get a lot of work from it. All my work happens either before or after. I think it is polite to turn up, because a lot of people have travelled a long way to be there. I just have to get on a train, and it’s a good opportunity to just show my face and say hello and thank you to people. (CB 2017)

The notion of ensuring politeness reveals a sense of obligation about meeting expectations, thereby following the rules of the game. Another translator interviewed offers a reasoned analysis for why it is important to maintain such professional relationships in person, not only virtually, demonstrating an astute awareness of the investment by the publisher not primarily of economic capital, but of symbolic capital gained over time:

As much as publishing is changing rapidly, I think the old publishers and the editors that have been around for a while, they really rely on relationships. I think it’s very old school in that sense. They build long-term relationships. They won’t start trusting you with bigger projects until they’ve known you for a while and they know that you’re going to be around and to continue to be in the industry for a few years. It’s like they often say that a publisher will buy an author. They don’t want to buy a book, they want to buy an author, because they want to translate him for a number of years and not just a one-off generally. And I think it might be the same for translators: they want a working relationship with someone they know and trust who will be in it for a while and worth investing in. (PRG 2016)

This lengthy analysis ascertains the importance of attendance in person at industry events for a translator. As described above, participation in and of itself accrues symbolic capital that is critical for sustaining a career in this field.

An emerging translator gives an example of using the opportunity of visiting *BogForum* (as a participant of the Danish Arts Foundation’s programme for translators) to meet one particular author and pitch herself as his translator:

[I said] “I can’t understand why you haven’t been translated into English – do you have some sort of explanation” – very charmed, he said “well actually, quite frankly, no!” *{laughs}* So we got on extremely well right from the beginning, he said “well, sure, let’s meet”, so that’s when we met at Copenhagen Book Fair, and I’d translated the first page of [his book] and I read that to him, trying to impress him, obviously! *{laughs}* We just got on really well. (LFR 2016)

The benefits of face-to-face sociability and chemistry is clear. This positive translator-led encounter kickstarted a chain of events via professional contacts that enabled Jesper Wung-Sung (2016) to be translated by her into English:

But it worked out well. He then put me in touch with his editor at Høst & Søn and both of them then put me in touch with the Gyldendal Group Agency – his agent at that time was Louise Langhoff – and then I made an application to *Kulturstyrelsen* or *Kunstrådet* for [...] the sample translation grant. (LFR 2016)

All of this translator’s mostly unpaid labour time was remarkably effective and efficient from the point of view of the Danish agent at Gyldendal, whose role appears to have been reduced to agreeing the international rights with the American publisher as per the usual dynamic, but very little other involvement. The Danish author’s, publisher’s, and agent’s relationships with this translator were good value given the amount of unpaid labour time willingly undertaken beyond the translation of the text. This full acquisition-to-publication approach seems an extreme example of a translator (in her version of events) being fundamental throughout the publication journey by taking on activities more typical of a literary agent. This end-to-end process by a translator seems unusual based on my interviews, although more about the tendency of translators in this field to act as *de facto* literary agents in such contexts will be discussed below in Chapter 6 on Promotion.

In concluding this study, I have established that attending book fairs legitimises a literary translator’s role in the field individually and as a group, demonstrating they are committed to the profession. Attendance bestows and affirms cultural and social capital – especially important when building a translator’s profile with publishers, agents, funders, and even other translators. Participation in itself is an important part of the identity work of maintaining a career as a translator in this field.

5.4 Conclusion

Naturally, the quality of a translator’s written work is a factor in their success, ‘because you could know all the editors in the world, but if the work you submit isn’t

good, then that's not going to help you' (KS 2017). Yet primarily this chapter emphasises the pivotal significance of potentially invisible supportive 'roots' of people, relationships, contacts, and networks to maintain a career in Danish-English literary translation. These human interactions result in the otherwise seemingly disjointed and random selection of books or authors that make it from Danish into English. A translator recalls her inexperience at the start of her career in literary translation, admitting her almost wilful naivety in not recognising the extent to which the publishing industry is run by its relationships:

you would think in the perfect world the best literature in translation would find a publisher. But that's not necessarily so – in fact, I think, unfortunately rather seldom! **It's a lot to do with contacts. But I didn't really want to know quite how much it has to do with contacts!** (LFR 2016; emphasis added)

The attributes of the individual translator including their physical attendance at significant industry events matter a great deal in a profession delineated mainly by its cultural products and recognition of cultural gatekeepers, rather than, say, qualifications and salaried careers. The accumulation of symbolic capital, demonstration of habitus, and learning the *doxa* of the field come into play markedly in such an underprofessionalised field. The investment of (often unpaid) time by translators in this field to personally accumulate cultural capital demonstrates Bourdieu's droll observation: 'Like the acquisition of a muscular physique or a suntan, it cannot be done at second hand' (Bourdieu 2004, 18).

In this chapter, interpreting networking and interpersonal interactions through the lens of symbolic capital gave logic to other unpaid labour time activities undertaken by translators. In Chapter 3, I concluded that symbolic capital and value of the physical consecrated book does not transfer internationally (from Denmark to the UK), which was a limitation of state cultural funders' source-market focus. Yet in this chapter I established that by having linguistic aptitude and accumulating symbolic capital in the field of Danish-English literary translation, translators are able to move on to translate from Norwegian (and even Swedish, cf. Aitken's translation of Linda Bostöm Knausgård: MA 2016). Cultural and social capital for translators therefore *can* transcend international boundaries into other fields. Danish-English literary translators are working to earn money and build their career, not primarily for the greater good of Danish literature. Extra unpaid labour time activities shore up symbolic capital for them personally as a translator of *Scandinavian* literature into English.

While translators are competing for capital and position, this is a growing field and market which only had a miniscule number of agents to start with. There is not a great sense of competition for work between the translators within the field of Danish-English literary translation. Evidence suggests an emphasis on mutual support for each other's interests (by sharing contacts and jobs via peer networks) as well as occasionally supporting the wider ambition of expanding the reach of Danish literature in English translation (via industry events and supporting DELT). Indeed, Bartlett talks of a 'brotherhood or sisterhood' (DB 2017), which is an interpretation that is reinforced by other studies into translating small nation literatures in the UK; '[a]n "eco-system" is marked by a tension between competition and co-operation' (Chitnis et al. 2017, 13). As long as there is a position for many translators in this small but growing market, competitiveness is both an unnecessary trait and an anathema in terms of acceptable habitus and *doxa* in the field, as reflected by the tendency towards self-deprecation and humility.

This chapter opened by describing some of the everyday work done by translators of Danish literature into English, and then identified many varieties of unpaid labour time activities relating to building a career and the wider field. Taking a process-based perspective on the typical publishing order (as described in Barslund's opening words in Chapter 2), the next chapter looks at the next critical stage following funding, acquisition by the publisher, and translating: promotion. Yet, the next chapter opens by looking at how unpaid labour time undertaken by translators in this field sometimes disrupts a 'typical' trajectory for a publication journey by scouting, pitching, and promoting their books.

CHAPTER 6 – Promoting: The Dissemination of Danish Books in Translation

In 1999, the Danish Consulate in New York devised the two-month Danish Wave Festival. Artists and writers were brought to the USA with negligible measurable impact. Since then, the Danish Consulate in New York has resolved to focus on being reactive and supporting initiatives proposed by experts in the target market. In 2007 the Danish Arts Foundation and Danish Embassy in London supported an authors' tour of the UK, primarily organised by the British publisher Arcadia (publisher of Leif Davidsen, among others). Collaboration by the Danish Embassy with a British publisher demonstrates an attempt to fund dissemination of Danish literature abroad in keeping with target-market considerations. The Danish Cultural Attaché recalls this 'Danish Invasion Tour' was inspired by a number of Danish authors being published around 2007 including Høeg, Christian Jungersen, and Morten Ramsland (LBC 2017); this rationale is reinforced by my corpus findings (Appendix A). Participating authors in the tour were Leif Davidsen, Morten Ramsland, and Janne Teller (Danish Invasion Tour Arnolfini 2007).

Promoting Danish literature abroad is a small part of the remit of the Cultural Attaché of the Danish Embassy in London. Overall its purpose is to promote a positive image of Denmark and Danish culture in the UK. Literature tends to be promoted primarily by those who are looking to sell it; that is, the book's publishers, and occasionally by extension its author(s) and translator(s). Previous chapters have explored the processes of ensuring funding, translation, and publication. This chapter explores aspects of promoting the resulting translated Danish books in Britain. The preceding chapter identified a tendency for literary translators in this field to act up as *de facto* literary agents, so the first section of this chapter explores this. Examples are given of some translators participating in scouting, pitching, and marketing. The ongoing case studies of *Miss Smilla* and the *Africa* trilogy are used in this chapter to illustrate diverging publication journeys in this field; both exhibit elements of exoticism, but encountered different promotional strategies. In section 2, I give examples of the role and variety of Public Relations (PR) in promoting a book in this field using these publication journeys. Increasingly, authors are involved in the marketing of their books, even across international borders, as illustrated by the

aforementioned ‘Danish Invasion Tour’. The significance of the author in promoting both *Miss Smilla* and the *Africa* trilogy is outlined in section 3. Finally, how marketing strategies for these books integrated Borealism is analysed and compared in sections 4 and 5, leading to a multifaceted conclusion of how promotional elements can come together with markedly different results in this field.

6.1 Translators as Ambassadors, Scouts, and Literary Agents

Literary agents represent authors in their negotiations with publishers, and may themselves be employed by a publisher or, more typically, work independently at a literary agency or freelance. The time period covered by my thesis has witnessed a rise in the number of literary agents globally, illustrated for example by evidence about those attending the Frankfurt Book Fair: ‘When the Book Fair opened its Centre for Literary Agents in 1978, thirty-six agencies gratefully took advantage of it. By the year 2000, the centre had expanded to occupy a complete hall in order to accommodate its 280 registrants’ (Weidhaas 2007, 222). Anglophone markets have a far longer history of literary agents than the Nordic countries (more about literary agents in the anglophone context is found in Thompson 2010). In Denmark, however, only four publishers and literary agencies share the market (Böker 2018, 268). Sweden has seen the largest growth of literary agents in contrast to its Scandinavian neighbours resulting in twenty literary agencies (in contrast to Norway’s six), according to renowned Swedish agent Niclas Salomonsson (Norli and Sandblad 2017; more on Swedish literary agents is found in Berglund 2014). A key consideration in relation to translators in this field particularly taking on scouting, pitching, and marketing roles is the relatively recent introduction of only a handful of literary agents in the Danish context. Although the situation may be gradually changing, Danish-English literary translators appear to have stepped in to fill the gap in a market where there has traditionally been little competition or drive to sell foreign rights to foreign markets.

Translators have been described as cultural mediators or ‘ambassadors’ – the term often used by Danish Arts Foundation staff and committee members in both informal discussions and recorded interviews (e.g. ALMJ 2015). This metaphor implies a campaigning and advocacy role that arguably results in strengthening this field. Unlike non-literary technical translators, for whom it is generally irrelevant whether they like a text or not, it has been argued that ‘it is unlikely that translators can

produce successful translations of novels they do not enjoy or understand, even though they may possess the language skills to carry out the translation' (Barslund 2011, 150). Editors, perhaps naively, apparently share this perspective too: 'Translators tend to work on books they like' (PE 2017). On the one hand, Chapter 5 above presented the perspective that many translators are in the profession primarily to earn money, therefore not 'choosing' the books they love. On the other hand, for some literary translators, their enthusiasm for literature is expressed in the energies they devote to ensuring particular Danish novels and authors will be published in the anglophone market. This section looks at translators of Danish literature participating in activities usually reserved for literary agents such as scouting, pitching, and marketing (often using the unpaid labour time described in Chapter 5 above).

6.1.1 Scouting and Pitching

There are many instances in my interviews of Danish-English literary translators taking responsibility for aspects of the publication beyond translating the text in order to ensure the English-language book comes to market. One translator uses the term 'scout' when describing how she initiates the introduction of 'literary' books (contrasted by her with commercially-focused crime fiction) into the anglophone market by meeting specific preferred Danish authors:

LFR: [...] they are not the big sellers. Because there's not a *huge* readership for that type of book. But I think that's the type of literature that I want to put out there. So I think there are Danish authors, those ones that I'm working with, which are really pushing the boundaries of what fiction is all about.

EK: So you take the role of being a fan as well, I guess? As in you read these books in Danish -

LFR: Yeah, almost a scout, rather. I prefer 'scout'. Unofficial scout.

EK: [...] at the book fair, you also use that as an opportunity?

LFR: I scout. I do. As I was saying, each book fair has one particular author [whom she aims to meet]. [...] I was after Peder [Frederik Jensen] specifically last year, and I was after Pablo [Llambias] specifically the year before, and Jesper [Wung Sung] the year before. (LFR 2016)

This translator then solidly enters into the realm of the literary agent, actively researching and contacting potential anglophone publishers, thereby pitching the Danish authors she has scouted. A publisher consecrates a work by choosing it for their list to translate and publish in their market (as described in Chapter 4). Each cultural product has a particular 'natural site' of production, and, arguably, 'producers or products that are not in their right place are more or less bound to fail' (Bourdieu

1993, 95). This emerging translator goes on to demonstrate a burgeoning awareness of this aspect of the field when describing her efforts at pitching an author she has established a relationship with (as introduced in Chapter 5):

in October I wrote Martin Aitken an email and I said, “look, what happened with Janne Teller?” Because it was clear to me and Jesper [Wung-Sung] and Louise [Langhoff, Gyldendal] that there was a correlation between his [Jesper’s] work and Janne Teller’s work so I just followed the trail and I said to Martin, “who shall I contact?” He told me about Atheneum Simon & Schuster. It was the last one. I said, well, if this doesn’t work then I’m going to give up! It was more the type of book, because of course being that inexperienced, my very first book, I had no idea how to go about things. Because it’s all about which ‘fit’. How the book will fit a certain list of a certain publisher in America or wherever in the target language. (LFR 2016)

This publication journey illustrates again how translators in this small field encourage and support each other by sharing knowledge to gain contracts (as per the peer networking described previously in Chapter 5). This translator’s behaviour exhibits a holistic approach to the full publishing process far beyond only working on the text.

Another example below illustrates how a translator acting as ‘scout’ – researching and pitching books to a publisher’s brief – can involve supportive existing contacts, and sourcing funds from state and other initiatives to support his unpaid labour time:

The publisher Aurora Metro was looking for Danish children’s books and an editor there contacted Jakob [Stougaard-Nielsen, UCL¹³] and so he put them in touch with me. I went on a trip to Copenhagen – because I knew nothing about Danish children’s books – and bought a stack of books, and found this book. I actually pitched a few of them to [the publisher] and they suggested this one – *Erik and the Gods*, which we’re now calling it – *Erik Menneskesøn* – they liked that one, so I applied to the Sample Translation Fund myself and got that. They decided to buy the books. Then again they applied for funding [from the Danish Arts Foundation] and they were in a similar situation as the other book where they’d hoped to get more and they got a smaller amount than they’d expected and they did the same thing and got an English PEN award as well. (PRG 2016)

It seems fitting that a translator in this field with an appropriate pool of contacts, time (not devoted to other jobs), and a drive to gain both symbolic and economic capital would take on these unpaid scouting and pitching roles, thereby ‘acting up’ as literary agents. Yet some translators in this field are sceptical of taking on these roles beyond the translation of the text. An established translator expresses wariness that undertaking a scouting role is straightforward speculative unpaid labour: ‘there is a

¹³ one of my PhD supervisors, which again highlights the small and enmeshed nature of this field.

real risk that a translator does a lot of the legwork, does a lot of reading and promoting and pushing and then the publisher just buys the right and the translator doesn't get any recognition, any remuneration for their work' (CB 2017). This same full-time translator is confidently resistant to spending unpaid labour time on taking on scouting and pitching:

we have to be really careful not to reinvent the wheel. I'm not sure that as a translator I have much to offer as an agent. [...] I don't have to be good at everything. I don't have to know what's happening in Danish literature, somebody else will do that. I don't need to write to twenty publishers a year, because I can only do four books maximum. (CB 2017)

A translator is not always involved in the wider publication journey beyond working on the text; this established translator receives no less cultural capital with publishers nor, ultimately, contracts for not taking on these additional roles. Notably, it is generally the newer, emerging translators who appear to be undertaking these unpaid labour time activities (cf. above: PRG 2016; LFR 2016). Those least endowed with symbolic capital must assert their difference and get recognised by breaking with prevailing *doxa* (cf. Bourdieu 1993, 58). In addition to scouting and pitching, it is also mostly relative newcomers who assert their position in the field by initiating change and making a name for themselves in visibly becoming part of the marketing process, as described next.

6.1.2 Translator as Marketer

Translators – linguistically able and experts on a particular book – are sometimes involved by editors in informing the publisher's initial marketing strategy. For instance, one translator described the process to me of what happens once book rights have been bought by the conglomerate publisher Penguin Random House, initiating their marketing strategy:

Before I start the translation, they have an expectation that I will read the book in Danish, then I'll write a summary of the book, I'll give some character analysis, and also say what are the key points in the book, what could be things that we might consider for a title. They create the blurb on the back. I've only translated three pages of the new book, but they've already written the blurb for the back of the book based on the analysis that I've given of what the book is about. So that they can start – because they start pitching the book now. (WF 2016)

This translator of the latest books in an established popular crime fiction series thereby explained his perceived input into the initial marketing and positioning of the book. Part of the process is deciding on the book's English title:

The new book now is called *Selfies* [in Danish] which seems like it could be a good title, but for Random House, they want it to be something that fits in with their longer titles of the series, so it won't be called *Selfies*. (WF 2016)

This book was eventually called *The Scarred Woman* (Adler-Olsen 2017) in both the British and American markets, in keeping with other titles in the popular series (cf. Kythor 2016, 198). It appears that it is not unusual for a translator to be asked to propose a title in English. When another translator finished her first draft of Friis's *Blitz*, the editor at the publishing house asked for a title suggestion:

We both didn't like *Flash* – the direct translation was all wrong – and I also said to [the editor], look, [*Flash* is] very commercial, [...] I think it's completely wrong. So then they said, well, what do you think? I said to her based on this, that, and the next thing, *this* is what would work – there was also an embedded title source in the third chapter or something, which is always nice, when you can see that's where the title comes from. (LFR 2016)

Blitz was published by Soho Press (USA) as *What My Body Remembers* (Friis 2017). These examples reveal a positive dynamic between the translator and editor, where the editor trusts a translator's judgement and knowledge of the text to suggest something as core to the marketing success of the book as the title. The translator's knowledge of the source culture and language is a crucial currency for the editor who needs the information and judgement imparted, and circularly trusts their own judgement in having chosen the right person for that purpose. This trust has arguably been imbued by the translator's position in the field and their associated symbolic capital.

Many translators in this field perform the double resource of being both textual producer and *de facto* literary agent, as established in the previous section. This is demonstrated further when translators undertake marketing activities for which they are not contractually obliged, for instance author-translator events (at bookshops or cultural institutions like the Free Word Centre, London), blogging or other online social media activities, and journalistic interviews. For instance, Simon Fruelund's translator was 'heavily involved' in producing his anglophone website (KS 2017), and Jesper Wung-Sung's translator participated in the European Literature Night translators' pitch at the Free Word Centre in 2015 (LFR 2016). In many cases, this 'ambassador'-style marketing work is undertaken as unpaid labour time. In some instances, expenses may be reimbursed, for instance if attending book launches or participating in readings. Aitken describes that he has participated in events at the English-language bookshop Ark Books in Copenhagen with authors Helle and Kim

Leine, for example: ‘I know the people who run that place, so they ask[ed] me quite a few times and I’m happy to help them out’ (MA 2016). Ark Books received 8000 DKK for one of these events from the Danish Art Foundation’s Literary Fund (*Projektstøtteudvalget for Litteratur*), presumably to reimburse some or all of the participants financially (although the translator obfuscates by saying he is ‘helping out’). This kind of marketing activity is not primarily for economic gain, as made clear by the necessity for state cultural funding, but it raises the credentials and position of the author and translator in the wider literary field.

One early-career translator expresses disappointment on more than one occasion at *not* being asked by an anglophone publisher to assist with marketing of their book: ‘I know they did an event with the author for a book fair in Canada, but I didn’t even hear about it, which I was a little bit disappointed, I would’ve liked to... not necessarily be there, but at least be able to share and promote it and tell people about it’ (PRG 2016). When asked to consider whether he will be involved in marketing the children’s book he has recently translated for a British independent publisher, he makes clear that he would gladly expect to be asked based on his relationship with the Danish author:

Because I’ve played the intermediary between the author as well, and they’ve asked if the author was interested and he said he was, but he’s a bit older as well and his English isn’t amazing, so I’ve said that I would do anything reasonable to help out. [...] I’m very happy to. (PRG 2016)

In the end, this translator was involved in the publicity when the author visited London in Autumn 2017 as part of the Nordic Matters season at the Southbank Centre. This translator openly acknowledges how he and translators like him are willing to act as these ambassadors: ‘I think the role of translators is becoming more fluid and we are becoming more... **we’re agents of Danish culture, we’re trying to promote it** as much as anything’ (PRG 2016; emphasis added). Undertaking an extension of a literary agent’s role by participating in various marketing activities using unpaid labour time functions to support the market for Danish literature in translation. The tendency coincides with the increase of literary agents in anglophone and other Nordic fields, which has not yet been replicated in the Danish domestic context. Overall, this section has found that in *some* instances, Danish-English literary translators have been taking on the roles of literary agents during the time period covered by my thesis.

6.2 Public Relations in Book Marketing

This section returns to the ongoing comparative case study of *Miss Smilla* and the *Africa* trilogy to illustrate Public Relations (PR) in book marketing in practice. In researching the promotion of *Miss Smilla*, I spoke to Steven Williams, the freelance PR director for Harvill at its time of publication, and Jane Thurlow, who had been Marketing Manager for Harvill at HarperCollins, responsible for marketing the book to the trade, wholesalers, and consumers. Williams described the marketing campaign for *Miss Smilla* as a ‘perfect storm of publicity’ (SW 2017). The role of MacLehose himself (introduced in Chapter 4 above) should not be underestimated in the success of the publicity campaign:

When Christopher said, I think you need to take notice of this – ‘this book is important’ he used to say – then people did sit up and take notice. It made my job a bit easier! (SW 2017)

He was a very well-respected figure in publishing and had a lot of contacts so I wouldn’t underestimate his ability to enthuse people in the book trade and people that he knew. (JT 2017)

MacLehose’s function as a cultural banker, imbuing cultural capital on those objects he consecrated, was the result of consistent concerted efforts to peddle canonical literary authors from anglophone and international contexts. Williams recalls that typically in that era, he and MacLehose would maintain close relationships with literary critics and reviewers by meeting key individuals face-to-face biannually:

We used to have regular meetings-stroke-lunches with all the main literary editors on a twice a year basis in which basically I said ‘Christopher, what are you publishing?’, and he’d just talk about The List. This [*Miss Smilla*] was one we had flagged up for quite a long time. (SW 2017)

The successful integrated marketing campaign of *Miss Smilla* emphasises the significance of suitable publicity from as early as the acquisition stage. As established in Chapter 4, the ‘network of professional friendships’ (Ries 1998, 38) was paramount to the acquisition, translation, and initial PR for *Miss Smilla*. The otherwise invisible exchanges rely on ongoing high social and cultural capital, resulting in the successful movement of books from Danish into English in this field. Yet this world of ‘soft’, face-to-face PR in publishing has evolved. Williams intimates that these meetings would no longer occur today given the decline in the number of dedicated literary editors and book review pages in broadsheet newspapers (SW 2017).

Accounts suggest that, in contrast to *Miss Smilla*, MacLehose did not use his position as cultural arbiter of consecration to help with publicity for the Ejersbo

trilogy. In fact, the marketing strategy and publicity for Ejersbo's *Africa* books appears not to have been fully engaged or prioritised from the start. The editor was left to his own devices: 'There was a marketer working on it, but [as] the editor, a lot of the time you end up driving a lot of this' (PE 2017). There is little evidence that the Ejersbo books were reviewed widely in British newspapers, although remarkably they did manage mentions in the tabloid press (which is typically less embracing of translated fiction). For example, an extremely brief four-line review in *The Express* ends in the descriptive yet broadly positive: 'The first part of a powerful trilogy' (Vowden 2011). A review in *The Daily Mail* is faintly damning of the book's less salubrious events:

If nothing else, the UK publication of Jakob Ejersbo's *Exile* shows there is more to contemporary Scandinavian fiction than thrillers. [...] In a series of honest but tediously repetitive episodes [...] *Exile* resembles nothing more than a hardcore version of an American high school rom-com, with drug-fuelled orgies replacing drugstores and the Prom. (Arditti 2011)

The Guardian's review is similarly fairly biting about the writing style and perceived lack of action:

Ejersbo clearly understood the enervating limbo of expatriate life, but his short, blunt sentences become wearying. 'We spend New Year's Eve at Tanga Yacht Club. Welcome to 1984. It's tedium personified.' Unfortunately 1985 and 1986 turn out to be pretty uneventful as well. (Hickling 2012)

The Times' short precis of the plot ends with the rather more positive conclusion: 'this fine epic of loneliness and alienation in a beautiful land that seems to be sinking shows that he [Ejersbo] was a writer of huge talent' (Saunders and Finlayson 2011). Online, *The Skinny* website ('Independent Cultural Journalism') is fairly neutral and descriptive in its short review: 'Exile offers a shocking insight into the state of Africa in the 1980s and the failure of Europeans to save it, or themselves, from the downward spiral' (McIntosh 2012). A handful of book bloggers reviewed the books too. For instance, *Bloggers Heart Books* offers a mixed bag: 'I started reading this not knowing what to expect but I wasn't expecting to love the book. But I loved it (mostly). To explain the "mostly" part: I hated the ending. Loathed it' (Lanna 2011) and *Slightly Read* concludes: 'If the other parts of the trilogy are as compelling and affecting as this one then he'll have left a notable legacy' (Andrew 2011). Proof copies sent by the publisher to newspaper and magazine reviewers and bloggers might not have captured the imagination, and publicists likely did not follow up with the ferocity reported by those involved in marketing *Miss Smilla* (cf. SW 2017).

MacLehose partly ascribes weak social media marketing channels as the reason

for the low level of publicity for the *Africa* books: ‘when this trilogy appeared, [...] we as publishers didn’t have access to what you would call now social media. There were not even blog writers at work to the [same] extent’ (CM 2017). Yet this seems to be a misinterpretation of the timeline: bloggers certainly received copies of *Exile* to review (cf. Lanna 2011, above), the MacLehose Press Twitter account was set up in 2010, and MacLehose Press’s *Millennium* series (2008-) has been widely reviewed by the ‘blogosphere’ right from its initial publication (Giles 2018, 271). According to Engles, some attempts were made at promotion of *Exile* via Facebook and a publicity film screening of *Nordkraft* in a ‘trendy’ part of London (PE 2017). In hindsight, the editor reflects enthusiastically on how the social media strategy for a more recent Quercus book from Scandinavia – Lars Mytting’s *Norwegian Wood* in 2016 – caught the imagination much better than Ejersbo’s books might have:

Someone came up with a ‘show us your stack’ tagline [hashtag]; people were taking pictures of their wood [stacks]. It was something, one of those things, more easy to resonate with a lot of people than potentially a book about Africa and teenage angst! (PE 2017)

A significant barrier to the sales success of Ejersbo is that it appears the *Africa* trilogy was not presented to Waterstones booksellers (PE 2017). This meant no in-store publicity in the UK’s largest bookshop chain and a very slim chance of word of mouth selling by Waterstones staff, unlike with *Miss Smilla*. While Waterstones is not as ubiquitous as in the early 1990s (especially given the dominance of Amazon: cf. Chapter 2), without this crucial element of offline PR, Ejersbo’s books became inevitably sidelined. It appears the books at the time of publication were very low down Quercus publicists’ lists.

The impression from speaking to the editor at MacLehose Press is of a disjointed and incomplete marketing strategy for the Ejersbo books. Challenges in marketing the trilogy seem to have been identified too late into the process of publication to back out. A significant hurdle seems to have been difficulty in positioning them in the market owing to their themes and genre. The next section investigates the comparative roles of the author in these publication journeys, before exploring how different types of exoticism and Borealism were dealt with in the respective promotional processes.

6.3 The Significance of the Author

As mentioned in Chapter 4, Ejersbo's first novel had won Denmark's prestigious Golden Laurels booksellers prize. Høeg won the Golden Laurels prize in 1993 for *De Måske Egnede*. Both Høeg and Ejersbo had already received stipends from the Danish Arts Foundation for their careers at the time their books came to be acquired by anglophone publishers. Both authors therefore held high cultural capital in their native Denmark. This section discusses the significance of the authors' symbolic capital outside Denmark within the British target market.

Høeg (with the assistance of Ries especially) participated in the editing of the British version of *Miss Smilla* (as described above in Chapter 5). Høeg as a person was an asset to the promotion of the book, too: unusually for Harvill's list of foreign authors, 'he spoke absolutely brilliant English' (SW 2017) and helpfully in addition 'he was extremely good looking. And young. And blond. He was a very interesting person, a very unusual person' (SW 2017). Høeg visited Britain for the press launch of *Miss Smilla* where he gave interviews to the press and met booksellers (Pihl 1996, 112; SW 2017). While Høeg did not participate in any consumer-facing marketing, his attendance at the press launch in London reportedly went 'brilliantly' (SW 2017). Interviews with Høeg featured in *The Sunday Times* and *The Independent*, and reviews – broadly positive – appeared in at least nine mainstream press publications including *The New Statesman*, *Times Literary Supplement*, *Time Out*, and *The Mail on Sunday* (Pihl 1996, 109). Williams himself followed up extensively with reviewers, which was a typical part of the PR process (SW 2017). So the author was an active part of the marketing campaign for *Miss Smilla* and his personality attributes were drawn upon to create interest. As the marketing manager recalls, Høeg was 'a very striking individual. He was quite mysterious as well from what I remember, and quite photogenic which obviously helped {laughs} Steven [Williams, PR director] made very good use of Peter' (JT 2017).

The book market has changed since the time of *Miss Smilla*. Williams describes, for instance, how 'if there'd been the plethora of literary festivals in 1993 that there are now, you could have kept Peter Høeg going at literary festivals for years' (SW 2017). The author has become an even more crucial 'root' supporting the book's marketing journey. A significant limitation to marketing approaches available for Ejersbo's books was the lack of author to do in-person publicity, such as increasingly

popular literary festivals. At the time of Ejersbo's publication in English, Scandinavian crime fiction had become a recognisable genre spurred by the success of the *Millennium* trilogy by the deceased Stieg Larsson. Both Larsson's and Ejersbo's trilogies were published posthumously in their native Sweden and Denmark, and then published in the UK with MacLehose's involvement. MacLehose recounts in the English-language publication journey of the *Millennium* trilogy:

Larsson's trilogy had been rejected by seven or eight British publishers by the time it got to me, I'm pleased to say. I think a lot of publishers just fell for the old orthodoxy [...] that you can't sell a dead foreign author who only wrote three books. Hopefully, that's another myth that's dead in the water. (Crace 2009)

While MacLehose claims it is 'a vile thought' that it might be considered a marketing boon for the British market that the author had died (CM 2017), it has been reasoned that 'Larsson being dead contributed significantly to his celebrity and was also an important factor in his British reception' (Giles 2018, 290). The 'finality' of the *Millennium* trilogy being the author's last books was emphasised in publicity with an eye on their 'scarcity value' (Giles 2018, 291). Therefore at the time of acquiring Ejersbo, MacLehose Press would not necessarily have shied away from acquiring the books just because the author would not be available: from experience this was no barrier to marketing. Although MacLehose claims that MacLehose Press may have bought the rights for the Africa trilogy without knowing about the full background of the author – 'Did we know that Ejersbo had died when we bought the first one that we bought? [...] I don't know that we did. It would absolutely not have made any difference' (CM 2017) – the parallels are noteworthy. Indeed, there is even a nod to certain similarities between these two authors in the publisher's initial marketing copy on their website for Ejersbo's trilogy: 'we haven't been as excited about a Scandinavian trilogy since ... the last one we published [hyperlink to Quercus webpage on *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*]' (MacLehose Press website) and in their video trailer which ends with the wording 'FROM THE PUBLISHERS OF THE GIRL WITH THE DRAGON TATTOO' (MacLehosePress 2012). In Denmark, Ejersbo's tragic death very soon after being diagnosed with cancer and subsequent 'discovery' of this trilogy led to a marketing buzz for these books. The British editor admits this backstory is where the main difference lay:

[Ejersbo] already had the profile in Denmark when these came out and it was the idea that he went silent and then they said he died and there is a book, it will come out, so there was a bit of a news story, but it didn't seem to work in any other country. (PE 2017)

MacLehose does not openly lend too much weight to the significance of whether or not the author is available for publicity, nor whether the fact of their death can be used in marketing: ‘I think you may take it as a given that publishers don’t go around looking for [...] the dead authors of living trilogies!’ (CM 2017). Yet MacLehose Press did not take the same approach with Ejersbo as they had with Larsson to compensate for the lack of author, for example where others (including MacLehose) were able to ‘stand in’ for the author in publicity and marketing (Giles 2018, 290). There is no evidence of the backstory of the assembly and publication of Ejersbo’s final books in Denmark being used in the British PR and marketing materials either. As distasteful as MacLehose claims to find it, a more effective publicity strategy might have drawn on the author’s and books’ backstory to drum up interest for British audiences.

Reflecting on the entire publication journey, in addition to the various human agents discussed here and above, it is important to consider the contrast in market conditions and marketing approaches helping carry *Miss Smilla* and Ejersbo’s trilogy from Denmark to Britain. Aspects of exoticism and Borealism were pivotal in the success and otherwise of each author in the British context, and these will be discussed in the next sections of this chapter.

6.4 *Miss Smilla*: Exotic but Not Danish

As established above, *Miss Smilla* left a significant legacy on the field of Danish-English translated literature in Britain in what has been called an indication of successful marketing but not necessarily a well-thumbed novel. Specifically, it has been accused of being ‘one of many bestsellers bought but never fully read’ (Bloom 2008, 305) owing to its formal complexity and ‘seriousness of purpose’ (ibid.), and one of the literary bestsellers whose ‘affiliation with domestic popular culture, foregrounded through promotion and marketing, can be visible enough to ensure that such translations are widely bought, even if unread’ (Venuti 1998, 153). While this interpretation is difficult to qualify – how do such commentators know whether people who bought the novel have actually read it? – these assumptions emphasise how the attainment of high economic capital created tension in relation to the symbolic capital for this ‘highbrow bestseller’ (ibid.). Debates over the hybrid genre of *Miss Smilla* as a literary bestseller in the Danish and international press and academic circles since publication have become part of its popular narrative (cf. Chapter 2). In these debates

on what genre(s) *Miss Smilla* could be ascribed to, there at least seems to be agreement on its timeliness in the contemporary British market. Venuti asserts that *Miss Smilla* was successful in anglophone countries especially because it matched popular contemporary themes in the target national literary markets (Venuti 1998, 153). Giles (2018, 248) demonstrates that *Miss Smilla*'s positive reception was in keeping with prevailing literary trends of postcolonialism and postmodern uncertainty in the early 1990s British book market. From the publisher's own marketing perspective, the PR director for Harvill recalls that 'Christopher [MacLehose] and myself had been sowing the seeds for something like this for quite a long time. [...] The ground had been well prepared in advance' (SW 2017).

Harvill had an elaborate marketing strategy in place in the build up to the publication of *Miss Smilla*, reported in hindsight as immensely original and groundbreaking (JT 2017; SW 2017). The description blurb for booksellers emphasises the publisher's attempt at 'mainstreaming' the book rather than narrowly labelling it as crime fiction or as translated fiction:

Part thriller, part love story, part elegy for a vanishing way of life. It's a rare thing: a novel so daringly original that **it defies definition and appeals to the widest possible readership.** (JT 2017; emphasis added)

All in all, *Miss Smilla* was not promoted by its publishers as a specifically Danish book nor as a translated book, but instead the exoticness of its setting was one of the primary focuses of the marketing:

Obviously Harvill was very, very experienced at marketing books in translation. But what we decided to do with this book was, rather than pushing the fact that it was a translation, that we wanted it to become a really big mainstream thriller. Certainly we used the setting, the really atmospheric setting, as a key platform of the marketing, and a lot of the descriptions in the marketing material were about that icy setting. (JT 2017)

The visual themes and colours of Harvill's marketing materials for *Miss Smilla* focused on the story's cold, dark scenes and the 'snow' of its title. Williams and Thurlow estimate between one hundred and two hundred proof copies of *Miss Smilla* were sent out to literary critics, journalists, and booksellers (SW 2017; JT 2017). For distributors, proof copies of the book were presented in a box along with a pale blue watch with an ice theme with a Harvill Black Panther logo on the face (CM 2017; Pihl 1996, 111): an unusual, original, and therefore attention-grabbing approach. In an elaborate tantalising promotional gimmick, Harvill sent four jigsaw pieces ('clues' about the thriller) to booksellers over a period of four weeks (Pihl 1996, 111). The

detachable jigsaw pieces were mounted on cards containing excerpts of the book and were followed by the proof copies (JT 2017). Point-of-sale marketing materials, including a display stand and posters, and broadsheet newspaper adverts shared the same visual themes and colour scheme: jigsaw puzzle pieces – to hint at it being a mystery/thriller – and the cold, icy setting (JT 2017).

Borealism is an exoticism of the North as perceived and embraced by foreign audiences (as defined in Chapter 1). The marketing for *Miss Smilla* deftly utilised British Borealism with its emphasis on the book's cold snowy seascapes as well as exoticism of the Greenlandic community. One crime fiction author neatly condenses the results of Harvill's marketing strategy in a review:

[*Miss Smilla*] has an inhospitable, wintry heroine, a strange title and a sombre blue-black jacket. And although HarperCollins has marketed it as a "thriller", it is a bleak discourse on the terrors of modern life with long, often scientific descriptions of ice and snow. (Gerrard 1995)

As stated, *Miss Smilla* was not marketed as particularly Danish or Scandinavian; it was instead promoted as rather original, exotic, and Boreal. At the time, Denmark's lack of suitable cultural capital in the British market led to a decision that marketing the book as 'Danish' might have hindered its widespread appeal:

If we had pushed the fact that it was a Danish book at the time, that probably would have encouraged people to pigeonhole the book more than we would have liked. [...] We felt had we really pushed the Danish angle that people would have been thinking that it might be a little bit hard {laughs} a little bit hard to read and maybe not that broad in its appeal. Things have changed, I think things have really changed. (JT 2017)

That 'things have changed' refers primarily to the pervading Nordic Noir marketing genre since the early twenty-first century. In the early nineties, *Miss Smilla* was arguably breaking new ground for Scandinavian authors in the UK (cf. JT 2017). No trend for Scandinavian crime fiction or 'cool' cultural exports existed in the British market into which it could have been positioned. In the early twenty-first century, however, Nordic Noir as a marketing genre is a space for aspects of Borealism to be used by marketers and embraced by contemporary audiences. Yet, Ejersbo's *Africa* books were not positioned into this ready-made marketing brand; the impact of this and its fuller marketing strategy is discussed next.

6.5 The *Africa* Trilogy: Exotic but Not Borealist

Ejersbo's *Africa* trilogy does not fit into the crime fiction oeuvre. Publicity by MacLehose Press acknowledged this openly by selectively using an excerpt of the

(fairly scathing) *Daily Mail* review, cited above, on the Quercus website and the books' back covers: "There is more to contemporary Scandinavian fiction than thrillers" Michael Arditti, *Daily Mail*' (Quercus *Exile* website). Both MacLehose and the editor of Ejersbo at MacLehose Press harbour a notion that readers of Scandinavian crime fiction may be receptive to move on to other genres from the same region (cf. Chapter 2). Engles draws parallels between the success of *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* (Larsson 2008) with *The Hundred-Year-Old Man Who Climbed Out of the Window and Disappeared* (Jonasson 2012), which also sold over a million copies: 'I wonder whether it's a coincidence that it was a Swedish crime novel that got really, really big and then it happened to be another Swedish genre book' (PE 2017). This belief that readers might cross genres to new books in translation goes some way to explaining why MacLehose Press acquired Ejersbo's trilogy in the first place (cf. Chitnis et al. 2017, 7). Analyses of the Nordic Noir marketing phenomenon have indicated that a broad range of cultural exports from Scandinavia have been packaged under this same brand, not only translated crime fiction (cf. Chapter 2). Yet attempts at focusing on the *Africa* trilogy's source-language origins in marketing were apparently quickly dismissed as too challenging:

We gave it a go, by saying this is also Danish. One of those things: if you like this, would you like that? 'If you like bacon, you'll like this' – it all gets very silly! Desperately trying to think of things that will connect with people. (PE 2017)

This unguarded remark by the editor demonstrates the uncertainty of MacLehose Press about where to position Ejersbo's books in the British market. The editor is cynical about short-lived attempts at marketing the books in relation to popular Danish xenostereotypes ('bacon'). Given the *Africa* trilogy's themes and geographical setting, it was apparently too difficult for the publisher to position it as a Danish (or even Scandinavian) export. The pervasive marketing genre of Nordic Noir might not have been deemed an appropriate vehicle either owing to the lack of a crime thriller element, or because the books are not set in Scandinavia.

The marketing materials developed by MacLehose Press exhibit a lack of engagement with Borealist stereotypes, instead focusing primarily on the young characters of the storyline and the African setting. A thirty second animated video trailer for *Exile* features filmic violence and romance, young protagonists, and stereotypical exotic African imagery soundtracked only with rhythmic drum music (no voice) with a main colour palette of warm hues of orange and ochre, reminiscent of

desert heat (MacLehosePress 2012). Book trailer videos seemed in the mid-2010s to be becoming increasingly popular (Owen 2014). They can be embedded into other online media to target audiences including social media channels such as *Facebook* and *Twitter*, blogs, and websites, as well as being screened as part of event marketing. For example, Nesbø's book trailers were part of an integrated marketing communication plan by his publisher, employing a consistent brand across various marketing materials, resulting in 'a strong presence in the crime fiction genre' (Owen 2014). The description blurb on YouTube for the *Exile* video attributes the following contributors: 'This animated trailer was directed by Aaron Lampert (<http://www.aaronlampert.com>), with assistance from Jing Li, and funded by the Danish Arts Council' (MacLehosePress 2012). Engles effuses that the video was, to an extent, a pet project: 'We made a film trailer which was pretty cool. [...] It was my dream to make this into an animated thing, so we got the money and it was like "right, we're doing it!". That was a school friend we did it with' (PE 2017). The greatest share of the marketing budget for the Ejersbo books went on this video, subsidised by a grant of 60,000 DKK (approximately £6600 in December 2011) from the Danish Arts Foundation's Marketing and Promotion Fund (Letter KLP30.2011-0004). A challenge is how to use videos as part of a coordinated marketing campaign to ensure people buy the book. The gulf between seeing a promotional video and buying a product is usually filled by other elements of the marketing mix including book shop displays, online banner adverts (with hyperlinks to the publisher's website or sellers such as Amazon), and social media campaigns, all of which encourage a potential purchaser to buy the book in person or online. Yet evidence suggests the *Exile* video trailer was produced without a strong strategy for how it might be used. This video trailer has been viewed approximately 2,000 times since its upload in 2012, according to YouTube. To put this into context, using a comparison with an example above, the Vintage Books (Random House) live action trailer for Nesbø's *The Leopard* (uploaded in 2011) currently totals 190,000 views (Vintage Books 2011).

Because of the video trailer's style and the primarily online marketing approach, some observers perceive that MacLehose Press's marketing strategy for *Exile* was targeted at young adult readers. Denmark has a tradition of quality young adult literature (YA) which is read by a broad audience, for instance *Det Forsømte Forår* (Scherfig 1940), *Den Kroniske Uskyld* (Rifbjerg 1958), *Martin og Victoria* (Lynggaard 1985); this is where in the Danish market Ejersbo's books could have been

positioned if they had indeed been targeted at young adults. In fact, in Denmark they were marketed and received by a general audience: Gyldendal's Riis disputed any reviewers' conclusions that young protagonists resulted in it being an 'ungdomsroman' ('young adult novel': Skyum-Nielsen 2016, 426). The translator, Petersen, who is now a secondary school teacher in Denmark, indirectly criticises the British publisher's perceived target audience in describing a screening of the book trailer to her literature class (MacLehose Press 2012), illustrating the mismatch between markets:

[Her eighteen-year-old pupils] did not like the video at all. They thought it was too juvenile, and it was... they felt that the book could have different meanings to people of different ages and that the trailer was targeted very much at a younger audience and limited the book. In a way they felt was unfair. They were quite upset. I was told to tell MacLehose Press off for having done it(!). (MP 2016)

Petersen's class associates the cartoon animation, reminiscent of graphic novels in style, as appealing to young people. Engles agrees the marketing approach made use of how the books were about 'kids', that is, teenagers and young adults, hence the style of the video (PE 2017). Inadvertently trying to sidle into the YA market would have been challenging for MacLehose Press as their list is typically general fiction (translated or otherwise). YA in the British market holds lower cultural capital than adult general fiction, so this label may not have been intentional or desirable in any case.

Not since Karen Blixen (*Den afrikanske Farm*, 1937) had Denmark been offered a Danish interpretation of an African nation with an unusual globalised multicultural perspective (cf. Skyum-Nielsen 2016, 433). Blixen was a rich aristocratic baroness in a colonised nation, whereas Ejersbo has – in a rather romanticised way – been described by his friend and editor in stark contrast as a 'journalist, insulation installer, pot-washer, bell boy, factory worker, brickie, unemployed' ('journalist, isolatør, opvasker, piccolo, fabriksarbejder, brolægger, arbejdsløs': Riis 2011, 81). Ejersbo was brought up in Tanzania by Danish parents before returning to Denmark (ibid.). Riis reports Ejersbo's sadness at not being able to transcend race boundaries in Africa and 'never get to be a Maasai' ('bliver jo alligevel aldrig masai': Riis 2011, 88). Riis refutes Ejersbo's self-perception at not being able to transcend these cultural, racialized boundaries in contrast to Blixen's less empathetic perception of Maasai people:

Hvor andre kun så usselhed og ynkelighed, kunne Jakob fra sit udsigspunkt se tragedien, tragedien for Afrika, tragedien for menneskeheden. Jakob var en masai. (ibid.)

(‘Where others only saw insecurity and inconvenience, from his point of view Jakob could see the tragedy, the tragedy of Africa, the tragedy of humanity. Jakob was a Maasai’)

In the Danish press too, Ejersbo has been described as a white African in terms that would likely be considered somewhat problematic in Britain:

Hun [Jakob’s sister] og Jakob var hvide udenpå. Men de var også sorte indeni. Eller også var de ingen farver nogle af dem. (Skarum 2015)

(‘She and Jakob were white on the outside. But they were also black inside. Or perhaps they were both colourless’)

For at least thirty years, British readers have been required to engage with Britain’s colonial past. Literature from black and minority authors from Britain or former colonised nations has entered the British market in great numbers since the 1980s. The ground-breaking first postcolonial literary theory textbook, *The Empire Writes Back* (Ashcroft et al. 1989), marked a turning point in British academia in which comparative literature developed postcolonial analyses. *Miss Smilla*’s postcolonial themes in this era were notably novel and prescient (as noted in the section above and Chapter 2). Firstly, therefore, Britain’s longstanding engagement with its colonial past and many postcolonial authors meant Ejersbo’s trilogy based in Africa was less of a novelty in the British book market, whereas in the domestic market, Ejersbo offered a long overdue reappraisal of a Danish Africa. Secondly, that Ejersbo was a white European man who had been brought up in Africa and later visited to conduct research for his novel would almost certainly not be so unproblematically conflated with being ‘black inside’ or ‘a Maasai’ in the British context. The editor at MacLehose Press highlights how the challenge of working with a Danish interpretation of Africa with Danish protagonists led to insecurities about how this might be received by British anglophone readers given the culture’s divergent histories:

I read an article that was quite critical of the Pidgin English of the black narrator of the third book. [...] I think we were always a little bit worried that there was... a white person writing about Africa – there was always a bit of a worry that, ‘is this a bit racist? I don’t *think* so, but I don’t know!’. (PE 2017)

In the Danish market, the cover art of Ejersbo’s trilogy was apt to reflect the contents of the stories – in this case, symbolic imagery hinting at Africa and turmoil. The illustrations were drawn by the author’s sister Ea Ejersbo (Skarum 2015). In English translation, however, where the author was unknown, no existing backstory helped explicate the cover artist. The same book cover designs from the Danish publications

were used for the MacLehose Press books; in hindsight the editor considers this might have been problematic for their positioning and reception:

We wonder whether the covers were wrong, because they are incredibly striking images, but then it didn't really convey [who] the book was being narrated by [...] Young, teenage girls would've maybe quite liked the first book, but then I didn't see there was any reason why they would pick up a book that had an 'angry Africa' on it. [...] But they were such striking images that we felt we couldn't *not* use them. So that was always a bit of a bind: 'what shall we do with this?'. (PE 2017)

Revealingly, one blog reviewer explicitly names the marketing components as off-putting: 'I would not have wanted to read the book based on the summary and the cover would not have caught my attention at all, it really isn't a book I would've read on my own so I'm really glad I was sent it to review' (Lanna 2011). MacLehose reflects on the striking, 'very beautiful', 'strong' designs and concedes 'we published them in a way that maybe too closely reflected the Danish form, maybe we could have had a greater success if we'd scrapped their way' (CM 2017). MacLehose admits he was particularly taken by the setting of the books in Tanzania, to which his family had a personal connection (CM 2017); this might have influenced his perception of the Africa-themed designs.

The trilogy's African setting was used by MacLehose Press in its video trailer and in the unchanged book covers without consideration of whether this would appeal to potential British audiences of Nordic literature. While Ejersbo's books perhaps could not fulfil audience expectations of British Borealism, given their focus on Danish young people and Africa, no clear alternative strategy appears to have been developed to position the books in the British market context. Engles' exclamation of 'what shall we do with this?' in relation to the book covers perhaps echoes the wider marketing strategy. Fortunes may have been different if the publishers had integrated the *Africa* trilogy into the prevalent Nordic Noir marketing genre, by changing the covers to better reflect British audiences' expectations of literature from the Nordic region, by emphasising the Danish author's backstory and 'finality' of the trilogy (as per Larsson, cf. section 3 above), and by targeting a more general reader, rather than drawing on the young protagonists for the target market. Another approach might have been to market the series as an 'updated' *Out of Africa* (1937), given British audiences' rising interest in Danish culture (cf. Kingsley 2012), hand-in-hand with the historical canonisation of Karen Blixen/Isak Dinesen.

In 2017, Denmark's state television broadcaster *DR* announced *Liberty* would be its first ever novel-to-television adaptation (Jensen 2017; Pham 2017). A star cast was assembled including Sofie Gråbøl, who has arguably become part of the British television establishment given her role as the protagonist of Nordic Noir hit *The Killing*, and subsequently Sky Atlantic's *Fortitude*. The mini-series of five episodes aired on *DR1* in early 2018 (DQ 2018). At the time of writing, broadcast rights have not been confirmed for Britain, but if it were to be aired, this might improve the sales, reception, and marketing fate for the translated books, according to Engles:

All hope is not lost though. [...] the people that did *The Killing* are going to make a ten-part series of *Liberty*. [...] That would obviously make a difference. I think we'd probably repackage it. [...] That might be what makes it work. (PE 2017)

MacLehose agrees that if the Danish series is taken up by any British broadcaster (BBC, ITV, or even Netflix), this might bring the books to a wider readership: 'If the television series can [...] re-ignite interest in an unchanged text, so be it. Wholly in favour of that' (CM 2017). While film tie-ins contributed to the success of the *Millennium* trilogy and for the ongoing sales of *Miss Smilla* following the 1997 film, for one recent Danish crime fiction book in English in my corpus, the impact of film tie-in reissues was minimal. *Mercy* (Adler-Olsen 2011) was reissued in 2014 with the film's title *The Keeper of Lost Causes*. This tie-in version sold a thousand print copies in its first six months, a comparatively low figure in light of the 52,000 copies sold of *Mercy* in its first months of publication in 2011. It is after the timeframe of my thesis to observe whether a (speculative) British broadcast of the television adaptation of *Liberty* has any impact on book sales, but any tie-in success will depend on the wider cross-medial marketing strategy. Crucially, if the adaptation of *Liberty* is broadcast in the UK, this might enable MacLehose Press to reposition the Ejersbo books into the Nordic Noir multi-channel marketing genre as part of the oeuvre of Danish cultural exports in the vein of *The Killing* and *Borgen*, benefiting from the cachet of having appeared on television. In February 2018, Danish promotion for *DR1*'s *Liberty* was shared on social media channels by British fan website scannoir.co.uk, for example, already indicating this possibility.

6.6 Conclusion

Examples in this chapter of promoting Danish literature in translation in Britain have

emphasised the crucial relationships that ensure the success or otherwise of a book in this field. Nurtured relationships borne of high social and cultural capital are important for the funders, translators, publishers, authors, and marketers acting as the roots to support the books to emerge and flourish. For instance, positive PR between a publisher and critic or bookseller results in the prominent, positive positioning of a book in the market, as demonstrated by the publication journey of *Miss Smilla* above. This ‘un-business-like business’ (ED 2017), run on its relationships, has resulted in the evolution of roles beyond expected boundaries, as demonstrated by translators acting as literary agents and marketers, too.

I am wary of presuming causation between the unpaid labour time of Danish-English literary translators and the relative upswing of books in the corpus across the time period covered by this thesis. While unpaid labour time activities described in this chapter included scouting, pitching, and acting as *de facto* literary agents might suggest Danish-English literary translators single-handedly cultivate the market for more books, established translators’ narratives suggest work would be forthcoming anyway. Additionally, statistics suggest the market for translated literature from many small nations including Scandinavia has increased in Britain in this time period (Giles 2015). As discussed throughout the thesis, all the translators interviewed make use of Danish state funding from the Danish Arts Foundation to some extent for their work. Translation grants and attending translators’ residential schemes organised and hosted by the Danish Arts Foundation enable them to undertake unpaid labour time they otherwise would not be able to afford (discussed in Chapter 3). Some Danish-English literary translators have stepped into a position in the field not otherwise occupied by other agents, deftly ensuring their own longevity.

The history of the publication and promotion of *Miss Smilla* is significant in the context of this thesis as one of the last successful books in this field before the advent of internet commerce and marketing. The 1990s saw the gradual emergence of new technologies, particularly electronic communication methods (email supplemented fax), as well as changes to the retail market (for instance, the dissolution of the price-fixing NBA cf. Chapter 2). Throughout the previous chapters, I have used *Miss Smilla* alongside Ejersbo’s *Africa* trilogy in comparative case study to illustrate in-depth different approaches and agents in the publishing, translating, and marketing processes. This chapter established how different approaches to exoticism were pivotal for the marketing strategies. Themes in Ejersbo’s *Africa* trilogy were exotic, but not Danish,

and Africa-via-Denmark appears to not to have been the ‘right kind’ of exoticism from Scandinavia to promote to the British market. Exoticism was utilised to positive effect for *Miss Smilla*, which was not marketed as Danish, but Boreal. In comparison with the Ejersbo trilogy, *Miss Smilla* was more heavily invested in by marketers. One explanation is that *Miss Smilla* may have been easier to position from a marketing perspective from the start, hence the PR push from the acquisition stage onwards. Yet the twenty-first century Nordic Noir marketing genre was not utilised to any effect in marketing the Ejersbo trilogy, which I conclude was a harmful oversight.

This chapter concludes my analysis of the people who act as the roots supporting a translated Danish book to reach fruition in the British market. These books go on to be bought, borrowed, read, and received by anglophone audiences. My thesis conclusion, next, not only summarises and presents my overall findings, but also describes the potential for further research into this field, including such reception of this literature.

CONCLUSION

The varied publication journeys throughout my thesis illuminate the many agents and processes involved in bringing a book to market from Denmark into the UK.

Multifarious factors are responsible for the movement of a book from Denmark to the British market. While no attempt was made to strictly compose a formula for how publication journeys in this context occur, theoretical perspectives were used as tools to interpret the otherwise opaque ‘un-business-like business’ (ED 2017) of publishing. My research identified that 125 books of Danish literature have been translated and published in Britain between 1990-2015. Half of these were published since 2010. My corpus findings demonstrate that the popular success of Høeg’s *Miss Smilla* in the early 1990s did not immediately usher in books from Denmark to eager readers in the UK. Yet *Miss Smilla* lives on in the anglophone conception of literature from Denmark, over twenty-five years on, and many of the agents involved in its journey have continued their input into this field. Throughout my thesis an in-depth description and analysis of this publication journey in particular has functioned as a red thread through the various agents and processes involved in this field.

In order to structure my thesis sensibly, a somewhat artificial distinction was made to focus on some of the key agents in the publication process in turn. Namely, there are distinct chapters each about state funders, publishers, translators, and promotion, and these are presented in sequence. Yet, in practice, the interactions of all these agents are symbiotically intertwined, much like the roots of trees in a forest (as per my extension of Moretti’s trees analogy). Many of the publication journeys in my thesis illustrate a publication process in a different order, too, such as when a translator pitches and initiates acquisition by an anglophone publisher. The following findings are therefore collated from research into all these agents and related elements of publication journeys.

Findings

1. There has been a significant rise in the number of books translated from Danish published annually in Britain since 2011

In the period of 1990-2015, after 2011 there is a statistically-significant difference in the number of books translated from Danish and published in the UK. Half of the books in my corpus were published after 2010. This increase in publications appears to

represent a turning point (not a general gradual upward trend since 1990), coinciding with the growth of the Nordic Noir marketing genre in Britain. It correlates with the broadcast in the UK of crime fiction television series from Denmark since 2011 (such as *The Killing* and *The Bridge*). 29 per cent of all books in my corpus and 42 per cent of all novels in my corpus are in the crime fiction genre. Three quarters of these crime fiction novels were published after 2010. One of the most frequently occurring authors in my corpus overall is Danish crime fiction author Jussi Adler-Olsen. Yet it is difficult to definitively conclude that the increase in books published from Danish in Britain since 2011 is entirely a result of the wider translated Scandinavian crime fiction boom. Danish books have comparatively not been well-represented in the overall rise of translated Scandinavian fiction in Britain. For instance, bestselling crime fiction books in the UK all stem from other Scandinavian languages such as Larsson, Mankell, and Nesbø. The rise in the number of publications indicates that this is a growing field that will serve more and more translators, although four translators have translated one third of all books in my corpus. Importantly, these trends are all based on very small actual numbers. 125 books published in this field across a quarter of a century is not a large figure. While each single publication fits into a new position in the field for Danish cultural exports within my small corpus across this time period, it does not necessarily have a large impact within the wider British book market.

2. Danish state cultural funders are supply-led and source-focused

State cultural funding decision-makers are immersed in the Danish source context. Their perspective is firmly based within the setting of a small nation with its own official national culture canon (cf. Mai 2011, 63-6) and dedicated institutions of consecration (such as *Forfatterskolen* [Authors' School] and the Danish Arts Foundation itself). Decisions are therefore based on the notions of value and quality that are very much rooted in Denmark, even though cultural value, such as canonisation of a novel, or the status of particular genres, does not transfer equally between international fields. Decision-makers use a consensus-based committee model, and openly rely on other agents, especially valued known translators and publishers, to understand each target culture. Naturally these agents have a vested interest in strengthening their own position in the field.

The source-culture focus is illustrated by the seemingly inexplicable decisions that happen without consideration of the target market. For example, Dedalus receiving

Translation Fund support for *Barbara* (Jacobsen 2013), despite the Danish Arts Council's funding of the Norvik Press edition in the early 1990s; partly this revealed poor record-keeping, but mostly demonstrated their primary focus on the domestic canon and reliance on the target applicant. The only consideration of the target market was taken from the Translation Fund application form – the target publisher gladly benefited from ongoing symbolic capital of the long-established publisher and translator. In another example, Ejersbo's second and third books of the *Africa* trilogy received Translation Fund grants to support publication in English, neglecting market factors entirely. The disjointed marketing strategy and very low sales figures for the first book of the trilogy (*Exile*) in Britain were not taken into consideration by the funders (the application form did not even require this data in any case). The economic impact of state cultural funding for translation abroad has not been recorded by the funders, nor has there been a perceived need to do so. Funding decisions are made on a case-by-case basis, well removed from their target context.

3. Danish state cultural funding sustains small publishers and supports unpaid labour time by Danish-English literary translators

As an extension of the previous finding, it is worth emphasising that there are positive outcomes for the target market from the demonstrable source-culture focus of decision-makers at the Danish Arts Foundation. Many Danish books in translation would not reach publication in Britain without cultural funding. By extension many small publishers would cease to exist without such support. Scholarly projects at Dedalus and Norvik Press to bring canonical Danish books to the British market would not have come to fruition without state cultural funding. The role of many Danish-English literary translators as *de facto* literary agents would be extremely unlikely, too, without Danish state cultural support. Translators who commit to unpaid labour time activities including pitching and scouting are often able to do so only when directly assisted by Danish Arts Foundation schemes. For instance, translators use the Sample Translation Fund to support their work on a text which they then circulate, and they benefit from participating in events such as the Copenhagen Book Fair and the related Danish Arts Foundation seminar programme. In hosting these events for translators, the Danish Arts Foundation encourages translators' accrual of symbolic capital, thereby lending legitimacy to both the field and its participants. Funding from the Danish Arts

Foundation is therefore crucial for supporting various agents and processes within the small field of translated Danish literature in Britain.

4. Translators' unpaid labour time earns them a composite career

Literary translators of Danish into English undertake a lot of unpaid labour time to develop their careers. Many start and sustain a freelance translation career via networking with crucial agents in the field such as authors, cultural funders, publishers, and other translators. This networking and related literary 'ambassador' roles are part of the community of practice, strengthening their position in this loosely-defined professional field. There is currently a position for many translators in such a small but growing field, so hostile competition seems at present to be an unnecessary trait. In fact, humility and self-deprecation appear to be typical tendencies, even for prolific established translators. Crucially, my research finds that Danish-English literary translators are particularly adept at taking on activities more typical of literary agents (unpaid, in addition to their paid translation work on the text), from scouting to promoting Danish authors in English translation. This is not to say that Danish-English literary translators work for love rather than money – the tendency of most participants to work from other Scandinavian languages as demand allows indicates a commercial focus. This tendency is also an example of how their individual symbolic capital can transfer between fields. Additionally, it cannot be stated that translators' extra unpaid labour time definitively increases the number of books published in the field of Danish-English translated literature in Britain, as many other factors contribute. Yet overall Danish-English literary translators are very involved in various publishing processes within this field beyond the translation of the text.

5. Successes (and failures) of publication journeys are not attributable to one person alone

As identified throughout the thesis, Christopher MacLehose has been crucial in bringing foreign literature in translation into the British market, including the impactful *Miss Smilla*. His commercially-focused approach to translated literature has admittedly had a huge impact on the field of Scandinavian translated literature in Britain. 'MacLehose authors' including Larsson, Mankell, and Nesbø were pivotal in the formation and growth of the significant Nordic Noir marketing genre. As such he has become something of a 'celebrity' in the overall field (cf. Clark 2010; Wroe 2012;

Djurberg 2017). His single-handed maverick status has been exaggerated by others: ‘towards the end of the twentieth century we find that publisher MacLehose has a hand, directly or indirectly, in almost every major Scandinavian literary transmission to Britain’ (Giles 2018, 44). My study identifies that from acquisition to marketing, the husband of Koukla MacLehose does not work alone; his wife and polyglot literary scout Koukla has critical input into the decision-making processes at the acquisition stage. Additionally, Christopher MacLehose (in his role in a number of publishing companies) has naturally relied on long-standing relationships with professional readers, established translators, literary agents, PR/marketing experts, and trustworthy editors. The very low sale figures of Ejersbo’s *Africa* books prove this finding. MacLehose’s consecrating touch alone was not enough to guarantee success: the lacklustre market impact resulted from a dearth of keen PR or marketing push, and the trilogy’s niche literary genre and themes. His successes should therefore be attributed to his wider networks; in much the same way, all the publication journeys described in my thesis emphasise the input of many agents involved in bringing a book from Denmark to Britain.

6. Borealism persists as an integral ingredient of promoting Scandinavian cultural exports in the British market

Books from Denmark do not travel alone (cf. Thomson and Stougaard-Nielsen 2017), hence the consideration throughout my thesis of the wider market context for all Scandinavian cultural artefacts in Britain. My terminological distinctions between Nordientalism/autostereotyping and Borealism/xenostereotyping have proved useful concepts for interpretation of this field. As conceded, it is often impossible to fully separate these two notions as stereotypes are so entwined and feed off each other, yet the distinct definitions are useful nonetheless for considering the projection and reception of Danish culture in Britain. A crucial finding is the consistent appeal of Borealism to a British readership throughout the period of the study. The popularity of Nordic Noir in the early twenty-first century is the most recent incarnation of British Borealism. I have defined and identified Nordic Noir as a marketing genre into which Danish literature and other cultural exports have been grouped as a unified brand.

Publications in different eras were marketed as exotic but ‘not too Danish’ with wildly different levels of success. At the start of the 1990s, the appeal of Borealism was demonstrated by the successful icy marketing strategy of *Miss Smilla*. The

publication journey of Ejersbo's *Africa* trilogy demonstrated a case where a Danish author outside the crime fiction genre was not integrated into the prevalent contemporary marketing trend for Nordic Noir, with poor market results. While it cannot be concluded that simply embracing Borealism in marketing is a guaranteed route to success, owing to the vagaries of the market and consumers, the lack of engagement with Nordic Noir in the promotion of Ejersbo's books is a conspicuous limiting factor.

7. Denmark has comparatively weak literary networks in the UK

According to LAF research, between 2000 and 2012 the number of books in total from Swedish in English translation published in Britain was over double that of books from Norwegian or Danish (Büchler and Trentacosti 2015, 15). Swedish has nearly twice as many speakers as Danish and a correspondingly larger source market,¹⁴ yet various additional factors appear to contribute to the proportionally larger number of books published from Swedish than Danish (or Norwegian) in the UK across my period of study. My thesis touched upon the strength of Swedish literary agents in the domestic and international market (cf. Berglund 2014) and the proliferation of Swedish crime fiction authors in the 2010s. Most significantly, Sweden has long-established strong networks in the UK into which to channel its state cultural funding, including SELTA, the ASLF, and strong Swedish representation at universities. Danish is at a disadvantage in comparison with the Swedish position in Britain in terms of benefiting from symbolic capital of stakeholders involved in the dissemination (and reception) of literature in the UK. Denmark has invested in the growth of some similar structures, exhibited by the state-initiated (yet arms-length) foundation of an independent network of Danish-English literary translators (DELT). But overall symbolic capital appears to be much stronger in the Swedish field in comparison with the Danish field in the British cultural context.

Reflection on Sources and Methodologies

Interpreting the transmission of Danish books into the British market through the lens and vocabulary of Bourdieu's field theory and concepts of agents and capital was a

¹⁴ Swedish-language literature originates in both Sweden and Finland, and Finland has around 270,000 Swedish-speaking Finns (in comparison with Sweden's population of 9.9 million). FILI offers support for the translation and international dissemination of Finland-Swedish literature published in Finland.

practicable approach throughout my thesis. Bourdieu's assertion rings true that what makes a successful cultural artefact is not one individual, organisation, or publisher, but the relations between these agents or institutions in the field of cultural production (Bourdieu 1993, 78). Publishing is run by its relationships. Interpreting interactions through the context of exchanging social and cultural capital therefore made explicable many decisions made by the 'cultural gatekeepers' of consecration. Interpreting small publishers as being motivated by symbolic capital in a supply-driven, not commercial demand-driven, model again applied a logic to this otherwise impenetrable aspect of publishing. The exchange of symbolic capital also provides an explanation for the motivations and actions taken by many literary translators, especially those new to the profession looking to learn the rules of the game (*doxa*) and gain a strong position in their chosen career. Yet my thesis also demonstrates in places the limitations of Bourdieu's field theory in the twenty-first century globalised context of these international interactions. Even with the consideration of other approaches to international exchanges, including Heilbron's perspectives on the hierarchy between semi-peripheral and hypercentral cultures, field theory inadequately addresses the mismatch of value and cultural capital in the literary fields in Denmark and Britain. One of my findings is that state cultural funders make decisions primarily based in the source context, yet notions of quality, value, and capital are not transposed seamlessly between two national fields. Danish Arts Foundation decision-makers admit turning to target culture experts (publishers; translators) for an understanding of markets outside Denmark; Bourdieu's nationally-bound notions of symbolic capital are restrictive in considering this process. What makes a qualified, prestigious translator is considered different in separate national contexts, and translators are not interchangeable in this field, so Bourdieu's interpretation of an individual's embodied symbolic capital is evidently also too nation-bound when considering translators' careers in this field. The field of translated literature in Britain cannot be modelled after Bourdieu's binary of commercial versus avant-garde publishing given the marginal position of all genres of translated literature in anglophone markets. Overall, however, applying Bourdieu's approaches hand-in-hand with more internationally-focused theoretical perspectives ensured a clear vocabulary with a focus on the human agents in this hierarchical field.

My methodologies were field-based and data-rich. Sources of data from the Danish Arts Foundation were limited to those provided in person and via email in early-to-mid-2015. The Danish Arts Foundation was forthcoming with information on

request, but the data was limited by practical factors (as outlined in Chapter 3): namely, IT changes and the physical relocation of paper records between offices owing to institutional restructuring, and staff capacity to enable a depth of archival research. For instance, they were unable to cross-reference my corpus findings with any list of books that have received their funding for translation. If researching this institution again, an alternative approach might be to spend time immersed in the workplace itself, as an observer or archival researcher, in order to gain access to (permitted) paperwork and witness the decision-making processes first hand.

A challenging, albeit positive, result of conducting unstructured, qualitative interviews is the amount of data they provide. Each interview lasted on average around one hour (some thirty minutes, some ninety minutes) with a corresponding large amount of ground covered. The interviews with translators could be used in further research: they could provide information about publishing journeys not mentioned within my thesis, offer data for a deeper analysis of how translators describe their work (investigating the tendency for self-deprecation, for example), and form the basis for more research into the habitus and activities of these often-overlooked professionals. Most of the interview transcripts with translators and other professionals have been included in Appendix B. It would be beneficial to interview even more translators to gain a broader, more representative insight, and interview a variety of other relevant agents including editors, for example. Another researcher into Nordic literature in Britain posits that finding time and expertise is a challenge in conducting numerous oral history interviews on book publication journeys, but concurs that: ‘This is an area of research which could [be] readily developed in the future in order to record translator and editor experiences more widely within the publishing sector’ (Berry 2013, 393).

The corpus for this thesis is comprehensive and complete (covering 1990-2015: Chapter 2; Appendix A). Unlike LAF data which is based solely on *BNB* data (Büchler and Trentacosti 2015; Trentacosti and Nicholls 2017), each entry in my corpus has been thoroughly checked for accuracy, completeness, and relevance. My corpus purposefully does not include re-issues (unlike, for example, Berry 2013; 2017), yet doing so as an alternative strategy could reveal trends such as the enduring or increasing popularity of particular authors or genres. The corpus illustrates only the British context, not the USA, as per the remit for the thesis studentship – this is increasingly an artificial divide in the digital era and in the age of huge multinational

conglomerate publishers. The corpus does not include non-fiction prose, which at the time of writing is a growing market (generally and in translation) and might prove a useful study given the recent interest in Scandinavian lifestyles with the *hygge* and *lagom* trends. Study into *all* translated books from Denmark in the British market across this time period (and beyond) would provide useful insight into the wider context for cultural mobility.

The timeframe of my thesis is an unanticipated limitation. *Mirror, Shoulder, Signal* by Dorthe Nors (2017) was a finalist for both the prestigious Man International Booker Prize in 2017 and the Oxford-Weidenfeld Translation Prize in 2018, resulting in much publicity for Nors and her translator (Misha Hoekstra) in the British media in these years. By extension, this widened the expectations of British audiences recognising Danish literature. The huge popularity of British *hygge* books in British publishing and the wider market since 2016 has also changed the British receiving market for Danish cultural goods. Enthusiasm for *hygge* stems from British books such as *The Little Book of Hygge* (Wiking 2016), and the trend has been integrated into anglophone cookery books, fashion accessories, Chick Lit, and home furnishings (more on British ‘hygge hype’ can be found in Kythor 2018). Nearly all the fourteen books on *hygge* published in the UK in 2016 were written originally in English (that is, not translated from a Danish edition). Nevertheless, this exported concept in an anglophone adaptation shifted the perception of Denmark and Danishness in the overall marketing genre of Nordic Noir. British Borealism persists and evolves. Developments such as these demonstrate this is a dynamic field into which more research would be fruitful in future. My thesis has provided a basis for these future investigations.

Potential Areas of Future Research

Textual Analysis: My thesis broadly takes approaches from Translation Studies, sociology, literary criticism, and book history, but stops short at undertaking textual analysis of the resulting English-language books. A further area of research might be to see whether the increased interest in Denmark in Britain and its shifting stereotypes across this time period has had an impact on linguistic aspects of translated books for the British market. Specifically, it would be interesting to discover whether translators and editors now opt for a more ‘foreignising’ approach (cf. Venuti) than before the

Nordic Noir wave – for instance, retaining Danish place names, or not translating *hygge* into an English approximation. This might take the form of in-depth textual analysis of a selection of literature over the time period to assess the translator's choices when negotiating culturally-specific items, allusions, and voids. This analysis could be supplemented by discussion with translators and editors about their textual choices and attempting to interpret what socio-cultural and lexical factors motivated their decisions. Translators and editors ultimately are making decisions that symbiotically influence and are influenced by xenostereotypes about Denmark and British Borealism.

Literary Agents: It would be productive and insightful to conduct research into the role of literary agents in the field of translated Scandinavian literature in the UK. Literary agents in the field of publishing Danish literature specifically in Britain have until recently had a negligible role, hence my finding that many Danish-English literary translators take over their potential tasks. Yet literary agents are very well-established in anglophone markets for non-translated literature, as well as in the neighbouring Swedish context (cf. Berglund 2014). The higher number and longer establishment of literary agents in the Swedish translated literature context (in comparison with the Danish) might be a reason for the comparatively higher number of books published in Britain from Sweden rather than Denmark. Broomé (2014a) concludes that study of literary agents in the context of translated Swedish literature in Britain warrants urgent attention – ‘Literary agents have risen to a position where they can function as powerful gatekeepers for border-crossing books’ (2014a, 247) – but observes that they are generally commercially ‘secretive’ (248), so it might be difficult to conduct a qualitative study. My own experience in approaching editors or publishers interviewed for my thesis, however, implies that those working in the publishing industry are outgoing; they would likely be willing to discuss elements of the field with researchers, admittedly with caveats about commercial sensitivity (cf. PE 2017, CM 2017). This is borne out in Böker's recent research into Scandinavian bestsellers in Germany, for which she interviews several Scandinavian literary agents including the Dane Anneli Høier (Böker 2018, 253).

Multimediality and Reception Studies: The primary focus of my thesis is translated literature. The broad marketing genre of Nordic Noir demonstrates the twenty-first-

century tendency towards multimedial, cross-channel cultural artefacts. Television and film – arguably the most impactful Danish cultural exports into Britain in the twenty-first century, more so than literature – have not been studied in-depth in this thesis. Within the disciplines of Scandinavian Studies, Film Studies, and Media Studies, there has been much research into contemporary exported visual cultural artefacts from Denmark, especially television (for example: Chow 2015; Hansen and Waade 2017; Hochscherf and Philipsen 2017; Redvall 2013; Thomson and Stougaard-Nielsen 2017). Yet there is scope for more research into all Danish cultural artefacts in Britain in this period of technological and media change.

The positive reception of Danish cultural exports in the UK is being sustained by consumers, readers, and fan audiences. My thesis is agent-focused, and it would be another project entirely to focus instead more closely on reception. There remains potential to engage with readers of Danish literature, for instance, via libraries, universities, book groups, blogs, and social networks, in order to better understand the receiving market context for these books. Engaging with British self-defined fans of Scandinavian literature and conducting qualitative and quantitative surveys would open up analysis of their interpretation of Brand Scandinavia, Nordic Noir, and reasons for the appeal. The reception of books in this field could be investigated via conducting ethnographic reader practices studies (cf. Squires 2007, 411-3). Further avenues of research into readers and reception could use quantitative data from the Public Lending Right or Nielsen LibScan on which books are most frequently borrowed in the British public library system.

Comparing Danish literature with other translated Nordic literatures in Britain: More research is needed into comparisons between Danish and other Nordic literatures in translation in the British market. As mentioned above, LAF analysis of BNB data consistently indicates Swedish and Norwegian books in translation in Britain outnumber Danish books in the time period for my thesis (Büchler and Trentacosti 2015; Trentacosti and Nicholls 2017). This trend is still apparent more recently, as nine out of the twenty highest selling books in translation in Britain in 2018 were from Swedish or Norwegian (albeit from a small number of authors), and none from Danish (Man Booker Prize 2019). The number of books published in English from Norwegian will likely rise with Norway's Guest of Honour year at Frankfurt Book Fair in Autumn 2019. The tendency for literary translators in the field of Danish-English translation to

accrue capital working from Danish and then move to translating from the two other Scandinavian languages has been identified in my thesis. Higher social and cultural capital for Swedish as a result of various strong networks goes some way to explaining its higher publication figures in English, but further investigation would establish whether Scandinavian state funding for translators is being distributed sensibly.

A further project would be to study which authors are translated – male or female, queer/gay, ethnic minorities – and, if there is a bias or imbalance, whether this can be explained by the expectations of the target readers of Danish cultural exports or by the agents involved in each publication journey. This could be a fruitful avenue for comparative studies, for instance, a number of immigrant Swedish authors have been translated and published in Britain in this time period. Analysis of my corpus data findings in Chapter 2 includes a breakdown by gender of translators and authors. Yet overall, despite this being an agent-focused thesis in which I emphasise the hierarchical nature of the publishing world, I recognise there is very limited intersectional analysis of identities (gender, ethnicity, other characteristics) and relative power credentials of authors, translators, and publishers. A future study investigating the impact of these intersectional elements on the position of individuals and cultural products in the field could provide data for agents in this field to redress the balance of which under-represented authors are translated and published.

Closing Words

The original parameters for this thesis studentship emerged out of a desire from both the Danish Arts Foundation and UCL's Department of Scandinavian Studies to understand and contextualise the market for Danish literature in the UK in light of an increased popular interest in Scandinavian cultural exports in the early twenty-first century. My thesis captures a snapshot of the recent past in a field which is always changing. The annual number of publications of translated Danish literature in Britain is still in double figures in the years following the end of the period of study.

Optimism remains about the state of the market: a translator in the field tells me, 'I don't think that we're going to hit saturation point; I think more books create a market for more books' (CB 2017). Indeed, sales in Britain of all translated fiction have been 'rising steadily' since the turn of the millennium, even in a declining overall market for fiction (Man Booker Prize 2019). Harvill remains a keen publisher of translated

literature, small publishers like Norvik Press are viable, and MacLehose and his adherents are still going strong.

Cultural exchange between Denmark and Britain is always in flux. Since the end of the period of study, the receiving market in Britain has changed unexpectedly and drastically: as the UK negotiates its future relationship with the European Union, support measures for intercultural exchange are subject to change. In Denmark, on a different level, in 2018 the latest members of the Committee for Literary Project Funding at the Danish Arts Foundation brought about a large restructure of its funding model. As a result, since 2019 the former Translation Fund and Sample Translation Fund (as analysed in chapters above) have been subsumed into a much larger pool of funding for all projects to promote Danish literature in translation abroad.

In undertaking the brief requested by my PhD co-sponsors to establish a network for Danish-English literary translators, I have made an enduring practical interjection into the field, beyond the pages of this thesis. As a result of my efforts to build the translators' network, my actions were informed by my research, and my research was informed by my actions. My thesis too is a piece of the jigsaw in the larger field of Danish translated literature in the UK; its data makes it a crucial part of the story. My findings inform others seeking to contextualise the field of translated Danish literature in the UK in future. Drawing on field theory and complementary theoretical approaches, the researcher-built corpus of books, and interviews with key individuals including translators, publishers, and state funders, my thesis is an in-depth examination of the agents and processes facilitating and fostering the entry of books from Denmark into the UK.

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Official Correspondence and Archive Materials

The materials here relate to Statens Kunstfond/Slots- og Kulturstyrelsen (Danish Arts Foundation/Danish Agency for Culture and Palaces) official correspondence and application forms. Each entry starts with the reference, underlined, as used in the body of the thesis, usually corresponding with the Agency's own reference.

Correspondence from Danish Arts Foundation

Letter 'Barbara': Lise Bostrup (Director, Danish Literature Information Center) to Norvik Press/Janet Garton [approval for translation subsidy for Barbara, Jørgen-Frantz Jacobsen], 17 December 1992

Letter KIK.2005-0399: Annette Bach to Norvik Press/Claire Thomson/Neil Smith "Kunstrådets fagudvalg for litteratur har behandlet din ansøgning om oversætterstøtte til Hanne Marie Svendsen 'Under Solen' into English" 6 June 2005

Letter KIK20.2006-0043: Annette Bach to Norvik Press/Claire Thomson/Neil Smith "Re: Hanne Marie Svendsen til engelsk" 10 February 2006

Letter KIK20.2012-0172: to Norvik Press/Claire Thomson "Grant of funding for journal no. KIK20.2012-0172

Letter KIK20.2012-0173: to Norvik Press/Elettra Carbone "Grant of funding for journal no. KIK20.2012-0173" 25 June 2012

Letter KIK20.2012-0246: to Norvik Press "Grant of funding for journal no. KIK20.2012-0246" 31 October 2012

Letter KIK20.2013-0146: to Norvik Press, Janet Garton "Grant of funding for journal no. KIK20.2013-0146" 1 July 2013

Letter KLP30.2011-0004: Marie Husted Dam to Quercus Publishing - MacLehose Press. "Award of grant from Marketing and Promotion Fund" 15 December 2011

Letter KLP30.2012-0014: to Elettra Carbone/Norvik Press "Award of grant from Marketing and Promotion Fund" 1 November 2012

Letter SKLP14.2014-0506: Marie Husted Dam to Norvik Press/Elettra Carbone
“Decline to grant funding for translation” 19 June 2014

Letter SKLP14.2015-0103: Marie Husted Dam “Decline to grant funding for translation” [undated copy: 2015]

Letter SKLP2015-0062: Anne-Marie Rasmussen “Decline to grant funding for translation” 5 August 2015

Documents

International Strategi 2014–2017. Statens Kunstfonds Projektstøtteudvalg for Litteratur
[undated version]

Translation Fund Application Forms

The following Translation Funds applications were received electronically by the thesis author from the Danish Agency for Culture in 2015:

KIK20.2012-0246 Projekttitel: Kirsten Thorup ‘Tilfældets gud’ into English
KIK20.2013-0040 Projekttitel: Jøgen-Frantz [sic] Jacobsen ‘Barbara’ into English
KIK20.2013-0146 Projekttitel: Klaus Rifbjerg: Den kroniske uskyld (Terminal Innocence)
KIK20.2013-0312 Projekttitel: Jakob Ejersbo ‘Liberty’ into English
SKLP14.2014-0440 Projekttitel: Naja Marie Aidt: Bavian into English
SKLP14.2014-0458 Projekttitel: Alen Mešković: Ukelele Jam into English
SKLP14.2014-0503 Projekttitel: Pia Tafdrup: Salamander Sun and other poems
SKLP14.2014-0576 Projekttitel: Dorrit Willumsen: Bang
SKLP14.2015-0062 Projekttitel: Jakob Melander: Serafine into English (CA)
SKLP14.2015-0068 Projekttitel: Kim Leine: Profeterne i Evighedsfjorden into English
SKLP14.2015-0097 Projekttitel: Fryser Jeg: Martin Kongstad into English
SKLP14.2015-0103 Projekttitel: Lene Kaaberbøl: Vildheks Ildprøven into English
SKLP14.2015-0120 Projekttitel: Ursula Andkjær Olsen, Det 3. Årtusindes Hjerter, til engelsk

The following Translation Fund applications were viewed in person by the thesis author at Norvik Press, UCL in 2015:

Norvik Press Andersen: Project Title: Benny Andersen: Lejemorderen (The Contract Killer)

Norvik Press Turèll: Project Title: Dan Turèll: Mord i mørket (Murder in the Dark)

Norvik Press Krossmessa: Project Title: Krossmessa

BIBLIOGRAPHY – Interviewee Abbreviations

These abbreviations are used for reference throughout the thesis.

* denotes the transcript is included below in **Appendix B**

ALMJ 2015 - Anne Lise Marstrand-Jørgensen (Chair, *Statens Kunstfonds Legatudvalg for Litteratur*)
AMM 2017 - Anne-Marie Mai (Professor, SDU) *
CM 2017 - Christopher MacLehose (Publisher) *
DL 2016 - Duncan Lewis (Founder, *Nordisk Books*) [unrecorded interview]
JNF 2015 - Johs. Nørregård Frandsen (Professor, SDU)
JS 2017 - Jon Sadler (Marketing Director, Arrow Films) *
JT 2017 - Jane Thurlow (Marketing Associate)
LBC 2017 - Lone Britt Christensen (Cultural Attaché, Danish Embassy in London)
PE 2017 - Paul Engles (Editor, MacLehose Press) *
SW 2017 - Steven Williams (Publicity Director)
TH 2015 - Thomas Harder (Chair, *Statens Kunstfonds Projektstøtteudvalg for Litteratur*)

Kulturstyrelsen staff group interview *

AMR 2015 - Anne-Marie Rasmussen
JNJ 2015 - Jeppe Naur Jensen
MHD 2015 - Marie Husted Dam

Translators:

BH 2017 - Barbara Haveland *
CB 2017 - Charlotte Barslund *
DB 2017 - Don Bartlett
ED 2017 - Elisabeth Dyssegaard *
KS 2017 - Kyle Semmel *
LFR 2016 - Lin Falk van Rooyen *
MA 2016 - Martin Aitken *
MP 2016 - Mette Petersen *
PRG 2016 - Paul Russell Garrett *
WF 2016 - William Frost *

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APPENDIX A – Corpus

Corpus of Danish-English literature in the UK, 1990-2015 (ordered by year of UK publication)

Author	UK Title	Publication Date (UK)	UK Publisher	Translator name	Danish Title	Publication Date (DK)	Text type
Franz Berliner	The Wild Beast	1990	Bodley Head	Alison Sage	Vilde bæst	1990	Children's
Henrik Stangerup	The seducer: it is hard to die in Dieppe	1990	Boyars	Sean Martin	Det er svært at dø i Dieppe	1985	Literature
Bjarne Reuter	Buster's World	1990	Faber	Anthea Bell	Busters verden	1979	Children's
Henrik Stangerup	The Man Who Wanted to be Guilty	1991	Boyars	David Gress-Wright	Manden der ville være skyldig	1973	Literature
Leif Davidsen	The Russian Singer	1991	Deutsch	Jorgen Schiott	Den russiske sangerinde	1988	Literature
Anne Holm	The Sky Grew Red	1991	Methuen Children's	Patricia Crampton	Den røde himmel	1991	Children's
Villy Sørensen	Harmless Tales	1991	Norvik Press	Paula Hostrup-Jessen	Ufarlige historier	1955	Short Stories
William Heinesen	The Black Cauldron	1992	Dedalus	W. Glyn Jones	Den sorte gryde	1949	Literature
Svend Åge Madsen	Virtue and Vice in the Middle Time	1992	Garland	James M. Ogier	Tugt og utugt i mellemtiden	1976	Literature
Peter Høeg	Miss Smilla's Feeling for Snow	1993	Harvill	F. David (Tiina Nunnally)	Frøken Smillas fornemmelse for sne	1992	Literature
Henrik Stangerup	Brother Jacob	1993	M. Boyars	Anne Born	Broder Jacob	1991	Literature
Peter Høeg	Borderliners	1994	Harvill	Barbara Haveland	De måske egnede	1993	Literature
Svend Åge Madsen	Days with Diam: or Life at Night	1994	Norvik Press	W. Glyn Jones	Dage med Diam eller Livet om natten	1972	Literature
Carsten Jensen	Earth in the Mouth	1994	Picador	Anne Born	Jorden i munden	1991	Literature

Ane Schmidt	In the Flesh	1995	Souvenir	Anne Born	Anelser	1992	Literature
Steen Steensen Blicher	The Diary of a Parish Clerk and Other Stories	1996	Athlone Press	Paula Hostrup-Jessen	Brudstykker af en Landsbydegns Dagbog	1824	Short Stories
Henrik Stangerup	Snake in the heart	1996	Boyars	Anne Born	Slangen i brystet	1969	Literature
Peter Høeg	The Woman and the Ape	1996	Harvill	Barbara Haveland	Kvinden og aben	1996	Literature
Peter Høeg	The History of Danish Dreams	1996	Harvill	Barbara Haveland	Forestilling om det Tyvende århundrede	1988	Literature
Solvej Balle	According to the Law	1996	Harvill Press	Barbara Haveland	Ifølge loven	1993	Short Stories
Peter Høeg	Tales of the Night	1997	Harvill	Barbara Haveland	Fortællinger om natten	1990	Short Stories
Suzanne Brøgger	A Fighting Pig's Too Tough to Eat	1997	Norvik Press	Marina Allemanno	En gris som har været oppe at slås kan man ikke stege	1979	Literature
Michael Larsen	Uncertainty	1997	Sceptre	Lone Thygesen Blecher and George Blecher	Uden sikker viden	1994	Literature
Inger Christensen	Alphabet	2000	Bloodaxe Books	Susanna Nied	Alfabet	1981	Poetry
Jens Christian Grøndahl	Silence in October	2000	Canongate	Anne Born	Tavshed i oktober	1996	Literature
Ib Michael	Prince	2000	Chatto & Windus	Barbara Haveland	Prins	1997	Literature
Inger Christensen	The Painted Room: A Tale of Mantua	2000	Harvill	Denise Newman	Det malede værelse	1976	Literature
Michael Larsen	The Snake in Sydney	2000	Sceptre	Anne Born	Slangen i Sydney	1997	Literature
Pia Tafdrup	Queen's Gate	2001	Bloodaxe Books	David McDuff	Dronningeporten	1998	Poetry

Jens Christian Grøndahl	Lucca	2002	Canongate	Anne Born	Lucca	1998	Literature
Lene Kaaberbøl	The Shamer's Daughter	2002	Hodder Children's	Lene Kaaberbøl	Skammerens datter	2000	Children's
Carsten Jensen	I Have Seen the World Begin	2002	Vintage (Harvill)	Barbara Haveland	Jeg Har Set Verden Begynde	1996	Literature
Leif Davidsen	Lime's Photograph	2002	Vintage Books	Gaye Kynoch	Lime's billede	1998	Literature
Jens Christian Grøndahl	Virginia	2003	Canongate	Anne Born	Virginia	2000	Literature
Lene Kaaberbøl	The Shamer's Signet	2003	Hodder Children's	Lene Kaaberbøl	Skammertegnet	2001	Children's
Bjarne Reuter	The Ring of the Slave Prince	2004	Andersen	Tiina Nunnally	Prins Faisals ring	2000	Children's
Suzanne Brøgger	The Jade Cat	2004	Harvill	Anne Born	Jadekatten	1997	Literature
Jan Mogensen	Go to Sleep, Little Bear	2005	Floris	[?Carlsen Books]	Lillebjørn	2005	Children's
Lene Kaaberbøl	The Shamer's War	2005	Hodder Children's	Lene Kaaberbøl	Skammerkrigen	2003	Children's
Lene Kaaberbøl	The Serpent Gift	2005	Hodder Children's	Lene Kaaberbøl	Slangens gave	2001	Children's
Peter Asmussen	The Beach	2005	Oberon Books	David Duchin	Stranden	1996	Drama
Janne Teller	Odin's Island	2006	Atlantic	Anne Born	Odins ø	1999	Literature
William Heinesen	The Lost Musicians	2006	Dedalus	W. Glyn Jones	Fortabte spillemaend	1950	Literature
Hanne Marie Svendsen	Under the Sun	2006	Norvik Press	Marina Allemanno	Under solen	1991	Literature

Stig Dalager	Journey in Blue: A Novel About Hans Christian Andersen	2006	Peter Owen	John Mason	Rejse i blåt	2004	Literature
Christian Jungersen	The Exception	2006	Weidenfeld & Nicolson	Anna Paterson	Undtagelsen	2004	Literature
Leif Davidsen	The Serbian Dane	2007	Arcadia	Barbara Haveland	Den serbiske dansker	1996	Literature
Inger Christensen	It	2007	Carcenet	Susanna Nied	Det	1969	Poetry
Morten Ramsland	Doghead	2007	Doubleday	Tiina Nunnally	Hundehoved	2005	Literature
Peter Høeg	The Quiet Girl	2007	Harvill Secker	Nadia Christensen	Den stille pige	2006	Literature
Lene Kaaberbøl	Silverhorse	2007	Macmillan	Lene Kaaberbøl	Sølvhesten	1992	Children's
Stig Dalager	Two Days in July	2008	Arena Books	John Mason	To dage i juli	2002	Literature
Peter Adolphsen	Machine	2008	Harvill Secker	Charlotte Barslund	Machine	2006	Literature
Jan Kjær & Merlin P. Mann	Taynikma. Book 2, The Rats	2008	Young World Digital	Merlin P. Mann	Taynikma Bog 2, Rotterne	2005	Children's ; Graphic Novel
Jan Kjær & Merlin P. Mann	Taynikma. Book 1, Master Thief	2008	Young World Digital	Merlin P. Mann	Taynikma Bog 1, Mestertyven	2005	Children's ; Graphic Novel
Jakob Martin Strid	Little Frog	2009	Alanna	Anna McQuinn	Lille frø	2005	Children's
Leif Davidsen	The Woman from Bratislava	2009	Arcadia/EuroCrime	Barbara Haveland	De gode søstre	2003	Literature
Mikkel Birkegaard	The Library of Shadows	2009	Black Swan	Tiina Nunnally	Libri di Luca	2007	Literature

William Heinesen	Windswept Dawn	2009	Dedalus	W. Glyn Jones	Blæsende Gry	1934	Literature
Lene Kaaberbøl	Midnight	2009	Macmillan Children's	Lene Kaaberbøl	Hermelinen	1994	Children's
Jan Kjær & Merlin P. Mann	Taynikma. Book 3, Tower of the Sun	2009	Young World Digital	Merlin P. Mann	Taynikma Bog 3, Soltårnet	2006	Children's ; Graphic Novel
Jan Kjær & Merlin P. Mann	Taynikma. Book 4, The Lost Catacombs	2009	Young World Digital	Kathryn Mahaffy	Taynikma Bog 4, De glemte katakomber	2006	Children's ; Graphic Novel
Stig Dalager	David's Story	2010	Aurora Metro	Frances Østerfelt and Cheryl Robson	Davids bog	1995	Literature
Pia Tafdrup	Tarkovsky's Horses and other poems	2010	Bloodaxe Books	David McDuff	Hvalerne i Paris; Tarkovskijs heste	2002; 2006	Poetry
Lars Husum	My Friend Jesus Christ	2010	Portobello Books	Mette Petersen	Mit venskab med Jesus Kristus	2008	Literature
Peter Adolphsen	The Brummstein	2011	AmazonCrossing	Charlotte Barslund	Brummstein	2006	Literature
Stig Dalager	Land of Shadows	2011	Arena Books	Frances Østerfelt	Skyggeland	2007	Literature
Jørn Riel	The Shipwreck	2011	Barefoot Books	John Mason	Drengen som ville være menneske	1979	Children's
Mikkel Birkegaard	Death Sentence	2011	Black Swan	Charlotte Barslund	Over mit lig	2009	Literature
William Heinesen	The Good Hope	2011	Dedalus	W. Glyn Jones	Det gode håb	1964	Literature
William Heinesen	Mother Pleiades	2011	Dedalus	W. Glyn Jones	Moder Syvstjerne	1952	Literature
Jakob Ejersbo	Exile	2011	Maclehose Press	Mette Petersen	Eksil	2009	Literature

Jussi Adler-Olsen	Mercy (Department Q 1)	2011	Penguin	Lisa Hartford (Tiina Nunnally)	Kvinden i buret	2007	Literature
Sissel-Jo Gazan	The Dinosaur Feather	2011	Quercus	Charlotte Barslund	Dinosaurens fjer	2008	Literature
Lene Kaaberbøl & Agnete Friis	The Boy in the Suitcase	2011	Soho Press (Turnaround)	Lene Kaaberbøl	Drengen i kufferten	2008	Literature
Janne Teller	Nothing	2011	Strident	Martin Aitken	Intet	2000	Children's
Carsten Jensen	We, the Drowned	2011	Vintage	Charlotte Barslund (with Emma Ryder)	Vi, de druknede	2006	Literature
Jørn Riel	The Raiders	2012	Barefoot Books	John Mason	Leiv, Narua og Apuluk	1980	Children's
Jørn Riel	The Snowstorm	2012	Barefoot Books	John Mason	Videre mod Nord	1980	Children's
Peter Høeg	The Elephant Keepers' Children	2012	Harvill Secker	Martin Aitken	Elefantpassernes børn	2010	Literature
Jakob Ejersbo	Revolution	2012	Maclehose Press	Mette Petersen	Revolution	2009	Literature
Benny Andersen	The Contract Killer	2012	Norvik Press	Paul Russell Garrett	Lejemorderen og andre spil	1970	Drama
Pia Juul	The Murder of Halland	2012	Peirene Press	Martin Aitken	Mordet på Halland	2009	Literature
Jussi Adler-Olsen	Disgrace (Department Q 2)	2012	Penguin	K.E. Semmel	Fasandræberne	2008	Literature
Knud Romer	Nothing But Fear	2012	Serpent's Tail	John Mason	Den som blinker er bange for døden	2006	Literature
A. J. Kazinski	The Last Good Man	2012	Simon & Schuster	Tiina Nunnally	Sidste gode mand	2010	Literature
Lene Kaaberbøl & Agnete Friis	Invisible Murder	2012	Soho Press (Turnaround)	Tara Chace	Stille umærkeligt drab	2010	Literature
Hans Egede Schack	The Fantasists	2013	Austin Macauley	John Lynch	Phantasterne	1857	Literature

Lotte and Søren Hammer	The Hanging	2013	Bloomsbury	Ebba Segerberg	Svinehunde	2010	Literature
Herman Bang	Ida Brandt	2013	Dedalus	W. Glyn Jones	Ludvigsbakke	1896	Literature
Elsebeth Egholm	Three Dog Night	2013	Headline	Charlotte Barslund and Don Bartlett	Tre hundes nat	2011	Literature
Dan Turèll	Murder in the Dark	2013	Norvik Press	Mark Mussari	Mord i mørket	1981	Literature
Kirsten Thorup	The God of Chance	2013	Norvik Press	Janet Garton	Tilfældets gud	2011	Literature
Jussi Adler-Olsen	Redemption (Department Q 3)	2013	Penguin	Martin Aitken	Flaskepost fra P.	2009	Literature
Jussi Adler-Olsen	Guilt (Department Q 4)	2013	Penguin	Martin Aitken	Journal 64	2010	Literature
Kim Fupz Aakeson	Vitello Wants a Dad	2013	Pushkin Children's	Ruth Garde	Vitello vil have en far	2008	Children's
Kim Fupz Aakeson	Vitello Becomes a Businessman	2013	Pushkin Children's	Ruth Garde	Vitello bliver forretningsmand	2008	Children's
Kim Fupz Aakeson	Vitello Carries a Knife	2013	Pushkin Children's	Ruth Garde	Vitello går med kniv	2008	Children's
Kim Fupz Aakeson	Vitello Scratches a Car	2013	Pushkin Children's	Ruth Garde	Vitello ridser en bil	2008	Children's
Kim Fupz Aakeson	Vitello Gets a Yucky Girlfriend	2013	Pushkin Children's	Ruth Garde	Vitello får en klam kæreste	2009	Children's
Steffen Jacobsen	When the Dead Awaken	2013	Quercus	Charlotte Barslund	Når de døde vågner	2011	Literature
Lene Kaaberbøl & Agnete Friis	Death of a Nightingale	2013	Soho Press (Turnaround)	Elisabeth Dyssegaard	Nattergalens død	2011	Literature
Sander Jakobsen	The Preacher	2013	Sphere	Sander Jakobsen [Dagmar Winther	Forkynderen	2013	Literature

				and Kenneth Degnbøl]			
Sara Blædel	Blue Blood	2013	Sphere	Erik Macki and Tara Chace	Kald mig prinsesse	2011	Literature
Sara Blædel	Only One Life	2013	Sphere	Erik Macki and Tara Chace	Kun et liv	2007	Literature
Bo Lidegaard	Countrymen	2014	Atlantic Books	Robert Maass	Landsmænd	2013	Literature
Helle Helle	This Should be Written in the Present Tense	2014	Harvill Secker	Martin Aitken	Dette burde skrives i nutid	2011	Literature
Elsebeth Egholm	Dead Souls	2014	Headline	Charlotte Barslund and Don Bartlett	De døde sjæles nat	2012	Literature
Jussi Adler- Olsen	Alphabet House	2014	Hesperus Press	Steve Schein	Alfabethuset	1997	Literature
Jakob Ejersbo	Liberty	2014	Maclehose Press	Mette Petersen	Liberty	2009	Literature
Sissel-Jo Gazan	The Arc of the Swallow	2014	Quercus	Charlotte Barslund	Svalens graf	2013	Literature
Steffen Jacobsen	Trophy	2014	Quercus	Charlotte Barslund	Trofæ	2013	Literature
Merete Pryds Helle	Wuwu and Co.	2014	Step in Books (iPad app)	Paul Russell Garrett	Wuwu & Co.	2014	Children's ; App
Kim Leine	The Prophets of Eternal Fjord	2015	Atlantic	Martin Aitken	Profeterne i Evighedsfjorden	2012	Literature
Henrik Pontoppidan	Sad Tales from Denmark	2015	Austin Macauley	John Lynch	Fortællinger	1899	Short Stories
Pia Tafdrup	Salamander Sun and other poems	2015	Bloodaxe Books	David McDuff	Salamandersol; Traekfuglens kompas	2012; 2010	Poetry

Lotte and Søren Hammer	The Girl in the Ice	2015	Bloomsbury	Paul Norlén	Alting Har Sin Pris	2010	Literature
Herman Bang	As Trains Pass By (Katinka)	2015	Dedalus	W. Glyn Jones	Ved Vejen	1886	Literature
Klaus Rifbjerg	Terminal Innocence	2015	Norvik Press	Paul Larkin	Den Kroniske Uskyld	1958	Literature
Jussi Adler-Olsen	Buried (Department Q 5)	2015	Penguin	Martin Aitken	Marco Effekten	2012	Literature
Tom Buk-Swienty	1864	2015	Profile Books	Annette Buk-Swienty	Slagtebænk Dybbøl	2008	Literature
Martin Kongstad	Am I Cold	2015	Profile Books	Martin Aitken	Fryser Jeg	2013	Literature
Dorthe Nors	Karate Chop; & Minna Needs Rehearsal Space	2015	Pushkin Press	Martin Aitken & Misha Hoekstra	Kantslag; Minna mangler et øvelokale	2014	Short Stories
Jussi Adler-Olsen	The Hanging Girl (Department Q 6)	2015	Quercus	William Frost	Den Grænseløse	2014	Literature
Lene Kaaberbøl	Doctor Death	2015	Simon & Schuster	Elisabeth Dyssegaard	Kadaverdokturen	2010	Literature

APPENDIX B – Interview Transcripts

AMM 2017 - Anne-Marie Mai
BH 2017 - Barbara Haveland
CB 2017 - Charlotte Barslund
CM 2017 - Christopher MacLehose
ED 2017 - Elisabeth Dyssegaard
JS 2017 - Jon Sadler
KS 2017 - Kyle Semmel
LFR 2016 - Lin Falk van Rooyen
MA 2016 - Martin Aitken
MP 2016 - Mette Petersen
PE 2017 - Paul Engles
PRG 2016 - Paul Russell Garrett
WF 2016 - William Frost

Kulturstyrelsen staff group interview:

AMR 2015 - Anne-Marie Rasmussen
JNJ 2015 - Jeppe Naur Jensen
MHD 2015 - Marie Husted Dam

All interviews were transcribed by the thesis author, except the two Danish-language interviews (AMM 2017 and the *Kulturstyrelsen* staff group interview) for which a transcription service was used.

Interview with Anne-Marie Mai

Her Office, *SDU*, Odense. 20th June 2017

(bilingual English [EK] and Danish [AMM])

EK: Should we start with what you were saying about the state funding and the scholarships/stipends for Danish authors and translation, a little bit about what you know and obviously the role you had with that?

AMM: Ja. Jeg har tilbage for mange år siden været formand for Litteraturrådet. Den organisation blev så omlagt, da Brian Mikkelsen var Kulturminister. Der havde vi både støtte til litteratur og oversættelser. Oversættelsesprogrammet var tilrettelagt på den måde, og det tror jeg stadig, at den er, at hvis man har en tilkendegivelse fra et forlag, og man kan lægge en oversættelsesprøve frem, som bliver accepteret, så er der gode muligheder for at få støtte til oversættelse. Så der er et omfattende støtteprogram. Egentligt vil jeg mene, at langt de fleste bøger, med undtagelse af bestsellerne, at den kunstneriske litteratur er meget afhængige af støtten fra Kulturministeriet og fra litteraturstøttesystemet. Det er nødvendigt for, at bøgerne skal udkomme. Bestsellerne er undtaget. Jeg tror ikke, at Jussi Adler-Olsen får støtte til at udgive sine krimier *{griner/laughs}*, eller for den sags skyld andre af bestsellerne, men der er rigtige mange af de betydelige kunstneriske forfattere, der får støtte til bogudgivelser.

EK: OK. What about the research you have done into literature in Denmark. Have you looked at the influence of state funding on authors?

AMM: Vi har mere set generelt på kunststøttesystemet. Jeg har skrevet forskellige bøger, der berører kunststøttesystemet. Både helt tilbage til de danske digtere i det 20. århundrede, og da vi kom omkring årtusindeskiftet, var det et vigtigt emne. Jeg har også været med i bøger, der handler om velfærdsstaten og støttesystemet, hvor vi lægger mærke til, at der sker noget afgørende, da Statens Kunstfond kommer til. Støtten professionaliseres og systematiseres, og der bliver midler til at støtte forfattere med arbejdslegater, oversættelser og udgivelser. Kunst og litteratur er meget vigtig del af velfærdsstatens politik og for en velfungerende velfærdsstat. Det er argumentet tilbage i '60erne, at hvis velfærdsstaten skal udvikles, så skal vi have en levende kunst og litteratur, og derfor har vi brug for et kunststøttesystem...

EK: And the book you wrote *Galleri*...

AMM: Ja, *Galleri 66*.

EK: ...starts from that point onwards, does it not?

AMM: Ja. Der prøver jeg at vise, at støttesystemet har haft en stor betydning, og at den i velfærdstænkningen står relativ uanfægtet. Alle de andre regler og love er blevet lavet om mange gange, for eksempel bistandssystemet til mennesker, der kommer i sociale problemer, eller folkepensionen, der er sådan en grundpille i velfærdstænkningen, eller hele støtten omkring sundhedssektoren, der er blevet lavet om mange gange, men Kunstfonden er blevet ved med at være der som noget vigtig og relativ uantastet. Der er faktisk stort set enighed i Folketinget om, at denne her støtte til kunst er vigtig. Jeg tror, at partiet Liberal Alliance har haft en politik om, at man skulle fjerne kunststøtten, og de Nye Borgerlige på den yderste højrefløj har den politik, at den skal afskaffes, men de er ikke i Folketinget. Nu tror jeg, at det er landet på, at Liberal Alliance mener, at systemet skal omlægges, sådan at regionerne får tildelt midler, som de selv kan fordele lokalt, istedet for et centralt statslig system. Der tror jeg, at litteraturen kan få det svært.

EK [in Danish]: Ja. Kompleks og unfair til dem der bor udenfor København?

AMM: Omvendt. Der er mange forfattere, der bor i København og hvis København skal give noget fra sig til de øvrige regioner, indenfor forfatterstøtten for eksempel, så kan det blive svært fordi at mange forfattere bor i Aarhus eller København.

EK: OK. Ja.

AMM: Det kan blive vanskeligt. Det synes ikke at have så meget støtte, men ikke desto mindre, så sidder der faktisk en Kulturminister fra Liberal Alliance i øjeblikket, så man ved ikke hvordan...

EK: Is that the first time it has ever been questioned?

AMM: Det er en meget meget stabil organisation. I den periode hvor jeg var Formand for Litteraturrådet, lå rådet under Kunstfonden. Kunstfonden er nu den overgribende institution, så det hedder Statens Kunstfond, ikke Litteraturrådet eller Kunststøtterådet. Kun Statens Kunstfond. Det tror jeg, at det har været meget afgørende for kunstnerne at der ligesom den organisation, de har kæmpet for, og at den er der endnu siden midt '60erne til nu. Man kan sige, at der har været mange diskussioner om den, men den er blevet ved med at være der, og måske har det, at der har været mange diskussioner været med til at styrke den. Det er ikke sådan noget, der er blevet glemt, og så ligepludselig er der nogen, som har fundet på: "hov, der er der lige noget vi kan spare på". Den er hele tiden til debat. Jeg har en formodning om, at debatten holder organisationen i live, men mine kollegaer fra Samfundsvidenskab og Historie siger, at grunden til at det ikke er antastet, er fordi, at det er så få midler i statsbudgettet, det drejer sig om, og at det er helt ligegyldigt i det store budget.

EK: Where do you think translation fits in, in all of this?

AMM: Oversættelse er jo en vigtig del af det, og er blevet en stadig mere betydelig del af det. Vi lever i en globaliseret verden og danske forfattere vil gerne oversættes og ud. Derfor er det blevet stadig vigtigere for mange danske forfattere, at de kan udkomme i andre lande. Det er nemmere for billedkunst og musik, hvor sproget ikke kræver oversættelse.

EK: Do you have any examples?

AMM: Ja. Du kan se nogle af de vigtige forfatterskaber, som vi har, som Helle Helle for eksempel. Dét, at det forelægger på flere sprog, er vigtigt både for hende og for formidlingen af dansk litteratur i udlandet. Vi kan tænke på Inger Christensen. Hendes internationale ry starter ved, at hun bliver oversat til tysk, ligesom H.C. Andersen. Tysk er altid en god indfaldsvinkel, og det er først i de senere år, at hun er udkommet på engelsk. Nu har hun mange dygtige oversættere. Du kan også se på Pia Tafdrups forfatterskab. Hun lægger meget vægt på kontakten til sine oversættere. Hun tager på poesifestivaler overalt i verden, og gør meget ud af at styrke sine kontakter i andre lande for at få sine bøger ud. Hvis du går ind på hendes hjemmeside, vil du se en stribe af oversættelser. Man kan spørge til, hvor stor en betydning det har, og hvor langt ud det når i læserpublikum. Nogle gange er det nogle små forlag, der oversætter for eksempel til engelsk. Der er også nogle, der kommer på større forlag, men det er nok især romaner og noveller, hvor digte har det ufatteligt svært.

EK: Yes, I found that as well. As part of my research, the first thing that I did was to look up a corpus of which books I was talking about. My study period is 1990 to 2015. I found through various databases, like the British Library database especially, that a 125 books had come from Denmark into English in the UK, which is not that many in the course of 25 years.

AMM: Nej. Det er ikke mange.

EK: There is a huge number there by small independent publishers, the obvious ones like Norvik Press, which is specifically for classic Nordic literature, but other independent ones, like Dedalus and so on...

AMM: Der var også et lille forlag, der hed Bloodaxe. Det får nogle forfattere til at vælge nogle meget utraditionelle veje. Eksempelvis min egen mand, Klaus Høeck, han skriver meget store digtsamlinger. De kan ikke udkomme hos et engelsk/amerikansk forlag. Det ville være utænkeligt, med mindre han da lige gik hen og vandt Nobelprisen *{griner/laughs}*. Måske også en udsigt at have.

EK: Why? Is it because no publisher will take it or there is no funding?

AMM: Jeg tror problemet er, at i USA eksempelvis, hvor han har kontakt med andre forfattere, udkommer næsten ingen originale digtsamlinger på amerikansk. Hvorfor skulle de ofre penge på et forlag, selv hvis de fik det betalt? De vil ikke engang ønske at udsende det signal, at de udsender dansk lyrik. Så han har valgt en anden mulighed, som du nok ikke fanger med optællingen. Det han har gjort er, at han

fik kontakt med en oversætter, John Irons, som blev så optaget af hans arbejde, at han ikke kunne lade være med at oversætte det. Det har han gjort stort set gratis og på eget initiativ, og med erkendelse af hvor svært det ville være at udkomme på et forlag. Han har i stedet fået anerkendt oversættelserne som elektroniske manuskripter, der nu ligger frit tilgængelige på Det Kongelige Bibliotek. Totalt oversat. Stort set det hele af hans forfatterskab er oversat til engelsk, gratis tilgængeligt. Men det er ikke udkommet som bøger, kun som elektroniske manuskripter. Du kan gå ind og kigge på det for sjovs skyld. Der ligger en seks-syv bøger, kæmpebøger, på 500 sider hver. Det ville være utænkeligt, at en engelsk/amerikansk forlægger skulle binde an med at udgive sådan nogle digtsamlinger.

EK: Yes. That is a good point and a good question. In all the research you have done into the Danish field and all of these brilliant descriptions you have done of the phases in Danish literature, do you think any of it maps much onto the British or American model?

AMM: Jeg tror, at den danske litteratur henter rigtige mange inspirationer i udlandet, og at udvekslingen er der. Selvfølgelig vil man rigtig gerne oversættes og ses af de læsere, som kender nogle af de forfattere, man er optaget af, hvad enten de er nulevende eller nogle ældre forfattere. En forfatter som Peter Laugesen eksempelvis er meget optaget af forskellige amerikanske og finske forfattere. Han vil også gerne oversættes, men det er meget svært inden for lyrik. Det er lettere at komme med en roman, der måske har solgt i 5.000-10.000 eksemplarer. Romanlitteratur er lettere at oversætte end digte. Digte er absolut umulige.

EK: That is absolutely right. Of those 125 books, I think about three quarters are novels...

AMM: Short stories...

EK: No, three quarters are "romanser". The are a few collections of short stories and then very, very few collections of poetry, and maybe one drama play. Mostly they are novels. That fits more typically with what the Anglophone market buys in English.

AMM: Ja. Hvis de skal købe udenlandsk litteratur, så kender de romangenren. Man kan se på den, at det sikkert er en god historie, eller at den handler om noget nutidigt, og at den vil man godt binde an med. Det er meget sværere med lyrik og essays. Jeg tror, at det tegner sig på den måde, men det er lidt absurd, for den danske litteratur henter ikke sin inspiration i en lille osteklokke af dansk litteratur. Den henter sin inspiration fra en større verden og fra mange forfattere i mange lande, som man er optaget af. Derfor er der netop mange, der tager på litteraturfestivaler i udlandet, og gerne vil være med. For eksempel Pia Tafdrup. Jeg tror, at hun er meget optaget i lyrik fra alle lande. Hun har måske været lidt mere heldig med at sine bøger ud, fordi at hun har været til stede på festivalerne. Det er lettere, hvis man først har fået hul på det. Det lykkes ikke uden kunststøtssystemet, det er helt sikkert. Uden det ville det være så begrænset. Så ville det være Jussi Adler-Olsen og ikke nogle andre.

EK: Do you think it is useful if these events and trips are funded by the state funding? What is the bigger picture? I suppose it is about the Danish image abroad?

AMM: Jeg tror, at de store poesifestivaler er meget vigtige og giver et blik på, og en interesse for, den danske litteratur, hvad enten det er romaner eller digtning. Der har været nogle store satsninger, for eksempel på *Salon du Livre* i Frankrig. Det var en stor ting, at de nordiske lande pludselig var repræsenteret som hovednavne. Der har været litteraturfestivaler i England, USA og mange andre steder. Det tror jeg, har betydet *rigtigt* meget. Der kommer man måske ikke i kontakt med det store læserpublikum, men man kommer i hvert fald i kontakt med andre landes forfattere, oversættere og forlæggere. Så er vejen, om ikke banet, så lettere at gå. Hvis man gerne selv som forfatter vil gøre noget for at få sine værker ud, er det en god idé med litteraturfestivalerne. Også det vi nationalt er begyndt at organisere. Vi har her i Louisiana den store Louisianafestival, som er en meget stor international begivenhed med både danske, norske, udenlandske, nordiske forfattere. Det tror jeg betyder noget. Der er også en anden måde at lancere Danmark på som et litteraturland, nemlig Hans Christian Andersen Literature Award, som jeg er involveret i, hvor vi uddeler en H.C. Andersen pris til en udenlandsk forfatter. Det tror jeg betyder rigtig meget for kendskabet til Danmark og viser, at det stadig er et litteraturland. Andersen er stadig en god dørbåner. Vi uddelte prisen til Murakami sidste år. Det gav en

fantastisk omtale alle mulige steder i hele verden, og selvfølgelig i Japan [...] Det betød faktisk noget. Begivenheder, som festivaller, er vigtige for lanceringen af dansk litteratur, for udbredelsen og kendskabet til den i andre lande.

EK: Yes, absolutely. That reminds me of one of the things I am writing about in my thesis. The whole thesis really broadly is about Danish literature in the UK, but actually I have ended up talking about the agents and the actors, who are bringing over Danish literature to the UK. Publishers and translators especially are really significant, but also about the brand of Denmark. H.C. Andersen is still such a big character and happens to be a literary character, so that works very well for the parallels I am making, and branding the nation and how that fits in with the support the state wants to give...

AMM: Of course there is also the crime fiction...

EK: Yes, exactly, which is interesting because Denmark is sometimes perceived as part of the bigger Brand Scandinavia, and that works well with the crime fiction thing because Nordic Noir, which it is sometimes called, really mostly in the UK is Swedish and Norwegian authors. As you say, Jussi Adler-Olsen is really the big Danish name and is maybe not even *that* well known. I mean, he sells well obviously, but...

AMM: Yes, but he does sell all over, in every airport *{laughing}*.

EK: Yes, exactly! What's been really interesting is to look at what stereotypes there are about Denmark and where they fit into a sort of Scandinavian model, but also whether the stereotypes perceived from abroad are the stereotypes Denmark is wanting to project as well, which is quite a nice picture. The most recent one is this whole "hygge" thing in the British publishing world, really. I don't think any of the books would have been published from Britain into Denmark. That would be interesting...

AMM: Jeg tror i hvert fald, at der er blevet skrevet *rigtig* meget om dem...

EK: In the newspapers, or?

AMM: Ja. Jeg ved ikke om I har adgang til Infomedia, som er et søgeredskab i forhold til danske aviser, men ellers kan du prøve at få det via biblioteket. Der kan du søge på det, og se, at det får meget stor omtale. Jeg skriver om begrebet hygge i denne her store nordiske litteraturhistorie, der udkommer formentlig inden så længe, med forskellige knudepunkter i tid, sted og forestillinger. Jeg er med i delen om idéer og forestillinger, hvor jeg har skrevet om hygge. Det har jeg gjort længe inden bølgen kom, så jeg ved ikke, om afsnittet passer ind, men jeg har gjort det, fordi det var et begreb, de gerne ville have med.

EK: That is interesting, because it is always something that comes up about Danish self-image and it always has. Suddenly it has been grabbed by these British publishers to create a story about something Danish, but it is also about what the British market wants to hear, isn't it? Or a particular part of the market, sort of the middle class readers. They want to be a part of this movement almost.

AMM: Ja. Det er også interessant. Da jeg skulle have oversat artiklen, var det meget svært at finde et ord for hygge på engelsk, for "cosy" er ikke helt rigtigt. Det var ikke desto mindre det, der dukkede op. Vi skrev om hygge og uhygge. Så bliver det endnu mere mærkeligt, for "cosy" og "grimness"...

EK: Isn't "uhygge" more like creepy?

AMM: Jo, på én måde er det mere "creepy" end det er "grim", men nu får vi at se. Den er ikke udkommet endnu *{griner/laughs}*.

EK: I think also it is interesting that all these articles and books in English seem to start with this big fuss about the pronunciation, all of these weird spelling out, *hyg-ga* and *hygæ*, and I think it is quite nice an example of how it is just exoticism, really. It is just saying how interesting and weird and wonderful this Danishness is, even though it is very accessible, because it is stereotypically white European, North European, but at the same time this lovely exoticism...

AMM: Ja. Jeg talte på denne der SAS konference i Minneapolis for ikke så længe siden, hvor der var en glimrende forlæser, Julie Allen. Hun er rigtig dygtig og hun arbejder med branding af Danmark, og hun kommer igen i December. Der mødte jeg folk fra Elk Horn, som har et dansk museum. De skulle have en udstilling om hygge *{griner/laughs}*.

EK: Wow. So it has reached that side of the US?

AMM: Ja. Vi har her i Danmark haft en udsendelsesserie med de mest populære TV figurer, Adam Price og hans bror, som har lavet en udsendelse fra Elk Horn om, hvordan nogle af efterkommerne har det med nogle af de traditionelle danske hyggeting, som jul og medisterpølse og leverpostej og æbleskiver...

EK: Is that on DR?

AMM: Ja. De har laven en serie, hvor de tager til Elk Horn for at lære de gamle udvandrerrfamilier at lave medisterpølse og leverpostej og æbleskiver og hygge. På muséet i Elk Horn skulle de lave en udstilling om hygge. Det er, fordi at der er rigtig mange familier i Elk Horn, der kommer fra Danmark. Det er blevet et sightseeing sted, hvis du vil se noget dansk.

EK: That is what is different with the American market and the British market...

AMM: Ja. Det er helt anderledes...

EK: I was at the Association of Scandinavian Studies conference in Canada a few weeks ago and that was the message I was trying to get across with my paper. I decided to focus on hygge and Danish culture in UK, because I feel like it is a really British, middle-class, white phenomenon. You know, Guardian readers, liberal...

AMM: ... det er 'lifestyle'...

EK: ... It really fits into a particular, almost kind of a class thing, as well as race. It is not a genuine looking-back-to-your-roots feeling for Brits. It is roots in a sort of a pretend nostalgic way. Whereas for a lot of Americans and Canadians, some of them have Scandinavian roots in their family and they are looking at it from a different perspective. I had not really appreciated that, but it is a different thing to grab on to Danish culture through this museum...

AMM: Ja, det er to meget forskellige sammenhænge. *{pause}* Men du var ved at sige noget mere om dit arbejde?

EK: Yes. I have been really interested in your book about the places of literature...

AMM: Ja. Litteraturens steder...

EK: That was a really good project...

AMM: Tak for det...

EK: Bringing in the material and the actual agency of how these books come about is really inspiring. This is where I am going by looking at the different actors and the people, who bring Danish literature across. We talked about the publisher a bit, but the translators I have been really interested in talking to. I have been to quite a few translators, translating from Danish to English. It seems like a lot of them, not all, but a lot of them have become like a literary agent and a scout almost. They do a lot of the legwork to get these books out.

AMM: Du skulle måske tale med én, jeg ved ikke om han er inde i Kunststyrelsen, nemlig John Irons. Han har oversat mange ting. *{crosstalk}*

EK: Is he based here?

AMM: Han er i Svendborg. Han er igang med nu at nyoversætte alle H.C. Andersens eventyr, som skal udkomme i en helt ny udgave.

EK: Is that with the H.C. Andersen Centre here?

AMM: Ja. Han er en afsindig dygtig skønlitterær oversætter. Han har også oversat hundrede danske digte, som er udkommet på Washington University Press, og han har oversat Grundtvigs salmer til engelsk. Har du den?

EK: Nej.

AMM: Det skal du have. Vi har et projekt liggende med alle danske salmer, alle de kendte salmedigtere, som Grundtvig og Ingemann, Kingo og Brorson. Det er blevet færdig, vi mangler bare nogle penge.

EK: So did you say he did your husband's translation for free or did he apply for a grant?

AMM: Han har fået nogle penge indimellem, når han har lavet det, men nu er det blevet en slags oversætterworkshop. Det er vigtig for en oversætter hele tiden at have dialogen med en dansk kunstner eller dansker. Men hvad skulle der blive af alle disse ting? Så kom de med den geniale løsning af få det lagt på Det Kongelige Bibliotek. Det er ikke bøger, men elektroniske manuskripter. Betingelsen fra Det Kongelige Bibliotek var, at det ikke skulle udkomme som bog. Han er meget dygtig og har oversat en lang række af forfattere. Han er én som giver sig i kast. Hvis han pludselig bliver optaget af en digter, sender han ham nogle oversættelser. Han kan ikke lade være. Han er virkelig god.

EK: Definitely. It is good to have that relationship. That is what it always seems to be about: the relationships that people build and who people know. It ends up being about who you know, who can refer you to this translator, who then knows this publishing house, and so on. That is what I found with translators. Part of my hypothesis was if whether they are the ones that are fostering the market for the growth of Danish literature in the UK.

AMM: De spiller garanteret en meget stor rolle. Det vil jeg tro. Også ved at nogle af dem selv tager initiativ. De kan ikke lade være med at oversætte noget spændende, fordi at de følger med i litteraturen.

EK: Do you know much of the projects or the support that Statens Kunstfond gives translators? Like they recently set up a summer school?

AMM: Ja. Det gjorde vi også den gang. Laver oversætterseminarer og oversættelsesmøder. Vores idé med at gøre det, og jeg tror, at den idé stadig er der, det er, at det er vigtigt at have kontakt. Man kan ikke sidde hjemme og oversætte hos sig selv. Man er nødt til at have kontakt med sprogbrugere på en eller anden måde. Man er nødt til at have en udveksling. Man er nødt til at møde andre oversættere og gøre nogle ting sammen. I Dansk Forfatterforening er der en helt særlig afdeling for oversættere.

EK: Do you think it is easier then for the translators who are based in Denmark?

AMM: Ikke nødvendigvis. Det er mere den anden vej rundt: at oversætte fra engelsk, fra fransk, fra italiensk.

EK: So maybe the ones who are based outside Denmark have potential to have better links with the Anglophone publishers?

AMM: Det kunne man godt forestille sig. Det er ikke udelukkende mit indtryk, at det er sådan, men jeg tror, at det betyder noget. Der skal etableres en relation imellem en oversætter, der får godkendt en prøveoversættelse, og får finansieret det, og et forlag, som også skal have tilskud. Vi skal huske, at forlagene skal have tilskud til at udgive dansk litteratur. Det er selvfølgelig en forretning, og de skulle også kunne tjene penge på det, men der skal finansiering til, før at det kan lade sig gøre. Min holdning er, at man burde satse meget mere, end man gør. Det er så vigtigt for forfatterne, fordi de modtager inspiration fra alle vegne. Selvfølgelig skal deres bøger være tilgængelige, så at de kan læses i andre lande. Ellers er det et problem, når det kun er hovedsprogene, der overlever som kunstsprog.

EK: So what do you think of the funding model at the moment then? It has not always been the same, has it? I think that they now fund 50/50 or even 30% of what is requested.

AMM: Det synes jeg, er i orden. Man kunne bare godt have flere midler til at gøre det, så flere fik del i det. Festivalerne er ikke gode nok i sig selv. De er kun et startskud. Det med at danske forfattere har fået

ophold i andre lande og adgang til en lejlighed i f.eks. Paris eller Berlin, og at man har kunnet leve i et andet land i længere tid, har betydet rigtigt meget. Det har vi ikke længere så god mulighed for, som vi har haft. Man kan godt søge et rejsestipendium, men det er vigtigt, at det ikke kun er statsstøttet. I Paris havde en af de store aviser, Jyllandsposten, en lejlighed, hvor danske forfattere på skift kunne være et par måneder af gangen. Festivalerne er statslige satsninger, men enkelte har hvilet på enkelte entusiaske personer.

EK: Do you think it matters how we measure the success of these books and these events? There are not many books translated: does it matter if they do not sell very many?

AMM: Jeg tror, at det betyder noget, at man følger op på både oversættelsen af en bog og på en event som en festival. Man kunne godt tænke over, hvad man efterfølgende skal gøre. En af de gode kanaler, som man desværre sparer meget på i den danske stat, er de udenlandske lektorer. Undervisningen af dansk på de store universiteter i Storbritannien sparer man meget på. Flere steder nedlægger man stillingerne og programmerne. Man har før haft sendelektorer. Det vil sige, at Udenrigsministeriet har givet penge til danske lektorer til at undervise på udenlandske universiteter i Skotland, Wales, Irland og alle mulige steder, også mange amerikanske universiteter, men man har nu droslet lidt ned på programmet. Det er skidt, fordi at de er gode til at få inviteret de danske forfattere og måske få arrangeret en oplæsningsaften med dem. I Sverige sparer man ikke på det. Der ved man godt, hvor vigtig det er. Her synes man, at det er for dyrt at sende en lektor og betale for, at et udenlandsk universitet ansætter en dansk lektor. Men formidlingen af den oversatte litteratur er fuldstændig afgørende, tror jeg, og disse lektorer ansat i udlandet kan måske skrive i aviserne eller arrangere en forfatteraften, der ikke bare er på dansk.

EK: It is all about these networks and contacts again. Like you are saying, it is not about the money you are paying them to be there, it is about the bigger picture. If they are not there, the network is not there. That is a really good point.

AMM: Ja. I Danmark sparer man desværre rigtig meget på det. Det har man ikke gjort i Sverige. Det betyder, at afdelingerne for skandinavisk og nordisk litteratur og sprog får en svensk orientering. Det er klart, når det er svenskerne, der har råd til at sende penge til det. Jeg håber at det vender, og at man indser, at det ikke går at spare på den måde.

EK: Everyone knows that Sweden is a bigger image abroad and in the Anglophone market. That is true in literature and music and so on if you look at the number of publications. In fact Sweden is really outperforming the size of its market in English. It is much bigger than not just the Scandinavian languages, which really goes to show.

AMM: Jo. Det er også, fordi at man har været gode til at investere i svenske lektorer i udlandet. De har været gode ambassadører og gode agenter, der formidler det her i en større sammenhæng.

EK: Do you know if their funding system is very different? I think it is a similar model to the one in Denmark?

AMM: Den svenske model er den samme, men hvor de har investeret, har vi trukket os lidt tilbage i en dansk sammenhæng. Jeg kender afdelingen for skandinavistik i Polen i Gdansk, hvor man har haft en dansk professor i dansk litteratur, og han har for eksempel været en vigtig formidler af dansk litteratur i Polen, og har udgivet ting på polsk af danske forfattere og digtere, som han har været optaget af. Man kan sige, at det hviler på noget meget subjektivt, men det virker, og det er vigtigt. Når man skærer ned på det dansksprogede, videnskabelige personale, så mangler det.

EK: That is interesting and is part of this bigger picture of networks and contacts.

AMM: Du kan gå ind på Udenrigsministeriets hjemmeside og se en liste af de danske sendelektorer og hvor de er. Det er ofte folk, der lige er blevet færdig med deres universitetseksamen, der bliver sendt afsted. Det kræver ikke et større PhD studie. Det gør ikke noget, men er en fordel. De er ivrige efter at bygge noget nyt op og udrette noget, og har en energi. Det har jeg set mange steder. De kan være i udlandet i seks år, og derefter skiftes ud, fordi at man lægger vægt på, at det skal være en modersmålsbruger, der er der. Man har forsøgt at kombinere det med, at man kunne tage en PhD uddannelse, men det blev aldrig

til noget. Det var for voldsomt at blive sendt ud og skulle undervise i dansk for og samtidig skrive PhD afhandling.

EK: Let me see if there is anything else, I wanted to talk about. I wanted to talk a bit about specific authors. Peter Høeg is the most translated Dane into the UK in that whole time period. In 1993 it was *Smilla* and all the books since have been translated and published. Do you have any opinion on that?

AMM: Han får et kæmpe gennembrud og læserpublikum. Det er vores indtryk her i Danmark, selvom jeg ikke kan basere det på meget, at han er mere anerkendt og har et større navn i den engelsksprogede verden, end han har i Danmark. Hans første bøger er velanskrevne, men han har modtaget meget litterær kritik for de seneste. Han har haft en deroute i Danmark, og det tror jeg ikke han har haft i en engelsk sammenhæng. Vi er stadig optaget af *Smilla* og hans tidligere bøger, men de senere har ikke det samme antal læsere og slet ikke akademisk interesse.

EK: They were received quite badly; critically?

AMM: Meget kritisk modtaget. Jeg ved ikke om det gælder for den engelsksprogede verden, og om det er gået godt for ham der?

EK: I think that they get published, but I do not think they have masses of publicity or that they sell particularly well. It is almost more about his name and his brand.

AMM: Der er brandingen af ham i Danmark nærmest blevet negativt. Han har det svært på grund af nogle af de senere bøger, som folk har været kritiske overfor. Man har syntes, at der har været tilknytninger til nogle holistiske tanker, som mange intellektuelle kan være skeptiske overfor. Han er meget velanskreven for sine tidligere bøger, men ikke de senere. Der er for eksempel ikke mange, som skriver universitetsopgaver om ham længere.

EK: That is interesting. What about the other way around, the canonical authors in Denmark that have not been translated into English? For example, Pablo Llambías?

AMM: Er han ikke blevet oversat meget? Hans seneste bog er meget rost. Det kan måske være, fordi at hans seneste tre bøger har været kæmpestore digtsamlinger. Det kan være, at hans nye prosabog kan have en chance for at blive oversat. Han er meget velanskreven i en dansk sammenhæng, og har en stærk placering, fordi han har været rektor for Forfatterskolen. Han har hele tiden arbejdet på nye spor og nye måder. Måske har det ikke været nemt at oversætte hans tre seneste bøger, fordi de har været digtsamlinger.

EK: That is what we spoke about before. That it is about the market that already exists there and not necessarily the quality of the work or how it is received here. Helle Helle, you already mentioned, is an interesting one because she only has had one book translated.

AMM: Ja. Hun udkom sent på engelsk. Hun får først en større success i Sverige, så en tysk success. Hun udkom ikke på engelsk til at begynde med.

EK: Exactly. I wonder what would happen, if they will look at the back catalogue of her books and translate them.

AMM: Ja. Nu har hun modtaget Det Danske Akademis store pris. Det kan måske hjælpe. Hun er så kanoniseret, som man nærmest kan blive i en dansk sammenhæng.

EK: It could be interesting to see if it changes anything for her...

AMM: Ja. Hvad der sker med hende. Man kan spørge til, hvad der for eksempel sker med en forfatter, som vi diskuterer meget ivrigt i øjeblikket i Danmark, nemlig Christina Hagen. Hendes bøger er halvvejs på engelsk. Hun har udgivet en meget omdiskuteret bog, der hedder *Boyfrind*. Den hedder *Boyfrind*, fordi at hun har glemt at skrive "e"et i "friend". Den er skrevet på det mest elendige engelsk, som man kan opdrive. Den er smækfuld af fejl. Den er skrevet i hånden med speedmarker.

EK: Is this the one that is like a big coffee table book?

AMM: Ja, og en nøgen mand udenpå. Hvad ville der ske med sådan en bog? Den kan ikke oversættes. Hvordan ville engelske læsere reagere på den? Fra ende til anden er det en engelsk tekst.

EK: And where would it fit in the market? But in a way it is ground breaking here?

AMM: Dan Turéll og min mand Klaus Høeck og Peter Laugesen har skrevet rigtig meget på engelsk i deres bøger. Meget eksperimenterende bøger, hvor nærmest halvdelen er på engelsk, men nu har Christina Hagen taget skridtet fuldt ud og skrevet hele bogen på det mest gebrækkelige og forfærdelige engelsk. Hvad vil den engelske kritiker sige til det?

EK: Maybe that would be okay because English speakers are more used to reading or hearing broken English than Danes hearing broken Danish. Does that make sense?

AMM: Ja. Hun understreger, at hun med det dårlige engelske sprog er en dansker, som ikke kan skrive ordentligt engelsk, og bare rabler løs på dårligt engelsk. Side op og ned fuld med fejl. Selv på omslaget er der som sagt en fejl, nemlig Boyfrind.

EK: I wonder how the process would be with PR via newspapers and so on to try and get the story out there.

AMM: Ja. Niels Frank har gjort noget lignende. På konferencen i Lund var der et meget fint indlæg af Elisabeth Friis, som er ansat i Lund, som skriver om tosproget dansk og nordisk litteratur. Ofte kan det være flere sprog som dansk, engelsk, arabisk eller tyrkisk, der er blandet ind. Hvad med sådanne bøger og tekster? De ville få det svært.

EK: Were they published like that in Scandinavia with for example the Turkish untranslated?

AMM: Ja. Nogle af dem er mundtlige værker, som for eksempel raptekster, men nogle af dem er trykte. Christina Hagen er gået hele linen ud, og har nu udgivet en bog, der hedder *White Girl*, hvor hun skriver på et meget dårligt dansk, der minder om indvandrersprog. Dette bliver brugt til at udtrykke alskens forfærdelige, racistiske, fordomsfulde holdninger og meninger til andre mennesker.

EK: Yes. I think that would be incredibly difficult to transfer to a British, and especially an American, context. It is just such a different experience of race, and there is the language as well to consider. Something really mainstream like Jussi Adler's books, one of the cops has a slightly immigrant Danish. I do not think that was translated into really bad English. People would read it thinking it would be a bad translation.

AMM: Men har man i den engelsksprogede litteratur en litteratur, hvor man bruger dårligt indvandrerengelsk til at lave et udtryk som Christina Hagen gør fuld af fordomme, og udstiller den iboende racisme?

EK: I don't know. Right now Britain is a really difficult place to discuss race. The whole Brexit thing has been wrapped up around race. It is all a bit more complex, I suppose. It is a different market for a different society, again.

AMM: Christina Hagen er også meget omdiskuteret i Danmark.

EK: Because it is all about political correctness?

AMM: Ja. Hun har udgivet en bog, som hedder *Jungle*. I forbindelse med lanceringen af bogen udtalte hun: "Ja, jeg har småracistiske tanker", og hun sammenlignede sig selv med kollegaer, som ikke ville sammenlignes med hende. De synes, at hun skulle tage parti mod racisme. Mine kollegaer siger, at Christina Hagen egentlig som forfatterfigur i offentligheden er et kunstprodukt, ligeså vel som bogen. Hvad Christina Hagen mener som privatperson, kan være noget helt andet. Hendes forfatterpersona i offentligheden er en kunstgenstand i sig selv. Det siger noget om, at sådan en litteratur er svær at oversætte,

fordi at den fungerer i en meget national sammenhæng, der sikkert aldrig ville kunne forstås i en engelsk sammenhæng.

EK: Yes. It is such a different history and culture. Especially now when things have taken a weird turn, a backwards step with right wing extremism. Is it a slightly controversial thing to say, that you have racist thoughts? Or maybe it's not if the papers are printing all this awful stuff that supports that?

AMM: Det gør de også her, men problemet er, at det gør forfatterne bestemt ikke, men nu har hun gjort det. Det er en konflikt mellem eliten og befolkningens bredde. I Ekstrabladet kan du sagtens finde folk, der udtrykker småracistiske tanker...

EK: So there is that shift between politics and personal identity and how to present yourself?

AMM: Ja. Er Yahya Hassan oversat til engelsk?

EK: No. I was wondering about that. I think it is nothing too cynical but because it is poetry. I was thinking that he does not fit the model of a Danish author and maybe that it is wrapped up in immigration and race, but then I realised that who would publish a small poetry book from a Danish Palestinian immigrant? It is not racism, but that the market is just not there for it. Where would even a small publisher put it?

AMM: Ja. Det er svært med poesi. Digtningen er svær. Der skal du have opbygget det fine netværk af agenter omkring dig, som for eksempel Pia Tafdrup har. Hun har lige været rundt på en mindre turné til en række universiteter og læsekredse i England, hvor hun har læst fra sine bøger. Der starter et netværk.

EK: Yes. That goes back to the question on what measures success. It is nice to have these authors representing Danish literature abroad and all the various agents that go with that, the translators and publishers.

AMM: Det betyder noget, om du kan læse op på engelsk eller tysk. Inger Christensens store internationale success begynder dybest set med, at hun er så god til at læse op på tysk. Så fik hun en god engelsk oversætter, Susanna Nied, som virkelig fik det til at lykkedes. Pia Tafrup kan læse op på engelsk og fungerer i den tradition. Det er meget vigtigt for poesi. Prosa kan man godt læse op af og fortælle om bogen, mere end det ligger på oplæsningen.

EK: But the authors of novels still do book tours. One of the series of books I am looking at is Jakob Ejersbo, the Africa trilogy, which was taken up by MacLehose Press. MacLehose was the person who also brought over *Miss Smilla* and Stieg Larsson, but Ejersbo's books did not sell well at all in Britain. Only like a hundred copies or something very little.

AMM: Det tror jeg, hænger sammen med, at det har I tonsvis af i forvejen. Det er et gæt, men jeg tror ikke, at det bringer meget nyt ind i den engelsksprogede litteratur, som det gør i den danske. Hele Afrika historien er utrolig spændende, men der er så meget glimrende postkolonial litteratur i en engelsk sammenhæng.

EK: Yes. It was slightly removed again, because it was a Danish perspective of Africa and, like you say, there have been so many other postcolonial perspectives. I wonder if it was also a factor that his fame here was because he was deceased and the build-up for his books did not happen...

AMM: Ja. Det betyder sikkert noget. Hans første bog var en success, men jeg tror også, at det betyder noget i en engelsk sammenhæng, at han ikke selv kan rejse og læse op, men er død og borte. Han er et lukket kapitel for et forlag. Man kan ikke lave fine arrangementer, hvor han selv kan blive interviewet af journalister. Jeg tror, at det betyder noget, at forfatterpersonen kan træde frem, som Helle Helle er eminent til. Hun er dygtig til at give talks og interviews, og være på, som den norske forfatter Linn Ullmann. Hun er eminent dygtig til det. Det betyder noget, når der ikke er nogen forfatter, men kun bøgerne, der skal klare sig.

EK: That was my thought as well and it happens again and again with lots of PR. What was the Man Booker International Prize?

AMM: Dorte Nors.

EK: Yes. I have seen lots of good PR for that recently, where she and her translator or often just her, have been in articles and newspapers. As you say, it really matters to have the face to put to the book.

AMM: Ja. At man kan sætte ansigt på, men også at man kan gøre sig i den litterære kultur betyder noget. Det kan være svært for forfattere, for der er mange, der ikke er gode til det og ikke kan lide det og hader det. Selvom de er kendte, kan de ikke fordrage det. Sådant en som Pia Tafdrup er god til det, og har gjort det siden sin ungdom.

EK: That is probably most true for poets as well because it is such an oral medium.

AMM: Ja. Det er rigtigt. For digterne er det særlig vigtigt, men jeg tror også, at det betyder noget for prosaforfatterne. Peter Høeg var god til det til at begynde med. Han var over hele verden, denne unge mand, der kunne optræde. Det var ligesom at møde en eventyrlig figur. Han havde en karisma og udstråling, som betød rigtig meget.

EK: He does not do much now?

AMM: Nej. Han var meget god til at tage forfatteropgaven og -rollen meget alvorlig samtidig med, at han også kunne træde lidt ved siden af den og være overraskende og underholdende. Det er jo performance. Hvis du ikke kan det, er det svært.

EK: I can imagine. I wonder if it is harder if people do not want to speak English or are not brilliant at speaking in another language.

AMM: Nu tror jeg, at for de nyere generationer betyder det at snakke engelsk ikke noget som helst. Når man er forfatter eller akademiker er det helt selvfølgeligt, men det har tidligere været svært. Du kan også se Suzanne Brøgger oversat til engelsk. Hun er rigtig god til at tale med pressen og forlæggere og være tilstede.

EK: I have often wondered about her books because only two or three of her books have been translated into English and she has not had massive success. I wonder if it is because there are already authors in English, who are doing a similar thing at the time in the 70s with the feminist wave.

AMM: Ja. Det har du nok ret i. Det er derfor dit studie er så spændende og vigtig for os alle, så man kan se, hvad det er, der sker.

Interview with Barbara Haveland

Beau Marche cafe, Copenhagen. 23 June 2017

EK: What I've normally been doing is starting by talking to translators about the books that they've been working on, so for example can you tell me a bit about the Peter Høeg books that you have translated? It was all in the nineties really, wasn't it? *Borderliners*, *A History of Danish Dreams*, *The Woman and The Ape*, and *Tales of the Night*.

BH: Now you're going a long way back. A long way back.

EK: Do you remember how you got them?

BH: - How I got started? I'll try to keep this reasonably brief, but it all started not long after I decided to go into translation, or not *decided*, but was suddenly in a position where I had a baby son, and didn't want to shove him into a nursery at months' old, so I decided, okay, I'll find something to do to work from home, and I wrote to various publishers because of my own background in bookselling. One of the things I suggested that I might be able to do - little did I know - was maybe I could do some translation. I got a couple of odd books, small things, from Gyldendal.

EK: So what was your background before that, sorry?

BH: I was a bookseller in Scotland for 16 years in Glasgow. Then I came here [Denmark] end of '88, because of meeting someone, moved here, and then learned Danish after I came here. He's Norwegian so then from that followed the Norwegian, so I gradually built it up, right? But I also worked in a bookshop here in Copenhagen for three years so that gave me a good grounding in Danish literature and authors and all of that. Basically what happened was that I had done a couple of things, nothing fancy y'know... and then I had been reading Peter Høeg's *Forestilling om det tyvende århundrede* and I think I'd said to my husband, do you know what, I wouldn't mind... now, if I'd known what I was getting into, I probably would've stopped right there! Because you don't really know what you're taking on. However, I thought, okay I'm going to be a bit bold here, so I wrote to Merete Ries who had started Rosinante and she was the person who found Peter Høeg. I wrote to her and just presented myself, and said 'this is me and what I've done is, I've taken just the first pages of this book by Peter and I've translated them and I wanted you to have a look at them because if you were interested in having it translated I would be really keen to have a go'.

EK: Okay, that's nice - when was this, was this before or after *Smilla*?

BH: That would've been... *Smilla* was out, I think. Was a big deal, was *Smilla*. There's a whole sort of controversy with that which we won't go into because that involves someone else. But there was a controversy - the publishers had... there were issues with it. And I think that was what had prompted me to say, well, maybe I should have a go at this.

EK: So you knew about that controversy?

BH: I knew there had been a story about what had happened with the translation. So I wrote, and she [Ries] wrote back and said, well actually, Barbara, we have this **other** book by Peter and that was *Borderliners* (*De måske egnede*) and we're actually looking for a translator for that, would you like to do a little piece, translate a little bit for that and then we'll look at that and see what we think and out of that came the job of doing *Borderliners*. But I have never looked at it, I don't dare. I don't dare go back to it.

EK: Okay, why?

BH: Because it was the first book, and if I went back to it now, I just know I'd think, Barbara *{head in hands melodramatically}* really?! I'm sure I would! Probably not... but you know it's just one of those things, I think oh my god that was really where I started.

EK: Okay - I've heard that before, there are quite a few translators who don't necessarily look back at their work, even when it's published in their hands, they think 'I can't read it' -

BH: - No, because you're sure that the first page you open it at there'll be a *great* big mistake going *boom-boom-boom* at you! So you don't look, no. But that [book] also introduced me to Harvill and Christopher MacLehose. I knew Christopher anyway from my bookselling days in Scotland and so when he knew it was me, you know *{affects his voice}* Barbara! - and he became like my mentor. There was no internet. Everything, manuscripts, had to be put in the post and then they would come back and they would land on the doormat with a great thump with Christopher's notes all the way through. Tiny writing all the way through, and I was terrified every time his notes came in, but by God, I learned! That was my tuition, that was my education in translation, to have him. He made you go back over every line. He picked out every repetition that you hadn't noticed. Even now I still have him on my shoulder when I'm doing anything. So that was really where it started and then once I'd done that... and the thing was, they had Farrar Straus and Giroux in New York, so I mean the poor old translator, if I think about it now: they had me doing one translation for two publishers. I had to do two sets of *korrektur* - you know, proofreading - and one flat payment, no royalties, nothing.

EK: Wow, okay - so do you mean that you had the editor from the US and the editor from the UK and you did corrections for both? Wow, yeah, that's a lot of work, isn't it?

BH: Mm-mm, it was actually.

EK: Did you work with Peter [Høeg] himself in any way?

BH: No, he didn't want to be involved. Other authors do, authors vary very much, he didn't want to. But I did pass nonetheless - of course, Merete Ries was such a very good contact with Christopher and she knew Christopher's way of working and knew of course he's very respected so she knew the manuscript was in safe hands. I had this fantastic guide, as a baby translator, really. But I would say that it was with those books that I learnt my craft. Really. *Borderliners* was a strange book in many ways but when you come to the others - [for example] *Tales of the Night* - then you're getting in to... it really is Blixen-ish, you're getting really in there, it's a real mouthful to translate, it's definitely *{pause}* it was a good training.

EK: Definitely. And do you know what Peter [Høeg] thinks of them?

BH: No. No, no, no-no. I mean, we did see each other a few times, but he's very a reticent person and not somebody who you're going to start saying, well, what did you think -

EK: No, no, this is what I wonder about - like you say, the controversy of *Smilla* makes you wonder if it was worth finding out. I don't know the full story of that really, I don't know how involved he was in the translation, the re-editing process -

BH: I'm not going to say any more about that because I think that's unfair.

EK: No, that's fine, like you say you weren't involved with that. What about Carsten Jensen, *I Have Seen The World Begin*?

BH: Funnily enough I'm just about to do an essay by him, I haven't worked with him for years! But that was great because... of course, that was also Rosinante, so from then on, people just came to me,

because I'd done this, and I'd done that, and I'd done that, so then they were saying well, Barbara, would you be interested in doing this. Again, it was Harvill, but with Carsten it was totally different because he really wanted to be involved. We would sit down at the offices in Rosinante and go through chapters together. I would translate chapters, I would send him [chapters] - as I still do with most authors. Once I've got the chapters up to a certain stage where I can see the queries I have for an author, then I will send them with my queries, and then some of them will just phone you, and say no that's fine Barbara or I'll just explain this bit. If I can see that maybe there's two meanings and I want to say to them, is this what you meant or would you rather I went this way or I can turn that *that* way, you know, that kind of thing. Others will come back with more detailed responses in the manuscript, others again will just write you an email with a few notes, and that's it, so everyone has their own way of working and you adapt. With Carsten I just sat down, we'd had several meetings where we spent hours, then we'd go and have lunch up in the canteen at Rosinante and then we'd go back and start again -

EK: Great, okay -

BH: And that was fantastic, also because as a translator you're on your own. All day, every day, months at a time often. So it's really good sometimes when you have the possibility to have that kind of... you're actually working with somebody else, and you can get right down into the nitty-gritty of a sentence and how to turn it. Again, it depends also on the author and how good they feel their command of English is. Everybody has some command of English. Some authors think they're better than they are, others are very modest and feel they're not as good as they actually are. Every conversation will take place in a mixture of English and Danish or English and Norwegian, because we go back and forth, and I say just explain to me in Norwegian if you want, or Danish, exactly what you want to say here, and I'll get the right thing with it.

EK: That sounds really good. Then what happens after that - that's sent to the British or American publishers and then you then get edits back?

BH: Then their editor will come back to me at some point.

EK: But at least you have confidence in what you've sent in the first place.

BH: Oh, absolutely. Yeah. You have to be very careful with the Americans in particular. I've experienced this with one of Peter's books earlier on: there was an editor over there, and of course he [Høeg] used a lot of repetition, so in a sentence he would repeat a phrase, or repeat words and then it would come up again later. So this editor in America had just taken a pencil and gone *{mimes crossing out with a pencil}* chht, chht, chht, chht, chht all the way through. I had to go back and say, hang on a minute, you cannae do that! You mustn't do that! This is the author's work, you're not allowed to do that. So in a way I tend to see myself also as the person who has to defend the author's work at times when people want to sanitise it sometimes or want to take out all of the stuff that makes it what it is.

EK: You can sort of see why in English that wouldn't 'work' - in inverted commas - but then obviously like you say that *is* what's written there...

BH: Well, sometimes I'll explain that even though this may seem odd, it's important here that we keep it. At other times I'll say to the author, look, we can't do that, but I can do this down here for you instead. That comes up a lot with poetry. Where you can't solve that quite the way you might want to do, but if we let that go we can do something down here instead, we can do it in our own way. So you have to talk to the editor, but then the good thing is - again depending who you're working with, if you've worked with one publishing house on various books then they get used to you, and they know [me]. I think I'm safe in saying anybody I work with in publishers - mainly in Britain of course, there've been the odd American one, but it's mainly Britain - they know me, and they know they can trust me. They know that the book will be in safe hands with me and that they will get my notes as well to explain why this word

has to be kept, for example, and an editor can say, 'do we have to use that word?' and I'll explain exactly why we have to use that word or why I've used this particular word because the Danish or the Norwegian says *this*, and this is the reason, because this hooks up with something else or whatever. So I'll always explain to them exactly why.

EK: And how do you maintain those relationships with the publishers and so on? Do you go to the book fairs much?

BH: I found out very early on that it was very nice to go, but actually... you know, to be honest I always had books lined up. There was always work lined up. I mean at the worse - *{laughs}* I say the worse - but I was at a point where it got too much, where actually I could see that the next year and a half, two years, was already booked. Then people would be coming and saying Barbara we've got this book and I was all 'I'd really like to do it but I've got three books lined up'. I began to get to the point where I said I can't really do this any more, I need to find another way, because it was getting a bit scary. It was like, one deadline was met, and away it went, and I would start on the next one. I had a son who was growing up at that time, you know, and I suddenly felt... I was working weekends, I was working evenings, and it got kind of out of hand. But it was never a case of me having to... more recently, there have been gaps, but that's also because I've chosen... I had to learn to say no.

EK: Yeah. It must be very hard as a freelancer.

BH: The problem is, it's either a feast or a famine. And because the money is not good - let's say it upfront, it's just rotten, the payment is getting worse, comparatively speaking. If I'm being paid by British publishers - look at the pound at the moment, you know - and if they can't pay me in Danish kroner because I have to guarantee that the amount I've signed on a contract to get will be the same amount in six months' time, with the pound in freefall at the moment - and that has happened before. I've lost a lot of money, because the contract was signed in pounds, so you were always working really flat out in order that you could get the money, because it was never like an ordinary salary. It was always... if you were to get anything out of it, you had to try and work as hard as you could, but I don't work fast. Still. I go through draft and draft and draft and draft and draft, so there's only a certain tempo I can keep up, therefore you have to say yes, okay, another book lined up, that's good, so there will still be money coming in in six months' time, there will still be money coming in in a year's time.

EK: But what happens with the books - when you said you were offered a book but you knew you didn't have any time for a year and a half, you just said no?

BH: - I said sorry. It just goes. -

EK: Have you ever referred a book onto anyone else that you know? How does it work?

BH: Oh yeah, that happens all the time. The problem is the way - strictly speaking, there are only a handful of us, you know. We, the older guard you could say now, like Don [Bartlett] and like Martin Aitken - you know, the ones who work full time on it. Because you can't clone yourself. You can't have an assistant. You can't.

EK: No, it's not like a 'regular' job in that sense, is it?

BH: My husband used to say, but Barbara, couldn't you get somebody else to do the rough work? I say, but it doesn't work that way! For me that rough draft that I do first of all, that is where I discover where the problems lie, that is such an essential part of the work. I can't, you can't, source that out. There's only you. If you've got smaller texts, if there's a longer period in which to complete a book, you could possibly do smaller jobs now and again inbetween times, to keep a bit of cashflow coming, but it's a serious consideration, and really there aren't that many translators who are doing it full time, who aren't

retired academics, or who have another job alongside and work on translation part time. If you do it full time, it's not easy. It really isn't. So you have to run very hard.

EK: Absolutely. And with the other translators, have you made use of the translators' networks in any way?

BH: Only in a very sort of informal way. I've our own little support group as it were because you meet people -

EK: How do you meet people, so like Martin Aitken and so on?

BH: Just at seminars and either things here in Denmark through the Danish Literature Centre (as it used to be) and NORLA in Norway; you would get together then. Then when Don [Bartlett] was starting... I had used Anne Born when I was starting out: I could write to Anne Born, and say Anne, you know, I've been offered this rate, is this okay? When you're new to things - I was told to write to her, and she would give me advice and then I in turn would get... once we got into the email age, it was Don who first got in touch with me, just when he was starting out and he just was graduating from UEA. At that point he wrote to me and said, I'm just starting out, what should I do, and I've been offered this and I got back and said *{taps table}* don't you dare accept that! *{laughs}* I was in Norway living at that time and we got in touch that way. Then Kari [Dickson] got in touch with me. People get in touch with me, and then we would meet at seminars, and so we still do keep in touch, and occasionally if somebody has a little issue with a publisher or is unsure what to do, they contact the others and get a little bit of feedback.

EK: That's nice. So what do you think about these translators' networks like the Translators Association, also DENT as well that we're trying to set up? How would that work for you?

BH: Well, I mean, possibly... it might still be something I would use. Possibly it might be of more use to people starting out. The Translators' Association? Not really been any help at all. No.

EK: Are you a member? Or were you a member?

BH: No, I considered it, but then I found out that really - and Don was on the committee for a while - it just seemed to me that actually they weren't doing that much for translators, particularly for translators like myself who are living elsewhere. For many years I was a member of the *Danish* Translators' Association, paying fees, but then I found out as well that they were doing nothing to help me. They were very much there for Danish translators translating into Danish, but every time I had a contract I had to fight for my own terms, and I had to fight to get the right fee, and there was no back up from there at all. It was very nice as a way of meeting other people, but actually eventually I found that I was putting out money, it was handy to get the *Forfatter* - you know, the magazine every month and all that, but again it really didn't appear to have much relevance to me. Through that I did go a couple of times to Hald Hovedgaard [translator/writers residence] and got away for a week or so there to work: it was very *hyggeligt* to go, but at the end of the day I felt really, no, it was up to me, I did feel I was on my own. Very much on my own. Especially that in that first ten years or so, definitely.

EK: So you learnt it all yourself really, with a few questions to contacts that you made?

BH: Yeah, yeah. Definitely.

EK: And have you been to any of these *Statens Kunstfond* events? They put on a programme for translators visiting the [Copenhagen] book fair, for example, though it's generally been for people living outside to come along.

BH: I haven't been involved the past couple of years, but I used to be every year. And that's always great. I'm in contact still with a lot of the other translators, [for example] Bruno Berni in Italy. You are in contact with them, and it's always again very nice to meet up with them, because then these are people you're on the same terms with - in terms of, often we're translating the same books, and many of them are also translating from Norwegian. When I was working on [Jan] Kjørstad, his trilogy, then there were others who were also working on that trilogy. Bruno Berni also translates Morten Søndergaard to Italian, that kind of thing. That's really good because then you can sit there and have a wee chat about this book or that book and how's it going with this, that I find very good. But again it's very much more on a collegial basis. It's not where you sit down and say, okay now we're going to really put the foot down with this publisher, it's not about that. It's more about just moral support, which is very good.

EK: Absolutely, nice networking. They part-funded the mentorship [scheme] in Norwich, didn't they - BCLT - can you tell me a bit about that, how that all came about?

BH: Well, they'd been running it I think for a year or so before I was asked if I would like to do a mentorship. I did it for two years running, and then because of family matters and work I just had to say that I'll need to pull out for at least a couple of years. Maybe later I'll come back, and I would love to do it again. I had a fantastic time with my two mentees!

EK: Who was that then, one of them was Paul Garrett wasn't it?

BH: Yeah and then David who lives in Fyn. David Young. It was just great, with both of them. We had a really good working relationship. I really enjoyed that. Because when you get their first drafts and right away, if you've been working as I have in translation for 25 years, there are certain things that stand out right away. There's the classic mistakes, and the standard expressions that have been translated literally which mean nothing in English, and that kind of thing. It's how to... then you've got to sit there with somebody and hold their hand really and say, now, you're gonna look at this and I felt very much like Christopher [MacLehose] had been with me all those years before, but I'm saying now don't be daunted by this, when I show you what I've got here, and all these notes, please don't be daunted because I've been there and I know what it's like but don't worry, don't worry! And then [we] go through it and say, if you were just to turn that sentence that way or if you see what I mean about this, and you've just misunderstood the meaning a little bit there, and talk them through... but often it's about showing people that they've actually got to go much deeper into the text than they're actually doing. At first it's like a superficial translation, but they're not seeing maybe the music in a particular sentence; could you see why the author has used that *particular* word, because it brings out a particular tone, or the colour, can you see how they use colour, you know, and you've got to... you've missed those things and you've actually translated it without using the colour there and that actually is really important because if you think about that scene. But that's all that comes with experience, it's something you have to learn, and I *really* enjoyed being able to pass on... I thought that was really good.

EK: That's like passing it forward a bit, isn't it.

BH: It really is, it really really is. When you've got people, [and] you're having to say: please, please whatever criticism I give you, it will be constructive, I promise you, and I'm here for you. I'm not going to just say oh this is wrong and this is wrong just to make myself look good because I'm not. Of course, I don't have Christopher's manuscripts. Now I wish I'd held on to a couple of them, because then I could present them to them and say - *{mimes holding manuscript}* you know - and what he would do with me was, in the margin sometimes on a page just on the side of a line there would be a little 'F', a little italic F, and he would say to me, Barbara, do you what that F stands for? And I would say, no Christopher? And he'd say, it stands for *felicitate*. Lift the sentence. Lift it. Bring out... That kind of thing. You'd think okay, lift the sentence, you'd go back to it and think *{mock despair}* Oh God I can't, what am I gonna do? But after a while you begin to understand, you've got to look more at the sentence, *look* at how the

author has written it, why has he or she written it that way, and it's up to you to bring that out: lift it. I really like doing that. It takes a wee bit of work.

EK: Yeah, it must take time -

BH: Because if you're going to do it properly -

EK: How did you get approached to do it?

BH: They just got in touch with me. Sarah Bower and Daniel Hahn got in touch.

EK: Because they already knew you?

BH: Yep, well, they knew me through other things, you know. So they got in touch and asked whether I'd be interested.

EK: Obviously you did the mentor as Danish? Or both [Danish and Norwegian]?

BH: I did it as Danish in both cases. Yeah, yeah. And Paul did a play, which was a modern take on A Doll's House, but what happens after she goes out -

EK: Jakob Weis, was it?

BH: Yep, yep.

EK: They did a proper performance of it in London.

BH: Indeed, indeed.

EK: Did you go over and see that?

BH: No, I didn't see it, no.

EK: Oh that's a shame. It was brilliant.

BH: But it was such fun doing that, you know. That was interesting... so that was that.

EK: That's really good. What are your feelings generally about *Statens Kunstfond* and the support they give translators? I assume you've received grants for various things?

BH: Yeah, I think they're pretty good, I would say so. I think the shame of it is that as a translator translating from Danish, and if you think about it, if you've got *Litteraturcenter* there, its job is to *formidle dansk litteratur i udlandet* [disseminate Danish literature abroad], right? Danish literature abroad. But as a translator from Danish to English, I can only apply for a sample translation grant, I think the maximum now is 9000 kroner?

EK: Might be 8000?

BH: 8000? 8000 kroner, that's the maximum you can apply for. So if I get people coming to me and saying Barbara I'd really like to see if we can't get a larger extract of this book translated to pass onto publishers in the US and in Britain or whatever else, because often English is the language that's used to sell it elsewhere in the world as well, right? I have to explain to them that I can apply for this much, but that's *all* I can apply for. Other than that it's the publisher in Britain or the US who has to come to them

and say... and then what happens is, if for example it were me who were taken on by a publisher to translate a book then when the book is published I will be asked to confirm with *Statens Kunstfond* that I have indeed received this money as a translation fee from this publisher and then they will give that money to - or a proportion of that money - to the publisher. It's the same in Norway with NORLA.

EK: Okay. Have you got any comparison to make between NORLA and Statens Kunstfond in Denmark?

BH: No... I think possibly I have more contact with - not *Kunstfond*, [but] the literature side of it, the Danish Literature Centre or whatever you call it, *Litteraturcenter* - it's changed names so many times -

EK: I think it's not still called that, but I know what you mean. It's now the literature department within -

BH: No, no, and it just changes its name all the time, but anyway - I had great contact with them, especially early on. People who are still there or have moved on a little bit. That's been great. I used to do a lot of work for them with the *Danish Literary Magazine*. That was a thing in the Spring and the Autumn and I enjoyed doing that, but I haven't had so much contact with them in recent years and sometimes I miss that a bit. You feel a little bit as if... but that's also because I have not been actively involved with them because I've been doing other things. There's no problem whenever I get someone coming to me to say Barbara - often it's poetry, if Morten [Søndergaard] were to come to me, or if Ursula Andkjær Olsen comes to me and says I would really like to have a few poems translated to take out or for this magazine somewhere, do you think you could help me, and I say: listen, I'll apply and we'll see what we can get, and usually that covers it. I can get about 7000, 8000 [DKK] to cover some poems, and there's never any problem. And that I'm glad of because they know my credentials and they know my CV and so that usually is no problem at all, which is nice.

EK: Do you think that helps then, that your name is known?

BH: Och yes, I think so. I think so. I hope so.

EK: I'm sure it does, it's just one of those leading questions really, whether it matters that your name is out there. Did you see, it was maybe a year ago or so now, the controversy that happened with - there was a new start-up publisher in Britain called Nordisk Books - similar name to Norvik - where in the [news]papers over here there was a bit of criticism about this small company translating and publishing *Hærværk* -

BH: No, I don't remember that at all...

EK: Well, I suppose the main point of these articles was... there were a couple of articles, one in *Politiken* that was saying that *Statens Kunstfond* shouldn't fund this kind of thing because it's such a big classic in Denmark and it's so important that it shouldn't be this tiny publishing company that's not established getting this money. I just wondered what you thought about that concept...

BH: I think it's a discussion point.

EK: What's their role, I suppose is the question?

BH: - I don't remember, I must've missed that, I don't remember it at all - but there's definitely an issue there. The problem is, then, you've got to weigh up, I suppose, it depends first of all *who* are they getting to translate it. Because obviously I can see the point, because it is one of the Danish modern classics, and obviously you would want that to be put in the hands of a translator who would do it justice, so that's one side of it. But on the other hand, it's so difficult to get literature in translation published, and small publishers find it so hard to find the funds to translate. If you think about it, in Britain there are

many small publishers, some of them have gone under - Arcadia in its time was a brilliant place for that kind of thing, but they were struggling all the time - and so I suppose the opposing argument is, but at least we're getting it out there. But it depends what the translation's like. If it's a mangled translation, then that is worthless in a way, right? But I didn't get that debate so I'll need to go back and look and Google and see if I can't find some of that debate.

EK: It was definitely interesting, this conversation about what is the role of *Statens Kunstfond*, should it be somehow more hands-on with these books, about what happens with them and things.

BH: But I can see that that is a... it's a question, should they be monitoring the standard of the translation? Normally of course the publisher - but by then the book is published - the publisher will send copies of the book to *Kunstfonden*, but by then it's too late for that book. But it could act as a way... if you suddenly look at it and think, but this is just, y'know, not good enough, then you could use that as a way of saying, well, from now on we'll need to see an extract initially or whatever, or see the proposed translator's CV - which I think they probably have to do anyway? I think you usually have to submit [a CV] to a publisher when they're applying for a grant...

EK: I think they do, yeah.

BH: You have to say who the translator's going to be.

EK: What about the dominance of Scandinavian crime fiction at the moment in the UK and the US, do you have any thoughts about that?

BH: Och, yeah, I mean.... it just was a *thing* right? It's just a thing. Of course once a few - and of course there's some very good Scandinavian crime fiction published - but then there was so much of it over here, and a lot of it was *{whispers}* serious crap. I'm not gonna name names or point elbows, but I got to translate extracts from some things, and I was thinking, oh dear. Oh dear. Badly written. But it became a thing, you know. You'd get two husband and wife couples, or brothers and sisters, or whatever, who'd be writing together, and they'd never published anything before but already they're signed up for a six book series, and you think well, come ON! *{both laugh}* Could we maybe get the first book out and see whether it's any good? I was getting a lot of this stuff to read and to report on, and there were a couple of [readers'] reports which I wrote which were just not good at all, where I had to say, I'm sorry - and probably it'll get published anyway - but I have to tell you in all honesty, the characters are cardboard, the plot is so hackneyed, the dialogue, everything. But then, because again, oh we'll jump on this bandwagon. But it was easy to sell, because publishers were desperate for it, so you could sell it. But there was only a small percentage that was actually worth anything.

EK: So who are you writing the readers' reports for?

BH: Oh, various people. I haven't done any reports for a while, mainly because the pay is... the pay. I think publishers forget that a) you have to read the book. Now, you're doing your other work, so when are you going to read this book? You're going to read it in the evenings, in the weekends, whenever, but it's still work. And then writing a report. It takes me a while, writing a report, and I find I go through draft after draft after... trying to decide what is it I actually think about this, and so I can spend a whole week working over and over a report in order to get it right. Now, there was a time, and I'm going back to around about 2000, when I could maybe get a hundred pounds for a report. I was offered not that long ago, for a two volume book, I was offered £40 per book for the report. So I'd get £80 for two volumes. Big book. I just politely wrote back and said, I'm really sorry, I'm so busy at the moment, I can't, and I've actually more or less stopped doing reports, because the average about ten years back or fifteen years back was £80. I can go back and look at my old invoices and say £80, I could push it to £100, but now they're offering £40-50 for a report, and the same goes for fees. It's terrible. When you think about

the work that's got to go into it, if you're going to be giving an honest report on something, so I'm afraid, yeah, I just don't.

EK: No, that makes sense, definitely makes sense. I think we've covered most of the things I wanted to talk about. I was also looking at the process of publication for various books and how they come over to the UK, and I don't know if you'd have anything to say about whether there's a typical process that you've experienced, or is every book almost different? The relationships you have with the Danish publishers, the UK publishers...

BH: I don't really have any contact with the Danish publisher. Apart from possibly when the British publisher - and it's very rare - there are occasions maybe when it will be the Danish publisher, but that's been very rare over the past 25 years. Usually it will be the [Anglophone] publisher - the one who's going to publish it, not the one who's already published it in the original language, so the British or the American - and then -

EK: - and also then working with the author, that varies by the book as well, from what you've said? Sometimes you work closely with them, sometimes not.

BH: Mm, and that's the good bit, that sometimes you don't. But there can be cases where I'll say to the British publisher, well, do you want me to contact the Danish publisher to get a copy of the book from them if I don't have it already? I can get in touch with them and they'll send it, and sometimes the British publisher will have it and will send it to me, or sometimes I get the manuscript first, because the final book is not yet published.

EK: Okay, just trying to think about the books you translated: you didn't translate the next Carsten Jensen one? Was that *We, the Drowned*?

BH: *I Have Seen the World Begin* and then *I Have Seen* {pause} that's a senior moment! It's gone completely. What happened was, Christopher at Harvill felt that the book was too long. So then -

EK: Which one sorry?

BH: The first one: *I Have Seen the World Begin*. {pause} And then, after Carsten and I translated the whole thing and worked through it and got it to where we thought it was good enough to pass, but then he [MacLehose] wanted to make quite a lot of cuts. You know it's difficult for an author sometimes when having to edit down a book, so I wasn't involved in that process at all, I think... I can't remember what happened, I think Harvill didn't take on the second book [*Jeg Har Hørt et Stjernesud*] , as far as I know, and I think partly it was to do with this idea of... in a way it was a shame because that was just half of the journey, it was only half of the world you know that had been covered {pauses again to try and think of title} Anyway. You won't find it under my name because I haven't translated it.

EK: Because there was *We the Drowned*?

BH: But that came much later, that was much later.

EK: {looks at corpus database spreadsheet} I'll filter this by author.

BH: It's funny because I can see the cover, but I can't actually remember.

EK: {pauses to look} It'll be here somewhere...

BH: No, no, it'll come.

EK: But anyway the immediate next book [*Jeg Har Hørt et Stjernesud*] , so Harvill didn't want to take that one on, is that the point?

BH: I can't remember what really happened there, but I know that there was a discussion back and forth between author and publisher, so I wasn't involved in any of that. Eventually the first volume was published but there was quite a bit of editing done to bring it down a bit. I suppose it's another problem, because books have got longer and longer and longer and longer, and I sometimes feel that editors don't do the job that they once used to do. Often perhaps with very well-established authors, there's almost too much 'mustn't touch'. I've translated books where I felt oh now this is getting extremely wordy here, maybe this could have been pruned, you know.

EK: But then that's not your job, or you feel like that's not your job?

BH: That's not my job. That's not my job, no no no no. I would only ever do anything along that lines if that was the author's decision as well, and the interesting thing, one of the nice things you find sometimes when you're translating a book is for the author it gives them a chance to say, well, do you know what, I was never happy with that passage, do you mind if I change that, or do you know what let's take that out, or let's just keep that line there and let that go, or I would rather turn that... you know, and that's interesting sometimes when somebody will say, I've never been happy with that line.

EK: That's interesting, isn't it. So it's almost re-writing a bit.

BH: Yeah and the other interesting thing is that often you find if you have one sentence, one passage, you're really struggling with, to get it right, and you think there's something, maybe it's a bit ponderous, or there's something with it that doesn't seem quite right, and every time you do it, you think no that's not right, no, and then if you go back to the author and say this or that, they'll say themselves, do you know, I had real trouble with that bit there, and you find you can actually tell! You can actually tell. It's the same with the first pages: the first passages of chapters, both for translator and for author, you can tell when you're feeling your way into it. I would say I almost always find by the time you're halfway into a book and after I've had the first feedback from the author where I know if I'm on the right track, see, once I get past that halfway mark, somehow it falls into place. You become more sort of *fortrolig* [familiar] with the text, and you've got more confidence that you're making the right decisions. Also there's problems at the beginning and you're not sure how to solve it, but sometimes, as you go further and further into a book, you think ahhh, now if I do this here, this will solve this problem back in an earlier chapter, and as you start to tie it all together, you find - I usually find the last chapters in a book, by the time I get to the third draft, it seems to all be falling into place. Then when you've finished, you think, okay I'll start the fourth draft, and you go back to the first pages and think oh God, no... because it's really interesting that process of when you go back and you think I'm still having trouble here, because you still haven't got into it in those first pages, but you're rolling by the end -

EK: Because you've got that familiarity?

BH: - you're rolling by the end. So you have to get to the end and then use that - whatever tone you've managed to get by the end, you've got to take that back to the beginning and work so that you relax. I think it's partly also true of the author and maybe you pick up a little bit, because they're also working their way in and have gone over it and over it and over it again.

EK: Absolutely. Well, I think we've covered everything I wanted to talk about really. A bit about my research: the first thing I've done is to look at which books I'm talking about, so they're books between 1990 and 2015 and there have been only about 125 books published in that period in Britain from Denmark, so it's not that many really. It does seem to be having a bit of an upswing since about 2010, so that's interesting that it's slightly going up -

BH: That also comes in with the bulge in crime fiction, doesn't it as well.

EK: I think so, yeah, not that it is necessarily all crime fiction actually, but maybe the interest has [resulted in] an upswing. Then looking at particular agents that are bringing over literature, so the publishers and the translators and state funding, and also this whole brand of Denmark - what do audiences think about when they think about Denmark. Obviously really recently it's been the TV stuff.

BH: Oh yeah, definitely. That must have had a knock-on effect back to the fiction, it really must have had.

EK: I think so. And very recently, last year, was the whole *hygge* books. A very British phenomenon, these British publishers publishing these books - that's [after] the end of my time period, but it's part of the bigger brand of what I'm looking into about what people think about when they think about Denmark.

BH: The other thing we didn't mention - you're using the word 'agents' in terms of all of us who are involved, but there's also the publishers' agents. Specifically them. Not that I have much contact with them, but there are a couple of actual agents who I've got to know over the years who will come to me -

EK: That's nice -

BH: - and say, so-and-so has a book coming out, how would you feel about doing a sample translation? Or would you be interested in translating it, he or she is still working on it, but we can already now send you the latest draft -

EK: So this is the author's agent here [in Denmark]?

BH: Not here in Denmark, in London.

EK: In London, okay. Because it seems like quite a new phenomenon, literary agents within Scandinavia I think, it's quite established in Sweden but not so much in Denmark...

BH: People like the Wylie Agency, I have contacts with them. I used to have quite a lot of contact with Chatto and Windus, the agency side, but sometimes it will be an author's agent who will come to me and make contact and say so-and-so, new book, how would you feel about doing that... it's just another way. I've had some good contacts that way over the years. People that I can also go to, and on a couple of occasions have, because people have come to me, authors, coming to me and saying what can I do about this, and I'd say well, you know what, I don't have that many contacts on that side, but I do know this person and that person and I can put you in touch with them, so you can facilitate contact there. That can come back to you in another way from the agent.

EK: At the moment what's your balance of Danish and Norwegian books?

BH: At the moment, it's about fifty-fifty I would say. I haven't done so much fiction just recently. But there's all sorts of reasons for that, because last year was a very hard year personally. A lot of deaths in the family. And before that I'd hit a wall. Last spring. I'm not going to go into details but there was a rather unfortunate situation with a publisher - no, a writer - in Norway, and it all went wrong, and it was really not very pleasant, and kind of took a lot of energy out of me, and I thought I just don't want to do any more of this at the moment, and at the same time my dad had just died - I had actually pulled back a bit, and had to cut down on my work because he for several years had been getting frailer due to Parkinson's. When I was here and he was there [in Scotland], I was going over eventually every six weeks to give my sister a break and give my dad's partner a break... all of that, so it meant that I stopped doing as much, I didn't want to take on too many big projects, because I was away a lot. Then last year

I'd started a novel but had eventually to pull out of that which was a shame. Then my dad died, and then shortly after his younger brother, who was my dear friend in London, died, and that came as a shock, and then there was other stuff, so last year I didn't really do that much.

EK: I'm sorry to hear that, it's a lot at once isn't it.

BH: But these things come along, and I'm at that age where it does come along! But what was good was that instead of getting bigger stuff, I had nice little things like a libretto for an opera, and other music, operatic type, very modern, very avant-garde, and then was more poetry - and that was all Danish - and now I'm working on, I'm in the middle of a really weird Norwegian poetry project, which I'm a bit frazzled at the moment *{cafe buzz gets louder as more customers get seated}* I can describe it to you when we're outside -

EK: Is that what you were working on this morning?

BH: Yep, yep. It's a matter of thinking okay what will be next, but as I say, the Carsten Jensen essay [is next]. I'll take July off, and then in August I'll start that. That looks very interesting. That's going to be something... also a finite thing. I'm not blocked into something for six months. When I've had that for a little while then I'm ready to do another novel.

EK: That's nice to be in that position, isn't it?

BH: But last year eventually I just had to shut down and say I need to get away from that desk, I can't sit at that desk. After 25 years, you get to the point where you think, I want to do other stuff for a while. I'm 65 now, so you're looking at the balance of your life. I couldn't ever stop working completely. Because it's what I'm good at.

Interview with Charlotte Barslund

Pizza Express, Beauchamp Place, Knightsbridge, London. 15 March 2017.

(Interview takes place immediately after DENT meeting on theme of 'translator as agent' at the Danish Embassy in London)

EK: What were we just talking about [en route to restaurant] - a comparison almost of the Danish Embassy versus, have you had any dealings with the Norwegian Embassy?

CB: The Norwegians are fantastic! They are much more confident in their outreach work. I don't know whether they just have a much stronger sense of national pride. The Danes have been around for so long that they're a little bit like, well we don't really value all that power because we've had it for so long, whereas the Norwegians are in many ways a very young country. They're enormously keen to promote their literature and their activities and they are everywhere. Their hospitality, their generosity, is just unparalleled. There's a real warmth about how they do things.

EK: That's interesting. I've heard similar recently from Don [Bartlett] actually, I have to say. If you had a similar situation where you wanted to have a meeting with a translator do you think that the Norwegian Embassy would be more willing to let...? -

CB: - Oh absolutely. The Danes I think have not quite worked out what it is they want from us, and I can understand that, because there is a risk that we end up doubling their work. I mean there are lots of excellent Danish publishers and agents and of course the Danish Arts Agency, and we have to be really careful not to reinvent the wheel. I'm not sure that as a translator I have much to offer as an agent. I've learned a lot of publishing along the way, but it wasn't the primary purpose of my career. I would be surprised if I were to discover an author whose work hasn't already been introduced to a British publisher by a Danish agent or a Danish publishing house - I just don't think there's that, the chance of there being something completely unknown out there that everybody except me has overlooked, I think it's unlikely.

EK: So you don't see that 'agent' role or scout role as part of your job, actually?

CB: No, but again as I've said to you, I'm not sure whether what's true of me is true of translators in general. It might be true of the next generation. You mentioned Sarah Death earlier with her saying there is a real risk that a translator does a lot of the legwork, does a lot of reading and promoting and pushing and then the publisher just buys the right and the translator doesn't get any recognition, any remuneration for their work.

EK: Exactly, and there's no guarantee - even if they've done the reader's report they don't always get the job.

CB: No. I do samples and while it's nice - *{interrupted by food arriving to table}* - when you do a sample, there is no strict *{inaud}* obligation on anyone's part to give you that full translation if the book is sold. It might happen, but you **can't** have that feeling of ownership that just because you've done the sample, they should ask you first. The publisher may have their own translator in mind.

EK: Back to the start, really. You are obviously very well established as a translator. Your experience potentially now is different from the emerging translators if you like.

CB: Oh I'm sure.

EK: Because you have these relationships with publishers and agents and so on where they come to you?

CB: Mm. In a way I think that we all go through different stages and actually I'm occasionally contacted by authors who want to pay me directly to translate their books and the author wants to try and sell the book themselves. I realised that they often have a lot of questions about well which publisher do I go to, how do I promote my book, how do I pay you and what's the situation - and you think actually I'm not sure I should be giving you a lesson in how to do this, because there are enough agencies and publishers in Denmark and if nobody has picked it up, that might be a clue. You can't both pay me for my work and then ask me to give you lessons in how to sell it. I can see that you don't know, but sometimes you have to explain to a Danish author that not only are you translating their book, if it's published you would expect royalties. If your translation is used as the basis for a secondary translation, you would also expect some sort of remuneration, and they can be quite - they don't really understand why they have to

keep paying you(!) If they pay for you to do the translation, can they not just do with it what they like? So I think the lines can be a bit blurred because people don't quite understand what it is that a translator does and maybe it's just it would be a better match if you had an author with a book and maybe a younger translator saying okay let's the two of us go into partnership and see if we can launch this, but I think for an inexperienced writer or first-time writer looking to work with a very experienced translator, hoping that I can somehow bypass the getting an agent^{inaud} to getting - that doesn't work.

EK: No, absolutely. They approach you because they recognise your name?

CB: Mm. Of course it's enormously flattering to be asked but I think it's very much what Paul [Engles] said during the [DENT] meeting that he likes it when the book has been through a vetting process, and by the time I'm offered something, it has been through that process. It is acknowledged as a successful book in its country of origin.

EK: This is partly what I'm really interested in, this process generally. I came from this without any publishing background so I was interested to learn about who was involved at what stage... it would be really great to hear about the publication process as you know it of how a book came from Denmark to England, that you were involved in. Like *We, The Drowned* for example, Carsten Jensen. I went into an independent bookshop in Bath a couple of weeks ago and they said it's still doing really well, it's something that comes up a lot that they can recommend. It would be interesting to hear - I know it's a while back - if you can remember the process of how that came into being and how involved you were?

CB: That came into being because Carsten Jensen's previous translator wasn't available so I was asked to do this particular book. I was initially doing it for a UK publisher, and then that changed and I can't remember whether they merged or fused or whatever it was - but the book was then moved from their UK editor to their American editor. So I went from working with an editor I knew in the UK to just having an editor I'd never met, working in American English, and I found that a really difficult process, and it made me realise that it doesn't work for me to work with American ^{interrupted by waitress} - I found that it was very difficult to get paid on time, the American tax system was confusing - this was before any real translation work was taking place, just the logistics of working with it, **completely** it was a very tricky period. I wouldn't work like that again. ^{pause to eat} But I loved the book! The book is fine. But it made me realise that when you are working on your own, the fact that a publisher in America hasn't paid you for six months and you are still expected to deliver the book on time and you keep emailing people saying please pay me and they don't for whatever reason, you have no leverage at all, how vulnerable that made me, how desperate and short of money I was, and how I was still expected to deliver the book on time even though I had no money for six months! I just... I remember thinking I don't want anyone, I don't want to be in this position ever again. I just can't work with people like that. Because they're a big organisation, they didn't care, and I don't think it was necessarily... I think it was incompetence, rather than venality. The publishers had - the editor was in New York, the royalties department was in Florida, the accounts department was in Chicago and nobody spoke to each other, and everybody regarded it as somebody else's problem! I was just **me**, and I had a mortgage to pay and two children. I mean, it nearly put me out of business, and I just thought I just can't afford to work like that, it's too great a risk.

EK: Was that the last book that you directly worked with an American publisher for, then?

CB: I think so.

EK: That's interesting. When did you... You were saying on the walk, but when did you start translating full time, then?

CB: Literature probably from my late thirties onwards. I spent my twenties doing theatre and literal translation of plays. In my early thirties doing technical translation and prose translation, and then when I was in my mid-thirties I did a Master's in Scandinavian Translation at Surrey. Then after that I did a little bit more legal translation but really by then I was doing prose translation and plays and children's literature and crime, full time.

EK: Lovely. What was your first Danish book, do you remember?

CB: ^{pause} Do you know, I can't remember. That's really bad!

EK: I should've had a little timeline...

CB: It's like not remembering what your children are called!

EK: When did you do your Master's?

CB: I was 35, so that must have been 15 years ago. You do the maths...

EK: Early 2000s.

CB: That sounds about right.

EK: {browsing my corpus spreadsheet of Da-En UK books} I've got down for the Peter Adolphsen book, *Machine* that's 2008, so a bit later. Let me look that up while we carry on talking.

CB: I've done quite a lot of legal translation which I enjoyed enormously. And it proved really useful when I started doing crime fiction because I had actually been in a courtroom as an interpreter so I know a lot of the terminology and the procedures, and I'd been in a police station, I'd been in a prison, I'd been in a custody cell. It was really satisfying.

EK: That's really good. What have you been doing at the book fair this year; how do you use the book fairs?

CB: To see people I normally only hear from via email. I don't really get a lot of work from it. All my work happens either before or after. I think it is polite to turn up, because a lot of people have travelled a long way to be there. I just have to get on a train, and it's a good opportunity to just show my face and say hello and thank you to people.

EK: {browsing my corpus spreadsheet of Da-En UK books on smartphone} I can't see the years of these books - my phone isn't displaying it very well - but we've got the *Brummstein*?

CB: Oh *Brummstein*, yeah, actually that was for Andersen publishing?

EK: Yeah, yeah.

CB: I think I did *Machine* before *Brummstein*.

EK: The earliest one I've got is *Machine*. Then you've got Mikkel Birkegaard -

CB: Ohhh yes, he was great, *Death Sentence*.

EK: Sissel-Jo Gazan, which one of those has done really well hasn't it? *The Dinosaur Feather*.

CB: Yeah.

EK: Steffen Jakobsen.

CB: I love Steffen Jakobsen.

EK: Elsebeth Egholm.

CB: Mm.

EK: A lot of crime fiction, is that right?

CB: I really enjoy crime fiction. I think it's probably about fifty percent of what I do. But I've always enjoyed it. I can be very pedantic, so I love going through the timeline and the locations and making sure it absolutely works. Often I find things that have slipped through the edits in Danish or Norwegian and I am learning to point that out without coming across as a smartarse.

EK: So you do always point it out back to the Danish or Norwegian publishers?

CB: No, what I've learned is to make contact with the author and establish good relationships so that I ask them. Because I don't want to upset anyone or humiliate anyone. Sometimes there are genuine mistakes or there are things in the book that I think need changing and I've now found a way of approaching that and saying this is the problem and I think we can fix it if we do this. Usually if I come up with a solution the authors go, that's fine. Some will be lovely and say do you know that's really useful because now I can tell it to my German translator and my Italian translator, or sometimes mistakes are corrected in future editions of the book in Denmark or Norway.

EK: Are there any specific examples you can think of?

CB: Mm. There have been crime novels where the timeline didn't work and I realised if I had the book start the week earlier, then it would work beautifully, so I said to the author, do you mind if I make it a week earlier, which was fine. In a different piece of crime fiction, a Norwegian novel where the author had misquoted someone. But this was one of those cases where the author - it was a quote she'd known for years, and never really thought to check - and then when I checked it I realised she'd actually, I think misremembered is probably the term. Nobody else had spotted it either! But the positive side effect of that was that it made her realise that I had read her book really closely, because if I'd spotted that I'd clearly paid attention. So it actually generated much more trust. Out of spotting a mistake what it actually fortunately convinced the author was that I'd really bothered with her text and I'd checked everything and I'd really paid attention and so it means that when I want to suggest changes in future an author is much more likely to go, that's fine, because I know you really thought about it.

EK: That's nice. You find it important to maintain these relationships with authors, editors, publishers, the whole range...

CB: I'm probably not involved in a very big part of it but I've worked out that if I establish a good relationship with the author and therefore when I work with the editor and they query things I can say, yes I've already checked with the author, I thought it might be a problem and this is how we fixed it. Because everybody's busy, everybody likes to know that there's somebody who can say, I've read this book and this wouldn't work. Then when the author's happy, that's a really big step in that direction, you're working in an atmosphere of trust. What I've also realised is that I immerse myself in what I do, and that's made me so that I'm not as well read as I'd like to be, because I focus very intensely on a handful of books and a handful of authors in one year and I really nurture those relationships and I really delve into that. But I haven't read a lot of interesting books recently outside of what I do for a living, and I regret that a little bit sometimes, because if I were to recommend a Danish book and say it's like **this** [book] in the UK, I'm not sure I'd know because... but then I wonder whether my strength is that my focus **is** on what I'm doing. I just have to accept that I cannot be a jack of all trades, and perhaps the reason I'm successful is because I make a deliberate decision to exclude certain things and be an expert at what it is I do, and that may be only a handful of books and two plays a year, but I **really** know them and they are really good.

EK: Like you say, it's put you in really good stead.

CB: When we were discussing the agency aspects of a translator [in the meeting earlier] or where the various ways we can network are, I wonder whether it's right for me - not whether it's a good idea, because it clearly is and people are passionate about it, but I wonder whether I'm good at what I do because I just shut out so much and go, this is what I can do, and I can only do that, but I can do it really well. But I wish I'd read - what's-her-name - Lionel [Shriver], the American author who was on BBC interview recently talking about her new book *The Mandibles* [sic], I thought I'd really like to read that. But then I thought maybe when I've spent the day translating and editing my own work, I find it quite hard to snap out of that, and I'm not sure whether I want to sit down and read Lionel Shriver for example - even though I really want to read Lionel Shriver - but there's a bit of me that thinks what if I'm not as good at my job if I get distracted. Maybe...

EK: It's very difficult to read for pleasure, isn't it, when you work with words for a living.

CB: It sounds incredibly geeky! But it's like, this is the formula that works, don't mess with it. But I'd like to be erudite, I'd like to be better read, I'd like to be able to talk about the top 50 Swedish novels all of which I have read and have an opinion about, but I just don't. I used to be much better informed, but I can tell you about Danish and Norwegian books but I'm now quite ignorant about Swedish books. I used to be better informed, but I realised even adding Swedish was too much.

EK: Do you find that work comes to you in a sense now, now that you're very established? How does that bit work - you must maintain these relationships with particular publishers?

CB: Yeah. You deliver translations which they like, and you deliver them on time, and you work successfully with an author. That really endears you to a UK publisher. Because it makes their job easier. I try and be the person who makes everyone else's job a lot easier. So if I have a problem that I flag up to the author I always try and put a solution, and often quite an **elegant** solution, which they like.

EK: So you're almost doing a bit of the editor's work in that sense -

CB: Exactly.

EK: - which like you say, saves them time. Have you only maintained good relationships? Have you had any relationships go sour in that regard?

CB: Yes! When I was younger, and they went sour because I didn't have the confidence to establish contact with an author. When I was an immature person as a translator, I would often talk to the book's editor, but I wouldn't talk to the author. I think I had a misguided idea that the author was so senior - obviously I was a lot younger then, so the author was invariably older than me and successful and I was a rookie. I would often only ask the editor questions. I didn't have the confidence to establish a relationship with the author. So when I did come a cropper, it was simply because I hadn't explained what I was doing to the author. I hadn't established trust. And so the author... I mean, I'm not saying I

can take responsibility for everything, but I think when things have not worked out, it was because I didn't establish that relationship with the author to convince him or her that I really knew their book.

EK: And then what happened, do you mean that the author was not happy with what the end product was because...?

CB: I had one situation where the editor changed a lot of the swear words in my translation, and then the author thought I'd done it and was furious. Actually, I was saying, but I did translate the swear words. But you are always the weakest point in that triangle: the publisher, the translator, and the author. The author thought well I can't be dealing with this, the editor tells me you didn't and you're saying that you did. And the editor just threw you under the bus because you're just a translator and they can afford to! *{smiling}* But I realise, much as I want to blame the editor, but it was also my fault for not having gotten in touch with the author earlier and creating a bond of trust, so that when there was a problem, he didn't know what to think. I realise that I should've spent - I should've had the courage to get in touch. I was much younger then. But now that I have worked with a lot of very good editors in the UK, I can go to a Danish or Norwegian author and say, 'I am almost certain they're going to ask about **this**. If we do need to change it, what would be acceptable to you?' And just get people on board a lot earlier. Sometimes there are terms in a Danish or Norwegian book that are really racially quite offensive to a UK reader. So I say to the author, actually this would be an issue, and as that's not what your book is about, would you mind if I changed it to this expression, which still conveys what's going on, but otherwise that word becomes a distraction and I know that people in Denmark can say that word, but you couldn't say it here, you don't really want your book to be known for the book with 'that' word when you are saying a hundred other things. So I've become much better at spotting things. And also, when I work with a first-time author who's written a really successful book but is still a first-time author, I've become more confident, going well that needs changing, or this, I can just say look you have told us three times that this person is blonde, how about do you mind if I cut some of these, or that he is tall. Because it's just - I can make your text tighter, it will read better in English, but I have to take some of the stuff out that your Danish editor didn't, because it's just redundant. It doesn't mean that I didn't spot that you wrote it, but we don't need it, because you've made the point. That's been really fun, when you can help an author -

EK: Yeah that's really good -

CB: The book is better sometimes. I think other translators may say that. That sometimes, the English version of a text is just crisper than the Scandinavian or Norwegian version - if you do your job really well. But you've got to have the author's trust. *{laughing}* You can't do this and go: here is the book you meant to write! They don't like that!

EK: *{laughs}* So I guess nowadays you get in touch with them via email, that's a really easy option. Do you go to the Copenhagen Book Fair very often or go to Denmark quite a lot?

CB: I do. Again it's a confidence thing. Now when I go to Denmark, I'll email a couple of authors saying, I'm around, do you want to meet for lunch or coffee? When I was younger I didn't understand the need to make yourself available. I think I had status issues as well. Because I just loved books so much and I don't think I really understood... I hadn't done enough work as a translator to understand the nature of my contribution. Now that I am clearer about my contribution to a translation and how I can help the author, I think the authors react to that. They realise it's not personal. Now that I understand what it is I have to offer and I can give them clearer fact-based bits of information rather than just hunches about a thing or just gushing going *{exaggerated}* I really, really like your book! They understand that I'm somebody who can be useful to them, who's actually interested and informed and I love it when they ask me questions. I love it when they run things by me. But I think that comes with experience, you just can't be like that with your first translation.

EK: No, absolutely. Do you make much use of the *Statens Kunstfond* grants and things? Have you attended their book fair programme many times?

CB: I've actually applied to do *sommerskolen* this year. But I haven't tried that before.

EK: It's only the second one.

CB: Exactly. I've done *BogForum* a couple of times. I'm still not sure whether I understand to use those events correctly, because I've worked on my own for so long. We're back to this, well if that's what works, what really works for you, then don't change it. But I'm also at a stage in my life where I can pick

and choose what I do, in terms of the books. My children have left home, so I can go to the book fair or summer school and not worry about who looks after them when I'm gone, so I think I'm entering a stage where I can explore that side of my work and become more involved. As I said, the week spent at UCL with seminars and the book launch was **really** enjoyable and I hadn't expected it to be. I mean, it was a very well-organised event, very well attended -

EK: This was the launch for *A House in Norway* -

CB: Yes. Meeting the students who were just delightful and keen and interested... and other people who were interested in literature and talking about literature... I had a lot more fun promoting the book than I was expecting to. It gave me confidence. Because when you work on your own for so many years you always wonder whether your social skills are, well, awkward!

EK: {laughs} Absolutely. Obviously you have a lot to offer though, don't you - if you can talk about your experience of translating, that is really interesting... Do you find - as you say, you do things your way and it's worked for you and now you're more established and you have these relationships ongoing with publishers and authors - but do you find these translators networks very beneficial or not? There's DENT obviously that we're trying to form now, but are you a member of the Translators Association or anything like that?

CB: No... again it's because taking part in workshops or any sort of event is always expensive and difficult to organise childcare, so I thought what's the point of belonging to organisations when I don't have time to take part in the things they organise and I rarely have time read newsletters. Because one problem with being self-employed is of course that any time spent learning how to use Twitter, you know, it's your time, you have to do it in your own time, there isn't an IT department who will just come and hold your hand. I signed up to LinkedIn because I kept getting so many requests that it seemed rude not to respond to people and now I'm bombarded with messages and I can't quite get the website to work and it doesn't like my email address and I'm deeply regretting ever touching it in the first place! But I realise it can make me seem stand-offish. It's not because I don't want to join, it's just that again, maybe I just really need to keep the focus on what I can do - which is not a lot, but it is my thing!

EK: It's your bread and butter as well. You know what you're good at.

CB: And actually, it's enough. I don't have to be good at everything. I don't have to know what's happening in Danish literature, somebody else will do that, but actually I don't need to write to twenty publishers a year, because I can only do four books maximum. You only really need enough people to make sure that you get four books a year.

EK: That's a good point, so you definitely don't see your role as being any kind of agent or scout for Danish literature because you're being offered the work anyway and you've got an idea of how many books you can take.

CB: It could also be that that is changing. What is true for me might not be true for somebody who is about to graduate from UCL and has lots of enterprising ideas. I think what happens is, once you work with a sort of cohort of authors, and they keep writing - as Paul [Engles] was saying about the catalogue of MacLehose Press or Quercus's - it is to some extent determined by the fact that you are, there is repeat business. So once you have that set up, somebody has to drop off the perch before you can introduce another author.

EK: Sure. As long as you've done well the first time round, then you're more or less likely to get the next book -

CB: They tend to stick with you. Then of course the more you work with somebody, the easier it gets to translate them. When I work on an author's third book, I'm whizzing through it, because I know how they think, I know how they structure things, I know expressions they use, some of the same problems crop up. And they know that you know, so you just get a lot faster. But I think initially in my search for work, there's a risk it could just contact everybody, and then if they then all come back to you and go, would you like to do a sample, or would you like to do a book, you could actually end up being offered more than you can cope with.

EK: Yes, and that would actually be a bit detrimental, I guess.

CB: Well, it would, because if you've gone around saying I'm a translator please hire me, and then somebody wants you and you go well I'm busy - if you contacted **them**, that can... you have to appreciate that other people are busy too, so don't waste their time. I think when I translate a novel and I

start my list of questions for the author, there is a point where it's right to send that list to the author, but it's not after my first draft. You have to get quite immersed in the book, and then when you're absolutely sure that the answer to your question isn't in the book, **that's** when you talk to the author. But they will get annoyed if you ask about something that you could have found yourself if you'd paid attention. That's fair enough, why should they give you lessons in how they write. If the answer's there and you've looked for it and you still can't find it, then you can talk to them. But I realised if you ask people at the right time, they will help you, and they will be impressed by the depth of your knowledge. So it's also about realising that other people are busy and respect their time. It can be so flattering to be asked that you just say yes to everything, but actually that's not possible, or if you give yourself an impossible schedule, you could be absolutely sure that one of your kids fall ill or something will happen that means that you can't meet your commitments, which I **hate**.

EK: Has anyone ever - do people wait for you, though? Does someone say, this book's coming out, we want you to translate it and they now wait for you to have availability?

CB: That happens now. Yeah. That's really nice. It's a very flattering position to be in.

EK: That's really good.

CB: When you have a publisher emailing you saying so-and-so's next book will be out in a few months, we'd love you to do it, can you set aside some time from I don't know May to September. The really beautifully behaved ones will go, oh so-and-so's book is late, are you still going to be free, and I'm thinking that's **wonderful**, that they actually bother to check. The story I told at the meeting about being in a position where the Swedish agent had sold the rights to a book to a joint American and UK venture and I said I'm sorry, I can only work for one boss, I realise that they might have picked a different translator, because they had already done the deal, and the agency had no idea why it could be an issue for me, when I just knew from previous experience that in case of any dispute, I would be hung out to dry between these two publishers because I was the weakest part.

EK: So were they proposing that they somehow paid half each, America and UK?

CB: Yes. It was being published in the UK and the US simultaneously, so all of that was fine, and I didn't have a problem with that, but I could only have one boss, and I know that the American version is different to the UK one but I don't write American English, so somebody else would have to make that call, but I wanted to just have the one boss. But I was prepared to lose the job over it, because I'd learned from past experience that it just doesn't work. It's a nice idea, but I wasn't clear - I didn't think it would be good for me - and I wasn't clear about which of the two editors was the 'top' editor, was it the person in the US or the person in the UK, what happened if they disagreed? I just thought, nope.

EK: A lot of people involved, isn't it?

CB: Yes, and I realised I had to look out for me, even if it meant not getting that book. Actually the UK editor was great, understood my position, sorted something out with the Americans, and we've worked happily together ever since. Once I got what I wanted, I then wrote to the American editor and thanked them for helping to make this happen, because I appreciated that they hadn't got exactly what they wanted - and actually ultimately they did get what they want, the book has been a success. But I realised that even if I didn't want to work with an American publisher again, it wasn't this particular person's fault. I think ten or fifteen years ago, I probably wouldn't have bothered writing an email saying I really appreciate you taking your time to negotiate this with the company in the UK. I realise you're busy but it means a lot to me and I really look forward to working on the book and I got a really lovely email back! So in terms of translators' networks - this may be a roundabout way of replying to that question - I'm starting to understand the need to just acknowledge what people do. Especially when they do things that is extra work for them. Maybe I would've had a different career, maybe I would've been successful in different ways if I'd understood that fifteen years ago. But I think it's also my ability to work on my own for long periods of time - *{interrupted by waitress}*

EK: It hasn't done you any harm, has it. But I see what you mean, would things have been different. A bit of a tangent that I've talked about with some people is *Statens Kunstfond* and whether you think they fulfil their role of promoting Danish culture, and is there anything they could be more involved with? Obviously they are able to support these networking meetings for example and they set up these events in Denmark for translators who live outside Denmark to come along to the summer school, that kind of thing. You've got experience of them and Norway and so on...

CB: I think they're in a very difficult position. Because they work in the system which by definition has to be accountable and regulated and unfortunately it makes it really unwieldy for people like me who are not good in systems and structures - and I realise this is also about me! There is a reason why I don't live and work in Scandinavia. I would not make friends! I think I'm too individual. I'm extremely responsible in terms of managing my time and my money, I am very bad when it comes to filling in forms, waiting for deadlines and budgets or reading guides... funding guidelines. To me, I'm just too task oriented to cope with the admin side of it. It just really gets to me. And I've realised that this is probably a personal failing, but I could not do the job of any of the lovely people who come over here from *Kulturstyrelsen*. Those meetings, working with the various ministerial changes of plans, I couldn't do it. So I think they have a difficult job. Because they have to promote the kind of things that I do, but without having really much control over it. While the people who are backing them back in Oslo or Copenhagen go 'how did you spend your money? Where are your Smart Achievable Measurable Results?'. I think that's a very difficult role to fulfil. I think it's probably a smart move for the Danish Arts Agency not to fund crime any more, because it doesn't need it. I think that was quite a brave step to go actually we shouldn't be putting the money into crime. I think it was controversial at the time, and the Norwegians still fund crime, but I think if there is a limited amount of funding and publishers will pay for sample translations themselves and it will sell anyway, why not. I think from that point of view I'm much more a free marketer. I don't want things to be subsidised just for the sake of it. I think also, how do you measure success? Well one of the ways I measure success is when I've read my PLR statement every year and I can see how many thousands of people took out a book I've translated. And it may be a book that also sold well, but it isn't always. It could be a different book. That really delights me, to see that that book got read by people. I couldn't... if I'd got a Carlsberg grant to just translate the books I love for the rest of my life and not worry about them being published, because what would be the point of that? There has to be - maybe because I have a background in theatre - there has to be an audience, there has to be somebody who enjoys what I do, and I see myself as part of that process of bringing a story to an audience. So I think my objectives are entirely different from a lot of the people who have funding objectives. I don't know... I'm not entirely sure how they can help. That might be my lack of imagination.

EK: Sure, like you say, the Translation Funds now are going to literary books. How do you feel generally about this dominance of Scandinavian crime fiction as a genre?

CB: I'm rather pleased about it. There was something that Nichola [Smalley] said when she talked about books being successful and I think actually various genres should have different criteria for success. You'd expect a good crime novel to sell in the tens of thousands, but a Per Petterson novel will never sell that many, and that's alright! I don't see that you take readers from one to the other. It's great that Samuel Bjork is being promoted by the Richard and Judy Book Club, I've no idea how that came about, I think the marketing campaign from Transworld was brilliant, the bits I know about were handled exceptionally well by a young team who orchestrated a digital marketing campaign which was exceptional - really intelligent and it worked. It's a good book, but I've translated others that were just as good that just didn't take off. I think there is a market for that book, hopefully hundreds of thousands. But is there a similar audience for reading *A House in Norway*? Probably not. But that's alright, it doesn't have to hit the same benchmark.

EK: So you don't see much overlap between - or a gateway between people who read translated crime fiction and -

CB: No, I don't think we're taking readers from... I don't think I'm losing readers in one area to another area, I don't think they're the same readers. In fact, I think it's more likely that some crime fiction people might want to read other forms of Scandinavian fiction, I think crime fiction could actually feed non-crime fiction -

EK: - so it *could* be a gateway? For readers to learn about -

CB: I think so. A lot of the Scandinavian TV series which have been so successful in the UK have ridden on the tailcoats of the crime series. *Borgen* isn't a crime series but everybody loved it. However, would they have started watching *Borgen* without watching *The Killing* first, they probably wouldn't. But BBC4 created a slot - Saturday night, 9 o'clock, something Scandi - and it had always been good, so when it stopped being crime, people were still there, and they didn't turn off when it was *Borgen*. But if

you'd started with *Borgen*? It wouldn't have worked. And I think it's the same with literature. If you launch it correctly, if you do a Scandi section and there's Scandi crime and you put Scandi non-crime alongside it, I think that is a clever way of marketing it. I mean I thought, as I think many of us did, that the Scandi Noir wave couldn't possibly last, and now it seems to be an established genre. We were all looking I think 20 years ago for the next hundred to take over from the Scandinavians, and various attempts were made, but nothing really took off with the same success, the Scandi stuff just kept happening. Excellent TV series based on books that people knew. And then cookery books. And then ideas... what's the Nesbø thing called, *Occupation* [*Okkupert* (Nor) / *Occupied* (UK)] - have you seen it?

EK: No?

CB: Some episodes imagining Russia invading Norway and the total collapse of democracy, where you use I suppose a thriller format to explore how fragile democracy could be and how quickly we can all lose something we take for granted.

EK: Was that broadcast here then?

CB: Sky, Sky.

EK: That reminds me actually, that trajectory - although it's very much a British publishing phenomenon - this whole *hygge* thing last year. Have you got any thoughts about that? Obviously it's not translation conventionally is it but it's a perception of Denmark from British perspectives.

CB: I think it's really interesting that we seem to have a looking closer for ideas and inspiration. It used to be that people thought Scandinavian was just too familiar or it wasn't exotic enough and inspiration had to come from afar, it had to be exotic. And actually I think that maybe there's much more cultural overlap and an ability to communicate ideas that really resonate with people in the UK. I love the fact that when I watch Scandi crime, the actors always have bad teeth, awful sort of 'Dad jeans', they look like they've slept on a park bench, and they wake up to a grey day, their life is essentially wretched, by the end of the day it's usually that little bit more miserable. I think British audiences go, I recognise myself in it. When I watch CSI, everybody has great hair, they have great teeth, they look twenty years younger than they are, and it's fun and fluffy and entertaining and it's brain candy, but I don't go 'I see myself in you'. But then when Krister Henriksson staggers through Ystad, I think yeah, I have days like that! So I think British audiences see that and recognise an authenticity about it. You can relate to it. You are being entertained but at the same time, it doesn't... I was going to say you're not being lied to but of course you are because it's all fiction, it's all contrived, but there is more... It has an immediacy I think. A level of identification. I think it's much more intelligent in its casting, there are many more women, there are women of different ages, there are also men of different ages {*interrupted by waitress collecting plates*}

EK: We can round up the... is there anything else you want to tell me about? I'm writing a case study about the role of translators beyond the obvious translating the text. A few of the people I've spoken to have been these emerging translators if you like, who are trying to play this role of agent and pitching the authors to people. From what you've told me you're at the other end of the spectrum, a more traditional model - because you've got those relationships built up, you're able to be offered the work and take the translation work, the text, you don't need to go above and beyond that aspect in terms of promoting a book because that's not your role.

CB: It's also that I'm not an expert on promoting a book. I think as a translator there's a tendency to overestimate that you can become involved in every aspect of the process and contribute something. Actually very few of us can do that. I am good at a particular section of that process but I don't think I'm good at all of it. But I'm starting to question myself a bit more, because having been to events like this one that I enjoyed more than I'd expected, I think that maybe I need to revisit that. Or maybe I can learn something from another translator's point of view, maybe they have different experiences, because one thing that did occur to me this morning was I would have liked to have had a conversation about possibly self-publishing. I'd find a book in Scandinavia, it's something I could afford to do now, where I get enough work not to have to worry about money too much, but I might find something which for some bizarre reason nobody else had noticed, and I would talk to the author, translate it, and get their agreement to publish it on one of the self-publishing websites, and find a financial arrangement actually cutting the publisher out altogether. I think maybe that might be a topic for a future meeting, because I don't know enough about self-publishing and the digital tools, but I could see that rather than the

translator doing all that work and then giving it to a publisher, why doesn't the translator just publish the book themselves? If you're only going to have it in an electronic format, you could self-publish it, then you don't need even the nicest publishers. So maybe there's still a job for the translator, and there always will be, but there may not be a job for the publisher. Maybe people who like Scandinavian literature will get used to using certain self-publishing sites because that's where translators publish good translations of books with the author's agreement. So when you were talking about the translator as agent in your original email to me I had a feeling that's where you were going, but then the discussion was about how we could do all the work that the publishers should and make sure that they could continue to make money based on our skill and experience and I was thinking, how is that working for me?! It's not *{laughs}* So recently I've become quite interested in Greenlandic literature. There's some writers and publishers there who have been given some money to do sample translations, but also putting their own money into getting things published, and I'm thinking actually, I'm quite intrigued by that, so if I am going to support something, it might be that I go to Greenland, meet some of the writers - I haven't been to Greenland - you know it feels odd to translate about a place that I don't have any sort of physical memories of or knowledge of. Maybe what I do with this part of my career is carry on with the established publishers and the authors who I work with, but maybe look into branching out. Look into self-publishing. To maybe become more involved with, work with DENT - maybe I hear from other people how they would do things, because I'm no longer quite so focused on establishing my own career and my children are adults so maybe this is something I can add to what I do.

EK: Absolutely, and it seems to be a growing area too, self-publishing. At both the book fairs in both Copenhagen and London you find representatives of it and I don't think it's seen as such a vanity project any more.

CB: No, exactly. I think the stigma has gone -

EK: A gateway into... something self-published could still then be picked up by another publisher, if it was successful. Like you said, if it's online anyway...

CB: So I think that maybe something we could discuss in DENT is, how about self publishing? Why do all the legwork only to watch somebody else benefit? And also, if you're self-employed anyway, is this just not another risk you can take? Especially since financially there'll be very little risk involved. So that if it does work, then you'd get a bigger share of the profits and that might allow you to do other things. I don't know, because I can also see what I have really liked focusing on being a translator and the fact that somebody else designs the cover and markets the book, but I also realise that we read things in a different way from when I started out. And I want to be open to how things change, you know what I mean, I don't always know about them because I work on my own and I don't have time to visit a lot of blog sites or... because it's unpaid time, and even when I have the time I find if I'm deep into a book, it feels almost like infidelity - my thoughts should be on what I'm doing! So I don't know, again I keep returning to the statement that what is true for me may not be true for everybody. I'm happy to see people succeed in different ways. I don't think that we're going to hit saturation point. I think more books create a market for more books. For more content.

EK: It does seem like there have been more translators coming up as the years go on -

CB: I think so. I think the problem for all of them is that point where they might like to buy a home and they might like to have some children, and then you may stop translating for a while, and then do you get back into it? Especially if you stopped translating to do something that pays you a salary, that salary can be really hard to give up, because it's not just about you any more. But then, there is so little job security. It may not seem like a big risk any more. Students at UCL now - those who are twenty now - they may not look at my career and think 'God that's really risky, I've got a massive student loan and I need to get a job with a pension', maybe they just think, 'she has **some** work that's better than no work! And I'm already fifty thousand pounds in debt so how hard can it be.'

EK: It does seem to be the way things are going that people will do these freelance jobs on the side of something else anyway. I suppose what could happen is that the more they get paid, the more they do these freelance translation jobs, cut back on salaried work anyway if they love it and actually earn enough...

CB: I think Annette Bach [*Kulturstyrelsen*] did point out to an obvious problem that they have is, that they really want to support emerging translators, but then what do they do once these people become established? It's not clear what the relationship is then.

EK: I see. They fund these networking events around the book fair and things, and the summer school - but you're right, what can *Statens Kunstfond* do for people who are already being offered the work anyway?

CB: Where do we fit in? Because we are self-employed and we have chosen to be self-employed so we are not their responsibility. It's not reasonable to expect we are babies who depend on surrogate parents! Though I still hope that somebody will leave enough money for a retirement home along the coast of Denmark, for all of us when we are too old to translate and we haven't got any money and the Arts Council will let us all live there and we can sit and stare across the sea and talk about the old days! But I don't think that's unique to translators, I think thousands of people go what will I do the day I no longer work I have no idea, who's going to look after me?

EK: Any freelance profession.

CB: Yeah. So we're not that special!

EK: Well, depends on the role, doesn't it - is there much money to be made in translation? I'm thinking of other freelance jobs where it's a bit more... contracts pay a bit more or...

CB: I really don't know because I've never really had other jobs. I think there is a problem that if you're good at what you do, you can still only do say four books a year. It doesn't matter if somebody said I'll pay you the extra, I can't do eight, and so the business has a limited capacity for growth and it has no resale value. When I stop working, when I'm seventy or eighty, I don't have a business I can sell to another translator and go hey buy me out. It dies with me. So you can spend your entire life creating a business that has no value and can never grow beyond a certain point.

EK: Which is very different, like you say. I was thinking of more of a practice, maybe like an accountant who works freelance in that regard - for themselves, self-employed - potentially that will have a business name somewhere won't it that they then could resell.

CB: And yes I can maybe get publishers to pay me slightly more, but it's never going to be anything that really makes a huge difference. If I were a surgeon, did private work and I was the best at what I did I could just charge everybody ten thousand for an operation where somebody else might charge five thousand, if I could find somebody willing to pay ten thousand I could get paid twice as much money for essentially the same job. But if I get paid ten thousand pounds for a novel, I'm not going to get the publishers to pay me twenty just because I'd like twenty thousand - that's never going to happen!

EK: Despite your name, if you like?

CB: Well, exactly - you can argue for a bit more here or - but it's not even worth it.

EK: For the sake of?

CB: - a few hundred quid. I mean really, it's easier, um... because I think as a freelance translator - as I learned from my past personal experience, though that's unfair because it wasn't his fault - never make yourself that financially dependent on just one publisher. Because it could have ended my business. And it wouldn't have been through a venality, it would just have been through an incompetent, laborious, slow moving system. So that made me realise that if you want to be self-employed, I have to be self-sufficient at every level, I just couldn't rely ...

EK: Yeah, so building up a relationship with different publishers.

CB: So if I sudden - if an author drops dead or if I get an email from a publisher today saying we never want to work with you again, I **have** to know that I'd be okay. Because nobody's under any obligation to hire me. You've no idea what's going to change. So even in a way, having to live a life that is that self-sufficient can make it quite difficult for you to be an obviously networking person. To be both at the same time can be a bit schizophrenic. Because your natural instinct is to go, I can't rely on you, just in case that doesn't work out, I can't expose my business to this. Good luck with that!

EK: That is the difficulty, isn't it, with carrying on the DENT network - it almost needs just one or two people to really drive it forward but then that's also the weakness of it because if that one person decides they're not interested any more then it really risks the whole thing.

CB: If enough people care about it, they will make it work. Over the years I've seen a lot of initiatives and they never last because no one really has the time and energy to do it.

EK: You need some sort of mass happening where if enough people are putting their energies into it - it's not something they're being paid for anyway so... it kind of keeps it going.

CB: I'm **really** fond of some of my fellow translators, people I've known for years. But it still seems quite alien to them and to me to ring them up and go how are - how are - how are you?! Because we're naturally quite solitary! That's why we're translators. When I see them at book fairs or events, there's always a really warm reunion, and I think why don't I ring you more often? But actually we would both feel that it was taking it too far. And it's a funny sort of -

EK: How does it work - you've worked on a couple of books where it says your name plus Don [Bartlett] and?

CB: Yeah, Don and I have worked together, that has been very happy.

EK: How does that work though; do you actually see each other?

CB: Not really. The first book we wrote together actually had two narrators - a woman and a man - alternating chapters, so I did all the female chapters -

EK: Oh, perfect -

CB: - and we both enjoyed working together so much, that we continued on a couple of more books. I really liked it because it made everything much faster. It was really... when you came up with a really elegant solution, normally you're the only person who knows, but it was so nice that there was one other person who'd go 'gosh, I saw what you did there, that's really good'. So my need for approval, recognition -

EK: *{laughs}* validation -

CB: Yeah -

EK: So that book was perfect because you alternated chapters, is that how you've always done it since?

CB: No what we'd do with one of them was I did a first draft because my Danish is better than Don's, but I need longer on the edit than he does, so we worked out that he might miss a couple of things in Danish, that I would spot - like a cultural reference or something - but then sometimes in the English version I'd go, this isn't quite what I mean, but I can't quite pinpoint in my head what it is that's being said here, but he would then go oh do you mean this? So what happened was that if I did the first draft, the Danish was quickly done, doing without checking dictionaries or anything, I'd just get the Danish much quicker than he would, and then he would do the editing much quicker because he could just focus on the English, didn't have to worry about Danish things, and then we'd discuss various solutions and then I'd read what he'd done and go 'ohhh, yes I see that' or 'mmm I don't quite agree with this'. But it was a very... harmonious experience and I would absolutely work with him again. I enjoyed it much more than I'd expected, I wasn't sure what I thought co-translation would be like. But I think because we're both still quite private, there was some synchronicity of where the boundaries were.

EK: Also that unspoken respect, because you're both established, aren't you?

CB: Yeah and the realisation that there were a number of ways that something could be done. How this was one version of this novel, and there were both of us on board *{inaud}*

I think it has to be between two equal partners. I don't think either of us felt that we were carrying the other, that wouldn't have worked. So I had happy experiences from that.

{tangential personal conversation redacted: CB: What are you going to do once you get your PhD?}

CB: When I look back I can see that I was always meant to be self-employed. It really worked for me. I have learnt now to have enough money in the bank so that if somebody's late paying me, I don't lose sleep at night - it's just made me super cautious. But that's alright. Other people couldn't live like me. But then I never have to get on the train and commute anywhere, I don't have to walk into an office where somebody else tells me what to do. So I think I really need that freedom. I was discussing this with an author who said when she goes to book fairs and does Q&A sessions that everyone has this idea that artists are so bohemian, you know, *{exaggerated tone}* they are irresponsible financially, with their flowing hair and they drink champagne for breakfast, that's everything the artist is - it's very glamorous, it's permissive... she was saying actually I'm really organised, and we realised that we both need our workspace to be tidy, it's a sort of ritual thing, that in order for the creative chaos in your head to flourish, you cannot be surrounded by mess. And like me she was financially very responsible, because you are not used to money coming in at the end of every month... it's just not a very rock-and-roll image to send to the world, but actually some of the self-employed people I know are writers or translators

they are extremely organised and responsible because in order to have that freedom, you just need to be in control of the basics. So I think a lot of it makes sense in hindsight. While I was doing it I probably didn't quite understand it but now I can see that... And she's convinced she's completely unemployable, and I think I probably am too!

{personal convo redacted}

It can all be a bit precarious but I think in a way when you're self-employed you're almost better equipped for that because you're used to it, this is how you live, rather than you've always had security and then it's suddenly taken away from you.

Interview with Christopher MacLehose

MacLehose residence, Westbourne Road, London. 3rd November 2017

EK: I've spoken to Mette Petersen, the translator of the Jakob Ejersbo trilogy, and also I spoke to Paul Engles as well about the marketing for the Jakob Ejersbo books - *Exile*, *Revolution*, and *Liberty*, that trilogy from the Danish author - so I just really wanted to know in your words how it came to be that the books were published by MacLehose Press.

CM: Did you say you'd talked to Mette?

EK: Yes. I spoke to her mostly about her role, if you like, because I've been talking to translators about their role in bringing literature over. For her, just to see if she was working on the text, or how much recommendation she made, that kind of thing. It would be interesting to know from the start how those books came to be acquired, and what was it that caught your eye?

CM: Just a word about Mette. I think she's EXTREMELY good as a translator. I like her very much. She worked... very very hard to deliver to whatever our schedule was. Even to the point of running herself just about into the ground. And is not a - she's not a professional translator in the sense of that is what she mostly does, as for example Don Bartlett, who began - I think he told me the other day, the very first translation that he did was for us of a Danish book... is that possible? I think it was, he was a Danish translator?

EK: Yes.

CM: Now I don't think he has time to translate from Danish. He's become everybody's favourite Norwegian translator. How did it come about? Absolutely in the normal way. I didn't know the author. I never met the author, alas. I never even met his sister who became I think his executrix and worked with the Danish publisher to complete the third volume of the trilogy, or to tidy it up. I don't mean to write the end of it, but to publish the... to put the texts that were there into such a shape as could be the third volume. But the Danish editor and publisher Johannes Riis had an important hand in the concluding of the trilogy. I can't remember whether he published himself the original volume of Ejersbo, was it called *Nordkraft*?

EK: Yes, it was.

CM: Which was published in English only in Canada by Anansi, is that correct? I thought it was a very very tough book. I didn't love it.

EK: Was that a book you'd considered at time though, that was a few years before wasn't it?

CM: No, we didn't as I remember consider it at the time, but we did go back after the trilogy came to us. I read *Nordkraft* for the first time and I was quite shaken by it, I thought it was... um... not by any means that I think this was written by a different kind of writer or a different writer altogether, it wasn't that, it's just that it was very savage. It's too long ago to remember whether we did consider it first. But if we did consider it, it would have been as a book in Danish, not as a book that one could read the entire - which eventually of course in the Anansi edition, we could, and I did. I mean it's a very impressive piece of work -

EK: {interjects} That was translated by Don Bartlett as well.

CM: Was it so?!

EK: It was Don Bartlett.

CM: That's interesting, well done, thank you for filling in that gap.

{interrupted by doorbell / dog barking / dog walker arriving}

EK: Yes, so with the deciding on the trilogy then - was that something where somebody approached you with the books?

CM: What always happens in a case like this, unless it were... it might happen in this way, that Don - who is a friend also - might have said I'm working on this author's first novel, or I did the first novel, there it is in English, do consider the trilogy. Quite interesting that he having translated *Nordkraft* didn't... wasn't available. And you would know, because you've obviously researched this, whether at exactly that time he'd fallen into - I think this is possible - that Jo Nesbø who I had contracted I think for two or three novels before I left Harvill. But did Don translate Nesbø from the very start? Maybe he did? Maybe he did. Anyway, he eventually was tied to that -

EK: - Absolutely. From the account that I heard, Don did do a sample for these Ejersbo books, presumably for *Exile* the first one, but then became too busy. So yes I think you're right, that he must have, for whatever reason, realised it wasn't something he could take on, even if it was offered.

CM: It was a huge undertaking. Mette who was teaching in school at that time... because she's such a meticulous and thoughtful and giving human being. I think she probably felt she wanted to give absolutely a thousand percent of herself to her young charges. And then took on this, it wasn't simply as a kindness. How did one ever meet Mette Petersen in the first place?

EK: She was a reader, wasn't she? She'd lived in London.

CM: I don't think I met her in London. Maybe, maybe, maybe I did. I have met her in London, she's been HERE [the house]. But... uh....

EK: When I spoke to her I think she said that she'd done some work as a reader for a couple of different publishers... Portobello?

CM: That's true, she came as an intern. That is what she did. You're quite right, for Portobello. I think she went on reading for them. Goodness knows where I first met her. She read books for us. She read the Ejersbo probably. But how did we go from that... level of involvement to handing her the care of the translation into English of this huge work? Well, it was an absolute belief because she's formidably clever this woman apart from being enormously likeable. Anyway, she took the commission and off she went, one after the other. She's the kind of person who says I'll do something, "I'll walk up Everest, I will walk up Everest," and off she went! It's clear to me - first of all the English is flawless, and this is unusual, you very very rarely ask somebody who is Danish to translate a book into English. Interestingly, the first Danish translator that we ever used - I think her name was Anne Born -

EK: Mm-mm.

CM: - Do you know of her?

EK: I know OF her, I obviously wouldn't have been able to meet her, but yes she's certainly got her name against a huge number of books that I know of that have been translated.

CM: She translated also for us Per Pettersen into English. And Per - it's possible to say this now that Anne is no longer with us - virtually retranslated the book after Anne's original! In the end he wasn't

happy to have to do that. Well, he was very UNhappy, what am I talking about, he was furious! He said, "it's just simply not good enough!" But at that time, and it really is a watershed in the arriving into English of one Norwegian great writer after the other that there simply were not alternatives. There was a wonderful translator called Sverre Lyngstad who was American who translated for us Dag Solstad and he was a great scholar. He said, "I warn you I'm very old, I'm not very well, I can't go on doing this forever, you'll have to find other people". At that time, we were obviously talking to those responsible at NORLA and at the Danish Literature Center saying to them steps have to be taken to identify Danish translators, Norwegian translators, in order that the great writers that you both have can escape into English. Escape into Hungarian, not just English - why, because the reality is there isn't a huge readership available for good Danish or good Norwegian literature. Things have changed to the point where - it's unfair really to all the other great Danish writers, but Peter Høeg *Miss Smilla's Feeling for Snow* sold a million copies here plus still sells. Then Jo Nesbø comes along, and anon Knausgaard and the sales begin to pick up. Also Per Pettersen, it should be remembered, sold many many copies in America also of *Out Stealing Horses*. So there was a change, but it's interesting to just look back at a time, 20-25 years ago, when you didn't have a rich choice. There were, there remain, translators available to you whom you wouldn't necessarily go to. The business of the translation of *Miss Smilla* was very interesting. The translator was commissioned by a Danish editor working for Farrar, Straus -

EK: Elisabeth Dyssegaard, yes, I've met her.

CM: You've met her, where did you meet her, is she still in publishing?

EK: Yeah she's still in publishing. She is working for - she's moved from Farrar, Straus and Giroux - I can't remember, but she's still in New York working in publishing. I've met her - I can find the email address - but I've met her in New York and London.

CM: Have you so? She seems well and happy?

EK: Yes, absolutely. She's very well. Her children are doing well, been to university and so on -

CM: Her children are at university?!

EK: One of them has been at Edinburgh, yeah.

CM: Bloody hell.

EK: {laughs}

CM: I remember she did leave Farrar, Straus - and it was a very odd decision - to go to, I'm not sure what... {looks in phone contacts, spells aloud her surname} it's not here. Maybe she worked for a publishing house called Crown. Her former colleagues said to me she'd gone off, she badly wanted to break out of literature and publish a list of... hmmm, I can't believe I'm about to say erotic handbooks, what on EARTH was all that about?!

EK: Wow, okay. She's done a huge amount of translation herself though now, she's done children's books as well.

CM: Oh really?

EK: Yeah.

CM: Oh good.

EK: *{laughs}* Interesting. *Miss Smilla* is also something I'm writing about in this chapter, almost a comparison with the fact that the Ejersbo trilogy didn't have this sort of huge impact in the market in the same way as *Miss Smilla* did. Not really a comparison because they are very different books and it's a very different market. I suppose to see where the similarities lie. The translation you were talking about though - the re-editing into British for Harvill of *Smilla*.

CM: Not just into English from American. In that case the translation arrives - I mean she's a prize-winning translator, she's...

EK: Tiina Nunnally.

CM: Tiina Nunnally, that's right. [...] She did this translation. I read it and made marks as normal on it. I may or may not have worked closely with Elisabeth Dyssegaard. What I did, when I had made my marks all over the translation I sent it to Merete Ries, the publisher at Rosinante, whose English is beyond flawless. I think she may have even **taught** at Cambridge. She was a great scholar. She enjoyed this work, she was a working editor apart from being a publisher, and she and Peter went through the translation - no doubt disregarding all my marks - and they wrote between every line and round all the *margins {demonstrates 'drawing' on a piece of paper}* Round and round. It was a **miraculous** document that came back. And Peter said, "look, she hasn't got this right". It was much more ferocious than that. He said what I want you to do is to get this right. So we did, it took a while, took some months, and at the end of the process the text went back to Elisabeth, went back to the translator. The translator said take my name off it. Actually she was quite combative, she went to PEN, she went to the translators' society, and kicked up a tremendous fuss, and I said okay we'll change your name very happily, but that's the version of your translation that we would like to use, which we'd paid for and so on. But it was the version that had been signed off by Peter, syllable by syllable. I wish I had the document here still. I've got it somewhere. Because it was a very interesting working study. I remember one instance -

EK: Did the Americans decide - they read the version that you sent back with all the edits -

CM: Well Elisabeth looked at it -

EK: She's looked at it and they've decided that they would go ahead with the original American translation, they'd already seen that edited, re-done version before they made the decision to publish their English version?

CM: They commissioned the translation, and this came about in a dotty way that, um, we bought the book... *{interrupted by Koukla entering kitchen on the phone, not talking}* Silent theatre? My wife, Koukla.

EK: Okay, yes, just thinking about the timeline of whether they already would have been printing their version if you like -

CM: No, no, no. We published just about simultaneously.

EK: That's what I thought.

{Koukla enters kitchen, hanging up phone - talks to CM – professional conversation omitted}

CM: [...] Peter says, take this sentence - stop me if you know all this?

EK: Well, maybe some of it - I'm just thinking about the questions I was after about the Ejersbo book actually. Going back to where we were I suppose. We were talking about Mette weren't we, and translators and her role. Because she's said she had a lot of conversations with you about whether

MacLehose Press should take it on at all, and giving her feedback... is that correct? What would have made you decide definitely to take on those books?

CM: I'd like to think that she encouraged us to take it seriously. I never ask a reader to guess how many copies we would sell -

EK: No, nothing like that, no -

CM: - because that's not fair. It's not their job. You ask your reader to say, in the context of Danish literature - contemporary or classic Danish literature, whatever - where does this writer stand? What does this book do for YOU? You have to know your readers very very well to know that when they say this is intensely moving - I had one this morning from a great scholar of Norwegian literature in which she uses a kind of shorthand all the way through the two-page report because I know what her head... I know the way she thinks about literature. She says at the end of her report, well I won't go on and on and on about this, you know what I'm saying. But I do! Because I've been reading her reports for years and years and years. Mette, on the other hand, relatively young, clearly a considerable scholar, and because you've met her, you'll know that she has read everything that she needs to have read in order to be able to give you a sense of where this book stands. I was interested by the, let's say, the European involvement in East Africa. Happened to be a part of my own family's life, so that was especially interesting. Curiously enough, my brother, who had taught all over various parts of the world, I mean he's been involved in Atlantic College in Wales for fifty-plus years. I sent him the first book, and he said to me, "I know this school well". I was absolutely aghast! Because I **assumed** that it was a fictional construction - nothing of the kind! So of course I thought, bloody hell, somebody's going to come after us with lawyers! I did think. Then I shut up, and I said to my brother for heaven's sake don't send this book anywhere where it's going to incite legal complications. Which it, by God, could have done, you would think.

EK: Yeah! Absolutely.

CM: Anyway. Um...

EK: But then it might have done in the Danish publication in the first place I suppose? Although that's maybe a smaller market.

CM: Doesn't make any difference. Doesn't make any difference because the Danish legal system is completely different. I don't know how fierce it is or could be or ever has been. The English and the American libel situations are completely different. You can say things in a book in America which you absolutely cannot say here without the risk that somebody's going to come and jump on you.

EK: Oh okay, I understand then.

CM: Anyway, as you know now, a series of television films is being made and this will bring the books back into - with any luck - a much wider readership here as well as television audience IF - and it's a big if - an English distributor, whether it's the BBC, BBC4 or ITV3 or even Netflix, whoever aligns themselves with the series that is being made.

EK: Do you think you'd re-market the books then?

CM: You know all about the series?

EK: The series on DR? Yes. It's -

CM: Have you seen any of it?

EK: Uh, I think it's still being recorded, I think.

CM: It is, it's still being made, you might have seen rushes of an early part of it.

EK: No. I've read a little about it - for Denmark it's got some quite big stars, hasn't it? One of the actors is the same woman who was the lead in *The Killing*. The detective. Sofie Gråbøl.

CM: Oh really? The detective in the sense of the boss or the boyfriend of the lady with the sweater?

EK: No, no, the woman with the sweater is the detective I'm thinking of, so that actress.

CM: She's in it?!

EK: As far as I remember.

CM: Is she so?

EK: I'm pretty sure I remember reading it and thinking "oh, it's like a list of quite well-known Danish actors".

CM: Well when you met Pengles did you tell him this, did he spring into the air?

EK: I met him at the very beginning of the year, and he said to me that he'd heard rumour that they might make a TV production of it in Denmark. Then it was maybe two or three months later where the actual press release happened, that it's being publicised that it's being made, so it's after I met him. But he did say that that might be something where, it might be the case where you'd reissue the books with some sort of link with the fact that there's been a series, assuming, like you say, that it's being broadcast in the UK. That might be, like you say, reigniting that... but it's all very theoretical at that stage when I was talking to him! Because I was just interested really in how it was marketed in the first place. That was one question I had for him about where it fit in with all the marketing strategy.

CM: He did a lot of inventive things, Pengles. He liked the books. We published them in a way that maybe too closely reflected the Danish form, maybe we could have had a greater success if we'd scrapped their way of... it was very beautiful lettering jackets, they were very strong. But by... I was puzzled. *The Guardian* wrote the rudest review of the second volume that I think I've ever seen in *The Guardian*. Why did they bother? They're saying what on earth does anybody bother publishing a book like this for in English.

EK: Oh I haven't seen that. I'll have to see if it's online.

CM: Well, Pengles will send it to you, if you ask him, he has a gift for resurrecting dead matter {*mimes opening drawers in the air*} It is dead matter. It's not a review we spread about. The sales were terribly disappointing, and nobody seemed to pick up the point about what young people in Europe do in Africa? What do they think Africa offers them as a chance for... whether it's charity, whether it's peace corps type work, whatever it is. I'm not sure that the unselfish ambitions that seemed to be there at the beginning of the trilogy survive to the end of the trilogy. They don't, because everything falls apart. But we'll see. It'll be very very interesting to see in the Danish film version of it which part of which books do they take to make a sequence out of.

EK: Well as I understand it it's the middle book where it's the ten short stories in - is it *Revolution* or *Liberty*? I think they're remaking that one in the sense that there's these ten different perspectives -

CM: So ten one-hour, as it were, films?

EK: I don't remember it saying in the press release exactly how it would be structured. Yes, it could maybe be ten episodes or maybe just ten of the characters that it focuses on. The thing that I read was on a Danish website, but there was also an English version of it, which is definitely somewhere online. It was maybe May or June that it was announced. It'll be somewhere online about how it's being made and who's doing it.

CM: I talked to the agent of the... why is there an agent involved. A man called Lars Ringhof of the Copenhagen [Literary] Agency, got involved {pause} My memory is that all the rights resided with Gyldendal and somehow presumable Lars Ringhof who is clever with... indeed who did, who sold, um... a book, or the right to make the novelisation of *The Killing* to MacMillan here, was it Pan or MacMillan?

EK: I think it might have been MacMillan, and that was David Hewson, wasn't it? {pause} Is that right, David Hewson, is that his name?

CM: No, that doesn't ring a bell. An English crime writer was handed the script - and the book was vast and hideous.

EK: I think it sold remarkably well for the fact that it was, like you say, a novelisation of a programme that wasn't originally a novel.

CM: Well, it can be any way round you like. Did it sell remarkably well? I'm a little surprised to hear that because it was a VAST book, could easily have been three books, which may or may not have mirrored the original, and I don't know how far the narrative of the book departed from, built upon, what was a very slender storyline in the film. Anyway, he did obviously heroic work. I hope it worked. I remember they paid a GIGANTIC sum to buy it.

EK: What's interesting to me as well is with this trilogy from Jakob Ejersbo when you were deciding on it did you see any parallels with any of the other authors that you'd either worked with or published? For example, Henning Mankell has his connections to Africa or Stieg Larsson with the fact that it was a trilogy, it was a dead author if you like, so there was no author there for promotional publicity and press and marketing. Were there any parallels that you drew when you were thinking about whether to choose the Ejersbo books?

CM: No. {pause} Interesting that you raise the question of Henning and his Africa. Very interesting, because he - as you know - he wrote purely African books. He wrote - there's one in the Wallander series, *The White Lioness*, which wanders in and out of South Africa. Very strangely, I used to write to our South African office and say listen for heaven's sake make sure that there are piles and piles and piles of *The White Lioness* and all the other books at I-can't-remember-which airport Henning was flying in on his way to Madagascar [Mozambique] where he spent 6 months of the year. I think it was only... no it was long before he died. It turned out that they in South Africa VERY much disliked the book. They said he'd got South Africa completely wrong. "You can't know how irritated people are here about..." and I thought, "phew, c'mon, it's a novel, enjoy it, and all the other books!". Absolutely not. No, it sounded to me that they felt really insulted by how wrong he had got South African politics. I think they were talking absolute nonsense. Anyway, they did not pile books up in the airport when Henning was passing through! That's okay, he sold a great many copies of the books everywhere - EVERYWHERE - else in the world. But no, I think you may take it as a given that publishers don't go around looking for the authors of dead trilogies! Or the dead authors of living trilogies.

EK: *{laughs}* No, absolutely. It's almost a comic comparison in a way, but it's more thinking about whether it was a factor in thinking about if it was a marketable book in the first place. Well, we've done it before, we can do it again? Like you say, it's a bit of a stretch really.

CM: No, absolutely not. And I don't remember the timing. Did we know that Ejersbo had died when we bought the first one that we bought?

EK: Oh. Good question.

CM: I don't know that we did. It would absolutely not have made any difference. It might, as you probably know, eighteen publishers turned down Stieg Larsson, of whom several, not to put a figure on it, did so on the grounds that the author couldn't possibly promote the books. These I think were more American publishers than English.

EK: So it's definitely a factor in the marketing for some publishers then, isn't it.

CM: Well, you say that. It has been said that it was - a vile thought - a marketing plus that he had died. I don't hold with that one way or the other. It's a little bit like saying, are you publishing enough Indonesian writers, this kind of thing. You say listen we publish the books that our readers of languages that we can't read have commended to us in such terms as to persuade us that this is literature, or pure narrative, that absolutely has to be read by people in English. I'll give you one example, let me have a look, this will excite your conspiracy theorists enormously *{walks to dining table/desk to collect book}* the author is 95! Maybe he won't survive for publication. Jin Yong. *{handles/demonstrates book proof copy}* Was found, this is quite extraordinary, by an English agent, not a conventional English agent. He goes to Mr Google and asks the question who are the best-selling contemporary authors worldwide. He gets a list of five, of whom I think [Georges] Simenon may be one. Of whom I think Agatha Christie is NOT one. I have an idea that Ellery Queen might be one. You could do it just for fun. In that list you will find Jin Yong. So the agent who's a television writer married to a very brilliant foreign rights agent called Rosemary Bachmann[?] puts his thinking cap on. Goes with his wife to Hong Kong where he has identified that the author lives. Meets his - he has an office on the forty-fourth floor of a tall building in Hong Kong and persuades this management team to make a contract for him to sell the books in translation all over the rest of the world. These people agreed very happily. This book comes out next Spring [back cover says February 2018]. It may be the first of either ten, possibly twelve, possibly thirty-two books, in this epic series. But what happens there is Peter comes and he says would you consider this. Why ask? Because we habitually translate books. Very importantly, before you even translate a book, you have teams and teams of readers. So we have many readers of Chinese literature who in this case said, "oh, of course I've read it, I mean I've read this a child, I've read all of them". Everybody has read all of them. What do you mean everybody? Well there isn't a single Chinese person who hasn't read Jin Yong in entirety six times. So these accumulations of impressive – *{phone rings, doorbell rings at same time; CM gets up to answer door; long break in conversation}* [...]

EK: I suppose one question really do you have a feel for why the books didn't sell that well, the Ejersbo books? There's obviously so many factors to take into consideration.

CM: *{pause}* I can't explain it. I think that the narratives are exceptionally powerful. The characterisation is utterly credible. To me enormously interesting. The context... it's not, if for example these books on *{inaud}* had been written and published thirty years before would you say that there were more people with a - how would you put it - more interested in that part of the colonial history. You could just about say that. Of an east African background. I grew up within a family where they had all as colonial officers spent half their lives in Tanganyika, Rhodesia, Kenya - 'Keenya' as was said - so it was very interesting to me. Apparently not to everybody else. BUT there is no question in my mind that the books have real value, and IF the television series can, as you put it, re-ignite interest in an unchanged text, so be it. Wholly in favour of that.

EK: Absolutely. What do you know about the marketing strategy that was used then? I presume as you say that Paul Engles was involved in that? There was a video trailer that was made, for example, I don't know how that was actually used in the end. You were saying about the press, but for the second book. I haven't found very many reviews, PR-wise, of it when it was launched.

CM: Do you know what? When this began, when this trilogy appeared, we were not - we as publishers - didn't have access to what you would call now social media. There were not even blog writers at work to the extent that -

EK: Absolutely, 2011 was the first book, wasn't it? That's over five years ago, isn't it - things have changed quite quickly I suppose.

CM: Changed very very quickly. I'll tell you in the case of Jin Yong we put out an announcement the other day saying that the books of Jin Yong were coming. This excited a response the like of which I have never seen before. The telephone goes one day and it's this woman, funnily enough Gala [his assistant] instantly identified her as coming NOT from China, I thought she was Chinese, she is Chinese, she's called Echo[sp?] and she subsequently put out another great avalanche of news. Twenty-two million people at the end of her news. You didn't have access to that. There was a time - I was a literary editor, long before your mother was born, and we counted with enormous intensity every week *{mimes doing so on paper}* the column inches of advertising in the newspaper. Somebody came down from the advertising department and said, it's quite sweet, they show you what your pages looks like *{draws ad columns on a piece of paper}* and they said this is a double-column and that will be a single column and then down here there will be a double, blah blah blah blah. So that's the space and then you had eight pages. That's what you had to fill. Now, nobody advertises in - can't afford to advertise in newspapers. Cost is immensely high. And you're not getting to twenty-two million people which you can do *{clicks fingers}* if you like, at the drop of a hat. I don't know how long this lady spent building her constituency. But this will change publishing in a way. What I found even more interesting is that the end result will be people reading books *{pats book}* Book-books. Rather than digital books. To a degree that we had not thought likely five years ago. When the e-editions were steeply rising. Now, as you know, it tailed off. It won't disappear obviously. It's a great relief that books... well, you've probably seen this: more copies of books are sold every year for the last five years - it's going up.

EK: It's fascinating, isn't it? There was definitely this premature claim that the physical book was going to die somehow. But people want books, people want physical books, don't they? You can read other things, read the [news]paper or whatever on your phone, but it's not the same as reading a book, is it?

CM: The worry is that there are in this country I think 130,000 different new books every year.

EK: That's true, yeah. That's a huge number, isn't it?

CM: How many of those are of any interest to the people that we are publishing books for? A MINUSCULE proportion. It's in that regard that I salute Mr Amazon, because he is supplying at least 120,000 books to the people who want those books, who never go into bookshops, wouldn't find them in a bookshop if they went into a bookshop. The fortieth book of underwater photography published in the last four years, well that's fine. If Amazon can deal with that, save bookshops having to stock them, so much the better.

EK: Back to *Smilla* actually - I recently spoke to, I don't know if you remember various people's names, obviously Steven Williams but Jane Thurlow as well who was the marketing manager at Harvill HarperCollins. She was just telling me how important booksellers were twenty-five or so years ago which is not comparable with today. This aspect of the point-of-sale marketing, getting this relationship going with the individual shops, the booksellers, the chains and so on. Like you say, now Amazon is

very dominant and that changes everything. It was really interesting to me that marketing then was just such a different beast compared with now because of digital changes.

CM: It does a different thing. Did Jane Thurlow tell you what she and her colleagues had produced?

EK: Yes, she even had this wonderful demonstration of the jigsaw piece that they had sent. They had a bit of card with jigsaw puzzle pieces to send to booksellers as teasers, so they did four of those. That had a similar theme with the point-of-sale shelves thing. Tell me the bits you're remembering?

CM: I remember a box. I think it was that size *{demonstrates shoebox-sized shape on table}* and in it there was a proof of the book and there was a handful of little objects including a watch which had a sort of an ice theme. Pale blue face, I think. But it was very... even in those days, very unusual. The marketing director was a man called Mike Chenie[sp?] who was a total genius. IMMENSELY original. Enthusiastic. He loved the book. Jane worked with him. I think everybody loved the book. I remember in the week after the book was published somebody on the sales - the home sales manager whose name was Sheila Graham said well this book is not brilliantly selling, not doing anything very much, and practically everybody in that meeting went mad *{claps three times}* you get your act together because this book is going to work! In fact, the hardback DIDN'T work terribly well. We managed to sell five thousand copies, which you'd think nowadays that would put it well up. Peter came, talked to all kinds of people, journalists, booksellers, and so on and so on. I think the Danish Embassy gave a party for him. But it was when the paperback came out that it went completely off all charts. Why is that? I don't know. I'll tell you one of the things was that there was no Danish literature. This was long before this silly term Scandi Noir which embraces Arnaldur [Indriðason] the Icelandic genius on the one hand and well before if you remember people nowadays writing about it Scandinavian crime fiction they always point to the Swedish pair Maj Sjöwall and Per Wahlöö. At the time they were published, very very few people read those books. They've been resurrected once or twice. Then along comes Henning Mankell. Nobody was very interested in the beginning, but then all of a sudden, what happened, people started actually to read them and say this man is a brilliant storyteller. Where in relation to... I have a feeling, I'm sure that Peter Høeg came before Henning Mankell, and the book was a great success for - I think the comparison isn't absolutely fair - exactly the same reason that Stieg Larsson's books were a great success. They have a character who happens to be a woman, a heroine, of exceptional originality. Smilla is a completely fascinating human being. Like Salander - not a detective, not a conventional police inspector or anything of that kind, just a person sorting out a problem. Very interestingly, they both come from - what Smilla is examining is the Greenlandic underclass in Denmark and what's wrong here, can't we get this terrible cruelty sorted out. Salander is sorting out all kinds of other cruelties. But it's these two women people responded to. Very many people did also buy *The History of Danish Dreams*, Peter's previous but subsequently published novel. I don't know how many people do buy his books now. Alas we had to leave him behind.

EK: Mm. Certainly nowhere near the figures that *Smilla* had -

CM: No. No, no, no.

EK: Or even like you say the subsequent two that were published then. But they're all very different books though. I'm just wondering if there's anything particularly Scandinavian about those books that have done well, or if it's the quality of the book and the characters and so on that have made them a success if you like? The way I see it is that with *Smilla*, there wasn't a big upsurge in books from Denmark particularly after that success -

CM: *{interjects}* There was.

EK: Maybe ten years or so [later] -

CM: There was.

EK: Straight after?

CM: Yes, immediately.

EK: Which authors are you thinking of, maybe Carsten Jensen was not long after I suppose?

CM: Carsten doesn't really apply, because he's writing a totally different kind of book. On the other hand, there emerges Barbara Haveland, translator, there emerges one or two other translators, and then there's sort of a subsequent string of them, very good ones. But I remember publishers going to Denmark, invited by the Danish Literature Center. Maybe there were 3-4 publishers from England, 2-3 - including Elisabeth - from America. We met many publishers, we met a number of authors. We did all the right things. We went to Louisiana. I bought on that journey, because you were listening to people and you say to them who is NOT translated and somebody said to me, there's only one really great writer who should be published in English and I went to see the owner of the book called *The Painted Room* by Inger Christensen while all the other people on this delegation had gone to listen to a reading of her poetry. They were all very impressed. I was quite tickled because by the time they'd finished listening to her poetry, we had secured the rights to the novel. Which is a beautiful novel. Did you ever see the book?

EK: No, I haven't seen a copy.

CM: It's a lovely lovely book. *{leaves kitchen to look through books on dining table}* People steal my books all the time, I remember exactly where it was, lovely, very small, very lovely. I never met her, is she still alive? Maybe. [...] Much work was done on it by a genius at Harvill called Guido Waldman, himself a translator. Anyway, that's all by the by. But there's a writer whose name is something like 'Loo-bye' *{sp?}* who was published by Chatto, two or three novels. Very nice human being. Don't think such an interesting novelist. But this is the reality. Publishers say ah, look at *Smilla*, what is the essence of *Smilla*? Denmark. Right, off they go. They did snap up a handful of Danish writers, every one of whom apart from Peter, including Inger Christensen, had evaporated within five years. So it does need to go on. What is behind this? I happen to think that the whole Scandinavian noir category is nonsense. There have been marvellous storytellers from Iceland - Halldór Laxness whom we published. We may never know apart from the children's authors who come from Finland. Very few other writers have escaped from that language which is so difficult into English to be widely read as they obviously deserve to be. Norway produces one wonderful storyteller after the other. I think the storytelling is the key. Of course you've got Dag Solstad, you've got Per Petterson, you've got Roy Jacobsen, on the other side, but the storytelling of Karin Fossum is hardly matched anywhere else outside this Nordic arena, within which storytelling is valued as it is not, nor encouraged, nor educated, in other parts of Europe. Per Olof Enquist will tell you, has told me over and over again, he comes from a tiny area, maybe one or two villages, in Härjedalen where Mikael Niemi comes from, he says Henning Mankell comes from, I'm not sure he did. He - P.O. - who else, they would say all the great storytellers come from this densely wooded, heavily snowed on part of the world, where during the winters all we could do was tell each other stories. Well, there must be some truth in that. [...]

EK: I was thinking about the state funding as well. Obviously there's funding available for all these translations from the arts agencies in the various countries. But I get the impression that Norway really has a lot of funding for translation and I wonder whether that has more of an impact than the Danish Arts Foundation, I don't know? They obviously do give quite a lot of translator funds as well.

CM: The beginning of NORLA, when it was under the leadership of somebody called Kristin Brudevoll, talking 25-30 years ago, she led that charge almost by herself. She would say, "I had to go and beat up the foreign office every year to get a budget" which grew and grew. Then there comes a time where

because of oil Norway that it can really invest in its writers. There is no doubt - many other countries would have said excuse me, we need it to build roads. But Norway said, we need it for painting, opera, writers, and they spent it wisely and wonderfully. And writers have benefited from that. Sweden who have MUCH less money nevertheless spend a great deal through the Swedish Arts Council, no question about that. Denmark... *{pause}* less effectively, I think. Maybe there is a sense that there is a resurgence now. But I'll give you one example, use of money. Next year at Frankfurt, the guest of honour is Georgia, who have found money to pay for translations. Norway the following year which is to say 2019 are offering a subvention of 75% of the cost of all translations made into that year, and I don't know for how many languages. That's huge. But they have the funds.

EK: What would you say makes the Danish spending less efficient, is that the word you used? Effective?

CM: *{intake of breath - mimes covering audio recorders with hands}* I think that Kristin Brudevoll in NORLA and one or two of her successors have been of a different calibre in terms of the extent to which they successfully manipulated the purse-strings, had the money to make things happen, but you couldn't do anything obviously unless you've got the writers to sell out of those languages. The other prime example of a brilliantly successful, incredibly hard-working unit, is the foundation for the propagation and the translation of Dutch literature and Belgian literature. They are in a class of their own. There's nothing to compare with that in Germany, NOTHING in Italy or Spain or France, these are people who take intensely seriously the business of finding an author, very importantly, which others don't. They will say, we will give you a subvention to help you pay for the translation of this book IF we approve the book and IF we approve the translator and the translation. You can send the translation and they can say, I'm sorry this is simply not good enough, we won't give you any money.

EK: Wow, that's interesting. They're really caretaking the whole way, the whole process -

CM: Absolutely. Yes, they monitor it. Having said okay we'll take this translator, he's very good, they don't come back and do a test for every subsequent book, that doesn't happen, they just say you're on the list. But if you want, there are not, curiously, so many translators from Dutch now as perhaps ten years ago there were, if you say I want to introduce a new one, they will take a very long hard look.

EK: Yeah *{pause}* that's absolutely not what the Danish Arts Foundation do as far as I understand their processes.

CM: Is my impression. That's never happened to us.

EK: They say it's the Translation Fund where the publisher is applying to cover their fees. They ask for a CV and three pages of a sample but I don't think they necessarily will come back and say send us the whole book or anything like that, never heard of that happening, it's very much more checking the person is qualified is their big factor. They want a qualified translator, whatever that means.

CM: I think I remember the extent to which they supported the publishing of the Ejersbo trilogy. *{signs zero with his finger and thumb}*

EK: Yeah. Because I think - was it Mette or Paul who said that because Mette wasn't experienced, she hadn't published a certain number of books beforehand, she therefore wasn't eligible.

CM: *{incredulous}* Excuse me. Okay. I have always taken the view that *{pause}* you publish a book because you want to publish it. If subsequently somebody says to you we'd like to support, you can use the money in any way you like, you can say that subvention will go towards bringing the author here, keeping the author here, etc etc. Doesn't matter where you put the money, you're paying for it in one department or the other. Interestingly, the Dutch who have this superlative organisation in Amsterdam,

there is virtually no parallel energy in London, or in any other country that I've heard of. Except France, where they keep a sort of book Cultural Attaché, keep them in a magnificent suite of rooms, offices. But here - simply couldn't care less. From time to time suddenly there's a little spurt of energy and you get invited to this that or the other and the Ambassador turns up and says 'isn't it interesting, hmm-mm-mm'. But it's extremely rare, which is to say approximately once every ten years. Occasionally the awarding of the Dutch translation prize at an embassy office. But the idea that there was a Cultural Attaché who minded, compared to, for example, the people who look after writers and books at the Norwegian Embassy, nothing of the same. French have the France Institute, the Germans have the Goethe Institut, the Austrians likewise, so they are on a different level. Then there's the Cervantes Institute which brilliantly embraces the Spanish languages if you may call them that all over the world, so that a Chilean writer is as welcome there as a Castilian. I have to stop.

Interview with Elisabeth Dyssegaard

London Book Fair, Olympia. 14 March 2017.

EK: One of the case studies I'm writing is to look at the 'breakthrough' book from the last 25 years or so which is *Smilla* by Peter Høeg. I wanted to know a bit about your involvement with that. So you were an editor at Farrar Straus and Giroux and I got the impression that you were just keeping in touch with what was going on in Denmark at the time, and then suggesting books, was that right?

ED: Yeah, I mean I was - Farrar Straus, from the very beginning of that company, was always very internationally focused. It's funny because when I first actually got my job there I was in graduate school in America and I went home to Denmark one summer and spoke to a famous old Danish editor - his name was *Ralph Rosen*[?] - he was at Gyldendal in the old days, very venerable - and he gave me a list of people I should talk to in New York about publishing. One of them was Roger Straus. I didn't know anything about American publishing at all! I wrote a letter to Roger Straus and said *Ralph Rosen*[?] suggested I should come and see you. So I went to see him, and he gave me a job! I didn't realise this was actually usually something you have to suffer for, you know?! But as it turned out he was right because my background and the fact that I could read different languages was actually extremely useful in the context of that company because they did do so much international publishing and of course when you're starting out, anything you can do that other people can't do is also where you focus. As a Dane, of course, I would've wanted to publish Danish books - but also I think publishing in an American context, to me translation has always been **especially** important because America is such a dominant culture, so large, English is so dominant worldwide that it's very hard to break through and I think it's so important for people, to voices from outside to come in.

EK: So how were you keeping in touch with what was going on in Denmark if you were living in New York?

ED: I would go home.

EK: Early 90s, we're talking about, are we? 80s?

ED: Yeah it was '93 I think, I actually was literally home - it might've been just as I was going into the hospital to have my first son that Roger called me about the paperback deal for *Smilla*! Because it was a lot of money at the time. But that was in the old days when we licensed paperback rights. I was going to Denmark, my family's still there, I'm still... so every year I'd try to see Danish publishers and of course.

EK: Okay, so a bit of a 'working holiday' feel to it?

ED: Yeah, it was always some part of that. Of course Danish publishers were also very much in touch with Farrar Straus anyway. So this book came in to me, and I read it in two seconds because it was so incredibly compelling. Although it's funny because this was in the olden days I guess of mailed manuscripts and faxes and all that -

EK: This is what I was thinking, it must have been so different back then. When you picture the way things work now, it's all very instant with the internet, so then everything was slower in that sense -

ED: Yeah, mailed - so I got to the end of the book and I was like, this can't be the end of the book! And it wasn't in fact, there was a page missing! I was like, *{exaggerated}* send that page right away! There was fax, so they just faxed it. But it fit into that, it's always hard to say but, it's that hard-to-define category of books that on the one hand are different enough and take you into enough of the world that people don't know, and at the same time are accessible to someone from outside that culture. That combination which now seems somewhat familiar was very fresh then - of a very literary book that also

had this incredible suspense and Noir-ish quality to it, and this amazing female character, like nobody had seen before.

EK: Okay. So then the story as I understand it was that it was translated by an American translator - Tiina [Nunnally] - and what do you know about the process then of when the rights for that translation were sold between the US and the UK? Obviously we know the bare bones of it being edited heavily and then Tiina wasn't happy and it was published at Harvill under a pseudonym but I don't know what happened in between if you like.

ED: I don't know why... the pseudonym, I don't know how much more - they, I guess, British-ified it and whatever. The rights: when we bought World English rights to the book, we committed to selling it to Harvill because Merete Ries also had a relationship with Christopher MacLehose and she said you can have the rights but you know sort of a gentleman's agreement. Yeah. We commissioned -

EK: - In terms of the translation, the text then, you could just hand it over, you didn't have to sell that?

ED: Right. Right. I think, I don't remember - I'm sure they paid some part of, we would charge them some percentage of the fee or whatever, I don't remember the details. So yes, we commissioned - I commissioned - the translation.

EK: Then - maybe you don't know - do you know how involved Peter [Høeg] himself was in editing the version that then became the British version?

ED: He was pretty involved in the American version too.

EK: Oh right! Okay.

ED: Yeah, he obviously speaks English extremely well and he was very engaged with it, so yeah, he was.

EK: Oh right. So the story that I've heard is that he was then involved in the editing of the British version if you see what I mean, which is why it became so different. But then if that's not the case if he was already involved with the American version...

ED: I mean he very much weighed in on the American version too. I think part of - I don't frankly know the story of the [British] English edition all that well.

EK: That's fine, just wondering... so he was, did he have any contact with Tiina Nunnally -

ED: No -

EK: - or was it more editing via you?

ED: - yeah. I mean normally... I guess people work different ways with translators but in many of the books where I've been involved the editor would be in the middle of that relationship.

EK: To mediate almost, I suppose?

ED: Yeah... you know, almost because you also want the editor of the translation. Ideally someone who can read the language, although that often is not the case.

EK: I imagine it must be different for every book, to some extent?

ED: Right, exactly. But I would say as a translator personally I think it is helpful to have an editor in the middle of that too. Because often people have... when it isn't your first language, even if you speak it very very well there's still maybe nuances that are different than you might think. So I think it's helpful to have a native speaker there saying yeah this sounds wrong to you but in fact that is how it would be. That comes up a lot, I think, by having worked on **many** books.

EK: I guess also the editor, because they work for the publisher, they know what **they** want as well?

ED: Right, there's that as well. Making decisions about... depending on the kind of book it is, are there things you would change to make it more accessible for an audience. For example, when I published *Sophie's World* there were certain literary references in that book to Norwegian books that nobody here would have heard of, do you change those or do you not change them? Do you make it something that would make sense that then informs the reading, or not? To me a lot depends on the kind of book and what the ultimate purpose is.

EK: What's your take on the reception of - or the impact now of *Smilla*? Because when I talk to the Danish Arts Foundation for example, they say oh yeah, that was the real breakthrough, that really made a difference. But then when I look at the number of Danish books into English that came after that, there wasn't really a big upswing. So, the argument is partly, people know about it, have heard of it but...?

ED: Well... I think, publishing translation is always going to be difficult. It just is. In addition, when you come from a small language, the number of books published every year that are meaningful in an international context are limited. But I always say too there's no reason to translate books that exist basically in the same form in English. So then you're really dealing with very unusual books, literary books, that kind of stuff, not everything - so it's a pretty small pool, right? I **do** think that that book made a difference because it was a bestseller. Because it made clear that you can in fact do that. You can take a book like that and it can be a bestseller. I think it actually set a precedent for this explosion - for better or for worse - of Scandinavian Noir, you know -

EK: Even though that was a few years later, you're right - there has been a real upswing -

ED: Absolutely! That was like a flood. You could've argued almost to the point where, I think there are probably several generations of Scandinavian writers who actually wrote to that. If I want to be published in English, this is the type of book I should be writing. For better or for worse. I think it [*Smilla*] absolutely did make a difference. It's interesting to me because it looks like we're just getting to a generation now when I meet younger people in publishing, they don't necessarily know that book, but it's been 25 years, you know. It's a long life -

EK: That is almost a generation actually, that's true -

ED: Every book that makes it - now we have the big example I would say now is Knausgaard. I was with a Danish writer the other night and he was like, *{exaggerated}* 'why, why?! Why those books? They're 6000 pages, why?!' But it's like sometimes it is that thing that you know - will that mean that every Norwegian writer will be published now? No.

EK: You're right. People know that he's Norwegian now, I suppose, or at least I get that impression. It's put Norway on the map in a sense.

ED: Yeah. Right. They sort of know where he is, vaguely. Or Elena Ferrante. Again. *{inaud}* for an overall sense that world literature is world literature, yes. Will many more Italian books be published? Not so sure. Although I certainly see plenty of people selling European novels saying 'it's just like Elena Ferrante', right. That's your ultimate mark of success!

EK: Absolutely! Have you seen many... are there any changes that come to mind since you first started in publishing translated literature, are there any big differences? For example are we saying it's become more popular? Translated fiction?

ED: No. I don't think so. *{slight laugh}* I think that publishing in some ways has become even more - in an American sense - conglomerated. And therefore also the stakes are big so it's harder to take on books just because it's important, right? On the other hand, the flip positive side of that is a whole range of small houses that are kind of filling in the gap like Europa and Archipelago who first published Knausgaard. *{inaud}* It becomes this two-step process, right? You publish those books, you tried to establish them, you get your champions, and then hopefully you like them - or the big publishers move in and take the next book, that's life. So that I think is a positive thing. Will it always be difficult, in an American context, I think so, because they're such an enormous English-language publishing industry anyway, and God knows it's hard enough to publish American novels -

EK: Exactly, like you say if they're always after 'big books' because they're a big company -

ED: Yeah, whatever that means, you know. Yeah.

EK: That's challenging. So which books have you worked on from Danish to English as well as *Smilla*, can you tell me about any of those?

ED: Well it's been a while, let's see. I also published Ib Michael back in the day. And what else? My most recent Scandinavian book was *The Hundred Year Old Man Who Climbed Out Of The Window*.

EK: Oh brilliant, yeah.

ED: Which was another case where she - his agent at the time could not find an English-language publisher. Everybody had turned that book down - in England and in the US. And Anna [Soler-Pont?] - from Barcelona [Pontas Agency] who was representing him at that point [now represented by Brandt New Agency] - and I have known each other for many years and she said you just **need** to publish this. Trust me. You just need to do it. Of course part of the problem is there is a translation - that's maybe between us - a not very good translation. And often that's part of the problem, how do you deal with the lack of people who read the language, right? You could get a sample translation, often they're not very good, and sometimes that makes it harder rather than not. But on the other hand it's also hard for a publisher to trust, to buy a book based on a reader's report, you know. Or then you can commission the whole thing, but again I often feel like the translations are just not good. So what do you do? That I think with *The Hundred Year Old Man* it was a really quirky book. And again *{animated}* there was no other book like that, now all of a sudden there are all kinds of them!

EK: I know! Now you can just see the number of words on a cover...

ED: Exactly!

EK: Like you say it's a real trend.

ED: I bought it then I just basically - between us - just redid the translation, I just rewrote it. It was worth it. I did it on my own at home at the weekend, because we weren't going to pay for another translation, but it also clearly wasn't going to work unless I redid it.

EK: Okay. But your name's not on it?

ED: No. The translator's name's on it. Which is why I don't want you to talk about that part.

EK: That's fine. But I see what you mean. Your role is really pretty significant.

ED: Well in that case it was.

EK: What projects are you working on at the moment? Are you using the [London] Book Fair to get more translation jobs for yourself or are you meeting publishers? Finding out about books?

ED: Uh, no - it's always a combination. As I wrote to you [in advance] I think it's just important to maintain relationships. Certainly with publishing internationally, there's a lot of fallow periods. Then all of a sudden a book pops up that has... that is 'that book'. You want people to remember you when that happens. {laughs} You wanna hear about it. I do also very much want to keep a finger in the translation game, because I think it's important, and intellectually it's very satisfying. It's a very good mental exercise.

EK: Is that what you studied - you were saying you were at grad school in the US?

ED: No, I studied literature.

EK: Okay, so translation was almost something you did incidentally?

ED: Yes. Many years ago when I was at Farrar Straus I actually oversaw - for a while we distributed a whole line of Swedish children's books. Which is why if you Google me, Pippi Longstocking pops up all over the place. It was Rabén & Sjögren who are the biggest Swedish children's book publisher. I helped them choose the books that we would then sell for them and commissioned translations but sometimes I just did them myself, because they were about this big {mimes narrow width of book with thumb and finger}. Then I guess the first longer book I did was I bought this beautiful Danish series by an author called Bodil Bredsdorff it's called *Børnene i Kragevig* - it's a four-part series. It's sort of like a Danish Little House on the Prairie. Just beautiful books. Four different children in this imaginary but very **not** imaginary 19th century world. One is focused on sea, one is focused on handicraft, knitting, sheep... I mean, it's like a whole catalogue of life from that time, but it's also very much - because it is Danish - all the social ills. Poor little abused children and various things. These books are so beautiful, so I bought all four for Farrar Straus and I commissioned the translation of the first and then I left Farrar Straus and by the time they got to the last two they were like, do you want to translate the last two? Yes I do, because I love these books. Because they're so beautiful. So that's how I started translating longer texts.

EK: Over the years what have your dealings been with the Danish Arts Foundation? Have they changed a lot in terms of the funding they offer?

ED: I feel like they're always super supportive. The whole way they do it seems to change - like who they belong to, keeps changes every five minutes, what they call it, but I think overall they are very supportive and they very much understand the value of the project.

EK: You've got this double perspective as a published and a translator. Have you been to many of their events, you know when the put on the book fair programme, where you can go to Copenhagen?

ED: I went to the one at the book fair, it was a couple of years ago I guess. That was I guess the publisher one. Then I went to one of the translator ones. I've been to a couple. Again, to me, it's maintaining relationships, because publishing keeps changing too, you know. Who's selling rights, what company, who's doing what, this constant over and over, so being able to go on a regular basis and see them...

EK: And what about the Translation Fund and Sample Translation Fund and things like that - do you make use of those?

ED: As a translator, that's not me of course, but as a publisher we always did, absolutely. Setting aside *The Hundred Year Old Man*, I don't think I've published a Scandinavian book that we haven't gotten [funding for] - NORLA too was always great, because I did another {inaud} too - yeah.

EK: I get the impression there's funding available from all of them quite readily.

ED: Yeah. Definitely.

EK: I'm just trying to work out if there's much difference to be said between them. Does Norway give masses more support?

ED: Seems like they're pretty much in line. To me, knowing that that's the case is always important. Publishers get nervous about certain costs and it's just one more hurdle so if you can say there's money to be had, that makes a difference. I think what they're doing, in terms of your work, just being a collective and supporting translators in general - they're just {inaud23:39 }

EK: We haven't reached saturation point for number of translators or anything like that?

ED: Doesn't seem like it! I don't think so.

EK: Do you find these networks useful as well, things like the Danish translators' network [DENT] we're trying to establish?

ED: I'm not doing it as full time as some people obviously, but I still think it's a great thing.

EK: Are you a member of any other networks? I suppose, you're not a full-time translator...

ED: No, I mean that's really major, other than that I...

EK: It's not your day job anyway!

ED: Yeah I do have this other day job too!

EK: I think we've talked about everything I'd like to talk about. Unless there's anything you can think of. What I'm doing is I'm writing about Danish literature in the UK. It's turned out that really what I'm writing about is the people who are involved in that process, so editors, publishers, translators especially, the Danish Arts Foundation, case studies of certain books and how they've come across and things like that -

ED: Who do you think is doing... I feel like Christopher MacLehose was such a towering figure in that world, do you think there's anyone who's sort of replacing him?

EK: Well, he's still doing stuff. You know *Norwegian Wood*, that book by Lars Mytting, that was him. Good question, I don't think there's any other bigger names really, and he's still active. MacLehose Press and Quercus are all still at it.

ED: That's the thing, it does come down to people. It does come down to people at the end of the day right!

EK: That's exactly what my thesis seems to be, it's all about relationships.

ED: But that's kind of true of publishing in general. Because it is about relationships and taste and passion. It's such an unscientific and subjective and un-business-like business! I mean anyone who calls it a business, you know...

EK: I'm also interested to write a bit about how these book fairs work in that sense as well. These face-to-face meetings are still just as important as ever really even though we're in the digital age, people still fly all around the world to come to London and Frankfurt.

ED: Exactly. To have... the people from an editorial point of view... people whose taste you trust. If they're buying a book, that matters to you. You earmark it. You know what I mean? If you see a big influence *{inaud}* in Holland and France then I think that makes a difference. More so probably in the European sense, because it's easier to buy books *{inaud}* but still... *{drifts}* If you have any other questions, you can always just call me.

Interview with Jon Sadler

EAT cafe, Soho Square, London. 20th January 2017

EK: Can you tell me a bit of background about how Nordicana came into being?

JS: I joined Arrow Films at the beginning of 2012. At that point they had had massive success with releasing the DVD box set of *The Killing* series one. At that point they'd also released about three volumes of the Swedish *Wallander* series starting Krister Hendriksson. And they had lined up - about six weeks after I joined - the first series of *Borgen* was about to be released. It'd obviously come off the back of the huge success of the *Millennium* trilogy of books, and then the subsequent films which have been released by Momentum Pictures. So there was a real palpable sense of there being a movement which was called 'Nordic Noir' - or that phrase had been coined - so it occurred to me that we should really try and build a label that could become a brand, that people could associate with anything to do with the genre. Even though we really had any kind of interest in commercial rights for TV series, mostly on the home entertainment level of rights - which is DVD or digital downloads - we thought we could encompass other areas of interest within that genre including books, culture, lifestyle, travel. It wasn't until a year later that it was decided to do an event. However we'd engaged with some of the actors from doing PR work on those releases, we'd been in touch to do press -

EK: - brilliant, was that events or PR?

JS: One of the precursors to Nordicana really was The Scandinavia Show.

EK: Oh right. I've heard of that.

JS: In 2011, before I joined, Arrow Films had a stand at The Scandinavia Show. Which I think was at Earl's Court. It's like an expo, a cultural expo. The organisers of that event had - because *The Killing* had just become a phenomenon in the UK - had invited Sofie Gråbøl and Søren Malling to that event. Because Arrow Films had a stand selling copies of *The Killing*, Sofie and Søren ended up on the stand signing copies, so... that was where the genesis of Nordicana was founded. The idea that people would be interested in meeting actors and buying products and saying hi. Then in 2012 we went to The Scandinavia Show again, and on that occasion we arranged Rolf Lassgård to come who was the actor who originally played Wallander in the Swedish series.

EK: And you were involved in this 2012 one? Or is this still before you?

JS: Yes, I was, yeah. That was in September I think. We also invited Birgitte Hjort Sørensen over to do some PR for our *Borgen* release and then she attended The Scandinavia Show as well on our stand. So she talked to people and did some signings.

EK: She's lovely, isn't she. I've seen her do a bit of publicity for *Borgen*.

JS: Yes, she's absolutely lovely. They all are actually. Then we did a couple of other satellite events. When Birgitte came over we did a screening of *Borgen* at the Soho Hotel. Final episode of season one, before season two started. We ticketed that event -

EK: That was before it was on TV?

JS: Before season two was, yeah.

EK: Oh I see, okay.

JS: The other thing we did - sorry, we had Sidse Babett Knudsen come to Edinburgh and we arranged to do a Q+A of the last episode of season one, again. Before season two started. That event sold out really, really quickly. We spoke to the venue and said, can we put it on twice? You know, she's here for the day, they said fine we'll do it. And then that sold out within a couple of hours.

EK: Brilliant. What did that coincide with? Edinburgh as in the festival or...?

JS: No, it was nothing to do with Edinburgh festival. We just arranged for her to come. I think also Nicola Sturgeon wanted to meet her as well. She was a big fan. Then we said to the film house, can we put on a **third** screening and Q+A? They said, we're up for it - because obviously we had to check that she was okay to do that as well. She was fine with it. So we did three sold out screenings in one day. They didn't play any films that day, they just played *Borgen*, and it was sold out on three... - and that made us really think that there's an appetite for... a larger event.

EK: Do you remember more or less the capacity of that... if that sold out each time?

JS: I think it's about two hundred seats or something. I mean, I can verify that. It was about 200 seats.
{MUSIC IN CAFE INCREASES VOLUME DRASTICALLY; BREAKING FLOW OF CONVERSATION}
Instantly commercial events as well.

EK: I guess London is an obvious venue... {LOUD MUSIC IN CAFE PAUSES CONVERSATION}

JS: Then we started thinking about doing our own event on a bigger scale which we started planning for June 2013. At the time an organisation called English PEN were interested in putting on an event about *Borgen* called 'Dramatizing Politics'. We said, we're going to do an event anyway so why don't you roll that into our event? We went around looking for venues and hiring event organisers to work with and met people through our PR agency who were recommended and we settled upon the Farmiloe Building in Clerkenwell. Which is a really cool venue, that's used a lot in filming. Filming things like Batman, Gotham City police station there, and stuff.

EK: Quite... what do you call it, scenic. Or the right 'feel'.

JS: Yeah, sums up the right kind of atmosphere. It wasn't very fit for purpose. So we kind of occupied that building, we had the green room area were the old offices, of the building, then on three layers we had an expo, we invited people to sell homewares, we sold DVDs, and totally Swedish... Scandinavian Kitchen did the catering. We put on this 'Dramatizing Politics' event, Mark Lawson chaired that, we had various sort of - we had the writer of *Borgen*, and various academics: people like Barry Forshaw, who writes books on the genre. Then we desperately tried to get people to come.

EK: That's what I was going to ask you as a marketing person: how did you go about marketing it, and who were the audiences you were trying to aim at? I assuming the capacity was much more than the original screenings before?

JS: It was, yeah. But it was also in hindsight it wasn't a particularly good time of year to do it. There wasn't really... the summer wasn't really conducive for the genre, really. Because it's so kind of wintery. And there wasn't a lot going on at that time in the genre. It wasn't like it's on the back of a big series.

EK: Yeah, these things are normally on [TV] in the Autumn, aren't they.

JS: And the nature of actors, they don't know what they're doing that far in advance because of work, so we didn't really know who we could get before we started. So we put tickets on sale but the event was really difficult to sell tickets for. So we struggled. Then at the eleventh hour we managed to get Sidse Babett Knudsen to come, literally for a couple of hours on the Saturday morning. She did a Q+A with Ben Preston from the *Radio Times* who'd contacted us wanting to get involved. So she did a talk and that helped boost the event. So, not enough people. I think as a first-time event we really didn't have the budget to publicise ourselves to the extent we needed to.

EK: How did you go about marketing it?

JS: It was mostly PR-led. We had a half page in *Time Out*. Also we did a **lot** of social media, because we'd built up a social media profile at the beginning of 2012.

EK: For the Nordic Noir TV brand?

JS: Yep. So we did a little bit of advertising, but not a lot. We worked a little bit with a few brands, like *Reyka* vodka - Icelandic vodka - they did a bar. It was a nice event actually. It was a bit lacking in certain areas. Sound and picture quality, being able to view screens - because of the nature of the building, it had lots of pillars and low ceilings. When you're watching something with subtitles, the subtitles are always at the bottom, so...

EK: Yeah. I guess... so that was 2013? Were there -

JS: So we learnt a lot.

EK: - Were there two others after that?

JS: Yeah - we did one in February 2014, we did another event straight off the back of *The Bridge*, season two. We didn't really have any problems selling tickets for that. That was in the Truman Brewery.

EK: Near Brick Lane, yep. How did that go?

JS: Radio Times came on as a partner for that, and we had **loads** of actors for that. It was a really ambitious event. The event didn't run very smoothly. We had lots of problems. A power cut. Heating wasn't sufficient. Queue management was poor, at the outset. A lot of organisational things. We were just fire-fighting on the day.

EK: How frustrating. Was it well attended?

JS: Really well attended, yeah. We had technical problems like with microphones, all sorts of things really. {pause} But yeah we had some **great** people. We had - Sidse Babett Knudsen came back. We did a whole *Borgen* panel. We flew in Pilou Asbæk as well. We had Adam Price who'd been at the first Nordicana as part of the Dramatizing Politics panel, he was the creator of *Borgen*, we had the writer... we also had Marie who was in *The Killing* 1 and *Borgen* so she'd been at Nordicana as well the year before to do with the *Borgen* panel. We had Krister Henriksson from *Wallander* came down. He did a talk about *Wallander* with Charlotte Jonson who played the new Linda Wallander.

EK: How did you go about marketing that one, did you do anything differently?

JS: The biggest thing with that one was we had Kim Bodnia and Sofia Hellin from *The Bridge*. That was like the main event really. Literally coincided with the last episode of *The Bridge* - it was The Bridge fever, it really peaked at that point. Channel 4 News came down and did an interview live with Kim Bodnia. Radio Times were the media partner -

EK: Oh that's was great, was that all set up by the PR company?

JS: Yeah. And it just was **absolutely** full on, chaotic, the most stressful experience ever!

EK: Because of the venue, organisational...?

JS: Sheer amount of people, the venue, organisational stuff, yeah.

EK: How did it all turn out then, from a PR point of view?

JS: It was great from a PR point of view. There was no negative PR from it. Some people were disgruntled, but other people said they had a really good time. It's difficult - I mean, it definitely wasn't a good well-run event -

EK: Sure. But then it delivered what people wanted, I suppose? If all those people were there, as they expected.

JS: For the people that got on with the fact that there were problems. Yeah, some people weren't happy and rightly so. We learnt a lot from doing it.

EK: I think I asked this before but I don't know if you have any data for it - do you know anything about the demographics of the people who attended? Is that the kind of thing you asked when people booked?

JS: {nodding} It's more just walking around.

EK: Just walking around - what's your **impression** then of the demographics of the people who attended?

JS: I mean I've got a little bit of data backing it up. When we did a survey, the number one profession for people who follow us on our social media and newsletter were teachers. It's an older audience. People generally in their 40s, 50s, and 60s. Generally culturally aware. I'd say politically slightly left. Goes with all the things that you see in the Danish dramas and the Danish politics, y'know, rooting for Sidse - she's naturally got a slightly left-wing audience, centre-left.

EK: It's a very Guardian reader thing, as well - you get a lot of the PR and these articles are in The Guardian, aren't they?

JS: Yeah I think The Guardian really championed the genre from day one. Coz Vicky Frost was writing for The Guardian; she was a real champion of it. And Alison Graham at the Radio Times was another one. So I think it's a mixture between a Radio Times audience and a Guardian audience. So if you did a Venn diagram: Radio Times is a little bit more mainstream politically than the Guardian [which is] slightly left. But they're not [a] fashion-conscious particularly audience. Very middle income - and above. Culturally and politically astute. People who probably would probably go to the theatre, watch a lot of dramas, cinema. But it's a lot of walking boots and practical jackets, you know what I mean! A sea of Millets clothing, practical clothing.

EK: Absolutely. Almost Scandinavian, I suppose, depending on the season, dressing for the season...

JS: Well, not the flashy - practical. But that gives you a picture.

EK: Did you say you have some actual data to back that up, because that would be really interesting, if there's anything you can share with me?

JS: I'll have something somewhere, yeah.

EK: That would be really good. What do you think generally about the market for Scandinavian TV, film, and maybe even books at the moment?

JS: Now?

EK: Yes, how's it going?

JS: It's still there.

EK: Do you feel like it peaked **then**?

JS: Oh yeah it definitely peaked. I would say that it's driven by the success of the individual series and everything. There hasn't been a massively successful series for a while.

EK: Yes. There's another series of The Bridge coming, isn't there.

JS: Yeah there is. In about a year.

EK: But that's quite a way away. Sorry - did you say there was another Nordicana after the one we were talking about just then? That would be interesting to hear about.

JS: Yes, so, 2015 we decided to do another Nordicana. Learning from the mistakes we'd made on the previous events. So we chose a venue which was very fit for purpose. But nothing in terms of being atmospheric or Nordic in its design or atmosphere. It was an art deco theatre venue in South London.

EK: But being more practical for screenings and things I guess?

JS: It was practical, because they had a proper stage and green rooms and proper theatre seats, you know, they were raked. It was a big venue: 800 seats in it. We arranged that around the transmission of the series *1864* - the Danish series - which we thought would be a big hit, but it transpired not to be a particularly big hit. There wasn't a lot of interest in it.

EK: Do you have any impression of why? Personally or professionally?

JS: Well, it's military history for starters, it's not really a 'Nordic Noir'. It's also a very, very specific piece of European history that unless you're really kind of a history academic -

EK: Exactly. Danes know it. That's why it was watched there, wasn't it.

JS: It's also a bit of a melodrama. That doesn't necessarily appeal to that many people.

EK: Very different from the other series -

JS: It's very melodramatic. I mean I loved it personally. It wasn't really our core audience. We also did the event in the summer again.

EK: How did that work out? Did you sell out the 800 seats?

JS: Not even close, no. That was really, really tough. But we worked really hard on the talent for that event, so we had Sofie Gråbøl came for the first time, Sofia Hellin came again from The Bridge, we had most of the cast of *1864*...

EK: Which are also the cast of other things I guess as well.

JS: And the Irish writer Marion Keyes she came and did the Q+A for *1864* on one of the days. She's a massive war film *{inaud: buff?}*, she's a big fan. We did lots of - we had a smaller room where we did satellite events about cooking and writing masterclasses and we did a little theatre thing. It was quite ambitious again in that sense. Tried to be a real cultural event. But unfortunately it was one of the hottest days of the year! I think it was the hottest day at that point that the year had got to. We didn't get any walk ups, it's a terrible location for that kind of thing. I think maybe some people had been put off by the previous event.

EK: So the one before would've been too cold or whatever, this one was in a theatre...

JS: But culturally it was a nice event. We had the stands there again. We had a beer sponsor.

EK: How did you go about marketing that one? Similar? Anything different?

JS: Our primary audience were the people that had come to events before. Because obviously we had their data. Beyond that, we did bits and pieces. We did some ticket offers with Time Out, got some publicity through that. We had a PR hired again.

EK: Social media, I guess?

JS: Yeah and then social media. We made some mistakes again. Mostly in terms of the pricing of the event in hindsight. But we also had the cast of The Legacy there.

EK: Okay.

JS: So **really** good people. We had Jesper Christensen, Trine Dyrholm. It was a really well-run event! It worked really, really well. There were no hiccups, no technical problems, everything went perfectly.

EK: That was all ironed out then, that's nice.

JS: Frustratingly we didn't have the audience of the year before. And it wasn't the right time of year.

We've never really made it work at a commercial level. We've lost money on every single event -

EK: Every time, ah okay. Do you think you're going to plan to do another similar event again?

JS: Well, all we have is a lot of pain and a lot of lost money through doing it. But it doesn't mean that it couldn't be done in a way that it could work, but I have to say that we were not event organisers, we'd never done events really before, and we put our trust in people that weren't really up to the job on the first two occasions. Mistakes were made. Going on [to] the second event with the people who did the first event was a bit of a leap of faith, because the first event was far from perfect. But people enjoyed it - it had a really lovely atmosphere, the first year. Some people said it was like a cross between a music festival and book festival and a film festival and a bit of expo. It was a really lovely atmosphere. We had also the cast of Arne Dahl series for that first event, they were milling around, chatting to people, taking selfies. We had a live music element at the first one as well. We had some Scandi artists doing a little set and there was an outdoor area where people were getting food.

EK: That's really nice. So it was all quite accessible and friendly and -

JS: - yeah, lovely. So if I could get the atmosphere of the first one, the crowds of the second one, and the organisational skills and technical prowess of the third one, and then do it all in one day - then we'd be on to something. We'd need it to be happening around the time of a big series where there's a peak of interest again.

EK: What was the purpose of the events in a way - was it to sell DVDs or was it to create the market - or continue building that market - for Nordic Noir...?

JS: It was a mixture of all of those things. Selling DVDs is a way of trying to recoup some of the costs.

EK: Sure. And obviously people paying for tickets also?

JS: The idea... in an ideal world we would not lose much money or break even. It's really a publicity driver for the brand, the genre, trying to sustain interest in this genre, the brand. It's good for us to have relationships with the talent, the casts. It's also good for us to meet our audience and have that dialogue. And it's fun. Or it's supposed to be! Ends up being really stressful!

EK: Of course - organising an event is always stressful...

JS: After the last one I said I'd never do it again! But there's always that desire to want to do something better. To go that far and then stop would be a shame. We could do something really good. Now we've got this far, now we've learnt so much about how to do it.

EK: Arrow Films, Nordic Noir TV, are they releasing all the DVDs of these various series? Have you managed to get all of them?

JS: Not all of them, no. Mostly. What happened in 2015 was that 'Walter Presents' launched. Do you know about them?

EK: On Channel 4? All4?

JS: Yeah. They bought rights to quite a lot of series that were within our 'space'. Like Nordic Noir and Beyond. So it's not just Scandinavian - we do crime dramas, internationally, with subtitles. So they started doing a free, advertising, video-on-demand model. So you can go onto All4 - they don't have their own website or section - but if you go onto All4, you can look up their dramas. And as long as you can sit through the advertising, you can watch the series for free. That was the first time we'd really had any competition. Since then, some other distributors have bought into that space. So there was *Fortitude*, which was done by Warner Bros bought that from Sky. I think there was *A Hundred Code*? It was a series released by another label, and also a series called *Occupied*. The Danish series *Dikte* was released by another company. So we haven't got - we don't buy everything.

EK: Sure, and that's a bit of a change to your market I guess?

JS: But also some of the smaller series, there isn't really much commercial value in them anyway. So we could buy them just so that no one else had them, but we're not really interested in doing that -

EK: Yeah if they haven't been on TV in the UK -

JS: We also just wanted to have a bit of quality control as well. Only releasing really good series. Things that have been on BBC4. 'Walter Presents' did steal some of our PR. Share of voice, really. Started saying 'we're the home of international crime dramas'. Walter - the guy who's the face of that brand - he was all like, I've discovered this, and this is what I do, and I watch hours and hours of TV... completely forgetting what we'd done and not even mentioning, that we, y'know, as if we didn't exist. That we've been doing it for like 4 years before they came along.

EK: Obviously they've had Channel 4 as a vehicle to do that.

JS: Exactly. Exactly. And I think they've been quite happy with their results as far as I can tell. And I think they're expanding as well into the States. Which is something we're doing as a business, but not for this... One of the problems with these series is the rights that are available sometimes are quite limited. We did release *Borgen* in America on iTunes via a partner over there, and that did **really** well. Really well.

EK: But sometimes you don't have the rights for the US, you mean?

JS: No we've not really launched - outside of doing *Borgen* on iTunes - we've not launched anything in America. But looking back on it, I wish we had bought those rights at the beginning. Because even though there isn't really much of a market for subtitled TV in the States, it's a niche market, but because of the size of the territory, it's sizeable enough.

EK: Well it's a niche market here I suppose but yeah you're right the proportion of the population there...

JS: There's no big TV channels that show subtitles - people would be like, what the hell, you know. *Borgen* took off a bit because Hillary Clinton mentioned it as one of her favourite series. Also Vanity Fair did a bit about it and picked up on it. So some tastemakers in the States, kind of... And obviously *The Killing* got remade over there, which kind of stole that thunder a little bit, I think there would have been some interest in the original version. I think our events would've gone down well in somewhere like New York. But we're quite a small company with a limited resource. I'm marketing lots of other things at the same time. Lots of niche films and DVD releases, the odd film and documentaries, catalogues. I don't just focus on this brand. It might be developed more potentially. We've got more series coming this year. The *Legacy* season three's coming. Then there's *Follow the Money* season two, that's a Danish series, this Spring. Again there will be obviously *The Bridge* four. There will be a *Trapped* season two. There are some more Scandi series coming through as well. And more what we call our 'Beyond' series. There's actually a Swedish series called *Public Enemy* that's coming out as well. There's plenty that's coming up. I'm not sure that there's a watercooler series again until *The Bridge* now.

EK: So you feel that that genre has peaked but not fizzling out as such?

JS: It's dormant. It's dormant and it'll come back again with *The Bridge*. But I think it's more the fact that people just love *The Bridge* and *The Bridge* has become a bigger and bigger series, because more and more people watch it, more people talk about it. It's probably on Netflix now so there's more access to it. It was on Netflix, I'm not sure if it still is, you'd have to check.

EK: My topic - my subject you like - is translation studies. Have you ever worked with any translators as part of this? The subtitles come as part of what you already buy?

JS: It's a mixture. Sometimes the subtitle comes from the BBC, sometimes it comes from the licensing, sometimes we create it through an agency or an individual.

EK: Any translators been involved in any of these publicity events, do you know?

JS: We've never needed them, because everyone speaks perfect English. We've never had a translator, no, never needed one.

EK: It's interesting, isn't it. Unusual for a foreign market.

JS: Most of the cast of the series speak better English than your average person in England.

EK: They have some really lovely accents, don't they, some really plummy accents, it's nice. Have you been keeping up with this whole '*hygge*' hype? Don't know if you have any opinion on that?

JS: I do, yeah. We decided to do an experiment with the label to release the *Slow TV*, *All Aboard the Sleigh Ride*, so we put that on the label and released it at Christmas on DVD. To see if our audience would be interested in buying something a bit different. The marketing and communications were all around the *hygge* thing. We did lots of articles on it on our social media. Obviously about five books came out all of a sudden on it -

EK: More than five -

JS: LOADS of books, all of a sudden came out. I don't know why, it's like buses, why they came along at once.

EK: Funny isn't it. And some of them have such similar titles, you don't even know which once you're talking about.

JS: Coz we've been talking about *hygge* for several years, it's not a new thing for us, we were using it last Christmas as our corporate Christmas card. It's a surprise it's so big all of a sudden.

EK: Do you get the impression it's the same audience as the kind of people who attend your event?

JS: I think a lot of people are Scandiphiles. They either were before and the series complemented them, or the series made them become Scandiphiles. So yeah we get a lot of engagement on our social channels when we do stories about things like *hygge* and cultural phenomenon, calendar events, cinnamon bun day, we get **loads** of engagement on those stories.

EK: Interesting. Trying to paint a picture a bit about what this whole phenomenon is, because it's not really in a way it's not really true Denmark in Britain, it's a recreation of something. Some bits of Danish culture in the British market and I'm trying to work out what my impression is of it, or maybe who the audience is in particular. Something about that audience that they all have in common.

JS: I think there's a real, real crossover between the people who watch the series and them. I think a large percentage will be people who are interested because of that. I mean when I was growing up in the UK, I didn't have a great deal of knowledge of Scandinavia. What I knew about Scandinavia was Björn Borg, ABBA, porno references - people with big moustaches and jokes about that in the playground - saunas, and that was about it really! I knew for some reason that there was a high suicide rate in Sweden, that's probably what I - when you asked me when I was 10 or 15 it's probably what I would have known about. Most of that's Swedish. I didn't really know a lot about Denmark or Copenhagen at all until *The Killing*. Hardly anything actually. I think what these series did is they brought the UK audience into those people's homes. Started looking at their furniture, and their lamps, what biscuits they were serving - you know in *Borgen* - and the scarves they were wearing, the jumpers they were wearing, and suddenly everyone got **really** interested in all that stuff.

EK: Do you think it helped make any kind of distinction between the countries: Denmark, Sweden, and Norway being separate from just Scandinavia as a -

JS: Yeah I think *The Bridge* did a lot for that. *The Bridge* really highlighted the differences. Because obviously on the one hand, you've got Saga, who's the absolute furthest end you could be of the Swedish personality - coz they're kind of a bit like that anyway. So then you're taking it to the Asperger's sort of extreme. Then Martin's a very affable Dane. Just from meeting a lot of Swedes and Danes myself, you can see really very, very clearly a distinction.

EK: Sure, yeah.

JS: Danes are very much like the Brits. Very, very similar. You could go out with Pilou Asbæk or um... someone like... one of the actors from *The Legacy*, or even so, you can just go for a pint, have a laugh, you wouldn't really know that there was any difference. I think some people say that the Danes are little bit more socially reserved? I really couldn't strike any distinction. But very different from Swedish: Very direct. Very sort of factual, to the point, blunt, not particularly warm, or convivial, you know. I mean there's exceptions, obviously. Rolf Lassgård - total exception. Such a warm individual. Generally, you know, the sort of stereotypes, I guess.

EK: So that's your experience, but do you think that any British audiences now are getting those distinctions as well?

JS: Yeah, through watching *The Bridge*, yeah. I think you can maybe pick up on it a bit more as well from watching one series and then another -

EK: Coz I'm interested in that - about this whole Brand Scandinavia thing - if it's getting a bit more distinct. Knowledge about whether *hygge* is Danish, not **just** Scandinavian, or not -

JS: I don't know whether... how much - there's this new Swedish phenomenon, isn't there as well that's being talked about?

EK: Yes, *lagom* or something?

JS: Yeah, yeah. That's suddenly become a topic.

EK: {laughs} The next buzz word -

JS: But all this stuff's good for the brand, because people are still talking about Scandinavia. Still culturally relevant. So if we did another event, we could have a *hygge* section, 'hygge corner' or you know, furs and candles, that kind of thing... we would definitely tap into all that stuff. The idea was the Nordic Noir and Beyond would become like a lifestyle brand rather than just the drama thing. How that develops is quite complicated really...

EK: Because primarily as a company at the moment you're selling DVDs?

JS: Yeah. We're not selling anything else.

EK: But you've got in mind that you might...?

JS: The thing is that we've got a database of sixteen thousand people. It's growing all the time. So then what do you do with that?

EK: You could either create your own thing or you could link up with some of the...?

JS: Or do affiliate marketing with travel companies. I guess when you get critical mass - maybe when we have twenty-five thousand, we could start thinking about maybe we could do some affiliate marketing. But I just don't have the time -

EK: Still a phenomenal number though - sixteen thousand, is it? In the UK?

JS: In the UK. We get forty percent open rates for our newsletters: really high. I think at some point we could open it out and become... I had this vision of having a website that was about everything to do with Scandinavian culture, where I guess we could do linking all the pieces with the drama series and stuff, so it would be about booking a trip or tour, 'The Nordic Noir tour' -

EK: - There have been some of those actually, if you go to Copenhagen -

JS: - You could find out some other things that are going on, what's on TV, what films are out...

EK: Any books? Scandi crime?

JS: And books, yeah.

EK: Have you done any events around books?

JS: One thing we did was we did publish *The Borgen* book, which Camilla Hammerich wrote. She did a signing for that at the last Nordicana.

EK: Oh right! So that was translated from Danish? Or was it written in English?

JS: Translated, yeah. I can send you a copy of it.

EK: Yeah, that would be really good, I didn't actually realise that had been released. Because with *The Killing* - did you hear what happened with *The Killing* - that is was a British writer wrote a version -

JS: David Hewson? Yeah, he came to talk at Nordicana 2013 and '14.

EK: Oh great, okay. Good stuff. I thought that was really interesting actually -

JS: We have had good stuff. We had Håkan Nesser came to 2014, he did a talk. We had Barry Forshaw, he's the British writer of *Death in a Cold Climate* -

EK: Oh yeah, of course - Barry Forshaw has been to all of these -

JS: He's been our MC. He's the editor of our magazine.

EK: Is the magazine still going then?

JS: Uhhhh... we haven't done one recently. We're just debating whether we're going to do another one at the moment.

EK: Was it every 6 months or something like that?

JS: It was biannually, yeah.

EK: When did that start? 2013?

JS: 2012 we did the first one.

EK: That's interesting. So it's complicated, like you say, it's definitely has that peak, because to be considering whether or not to do another magazine is a sign -

JS: The hardest thing is how we integrated series from other countries. And where you could draw the line.

EK: Do you know that the audience would be the same?

JS: Well no one writes to us and says, 'why are you talking about a French series?' Because a lot of them watched *Spiral* before - which was the first series of, of [on Saturday night BBC4]... so they were used that, and they wanted more of the same. It wasn't like it **had** to be Scandinavian. It just had to be a good crime drama. We've tried our best to include things. But some things don't go on the label, but we still promote them on the site. For example, we've got the French series *The Bureau* - a spy thriller. It's not Nordic Noir. We know our audience will like it, we post about it on social [media], we get a lot of engagement, and nobody says 'oh why is it French'. People really accept... I mean when we first wrote about other countries' products, we did get a few people saying this isn't Nordic Noir, why are you talking about it. But it was very few people. And obviously we integrated some of the other series at some of our live events. *Versailles* and so on.

EK: That's good. Feels like that would be an overlapping market, if it's like a Czech series that comes out or something then people would be just as interested, wouldn't they?

JS: Exactly. I think there's different kinds of *{inaud}* crime. It's difficult when you have a series like *Gomorrah*, which is like mob-based crime, very violent crime. There's not much crossover to that. We should do all these Venn diagrams, all the different series, and how much crossover there is on each one. It would be quite an interesting thing to do that, as an exercise.

EK: Yes. Because the actual genre like you say is not clear cut, it's not just 'crime' -

JS: *Spiral*, *The Killing* and *Borgen* would have massive crossover, then *Gomorrah* would be over **here**. Things like *Narko*[?] way way down **here**. But then you'd have stuff like *The Bureau* kind of more in the middle. *Braco*. *Witnesses*. *The Disappearance*, they're getting a lot closer. It helped that BBC4 particularly played a Belgian series, a French series, an Israeli series - so it's the same ones really as BBC4.

EK: Why does the BBC not publish these DVDs themselves? I don't know how that works?

JS: It's not really set up to do that.

EK: Even though they broadcast them, that's fine that you're buying the rights...

JS: Yeah. We sometimes buy all rights to a series and then sell it on to the BBC. So we bought all rights to *The Legacy*, but ironically the BBC didn't buy it, they didn't want it. I didn't think they thought it was 'crime' enough. Because BBC4's got a bit of a crime theme. It's a shame because I think it would have been really successful if BBC4 had gone with it. But Sky Arts went for it. I think it's a natural successor to *Borgen*, *The Legacy*.

EK: Just difficult when Sky I presume doesn't have anywhere as near as many viewers?

JS: No that's the thing, yeah. It's about ten percent of the viewers. But then again *The Legacy* series one did really well for us on DVD, so we picked up that audience.

EK: Yes, people who were interested -

JS: Yeah. I'm going to have to shoot I'm afraid -

EK: Of course, well thank you very much for your time.

JS: Very rambly - if you want any specifics, then email me. I'll try to follow up. I missed out loads of stuff. *{closing conversation mentioning other books e.g. The Year of Living Danishly and - unrecorded - that he did an event with the Danish Embassy}*

Interview with Kyle Semmel

Skype video call, 3rd May 2017

EK: You're the Director at Writers & Books, is that right?

KS: That is correct.

EK: So you're there now -

KS: I'm here right now.

EK: So that's your day job - can you tell me a little about that? It's a community organisation?

KS: Writers & Books is a literary centre. I think it might be similar to what you would call an open university, if I'm not mistaken? Where it's adults who want to learn the craft of writing, in a sense. We only do writing. We have workshops year-round, all sorts of creative writing workshops, and also literary events we host most of the year round but not always. We do a summer programme for kids basically aged 5 to 18.

EK: Oh nice, okay. And how does that fit in with your work as a translator?

KS: It doesn't. Ha ha!

EK: Tell me more - are you a translator? Or are you a lapsed translator?

KS: Not any more. I've kind of stopped - it [Writers & Books] fits into my professional background: I have a background in non-profits, ranging from communications to development, and honestly, I think I wanted to get out of translation. I wanted something more stable. When my wife was finishing up her term at university we were just both looking to see if we could find some other way of living I suppose. It was a good life in all, and it's not a bad life - translation - but it's just more of a hustle than I really wanted right now. Especially [as] we have a six-year-old.

EK: Were you trying to be a full-time freelance translator then?

KS: Well, I was, for three years. That goes well, it does well, the problem comes when you have one income. When we had two incomes it was great, and once my wife's term ended at the university, one of us had to get a job for sure, and it turned out to be me. Now my wife - who is Danish - has begun translating some. But I don't know if she likes it like I'd like it, to be honest. I don't think it's her cup of tea. She does it, she's good at it, but I think if she could do something more, she would do it.

EK: That's fair enough. Part of what I'm writing at the moment is this chapter based on interviews with translators about what they do beyond the text, so not just the translation of the text, but all of those other bits - like you say, this 'hustle'. So you're on the lookout for other jobs while you're working on a book, that kind of thing. I wanted to speak to you especially because you seem to have done a lot on the marketing side of things, so these books that were published by Open Letter Press, was it 2015, this Danish collection?

KS: You mean Naia's [Marie Aids] book?

EK: Yeah and there were four that were published at the same time - this University of Rochester book launch?

KS: Are you referring to their women's series? Danish women writers series?

EK: Yeah, I think it was that. One of them was *Justine* by Mondrup.

KS: Yeah. I think they're still technically publishing - I think they're not done with that series yet: Iben's just came out, and I think there's one more coming, I don't know... it might be Josefine Klougart, maybe. I know they've published one of hers already.

EK: There was a small event I think that Kerri Pierce was involved with, and the idea was it was meant to be connected to the Danish translators' network [DENT] loosely - can you tell me a bit about that, do you remember that? I'm pretty sure it was 2015, wasn't it?

KS: Yes, that was 2015. That was at the University of Rochester, before I moved here actually. There were a few translators who came to that at the time. It was around the time that that book published because there was an event that Naia and I did here in Rochester that the other translators went to.

{audio stutters and glitches}

EK: Sorry can you say that again?

KS: I don't know if I've done the kind of marketing - I don't think I've done a whole lot of marketing for any of the translations that I've done, other than the usual Facebook, Twitter and stuff like that. I'm not

somebody who goes out and tours the translation, so to speak. Unless I'm asked and unless I'm paid for it. AmazonCrossing as you know publishes a lot of translations and I've done three books with them I think, and the first time they paid for me to go to BEA - the Book Expo America - and I was grateful to do that. That kind of stuff, if the publishers are paying, I'm happy to do it. But only then, because otherwise it's just cutting into your income.

EK: Absolutely, that's understandable. What about the book launch where you recorded a video: *The Hermit*, Thomas Rydahl?

KS: Oh, yeah, yeah. That was a book launch that was actually in London for OneWorld. I absolutely love OneWorld press {inaud} But they asked me to do that little video, five or six minutes, and I did probably about ten different videos before I felt I had a decent one! Because it was basically me and this computer here at work. And I'll be honest, I don't like talking about translation so much. I don't know HOW to talk about translation. I've never studied translation, I don't think about it in a theoretical way, and I just do it, or I just did it. For me it was an instinctual thing, and I enjoy language, I enjoy writing, to me it just worked, but I never... there are writers or translators who can talk about a particular passage, 'oh this is a difficult passage and here's why', I just don't have that mind, I don't {inaud - audio freezes}

EK: So talking about the language side of things not so much... Part of what I'm writing as well is a bit about the publication journeys, so how a book from Denmark comes to be published in English. I guess we could pick a couple of books to think about that process. Like this Thomas Rydahl for example: did you approach them, did they approach you?

KS: They approached me. I've done several different paths, and there are three that I could talk about. Simon Frueland is the first author I translated. With him I literally found a book in a bookstore, liked it -

EK: Is that the short stories one, *Mælk*?

KS: Yeah -

EK: That's so funny as it's the first Danish book I read in Danish, so when I saw that, I thought, that's really funny - but that was only published in America, so far?

KS: To my knowledge. Technically I guess worldwide, it could be bought elsewhere, but it's really an American publisher - it's a small press. He's not a commercial writer, as you know, and I was able to find a press for it after publishing all those stories here in the States, but I did all the legwork for that one. Including his website, which you'll see, that is something - I forget how this worked out but I was heavily involved in the production of that website.

EK: Okay. Was this all... do you mean this was a labour of love or did you have funding to do this?

KS: Oh yeah. I got no funding to do that. I did get funding eventually from the National Endowment for the Arts for a third book that I finished, I actually sent it to him recently. He's someone - he likes to read it, and I like him to read it, so he's looking at it now: *Verden og Varvara*, I translated the last couple of years. Slowly. It's a small book, but I was doing so many other things. So he's someone I went out of my way to translate. I think some translators will do that. Then there are others like Thomas Rydahl where the publisher came to me and asked if I would do it. Then there's a third thing I've done - and this is the one I'm quite proud of actually - Jesper Bugge Kold [*The Wall Between*] {audio freezes}

EK: Sorry say that again - Jesper Bugge Kold?

KS: {audio returns} ... that does well, both for the author and the publisher. So those are the three ways I've done it. The best scenario is when the publisher contacts you out of the blue in my opinion. Then you're not doing {inaud: speculative?} work. The thing about the hustle is, the best year I had was when I had three books lined up in a row, and I knew that once I finished this book, I had another one, and then after that I had a third. And that's pretty nice to know, because you don't have to do any hustles then! Martin Aitken is at a level where he can do that, and that's great.

EK: How do you think people get to that stage though?

KS: By just doing it a lot.

EK: Is it who you know?

KS: Um... yes and no. Martin deserves where he's at because he's I think one of the best. The more you translate, the more you do know. You do the work and eventually your reputation goes out in the world

and you get the jobs because you're one of the best at what you do. I don't think it's just who you know, that's obviously important to a degree, but really it's the quality of the work ultimately, because you could know all the editors in the world, but if the work you submit isn't good, then that's not going to help you.

EK: Sure, because they won't give you another job.

KS: Right, right.

EK: We met in Denmark didn't we a while back and that must have been during the period when you were really focusing on translation, at this book fair programme that *Kulturstyrelsen* host. Can you tell me a bit about your dealings with them, with *Statens Kunstfond* / the Danish Arts Foundation? You must have received some funding from them for translation grants as well?

KS: Over the years I've received a number of translation grants from them, they've been great. {audio freezes}

I have nothing but great things to say about them. {audio freezes} ...non-Danish translators and publishers and other... it's just amazing to me that that exists. There's no comparison with the United States. It's a very foreign concept, but it's wonderful. Nothing but good things to say.

EK: Have you had any dealings with the Norwegian equivalent? Because you've translated a couple of Norwegian texts.

KS: Only as a subsidiary... the publisher Harvill Secker... my first book-length translation was *The Caller* by Karin Fossum, and they submitted the grant I guess you'd say for the translator. So I guess that's how they do it, where they submit and they get the money and then they pay the translator based on that money. So I haven't personally applied for funding from the Norwegian [NORLA], but I know I've received the benefit of that. I get their emails, I like their emails, but I haven't replied, because I've never really done or had a Norwegian project that I was absolutely wanting to do. I've done them only when asked, basically.

EK: Just looking at my notes here... with that whole translation process, have you had occasions where you've known about the translation funding available from the Danish Arts Foundation and the publisher hasn't? Or has it always been the other way round almost, that we know there's funding available so let's see if we can get this project published?

KS: The only one I've ever done without knowing whether I was going to get funding is Simon [Frueiland]'s book. The others, even if it's a sample here and there, I knew that I could get funding for it. Again, doing a ten-page sample is not the same as doing a 120-page book. So I was less bothered. I have done some that I wasn't sure we were going to get the funding for, but they were only two thousand words, that's not a big deal to me so much. So that's the only book that I have ever done because I wanted to do - but it's also because I had never translated before and I needed to know whether I could do it! I enjoyed it. The funding part - I actually didn't realise at the time we could get funding. It wasn't until Simon mentioned it that I realised it. That was gravy at that point. But I will say that the publisher of this book - SFWP - did get funding for the book as well. I let the publisher know about that funding and then they applied. But that was for marketing the book, not for me - I didn't want money at that point.

EK: I see, because there are different funds aren't there, marketing and there's this author-translator fund where you can get money to go over and visit people, things like that. I don't know if you've ever used anything like that?

KS: Have I used anything like that?

EK: Yeah, any of the other grants - the Literary Exchange Fund I think it's called.

KS: I've not done that myself. Maybe technically I did with the conference that we went to? [Book Fair translators' seminar programme in Copenhagen] I think all I did do there is to say that I wanted to come over, if I'm not mistaken?

EK: Yeah, I think so, because that was a specific event that they were hosting. You just apply, and that's under some other heading for that event. Another book we haven't talked about yet is this Jussi Adler-Olsen crime fiction. You did the second book, is that right, of that series? {audio freezes} How did it come about, you translating that second book? It was only that one, wasn't it? Can you tell me what you know about that whole series?

KS: I stopped... I've only read the first two. It came about because *Politiken* asked me, I had done samples or something for them, and Rudi Rasmussen who's at *Politiken* asked me if I was interested in that book. I of course said yes. I ended up getting a two-book deal, I would've done the second and third of the series, and I wanted to, but I have to say that was an exhausting book. I was working full time, my wife was getting her PhD, we had a little baby, I ended up having to drop the second book. I felt really bad about that, because it was quite a good deal of money, but I was getting up at four in the morning to do the work, then going to the full-time job, and then having the baby. The baby, he was alive then, so he was actually a baby [as opposed to in utero], and my wife was trying to get her PhD... it was just too much. I bit off more than I could chew. So that's why I only did the one. I put them in touch with Martin [Aitken], and Martin did the next two or three.

EK: Yeah, he did - like you say - two or three. Then it's moved onto somebody else. But it is a series that's ongoing, isn't it? Did you work directly with the publisher? The English-language publisher, with any edits and things?

KS: I did, except Jussi has a friend who - and I knew this going in - that the friend would read the book and make edits based on Jussi's voice, basically. So my translation is slightly different from what ultimately became into the book because I changed syntax more than this guy, he would put the syntax back into a different... more to Jussi's style, or what he perceived to be Jussi's style. {inaud} To my ear, things sounded differently.

EK: How did you feel about that process then?

KS: {pause} Have you talked to Martin about this by any chance?

EK: Yeah -

KS: {slight laugh} Okay.

EK: He didn't tell me about how **you** feel about it. He told me how he felt about it.

KS: Yeah, um... I, um... I don't know what to think about it. It's been years.

EK: No, that's fair enough. I don't think it's something that I'm going to be able to write up on the record anyway, because it's so contemporary to be honest.

KS: Okay, that's good.

EK: But it's really interesting to hear about on more of a detached level, I think. To hear about this process of this to-ing and fro-ing with an editor but also this language consultant as he styles himself.

KS: Yeah.

EK: But you never dealt directly with the author?

KS: Never. I've never met or spoken with Jussi. I've never had an interest to do that, actually. I never met Karin Fossum or spoke with her either, though I would like to speak with her someday.

EK: That's interesting actually, because I presume you've got a professional relationship with Simon Frueland now?

KS: Yes, Naia [Marie Aidt], Simon, some of the others I've translated, not book length so much but I've translated Pia Tafdrup, there are others but just drawing a blank on their names. Morten Brask, I've met him. But yeah, I never really wanted that with [Jussi]... for whatever reason. Maybe because I was working a full-time job, and I just didn't need the added aggravation of an author telling me this, that, and the other thing. But with regards to the question about the [language] consultant, I don't know if I cared so much, because I was still being paid. I was young enough - this was my second book, and I don't know if I really had the same reaction that Martin did, even though I think in the end I still like some of my wording, I guess you could say, but I also wasn't like, it just wasn't something I was going to fight with or anything like that. Martin's in a different position. It was my second book, I didn't know much at this point.

EK: I see what you mean. Thanks for your time then, I don't know if there's anything else you want to tell me about the world of Danish translation and translators in general. I don't know if you have dealings with translators of other languages, for example, anything that you might want to talk about?

KS: I do to an extent, because I'm in Rochester and that's where Open Letter is. I met Bae Suah [South Korean author/German-Korean translator] the other day for example. I used to have a interview series for translators called Translators Cut, it was SFWP's literary journal, online. I know quite a few translators. Also through the American Literary Translators Association. Again, I like translation, but I don't know if I like the theoretical parts of it. I'm not somebody who really cares, frankly, about many of

the things that translators seem to care about. That sounds crude in a way to say. I believe that translators should get credit, more credit than they're actually given - all that's true - I think they should get paid better than they are given, but I think there is a little bit of a tendency in my mind that translators *{inaud}* every little thing. I'm not somebody... I just don't see that the same way, I guess is what I'm trying to say. I'm going to have to explain that at length another time because that just comes across as weird!

EK: No, no - it makes sense. Would it be correct to say that you see it as a job, and the relationship is that you want to be recruited by somebody for that job, as opposed to chasing up agents and doing pitches yourself, that kind of thing?

KS: That's definitely true, yeah. You probably want to reach the point where you're getting contacted. I still get contacted and I end up saying for the most part - actually, all - I just say no, then I say my wife can do it, or another translator that I know, he might be able to do it, or something like that. But that's definitely the ideal, when you're getting contacted.

EK: Have these translators' networks been useful to you?

KS: They are useful.

EK: You mentioned the American one, the American Literary Translators Association.

KS: I like them less, though. I prefer the Danish network. The ALTA is exactly the reason why I find translators obnoxious!

EK: *{laughs}*

KS: I think there's a great deal of snobbery in translation. To the point where it's just annoying. That's just me.

EK: Obviously I'm not privy to that group's conversation, but you mean there's a lot of linguistic nonsense?

KS: It's a little highbrow at times. I mean, huge generalisation I admit. It's a clique that I find a little bit disturbing at times, that's all.

EK: That's fair enough. Did you mean the Danish network that we've been founding over the last few years or do you mean the Danish *Oversætterforbund*?

KS: No, no, I mean DENT, yeah. I'm not part of the other one. And I'm not **really** part of DENT any more, I get period updates on Google+ but I don't follow it, I'm just too busy.

Interview with Lin Falk van Rooyen

Comfort Hotel Vesterbro Lobby, Copenhagen. 12 November 2016.

E: So you were just telling me about this translators' retreat in Yorkshire?

L: Yes, Lumb Bank. I'm not sure if this is the first one - it may well be the first one. It was initiated by Daniel Hahn. Daniel Hahn and Maureen Freely put it together. We were a group of about twelve literary translators across the board: French, Turkish - one other Danish translator Caroline Waight was there as well, which was great - and Italian. I was a bit sceptical because it's multilingual. But it works really, really well, because it focuses on **your** writing. We do a lot of workshops in the morning and the afternoon focusing on how to write brilliantly and precisely. It was quite fun. The most fun we had was yesterday: we had to translate a Greek poem, none of us could speak or read any Greek, so it was a transcription and they played us the music, and based on the rhythm, we had to translate the rhythm! {claps} And this was just because Maureen Freely - it's very important to her that you translate according to a certain cadence. So that was quite fun, we had an hour and came back, each person had to read out their poem.

E: That's really nice, really creative.

L: Yeah - it's completely crazy! But it just shows, it's very lateral thinking. What you come up with. It was very interesting - everybody got the mood right. Something melancholy, something by the sea. What was also very interesting is that the personality of each translator came across very strongly - what you hear, which is very similar to a literary translating, what you 'hear' in that particular piece, so that was really fascinating. Maureen said to us, what she wants us to translate is, what you hear. You want another person or the rest of the readership to hear, 'this is what I heard, there you are'. It was brilliant. Absolutely brilliant.

E: That sounds really interesting! And how did you find out about the event?

L: I found out about the event through the TA [Translator's Association] because I'm through the membership of Society of Authors and the Translators' Association. It was on the website.

E: Do you find that useful, the network?

L: I find that extremely useful - you mean the TA or the SoA?

E: Is there a distinction for you?

L: Um. Well, you're automatically a member of the Translators' Association if you're a member of the SoA. So the Translators' Association is slightly more - well, I think they supplement each other quite well. Matter of fact now that you mention it, both the ELN Pitch - European Literature Night - and this one, I got through the TA website. So that one is actually more relevant.

E: I was going to ask you about that - the Translation Pitch at Free Word Centre, the ELN one last year. Do you mean you found out about this in the first place through the Translators' Association website?

L: Indeed.

E: So no one contacted you -

L: That was directly off the email.

E: Talk me through it - how did you know about the book that you wanted to pitch?

L: Well, I'm always looking for opportunities to pitch the projects that I'm working on. By now I've got quite a few going at the same time. Then I actually made two entries because you were allowed to make two, one was Pablo Llambias' *Enraged / Rasende* and the other one Jesper Wung-Sung's *Proper Fractions* - or we call it *True Fractions* now - and I just applied, I just thought to myself which was the one that would work best for that type of forum. That's why I chose those two.

E: How did you find out about those books originally in Denmark? Through being in Denmark, or?

L: My approach was right from the beginning, which brings us back to the two Jesper books - well, I've done several - my approach right from the beginning was when I finished my studies, I simply asked myself what is the kind of literature that I would like to see transported into...

E: Sorry, what was your studies?

L: I studied *Anglistik und Skandinavistik* - so English and Danish Literature.

E: Brilliant.

L: At Hamburg University. But my first major was *Anglistik* - English Studies. During the course of my Masters - it's an MA - Jesper Wung-Sung was **the** author on the top of my list which I really wanted, I was very very interested because he's so unusual, and the same goes for Pablo Llambias. So both those authors - Jesper in particular... because I'd met him briefly, very briefly, in Frankfurt 2009 I think it was, and I spoke to him very briefly then and I was very interested and I knew he was approachable type of person, y'know, a decent human being, which you don't always know if an author is approachable or not. So on that basis, which was a very skimpy basis, I emailed him in 2012 and said to him, look, I'm coming to the Copenhagen Book Fair, so that ties in with how that worked which was instrumental for the launching of that project. 'I can't understand why you haven't been translated into English - do you have some sort of explanation' - very charmed, he said 'well actually, quite frankly, no!' *{laughs}* So we got on extremely well right from the beginning, he said well sure let's meet, so that's when we met at Copenhagen Book Fair, and I'd translated the first page of *The Last Execution / Den sidste henrettelse* and I read that to him, trying to impress him, obviously! *{laughs}* We just got on really well.

E: - That's good -

L: - cos I felt rather insecure because I'd never translated literature before. But it worked out well. He then put me in touch with his editor at Høst & Søn and both of them then put me in touch with the Gyldendal Group Agency - his agent at that time was Louise Langhoff - and then I made an application to *Kulturstyrelsen* or *Kunstrådet* for the grant -

E: Which one, the sample translation?

L: The sample translation grant. Then I went to Copenhagen having arranged the meeting with Louise because I had to of course get her permission and Jesper's permission - I got that both in order to make the application. Then I went to go and see Louise in Copenhagen, just have a chat with her, tried to gain her confidence in a way, and then we agreed that we would work together and try and pool our resources. Then what was instrumental for me was I sent my sample to - not that many, I was very lucky, I think it must have been about four other publishers, I had a list.

E: Whereabouts? *{L hesitates}* Not the specifics if you don't want, but do you mean in Britain or America?

L: There were two in America and I think two in the UK. And then in October I wrote Martin Aitken an email and I said, look, what happened with Janne Teller? Because it was clear to me and Jesper and Louise that there was a correlation between his [Jesper's] work and Janne Teller's work so I just followed the trail and I said to Martin, who shall I contact? He told me about Athenaum Simon & Schuster. It was the last one. I said, well if this doesn't work then I'm going to give up!

E: *{laughs}* That's interesting - so it's about the content of the book that drove you in that direction, this is the same vein as this author, so...

L: Yep. It was more the type of book, because of course being that inexperienced, my very first book, I had no idea how to go about things. Because it's all about which fit. How the book will fit a certain list of a certain publisher in America or wherever in the target language. So that was just a hunch. That that would... so I sent it off, I think it was December of that year, about three months, I just got an email from them, from Caitlyn Dlouhy, she said 'thanks so much for sending this to me, I'm very excited, this is brilliant, I love it' and then I connected her with Louise and Louise then banged out the contract.

E: Brilliant, so then you started working on the full translation then?

L: It took quite a while for the contract to go through. Between Gyldendal and Athenaum. And then Caitlyn contacted me early the next - I think it was already May. Took a few months, must've been May. Then we signed a contract, I signed a contract with Athenaum, and then I banged it out towards the end of that year.

E: Do you know if they applied for funding anywhere?

L: I don't think they did, I don't know, I don't think they did because I offered to assist her with that, but she didn't. I think because the book was quite small, it wasn't really an issue. I don't know, I don't think she made an application.

E: Okay. But you're happy with the contract as it was?

L: Yeah. It was fine, yeah.

E: So this event - did Jesper come to the event, the Translation Pitch? Did he know about the Translation Pitch?

L: No, no, I told him about it because I had to get his permission, so I just simply got his permission, he said 'of course, please, go for it, you're welcome to try'.

E: Was it useful for you as a translator to take part? It was interesting but was it -

L: - It was very useful for me to see - but more in a negative sense - what not to do, rather than what to do, which is of course very useful. It also gave me a bit of a reality check in a way, as I realised how difficult it really is. Because it became clear to me then, it had already become clear to me, the reality really was pushed home to me there because... it's not necessarily the best books that get published. So that's what I mean by negative. Because you would think in the perfect world the best literature in translation would find a publisher. But that's not necessarily so - in fact, I think, unfortunately rather seldom! It's a lot to do with contacts. But I didn't really want to know quite how much it has to do with contacts! Maybe you shouldn't quote me too literally on this one!

E: It fits with things I've heard before, don't worry!

L: Absolutely. It's a pity. Which is why I've...

E: It's connected with what I wanted to ask you about a bit as well - about book fairs. The first time I met you I think was in Copenhagen, was it? The translators' programme?

L: Yes it was... no, no, wasn't the first the launch in London?

E: Oh yeah, you came to the first meeting. The London Book Fair and the year before that -

L: I came to the first meeting.

E: So how do you use the book fairs, like the London Book Fair and the Copenhagen Book Fair?

L: That has improved. What I find extremely useful, and I thanked Daniel Hahn personally because it was primarily his initiative, this Literary Translation Centre at the London Book Fair. 2014 I went for the first time, all those lectures I found very, very useful. Going there and simply collecting business cards so that I had people to pitch to after the fair.

E: From publishers?

L: From the publishers who were on the panel. I simply approached them after they'd finished and made some other comment about that, and I found them very approachable, which was very positive because without knowing I thought you couldn't approach them because generally it is the question of 'no unsolicited submissions and no agented submissions' - obviously for the big companies, the big publishing houses. But there's again this whole rise of the small independents, who definitely want to work with translators, because, bar the author, nobody knows that book quite as well as the translator. Including the agent.

E: You were planning to go to the book fair tomorrow - do you have any meetings booked or anything like that?

L: Well, I'll go back a step. In the first one I did it slightly wrong - well, not wrong, but I didn't have all that much at my disposal in the London Book Fair. I've just come back from the Frankfurt Book Fair three weeks ago, something like that, and there it was because I've got a book coming out next year. I got in touch with my editor at Soho Press in New York and that was when I had the basis for then doing other meetings. From there, I had that one meeting, and then I arranged meeting Louise at People's Press - because you know Louise is at People's Press now, the Rights Director at People's Press now -

E: So this is all on the same book you were talking about before?

L: No, this is all just general keeping up to date with my projects. I started off that relationship with Louise when she was at Gyldendal and when she moved to People's Press we continued our relationship in the sense of she feeds me good samples. That's my living, that's my daily bread and butter, I do commissions for her.

E: Who pays for the samples, is that from the sample translation fund?

L: She does. Nope, she has I assume a budget, she just sends me manuscripts and says do you like it and then I give her a quote then I do it with a quote and a deadline. Since the book fair 2012 when I started I've now worked up a pretty good relationship with Gyldendal, Politiken, People's Press - Louise - and then I supplement that with the funds from the... so I've done this year three applications,

E: For?

L: For the funds, sample translation [from *Statens Kunstfond*]. And I got all of them. So that's worked out rather well. What I do is, with this Frankfurt one - but again it was totally spontaneous - I went to a lecture, I did the same thing as happened in London, and then I met a publisher there - an editor - and

then I did a spontaneous pitch of a book, of two books, and then I will be sending him samples, because you have to have some sort of relationship before you can send something. Tomorrow I will be going [to *BogForum*] and I've just got a meeting with one of my authors, with Peder Frederik Jensen, because we've also built up a relationship due to the two projects I've done, which is because I - through Peder - I've got a relationship with CLA [*Copenhagen Literary Agency*], with his agent. So I really appreciate the fact that as soon as he writes a book, he'll keep me informed, say 'do you want to read the manuscript?'. It works really well because then, as the book comes out, I've already read it, and I can do the application.

E: This all sounds really interesting because it's all about relationships. Like you said, it's all about contacts.

L: Exactly. And my approach has been up to now. I spoke to Ros - I don't know if you know Ros Schwartz? She translates from French but she's very active in the networks. Brilliant translator and very sympathetic woman, wonderful woman. I had a chat with her at the first or the second London Book Fair and I said there's just so many things you have to do when you're starting out. I mean apart from concentrating on your writing and making money and making contacts in Denmark, you have to have a thought of a target. Which brings me back to Arvon [Lumb Bank retreat]. I went because I felt confident enough and built up the relationships here for me to start concentrating on the quality of my writing as such. Because it's very much learning by doing. It has been for me. Quite frankly - again, don't really want to be quoted on this! - but I can see that the quality of the samples I did in 2013 and the quality of the samples I'm doing now {*whistles*} there is definitely a learning curve.

E: I think everyone finds that a bit - if I ever look at old essays or anything like that, it's awful isn't it, you think 'I've come so far'!

L: Yes, you just think {*exaggerated*} 'ohhh no, that was a bit flabby!'. I have to say the greatest learning curve was doing the editing process with Caitlyn Dlouhy. Which also surprised me in the sense that everything was left up to me. It was this HUGE sense of responsibility - and I love that! I was very much the go-between between... because Jesper's writing is so difficult - 'difficult' in inverted commas, so literary, so deep and metaphoric - and he used a very particular style, a very very economic style in *The Last Execution*. She was often saying, 'he's not quite getting through to me, can you just tell me what's this', but she never ever... she didn't edit as such. She just asked me questions. And if I didn't know myself, then I would ask Jesper. But the great thing with Jesper as well is that he hasn't once - in the three years that we've worked together - he hasn't once told me what to do. Which is probably why we're still working together! {*laughs*} Which is fantastic. But the same goes for Peder. I've asked him questions, because I think of the most difficult was Peder, Jesper, and Pablo Llambias. The same thing with Pablo, I also just said can we meet and he was yeah sure. I think that was 2013. I always laugh because when I met Peder at the - I'm meeting him tomorrow again as I said - but each [Copenhagen] Book Fair had an author. 2012 was the Jesper Wung-Sung book fair. 2013 was the Pablo Llambias book fair [at] which I accosted him after a lecture. 2015 was Peder Frederik Jensen who I also accosted at the book fair. So I don't know what's going to happen tomorrow!

E: {*laughs*} Well, we'll wait and see.

L: Because I like working with the authors. Although it's very different - like with Katrine Marie Guldager, for example, when I worked on her stuff, I emailed her and she said she didn't require any contact or any... I asked her questions in the beginning, but that was only for the first project I did of hers. Otherwise I've never had contact with her, so it's very different. And all the samples I do I never have contact with authors.

E: With the samples, I meant to ask - do you find that those commissioned samples, if they get the rights sold to an English-language publisher, have you ever had a situation where another translator has then done the full book or anything like that?

L: No. I haven't had that. I know that there's always that risk, but it hasn't happened yet. I'm as yet to have that happen that I've done a commission for, say, People's Press and it's led to a sale directly as far as I know. Because I've only had the two. One was on my initiative and the other one was Agnete Friis which was Louise simply saying I've sold this book, and then the publisher asked her for three names [of potential translators], so then there was a little beauty contest. Of course, I don't know who the other two were. But then there's a little beauty contest as to who gets the contract. Then I was contacted directly

by... she said, I got your name from People's Press, would you be interested. I didn't even know, I hadn't even heard of Agnete Friis then, so that was quite interesting.

E: Do you mean that those three people were asked to give samples which -

L: I assume. I was asked to give a sample because I'd never worked with them before, they'd never worked with me, they don't know the quality of my writing. It was quite nippy, I did a sample for them which was quite scary and then luckily they wrote back and said we love it. Then we made an agreement.

E: Are you working on that now, sorry?

L: Um, I'm doing the final edits now.

E: Which one is this?

L: This is Agnete Friis' - it's called *Blitz*. That was published [in Denmark] beginning of last year, I think, yeah.

E: And it's being published in the UK?

L: It's being published in America. By Soho Press in New York.

E: Oh yes, you mentioned.

L: And it will be called *What My Body Remembers*.

E: Brilliant -

L: Again, they asked me for a title suggestion based on - that was a very interesting experience, and **that** I learnt **so** much from Juliet Grames, the editor there. Because she was brilliant. A completely different experience to Caitlyn Dlouhy, because she [Juliet] was **very** involved. I mean, I was so amazed - she [Juliet] didn't miss a single point or a comma. She asked me what's this, what's this, I mean we had a detailed commentary all the way through so...

E: That's interesting that they asked you for a title suggestion as well. What stage did that come? With the sample?

L: That was when I finished my first draft. They asked me what did I think, because we both didn't like *Flash* - the direct translation was all wrong - and I also said to her, look it's very commercial, I don't really feel like... I think it's completely wrong. So then they said, well what do you think, and I said to her based on this, that, and the next thing, this is what would work, and there was also an embedded title source in the third chapter or something, which is always nice, when you can sort of see that's where the title comes from. We're very excited about that. I have to do the final edits by the end of November.

E: Oh, soon. Now!

L: Yeah {laughs} Soon.

E: That's interesting. Part of what I'm writing about with this translators' case study is a bit about publication stories, so having this thread through who gets involved, at what stage, and whether there's a typical process as well. I don't know if there really is?

L: I suppose you'll probably find that out through your interviews?

E: Well, that's what I'm hoping, yeah, that by talking to a range of people there might be common factors in this book publication process, or it might be that there are certain things that crop up that are not common at all. Um... what was the other thing I was thinking about? The role of the translator as an ambassador for culture - which you seem to have given quite a few examples of.

L: Well, that is extremely important to me, because my mission as such is to get - I guess there's probably a feeling that Danish crime has sold very well, that's probably to do with Henning Mankell and the great crime writers and this whole Danish Noir movement - and I'm interested in a very different kind of literature. That is the kind of literature that excites me, and that I think is brilliant, and it's those authors that I want to work with, and that I want to promote. But they are not the big sellers. Because there's not a **huge** readership for that type of book. But I think that's the type of literature that I want to put out there. So I think there are Danish authors, those ones that I'm working with, which are really pushing the boundaries of what fiction is all about.

E: So you take the role of being a fan as well I guess? As in you read these books in Danish -

L: Yeah, almost a scout, rather. I prefer 'scout'. Unofficial scout.

E: So - I don't want to put words in your mouth - at the book fair you also use that as an opportunity -

L: I scout. I do. As I was saying each book fair has one particular author.

E: As you say maybe tomorrow something will catch your eye -

L: I don't have a particular author - I was after Peder specifically last year, and I was after Pablo specifically the year before, and Jesper the year before. This year I didn't have anyone in particular because I simply haven't had time. Because my focus has been on my writing. But I will definitely look at a few books and listen to a couple of interviews. But at the moment I'm so lucky that I've got enough work.

E: Interesting to see where it will take you, really nice.

L: Yes. I've got enough work.

Interview with Martin Aitken

Hotel Comfort Vesterbro restaurant, Copenhagen. 10 November 2016

EK: [...] With these translator interviews I am trying to look at how a translator sees the publication process. You've done a whole range of genres and books and you're quite prolific in the corpus of literature - maybe in the past 5 years you are the most published translator.

MA: That's nice, I don't know how I do it!

EK: I brought a couple of books to start off the conversation really. *{EK places on the table: Peter Høeg The Elephant Keepers' Children and Helle Helle's This Should be Written in the Present Tense}*

MA: Yeah, I recognise them.

EK: Let's start with that one because it's a bit further back: Peter Høeg *The Elephant Keepers' Children*. Can you tell me a bit about the publication process into English as **you** know it; how did you get to translate the book?

MA: I can't remember the specifics of that one really, apart from the fact that I was asked by somebody at Harvill Secker, or - no - wait a minute. I think it was... somebody got in touch with me, and said that Peter Høeg was looking for a new translator. Now, who might that have been that got in touch with me... that was probably Gyldendals Group Agency, I imagine. Probably Sofia Voller or maybe Jenny Thor. I think it came from there anyway. And if I was interested then they'd put me in touch with whoever it was at Harvill, I think it was Michal Shavit at Harvill or maybe it was Ellie Steel at Harvill, can't quite remember. Anyway, at some point I was in touch with them and I think I was probably asked to do a sample translation for that, just a short eight to ten pages or something like that. Which I did. At the time I was still starting out, I suppose, in many ways, because I'd only started translating properly in 2008 - I can't remember when this [Høeg book] is from, probably 2011 or something like that...

EK: *{looking at copyright page}* Let's see - 2012, it says.

MA: Okay right so in '11 I was probably working on it. So getting asked to do Peter Høeg was a really big thing for me. I thought: wow, this could be a breakthrough! Climbing the rungs of the ladder in a way. Because he's still - I mean, no matter what he does now, he's still Denmark's major international literary name in many ways even though it's like 20 years since he did Smilla, but he's still known. He still has this aura about him, possibly because he shuns the literary circles of Copenhagen - he lives in Jutland and he does his own thing, and he may or may not be part of some spiritual sect over there or whatever *{smiling}*, but it's all very mysterious. There's a lot of mystique about him, he's a bit Howard Hughes-like. But anyway, I did a sample translation with my hands shaking, and I remember **really** concentrating on that and going through it a lot more times than I would normally if it was just a book I was translating, because I really wanted that to be good. As far as I remember, I sent it off and I didn't hear anything for a few days and I started to get a bit worried, but then they got back to me - 'oh yes it's absolutely fine, no problems' - they were already drawing up the contract! So I got the job basically.

EK: So that was for Harvill Secker. How did they know your name - from your book you did before that with them, or...? What was the relationship there?

MA: Oh I should've brought my CV with me! *{laughs}* My list of publications, because it's all a blur! I can't remember, had I done anything for them before... *{pause to think}*

EK: That's fine - but you've translated his current book; his most recent book, haven't you? *Susan Effekten*?

MA: Yeah, that's waiting to come out at the moment. It's coming out next year sometime. It's been ages. The process has been really, really long, because basically it was a book that got really good reviews when it came out in Denmark and it's all fun and entertaining - it's a bit like Smilla in many ways - but I noticed when translating it that there are a lot of mistakes and things that don't sort of hang together. He's done it with his left hand, y'know, as we say - *venstre hånds arbejde* - and it hasn't been edited anything like *{inaudible}* in Denmark, and of course Harvill pick up - the British editors are really stringent in their work, they just see everything that doesn't fit. There's a character in there that is supposed to have worked with Niels Bohr at some time, but if you go back and figure out how old she was, she was only about 6 years old or something as it turns out *{laughs}* which is just not good enough.

EK: The British editors would pick up on that?

MA: The British editors pick up on it. So there were a number of issues which I pointed out. Well, what's happened is they've just had the manuscript for ages and ages, and they did a copyedit - which always comes back to me - and I went through it, and I said there are still a few, some issues that we need to straighten out, either with Jakob - who's editor at Rosinante - or with Peter himself. And I just left that to them. And I haven't heard anything else other than it's now scheduled to come out some time in 2017. But when I did *The Elephant Keepers' Children*, at that time there were no hitches at all with that one. Just the normal copy edit. I must say, I still think it's one of the top two books from my own point of view from how I've worked on it and how well it's turned out, I'm just really really pleased with that one. The other one is Kim Leine's *Prophets of Eternal Fjord*.

EK: I was about to ask about that.

MA: There are just some books... I never read through again once they're published. You can't help flicking through a couple of pages.

EK: {referring to books on table} So me bringing this is no good... {both laugh} you don't want to sit and look through it?

MA: No I'm fine with that one! But sometimes, you get the box of books, the postman comes one day, you flick through a couple of pages, and whatever happens you're always going to find a mistake somewhere, a typo, or something ... urgh, I hate it! So for that reason I never really... unless I'm feeling particularly masochistic, I might pick something off the shelf. But that one {tapping Høeg book} I really like that one, I'm pleased with what I did there, I'm pleased with the Helle one as well {tapping Helle book}

EK: The Helle Helle one - that cover's not the one I remember: did you hear about this marketing thing they did when they gave it out on the tube in London?

MA: Yeah, that was really good. It was sort of rainbow stripes.

EK: Yeah it was nice -

MA: Very visual -

EK: Tell me about this one then, how did you get to translate this one? It's not the same ... oh it **is** the same publisher, Vintage.

MA: It is the same publisher, and because they know me and everything, they know that if they've got something from Danish - or Norwegian as well now - then I think they'll have me fairly high up on the list.

EK: And did you work with Helle Helle herself?

MA: I never **work** with authors at all. I like to do things myself. Most authors are pretty happy with that as well. Of course, I don't know what happens in the background sometimes, maybe they're having arguments with the editor about this rubbish translator, I don't know! But I never hear anything.

EK: That's a good way to work, I guess.

MA: Yeah I prefer to do that. But with Helle, it was a question of already having worked for Harvill, Random House, and the same editors. This is Ellie Steel who edited this as far as I remember. Funnily enough, I know Helle personally, because we - I know her ex-husband, we were friends - and Helle lives very close to where I live. But that wasn't how I got the job at all. That's just purely by chance.

EK: Well, Denmark's a small place!

MA: Denmark's a small place. And Ida Jessen, who I'm also going to be translating, she lives round there as well. I meet her in the supermarket - always meet Ida in Brugsen and Helle in Netto! {laughs} I can't remember if I did a sample translation. I think I probably do sample translations for most books because they want to see if it works, they want to show something to the author, or the author's agent.

EK: How does that work then, I saw that *Statens Kunstfond* have a Sample Translation Fund... how do you work with the funding side of things?

MA: If I'm asked to do a sample translation for a book, I actually don't bother applying for money from that fund at all. I just take that as part of getting this job. If I do something off my own bat, if there's something I really want to do, a project of my own, then I'll do it, but it's been quite a while since I applied to that fund for money. But they always give you the money, so I ought to do it more often really! {laughs}

EK: You've also had those working stipends...

MA: Yeah the *arbejdslegater* -

EK: Yeah the three years -

MA: Not the three year one. That's really prestigious. Funnily enough, I was talking to Helle the other day and she said, you must be on your way to getting the three-year grant. Wow! *{laughs}* That would be really nice.

EK: How do the *arbejdslegat* work in relation to the funding generally?

MA: Because they changed the whole system about two or three years ago: before that, translators could apply for *arbejdslegat*, but only if the project they were working on was particularly difficult or demanding or whatever -

EK: Oh okay, so it would be for a specific text?

MA: Yeah. So on that basis I did apply when I was doing the Kim Leine book because that's a very dense text, slightly archaic language, takes a long time. So I actually applied for money then and they gave me 75,000 kroner which I was absolutely over the moon with. Then they changed the rules so that translators can apply for one of those grants in exactly the same way as authors can with the purpose of... simply for the furtherance of their artistic endeavour, it's not sort of linked to any particular project. So once a year you can apply to that fund. And that's been going on... that's been three years now and I've been lucky enough to get money. I got 150,000 [kroner] the first year which is amazing, then I got 100,000 and last year or this year I got 75,000, so it's going downhill(!)

EK: But it's a wage of sorts?

MA: It's absolutely crucial to me. I don't work very fast at all.

EK: Despite your output!

MA: Okay. I'm sure there are lot of people who work faster than me. This is the only thing I do basically, I don't want to be teaching alongside, I might have to at some point, but it means that I can keep things running financially so in that way it's pretty crucial. At the same time I can't rely on getting that money. I probably won't this year. Because now I'm translating Knausgård and that's Norwegian and what's that got to do with ... that sort of thing. Still luckily got some things, y'know with the Peter Høeg coming out and I'm going to be doing Ida Jessen, so there's still stuff, so I might get money again this time around.

EK: I assume you get royalties... when those books are coming out, you're looking forward to that?

MA: *{exaggerated}* Ha! Hahaha.

EK: That's what I'm interested to hear!

MA: The system is that the standard contract, it always says that we'll give you I think it's two percent or maybe it's two and a half, and you think great, that means for every one of these *{taps book}* that gets sold I'm getting two percent. Ah ha. The catch is, the royalties, they don't actually kick in until the book has earned enough in royalties to cover what you got paid for translating it. So if I got paid 100,000 kroner for translating that, then it has to earn me 100,000 kroner in royalties before I actually start getting anything. And then it starts from zero...

EK: Sure, so it's paying back -

MA: - so basically I'm never ever going to see a penny from it. I'm never going to see a penny for that *{taps Høeg book}*

EK: Even for that?

MA: Even for that. I mean, and I've translated Jussi Adler-Olsen and I'll never see a penny for them.

EK: Ah okay. They must sell quite well.

MA: Maybe my son who's twelve years old, maybe in twenty years' time there'll be a cheque through the door for him once a year for 25 kroner or something! But basically it's a sham, basically, it's ridiculous.

EK: So you need the money upfront, that's the important thing.

MA: Yeah. The monetary side of things, what they do is the UK publishers, they'll give you half the money upfront which is really good. The US publishers tend to do the same thing, or maybe they'll give you a third of the money upfront, or maybe they'll just give you the whole lot when you're done.

EK: And these, both *{books on table}*... it says they've had support from Statens Kunstfond.

MA: Yeah. Because they pay for the translation basically.

EK: So do you use the Translation Fund as well as the fact that you had your -

MA: It's the publisher who applies. And now it's a different fund. They apply to cover the costs of the translation, so they're covered.

EK: It's the same publisher, so I assume, like you say, they already know about the Translation Fund?

MA: Yeah - they all know.

EK: Are there cases where you've introduced the Translation Fund to a publisher?

MA: I can't remember to be honest. I may well have done. If it was a new publisher starting up from nothing then I'd certainly mention it to them. Whether they get a hundred percent each time I'm not sure.

EK: I don't think they always get everything they apply for.

MA: No, okay. If it's like a big thick brick they might not get all of it. But something like this *{taps Helle book}* I think they got all of it, they got their costs covered. So yeah, getting money upfront is good.

EK: Do you think it helps with the application when the publisher applies and it says that you're the translator, you're known to the funders, I assume, because you've already got the working stipend...

MA: I think when they send in their application to *Statens Kunstfond* they have to send in a translator's CV, pretty sure they ask me for a CV, pretty certain. So part of that is that it's a translator who's well known. Not saying that a first-time translator would cancel that out, not in any way, I don't think so. Because once you get to that stage, you've drawn up a contract, if it's a decent publisher who've drawn up a contract with a translator, it's because the translator's done a sample translation for them and they've seen and looked at it, and the author or agent had a look at it, it's because y'know everything's at that stage...

EK: Sure, they're already ready to go.

MA: But talking about advances, I got into a bit of schtuck doing Knausgård, the sixth book of *My Struggle*, which is like this thick y'know, I'm doing it with Don [Bartlett] - Don's doing the last 300 pages, so he's rounding the whole thing off, which is fine by me.

EK: Oh right, I was going to ask how those collaborations work -

MA: It's not, it's a collaboration in name only basically, unless I need to ask him a lot of stuff. But I'm doing the first 900-950 pages or something and Don's rounding the thing off which he should by rights. But because it's got this 400-page critical essay in the middle of the thing, which is part of what I'm doing, it's really, really dense, it takes a hell of a long time, so of course the money I got upfront for that book which I got a year before I even got started, it's spent ages ago y'know, so all of a sudden I realised that I haven't got any money. What am I going to do, y'know?! And I'm not due to deliver this book until September next year or something. Fortunately I'd drawn up two contracts for two other Knausgård books and I'd held off purposely on getting the money upfront on those because I'd envisaged spending it, getting into dire straits or something, but they released those two advances for me, so sort of saved me from drowning. But that's a different side of everything, running things financially. If you want to make a living out of it, you've got to do it full time as I'm doing, I've been really really fortunate, I mean just the whole idea of translating Danish literature full time is just ludicrous!

EK: But any freelancer has that challenge don't they, money flow and contracts and everything, must be really challenging.

MA: But I'm not a 'money person'. As long as I can say there's money there and there's some money coming in.

EK: I've got a list of things I want to cover... I think you mentioned briefly Jussi Adler-Olsen. So from that crime series *Department Q*, you translated number 3, 4, and 5, is that right?

MA: Yeah I think so.

EK: But not ... I don't know enough about that series actually. So why did you end up with number 3 after the two had already been -

MA: Because... it's to do with Jussi himself really. The first book was done by Tiina Nunnally. Who is a very well-respected translator. But *{pause}* I don't know if this should be off or on record, I don't know. But not to slag off Jussi in any way... Jussi's got an old friend called Steve Schein. An American. They've known each other for years and years. Jussi wants to be good to all his friends. What Jussi really wants is for Steve Schein to translate his books.

EK: I've seen his name on the... what do you call it, the credits -

MA: {laughs} So have I. I think what was happening there was that when Tiina delivered her manuscript, it was sent on Jussi's instructions to Steve Schein. What Steve Schein does, so I later discovered, is that he starts rewriting the thing.

EK: Does he only read the English version?

MA: Yeah, yeah.

EK: He doesn't read Danish?

MA: He does read Danish. He'll take Tiina's manuscript or my manuscript or whatever and he'll just start altering everything according to how he wants it done. So Tiina, I think - I don't know this for sure, but it's my feeling, my assumption - this really pissed her off, she didn't want anything to do with it, and for that reason her name isn't on the title page, it's done under a pseudonym, I can't remember that.

EK: That's a familiar story unfortunately with her.

MA: Right. Then Kyle Semmel got drafted in. He did number two. He had the same thing with Steve Schein but because Kyle is such a nice... wants to make everything work. But Kyle, his wife had just had a baby, and he had a job, he couldn't manage any more, so I was asked if I would do it. So I said yeah - but nobody had really told me about the Steve Schein thing by the way. So the first two went okay because Jussi's editor at Penguin - Steph Earvert[sp?] - she was on my side, she didn't want anything to do with Steve Schein's involvement at all [...]

EK: Okay and he's only editing the English version as far as you can tell?

MA: Yeah. So basically what Steph did, she just ignored everything that Steve had done, as far as I know - like I say, I don't read them after they've come out! But what happened was that Steph moved on from Penguin and Jussi grabbed his chance to get hold of the new editor. Nobody said anything to me. But I got the third book back, and there it said 'Translated by Martin Aitken' and then in **big** letters 'Translation Consultant: Steve Schein'. And it's like: okay, this guy, Martin-what's-his-name, he doesn't know what he's doing, he had to have help... that's the impression, he had to have somebody to help him! So I didn't think that was on really. I said, I'm not going to do any more. Then I think William Frost - wherever he came from I don't know - but suddenly William Frost...

EK: Yes, he's done number six. And doing number seven as well.

MA: I spoke to him at the last DENT meeting, I asked him about it and he said it was just completely fucked up, he couldn't recognise what he'd done because Steve Schein had just fucked it all up...

EK: Oh. But he's still doing number seven -

MA: Is he? Okay. But maybe... I said to him maybe he should have a word with the editor, but basically it was all down to Jussi. Jobs for the boys. A bit of nepotism. 'Steve's English anyhow, it's not that difficult, he's as good as anybody else'. But it's just messing things up completely - without my knowledge at all, he was just messing things up.

EK: What do you think it means for the series in English, then? For a fan, would they notice?

MA: Well, I noticed everything that Steve Schein had done, when I got a manuscript back at one point. What he'd done, he'd just changed it, he hadn't even tracked the changes or anything! So he just changed everything. So I had to get my own copy out again.

EK: What a hassle.

MA: It was really... a real real hassle. So those books, I don't really have the heart to look at them really. I know that William said that his one was just fucked up completely. I don't know what that means for readers at all. Readers are funny, because if they don't like a book, and it's a translated book, then obviously it's the translator's fault! Look up the comment threads on Amazon, y'know. I remember one of the Jussi books somebody wrote me an email. I've only ever had two emails from readers in my life. They were both for the same book, a Jussi book. There was a woman in the States who wrote to me and said 'this is the worst translation I've ever read. Why did you translate it into old English?' {both laugh} What she really meant of course was British English. She just wasn't used to seeing British English. So with Carl Mørck going around saying bollocks to this and bollocks to that, she didn't know what it was at all!

EK: And they hadn't adapted it for the American market?

MA: No, no, not at all. So she was reading British English and that was **completely** foreign to her. The funny thing is, I got an email from another reader about the same book who said, it was the best translation he'd ever read **in his life!** {laughs}

EK: That's great! You can't win.

MA: You just have to shrug. You can't win! Readers, who needs them?!

EK: What do you think about the fact that crime fiction seems to be the big export at the moment?

MA: Yeeah. It probably still is, isn't it.

EK: It is and it isn't. From Danish it's maybe a third or half of the books, it's not as many as you'd think. Swedish or Norwegian tends to be the Scandinavian crime fiction -

MA: I don't know... Jussi's still up there, I don't know who else really... Translating Jussi's books, the fun thing about Jussi's books is for me the humour of them. I had a whale of the time doing the dialogue in those books. Carl and Assad. That made them stand out as something more than just your average Nordic Noir Scandi crime thing. I don't read crime novels myself at all. It's a massive exposure. I look at The Guardian on my iPhone and there's stuff about Denmark every day basically. The new thing is *hygge*.

EK: It is, isn't it! It's the stocking filler book of the season, I've heard different numbers - 8 books about *hygge*, 15 books about *hygge*.

MA: It's amazing. Obviously that's very very positive because it opens a lot of doors. People know what Denmark is in some respect. It might not be true *{laughs}* but they know what it... they know where we're coming from...

EK: I don't want to put words in your mouth, but people know it's Danish not just Scandinavian, it sounds like.

MA: Yeah. In that respect it probably has opened... well, obviously one good crime novel opens the door for another one. But I imagine it's opened things up a bit generally. People reading translated fiction, which I'm sure they do a lot more now than they did twenty years ago. In terms of Danish literature, I think a whole lot of stuff kicked off with Peter Høeg and Smilla at the time. That opened a hell of a lot of doors, I think.

EK: Yeah, that's one of the reasons that I'm starting my... the parameters of my project start in 1990 so that we see the immediate context - that's the turning point I suppose - and then up to the present day.

MA: There's always this figure of three percent that's bandied about. I don't know how true that is. Certainly in the States there's this really dense undergrowth of small publishers, independent publishers, a lot of whom are focusing almost entirely on translated literature, or at least significantly so. Obviously they're not mainstream and they don't have mainstream readers, whatever a mainstream reader is, it's not the Barnes and Noble stuff, it's more specialised in that way, more constrained in some way.

EK: The Klougart one, *One of Us is Sleeping*, that was for an American publisher, wasn't it?

MA: That was for Open Letter, yeah, who do a massive job - Chad Post and Kaija Straumanis - they do a fantastic job in Rochester publishing entirely fiction in translation. Through their - they had an intern at one point, Will Evans, don't know if you know him, but he was an intern with them in Rochester and then went off to Dallas and started his own publishing company called Deep Vellum. He's publishing another of Josefine's books, which I've done, that's coming out in February I think. It's like a knock-on, a domino thing - if he's doing that, I'll do that in Dallas, y'know!

EK: Are there any big differences for you working with an American publisher and working with a British publisher?

MA: Nah, not really. Doing the second book of Josefine's for Will there was a bit of an issue with payment, he's got so many projects going on and cashflow problems, I wasn't sure if I was going to get my money - all of a sudden the money turned up! That was all fine. So there can be that kind of stuff if it's a small publisher.

EK: But that's not necessarily unique to which country it is.

MA: No, no.

EK: You live in Denmark obviously, but you maintain these relationships with the various publishers and agents and editors... do you go to the book fairs?

MA: I usually go to London. I go to the one in Copenhagen. Mainly just to see people and have a beer; networking! London - it's always nice to come to London. But I haven't been in the States that much doing that sort of thing. I've been there a couple of times doing stuff. I don't think there are any specific issues in terms of American translators... Of course, they may go in and tweak the spelling, because I

write British English. But then they don't always do that, so there's no difference really at all. Not that I can think of.

EK: With the fact that you live in Denmark, how do you feel about these networking events that *Statens Kunstfond* are putting on... there sometimes seems to be a bone of contention with the network that Danish-resident translators aren't able to come to the whole programme.

MA: Yeah, that's a bit daft. It's a bit daft, isn't it.

EK: Which bit's daft, sorry - the people complaining or the -

MA: The fact that we can't come. We're invited to the dinner. Obviously it's a massive expense. There's sixty translators or something - well, sixty-one, sixty-two, sixty-five, it wouldn't make that much difference. I think it's a bit daft that we don't get invited, because we're very much a part of that network, and we feel an affinity with *Statens Kunstfond*, we feed off each other. I think we should be there.

EK: Do you find translators' networks generally beneficial? Are you a member of any of them in Denmark, I think you are?

MA: I'm a member of the *Dansk Forfatterforening*, and the British Society of Authors. But I've never drawn on them. I mean.... one advantage is you get your profile on their webpage, so people can look up, if they're looking for a translator then they'll be able to look you up and find you. That's basically the main advantage, I think. Of course, they do a lot of work I suppose making sure contracts are okay, and you could send in a contract to them if you're in doubt. I did have an issue with one book I did. It was a non-fiction book for an American publisher and when the book came out - I didn't even know it had come out - because I did the translation for the Danish publishers, Politikens, and they sold it on. I didn't know anything, somebody told me 'hey, that book which I think you translated is number one on Amazon' in some division! So I looked and there was absolutely no mention of me anywhere. I thought, well, that's a bit of a 'piss off'. So I sent an email to the Society of Authors saying I've got this book, what do you do in this kind of situation? Basically there was nothing to be done about it! The way she wrote back to me, it was as if she was representing the publishers and not me, y'know, wait a minute, I'm a member here, you're supposed to be nice to **me**, but she was basically saying forget it.

EK: Does it matter to you whether your name's on the book?

MA: It didn't matter that much with that one. That one was Flemming Rose's *The Cartoon Crisis* so maybe it would have been an advantage not to have been mentioned at all! *{laughs}* But I made the decision I was going to do the book in Denmark. It does matter a lot.

EK: *{looking at the books on table}* You're not on that cover, I don't think.

MA: Not on the cover, no. But on the title page. The British...

EK: *{opening book}* Oh yeah it does, quite prominent there -

MA: The British publishers put you on the title page, which is fine. The American publishers tend to put you on the title page and on the cover as well, which is nice. I think... that sort of recognises... what we do, it's not an algorithm, it's not like you put something in at one end - here *{points to mouth}* - and it comes out somewhere else *{laughs}* Sort of an identical copy just in another language, it's not computerised. We're creative writers. Basically I've written this book in English. Obviously within certain very well-defined constraints. Semantics and style, basically. If you gave it to somebody else, they'd translate it... it'd be two different books. Same things going on, and the same characters, but they'd be different books. The translator should be recognised as a co-writer basically. Not saying it should say 'co-writer', but the name should be there at the very least.

EK: Absolutely.

MA: That pisses me off quite a lot actually. People... even if you talk to some authors. A lot of authors just think you're some kind of office worker at the publishers or something. That what we do could be done by just about anybody else who knows English. They think you just sit around with your head buried in a dusty dictionary or something. Which often surprises me, because writers are creative people, they work with language. That's exactly what I do. I'm a writer basically, writing within very severe constraints.

EK: Absolutely. Which is why with the case studies that I'm writing - these interviews will hopefully end up being part of a case study about translators. Then I'm going to do a case study on a particular publisher, if I can find enough pieces of the jigsaw for **one** publisher. State support from Denmark as well, which seems to be quite a big factor, I think, with Danish translation as opposed to other -

MA: Definitely. Absolutely crucial.

EK: Also a bit about different types of literature that seems to be published - bestsellers in Denmark don't necessarily map onto the bestsellers. There's probably big gaps from the picture there, you talk about the editors as well?

MA: But it's funny, what makes a book into a bestseller. If you think of Kim Leine's book which has been a massive bestseller in Denmark and in Norway, Sweden, Germany as well. It's done really well. In Britain, where it got absolutely brilliant reviews in the Sunday Times and the Telegraph and everything, it's just bombed completely. They were hoping it was going to be at least long-listed for the Man Booker Prize. It didn't get on the long list which is a real shame.

EK: It did win prizes over here though, didn't it.

MA: It did, it won the Nordic Council prize as well. But it hasn't done anything at all. Funny story - that's another thing that's intriguing, because that book, it was the British publisher, Atlantic Books who bought the rights and I signed my contract with them, so it was them I was working for basically, but they then sold on the American rights to an imprint of Norton in the States -

EK: I think Liveright?

MA: Liveright, yeah! Where it actually came out first. But they did absolutely nothing for it at all. The editor who was involved, she wasn't involved in the copy edit, she did read through and have some suggestions which - the English editor and myself were in agreement on - we agreed that her suggestions were no good at all. In that book there's stuff like... there's a pretty horrific but a very funny scene concerning an abortion. Sounds a bit funny - it's horrific but it's funny as well! It's really weird -

EK: It's funny, honest(!) *{both laugh}*

MA: - and she just freaked out. She didn't want any mention of abortion on the blurb or... stuff like that. I remember getting an email where she said I will NOT mention the word abortion - NOT in capital letters! So we got the distinct feeling that she didn't like that book at all.

EK: Do you think it's just different markets or just her personal preference?

MA: I think a lot of it had to do with the personality of the editor. She just wasn't into that book at all. For that reason I think - I'm just guessing completely - but there was absolutely no marketing of the book, there was nothing on Twitter, there was nothing on Facebook. So what's the point of publishing it? It just came out over there, there was one review that I've seen in the Chicago Tribune or something like that which was a good review. But it just didn't do anything at all. Then it came out in the UK. James - who is the editor there - he thought it was a fantastic book, so obviously he was really into doing stuff for it. Obviously within a limited budget, but it was on Facebook, it was on Twitter, and it got these absolutely brilliant reviews in the major papers. That's all part of it as well.

EK: Do you get involved in any of the marketing side of things? -

MA: No not at all -

EK: Or are you asked to... are you asked your opinion?

MA: No pretty much never.

EK: What about these events that you've done: they're not really 'marketing' I suppose, but things like the Free Word Centre or any translation slams? -

MA: Ye-eah, they're not really marketing - I suppose they are indirectly, but... sometimes I get asked to do stuff with an author or on my own, readings or talk about the translation or whatever, which I like doing because it makes you feel a bit big *{laughs}* but on the other hand, I don't like it, because it's very hard to make explicit the sort of stuff that we do. What goes on when you do it, it's a flow of some kind that either works or doesn't. What generally happens is when you get asked to do some event and you're talking to somebody on stage, they'll always ask 'how would you translate this word?' or 'have you got any funny examples of difficulties in translating?' and I never have! When I'm doing the stuff it's all going on, it's an artistic process, and afterwards it's like *{lifts his head}* you come up for air. Everything that happened in the pool feels a bit weird and unreal in some way, but it got done. It was done, it was like that. Nobody's ever really asked me to take part in marketing ... Oh, yes, actually - Josefine Klougart's book *One of Us is Sleeping*, the Open Letter Book - I was invited over to the States just a couple of months ago actually. I was supposed to do a couple of events with Josefine. She was doing a whole tour of the States, and I was going to be with her in Rochester at least, and maybe New York, I can't remember - which I was looking forward to until I suddenly realised that my passport had expired,

or was about to expire. Because I'm still a British citizen it takes 6 weeks and I just couldn't go to the States so I had to cancel -

EK: Oh that's a shame!

MA: But I did get asked! *{laughs}*

EK: That's what's important!

MA: It tends to be... I've done stuff with Kim and stuff with Helle which I suppose is marketing indirectly.

EK: Yeah exactly, it's a form of marketing, isn't it.

MA: There's a small independent bookstore here in the city called Ark Books, and they do a lot of events. I know the people who run that place, so they ask me quite a few times and I'm happy to help them out. That's been with Helle, that's been with Kim, and other stuff as well so...

EK: And who's the audience for that then? People who live here but don't speak Danish?

MA: It's an English language book store, there's a lot of young people who are studying over here or maybe just over here dossing about or whatever -

EK: As you can while we're still in the EU!

MA: *{laughs}* People into literature and creative types, but also more mainstream readers as well. We'll do stuff like reading: we'll alternate between Danish and English, so Helle or Kim or whoever it is will read the Danish and we'll overlap each other and I'll come in with it - that was Helle's idea actually, works really well - I'll overlap and come in with the English, you get a nice little flow going there, tends to work quite well.

EK: That sounds really good, that's sounds very performative - like creative arts.

MA: Yeah very performative, that was Helle's idea actually, really good one...

EK: Just looking at my notes, my questions that I wanted to cover, but I think we've covered everything really. I just wanted to have a conversation really about how you saw your work and everything. What are you up to at *Bogforum* this year? Have you got any meetings?

MA: *Bogforum* is just having a beer with a couple of people - I'm only going to be there tomorrow.

EK: 'A couple of people' like publishers, editors?

MA: A couple of authors that I know, and just doing the rounds and saying hello to people. Editors, agents, people like Sofia Voller, Jenny Thor, Monica Gram, the agents who are working here, who are very important because they know me and I know them, of course they know of other people as well, so I get asked to do sample translations... there's been a period when I haven't really wanted to do any because I felt I just wanted to concentrate on what I was doing, but I've started doing them again. I just did Linda Boström - Knausgård's wife - she's got a new book coming out, I'm doing a sample translation of that, a couple of weeks ago. Of course doing a sample translation does put you at the forefront when - if a book is sold on the strength of a sample translation then obviously you're in the front line. It's a decent enough translation, let's ask him, y'know. If people are recommending you then that's fine.

EK: Does it ever happen that a sample translation is done and then a different translator takes it on - or maybe the other way round?

MA: I'm ashamed to say I've probably translated books that other people have done the sample translation!

EK: Oh okay, you've poached the translation!

MA: Yeah... sort of unknowingly, of course. What happens is that I'll just get an email one day saying we've bought the rights for this book and we'd like you to translate it, would you be interested, have you got the time?

EK: So that email comes from the British ...

MA: ...comes from the British publisher, yeah, usually.

EK: So you've got a mix of relationships that you have with the Danish publishers and agents on the one hand, they're the ones selling the rights -

MA: Yeah, the Danish agents sell the rights -

EK: Sometimes I guess you do samples, extracts, abstracts for those publishers too?

MA: Yeah, I do sample translations both for the agents with a view to selling the rights, and that's a sample translation because it's English it'll work for French publishers or German publishers. And if the book gets bought, if the rights are sold, and somebody else did the sample translation, but they want me

to translate the book, then the publishers will probably ask me for a sample translation if they don't know me - or even if they do know me, they want to see if you can fit with that book, the way that particular book is written, if it's going to work. {pause} I was going to say something then but I forgot {pause} I can't remember. But yeah the agents are really important. {long pause} yeah I was going to say something but it's gone completely!

EK: Oh no, that's a shame, I was going to say it's been about 50 minutes, thinking about rounding up really, but is there anything that we haven't covered, which is quite a broad question - a bit like your 'anything you've translated that's funny' kind of question isn't it? {MA laughs} Anything we haven't covered?

MA: There probably is, all sorts of things. Like I said before, the idea of being able to work for yourself full time translating Danish literature into English, it's just ludicrous! I'm just really fortunate to... I didn't start doing this until 2008, I was a university lecturer, well y'know that world... I just found it too cerebral, it was the wrong half of the brain for me {pause} I was just listening to The Fall and that sort of poetry and attitude and just feeling 'something's gotta happen', y'know. I knew I wanted to translate, sometimes I just sat at home and just translated stuff.

EK: What was your first book?

MA: The first book was Janne Teller, *Nothing*, which was absolutely horrendous... I'll share this with you. It was the first book I'd done, it was just completely by chance. How I got started, to begin with I just went to my head of department and said I don't want to do this any more, give me leave for a year. He said fine, okay. So I thought: right, now I'm going to start translating literature. Had no idea if it was feasible at all! But what happened was Helle Helle's *eks-mand* actually, Peter H. Olesen, who is a writer as well, musician and stuff, he passed my name on to Simon Pasternak who was an editor and a writer as well... Simon passed my name onto Gyldendal's Agency, Sofia Voller. So Sofia Voller called me up one day - they're always wanting people to do sample translations, they always need somebody - so she called me up one day and said 'I've heard you'd be interested in doing sample translations?' 'Yeah I'd love to!' 'Well okay we've got this Janne Teller' 'Great'. So I did a sample translation of a book by Janne Teller which Janne Teller was very very pleased with, apparently. And that just happened to coincide with - that book *Nothing* - the rights being sold to Simon & Schuster in the States. So because Janne Teller was pleased with what I'd done and recommended me, and Gyldendal said yeah that's good - so I got that job. I'd only just started. I basically hadn't done anything really. I translated that. {description of editing process redacted - MA requested off the record} Looking at it, it's my translation, can't see that anything's changed at all. So I'm perfectly happy with that book. I can say 'that's my work'...

EK: Now you don't tend to work that closely with the authors?

MA: Maybe that put me off, but basically that's just the way I am. I don't like doing... it's like doing group work at university, either you like that or you don't like it, and I don't like it. That may have put me off certainly, I hadn't actually thought of it like that. But basically... another author experience - with another author which had nothing to do with translation at all - we just fell out: she had a really funny idea about because I was her translator I wasn't supposed to do anything for anybody else, and she hit the roof when she found out I was talking to... her American publishers actually talked to me about another Danish author. When she found out she didn't want to compete with that author in the States, we just had a falling out. So that was the second... two bad experiences that I've had. Both personality things basically. So I'm quite happy to sit at home on my own!

Interview with Mette Petersen

Kaffe Lladro, Frederiksberg, Copenhagen. 11 November 2016.

EK: *{places UK paperback of Ejersbo's Exile on table}* It's quite nice to have a physical copy in front of us...

MP: It's lovely to have a physical -

EK: Yep. I just wondered to start off with, how... well, for a start, have you read the physical book as it's been bound?

MP: Yes.

EK: Okay. Okay. You'd be surprised: some of the translators I've spoken to, they do the translation and then -

MP: No, but this is... this is the biggest work I'm ever going to do and I'm **immensely** proud of it. I was so, so flattered to be asked.

EK: Okay, let's start at the beginning then - tell me from your point of view, how did this then get to be published in English?

MP: I have no idea how it came to be published. I was asked to read them for Christopher MacLehose. A few years prior to that, I had applied for an internship with him and was offered one, but chose to work at Portobello Books instead. Because I had spoken to both him and to Philip Gwyn Jones at Portobello, I continued to work for both of them as a Reader afterwards doing most of the Scandinavian reading. Then Philip asked me to do a translation for them, I did it, Christopher MacLehose read it, he liked what he read obviously, because... I don't know why, but he did! And when he asked me to read Ejersbo, I told him he had to buy them. As I recall, he dithered for a while, because *Liberty* was such an enormous book. He thought it might be slightly too long. Not having read it himself, obviously, but he thought it was a very long book. Which would make it very expensive. But also might deter some readers from actually picking it up. But in the end, he decided that he had to get all three, not just one of them. I think a Norwegian publisher, possibly Swedish publisher, told him only to get *Revolution*, because that was the heart of it, *{inaud: with?}* the most interesting stories, in his opinion, and we discussed that for a while and ended up deciding against only getting *Revolution* because this a work that needs to be read in its entirety.

EK: Sure, well, it's a trilogy. It's published as a trilogy in Denmark.

MP: And it's meant to be a trilogy.

EK: That's interesting then that that was considered; breaking it up. Okay.

MP: And then after he bought it, he asked me if I would consider taking it on. We agreed to do it over three years. A book a year.

EK: I was going to ask that because... I've done a bit of archival research in *Statens Kunstfond* and I saw that there was an application for the Translators Fund for *Liberty*. I guess there was as well for *Revolution* and *Exile*. I was interested to see that it was its own application, if you see what I mean. I would've thought it would be one application for all three books. But instead -

MP: It would have made sense, I think, to apply for all three, but -

EK: Sure. But it was done one at a time?

MP: It was done one at a time, and I got one contract at a time as well.

EK: Oh okay.

MP: Same terms. But one contract at a time.

EK: So how did it work... *Exile* was published, and then you started working on the next one, or...?

MP: I knew I was going to do all three. I had deadlines for all three, one year apart. In Spring. I think March or April each year. Um... *{pause to think}* The first two I did in six months, and then the last one I really did need that year to finish it.

EK: Yeah, okay. So you worked on them as if you had the contracts?

MP: Yes. *{pause}* But also I was working at the same time. I'm not just a translator: I'm a teacher. I work as a teacher and then translate in whatever spare time I can find.

EK: Back to what you were saying with being a Reader for the two publishing companies, would you write readers reports -

MP: Yes -

EK: - or sample translations or...?

MP: I've never done a sample translation.

EK: Okay, so more like a report -

MP: I did readers reports and I did **masses** of them. At one point I did about I think 54 in a year.

EK: Wow. Okay.

MP: For those two companies.

EK: But something stood out about these *{taps Ejersbo book}*

MP: Yes. And obviously those two were minor publishers. I think Portobello could publish seven fiction books a year, seven novels. If you can only publish seven, and you're meant to do international works, that means you can't do only Scandinavian, so I had to find the one or two best books in a given year. Which meant being quite brutal at times!

EK: Sure!

MP: But yes, something did stand out about those three.

EK: Do you know why... **You** then were able to make the case to MacLehose, and... do you know what made them choose to say yes?

MP: No, I don't know what it was. I had a conversation with him - he called me after reading the report, and said 'Is this something your mother would read?'. I don't know. I think he might have been worried that it was either too juvenile or that the sex would be too graphic or that the drug taking would be too graphic and that **that** might deter readers as well. The niche was too limited. So he called me and he asked me that, and, as it happened, my mother had just read it and **loved** it. So I could tell him honestly that she would, and that she would be reading the next book. I don't know if that swung anything...

EK: That's great - well, it could've - they've got to think about the readers and the market and everything, haven't they! That's a really nice story. Part of my research, I looked up - I'm looking at translators from 1990 to now - translations, rather - so it's not the only books that you've worked on?

MP: No, I did *My Friend, Jesus Christ* -

EK: I don't know anything about that one, that was before, wasn't it?

MP: That was before - that was the first one I did.

EK: How did that come about?

MP: That was the one I did for Portobello Books after having worked for them as an intern/jack-of-all-trades - I was the first employee except for Philip Gwyn Jones.

EK: Okay! Did you... for all of these, I think they had input from *Statens Kunstfond* *{looking at Exile title page}* actually, maybe not this one, hmmm - I don't know how much you've used the funding from *Kulturstyrelsen* and so on -

MP: Not at all. No.

EK: Like I say, they applied to the Translation Fund for the final in the trilogy at least. I assumed the earlier ones, but actually I can't see their logo in there -

MP: I don't know. I got my contract, and I don't know how they funded it!

EK: [...] So you haven't used their sample translation fund or...

MP: No. Well, that's not **entirely** true. I have, later. I did a few sample translations as favours to Leonhardt & Høier Agency. And they applied for funding. So I have received funds for sample translations.

EK: Okay. Have you been to any of their networking events or translators' events? We met briefly - there was a meal, wasn't it, couple of years ago...

MP: I think I've been to two, and then one of their dinners. And that's been it.

EK: But you don't work full time as a translator.

MP: I haven't for the last four years.

EK: I was going to ask a bit about translation networks or...

MP: I'm not really involved in any of them.

EK: Not something that you've...

MP: At the events that I have been to - there have been a few in London, two in London - I've met Martin Aitken, who has been very kind and has referred work to me. But other than that, no, I haven't had any real contact with fellow translators that I have worked with in any way, shape or form.

EK: Fair enough. {pause} Do you visit the book fairs as well? So, London?

MP: No, no I haven't. I've only ever been to the ones where I've worked for either Portobello or Leonhardt & Høier Agency. {pause} It would be brilliant, but working as a teacher it's not always feasible.

EK: No, absolutely. What do you teach?

MP: Danish. And I teach a bit of English, but I'm about to stop as an English teacher and only teach Danish.

EK: That's good. {pause} Do you know much about the marketing of these books? Were you involved in any conversations?

MP: Not really. They contacted me and asked me questions, but in the end I think they preferred to speak directly to Gyldendal and to Christian Kirk Muff as people who actually **knew** Ejersbo. Made more sense. And then they sent me the video they made, the trailer they made, for *Exile* - but only after it was made.

EK: Okay - to let you know what was happening -

MP: - what was happening, yes. I showed it to my students, actually. I read the book with my oldest class - eighteen-year olds - and they were very upset by it. They did not like the video at all. They thought it was too juvenile, and it was... they felt that the book could have different meanings to people of different ages and that the trailer was targeted very much at a younger audience and limited the book. In a way they felt was unfair. They were quite upset. I was told to tell MacLehose Press off for having done it(!)

EK: {smiling} That's interesting - I can see why that would happen. I don't know... maybe you end up limiting the market anyway, whatever you do with that kind of marketing? They've obviously made their decisions, I don't know enough about that yet...

[...]

With your contract then, did you get royalties?

MP: I did. I've never, ever received a single penny. Because they haven't sold enough to make any royalties.

EK: I was going to ask whether you knew about e-book sales? I have access to information about the physical book sales, as in, this kind of book {on table} but nothing to do with e-books...

MP: It's been part of the two - only the two last contracts - for *Revolution* and *Liberty*. But my feeling is that the sales have been negligible.

EK: How does that... make you feel about it?

MP: I feel really sad - not for my own sake, but because I really, really love the books, and I felt very strongly about them, and very proud of having done them, and I thought they deserved a better reception than they got. They seemed to fall a bit between the cracks.

EK: Yes, I wonder why. Have you had any thoughts about that?

MP: No. I... I thought perhaps it was not being what people expected from Scandinavia at the time. You hadn't quite reached *Borgen* and that phase of things, so it was still the Scandi-crime thing, and... I dunno. I think people perhaps expect that a Scandinavian novel would be about Scandinavia, and feel that something about ex-pats, they could do themselves, I don't know.

EK: That could be one reason. I really haven't analysed it myself either. Do you know much about how they marketed it? Do you feel that they marketed it in a certain way?

MP: No - I think they did everything they possibly could. But I think it would probably have been helpful if there had been, I don't know, an Ejersbo website, or... I don't know - it went a bit dead in Denmark as well, I thought, after a while. The first year or two everybody had read the books and it sold enormously. But after a while it sort of petered out a bit. I'm not sure I think enough was done to keep the name alive. Only now with the recent biography that people start to talk about it again.

EK: I've seen that; I've got that lined up to read.

MP: I haven't bought it yet but I will.

EK: Quite recent release, isn't it, yeah. [...] Looking at the bigger picture, I've talked to a couple of other translators and they've talked a bit about their work and so far I've had two ends of the scale: one person who said, 'I spoke Danish and English and I wanted to make some money, needed to make a living,

that's why I did it', and the other end: passionate about literature, keen to help that transfer of culture into another nation... I don't know how you feel about translation? Or why you took on these translations?

MP: I think I'm somewhere inbetween, really. I studied literature at university. I fell very much in love with the English language and the culture when I was twenty-ish. I really, really wanted to make that... if I could've moved, I would've. But it wasn't feasible, I have family here, and I couldn't really uproot everyone. So I had to stay. Translating, and working as a Reader for publishers I respect enormously, was a way to make, to combine that love of the language with being stuck here.

EK: Oh okay. When you said you were a Reader for those publishers I assumed you were in London?

MP: I wasn't, no. It was because I was... I had to move back here. I worked in London for Portobello for six months, five months, and then I returned and finished my degree here. And because I have a young son, I had a young son at the time, I had to stay. I couldn't find a job that would pay enough for us to be able to move to London.

EK: - I can understand that -

MP: That would've been quite difficult. So I had to stay. And I could read from Copenhagen, so I did. On average, a book once every week or every two weeks, for about five or six years. After a couple of years, they asked me to do my first translation, then they asked for the second one a while later.

EK: So that's an interesting role, I suppose - being that contact in Scandinavia for them. Churning out these reports, saying 'here's something great, here's something great, here's something great' and then some of them get picked up, or like you say just a few get picked up -

MP: At Portobello, we published Knausgård. His second book. I found it on the London Book Fair and told Philip that we had to. I'm **enormously** proud of that, having spotted him before the entire *My Struggle* thing. It didn't sell very well at all, but it's still an absolutely fabulous book.

EK: Yes and, like you say, to have been that gateway, opening that door... that's really important...

{pause}

MP: You were about to say?

EK: Trying to remember what it was... about having that ambassador-type role, this cultural intermediary, it's quite an interesting one. Because on a linguistic level that's what translators **do** - they bridge the gap between languages - but also these relationships, maybe...

MP: I thought it was important. I felt like it mattered enormously, trying to... to... work out what was going to be the best, and what **deserved** to be noticed. Occasionally I would write reports and say, this is absolutely brilliant, but I really don't think it would travel. On other occasions, I would say I think this will travel really, really well - but it's not great! {pause for effect} If you know they can translate one maybe two Scandinavian books a year, you always have to keep that in mind, is this going to be **the** book that deserves that kind of attention?

EK: Those few months you had working in London, do you feel that gave you the insight to be able to know what the British market might... or what might appeal to that market?

MP: Um... I think that came with a bit of experience. It came with being... I'd been in London for quite a bit. A couple of years before that, I had a boyfriend in London, whilst I was there once a month or something. Going through bookshops, looking at what was there, what seemed to sell, talking to my boyfriend about what he read, what he didn't read, why he liked them, why he didn't... was an opening - but really it was only looking at what Philip and Christopher published and why they told me they wanted to publish something, why they told me they couldn't publish something else - I could write 'book' and sing its praises and they would say 'yes, but... it's not going to work. We already have twenty-five books about this' or 'we already have people in Britain who can write that type of thing; we don't need something in translation because it's just going to make it incredibly expensive and nobody's going to buy it'!

EK: Where were you in that stage when you recommended Ejersbo? Were you a few months down the line, a few years down the line?

MP: I was quite a few years down the line. I think... I came home in 2005, in the spring of 2005, summer. So three years down the line, I think?

EK: Yeah... let's see {looking at Ejersbo book copyright page} it was first published in Danish in 2009? Yes, 2009.

MP: Yep, so maybe four years down the line, actually.

EK: Yeah, okay. So, like you say, you knew who you were writing that report for, what would appeal...

MP: I knew their... I knew the publishing house, knew what their profile was. Even if I didn't know as much about the British market as I would like, I certainly knew what my publisher liked. What they wanted, what kind of books they wanted to publish.

EK: Absolutely, that makes sense. You said that they then came back and said to you, yes we'd like to know more...? Or yes translate a bit more for us...? You sent a reader's report, not a sample...

MP: I sent a reader's report, yep. Then once I had sent... I think every time I sent a very, very favourable report, they asked someone else to read it and give a second opinion. And if we agreed - and we seemed to on a number of occasions - they would get back to me and say, listen, could you tell me a bit more about **this**, could you translate some reviews for us, or what's the reception been like?

EK: That's nice - okay, so they're interested in the domestic, the Danish market, their response, that's interesting. Do you know who the other person was they asked?

MP: No, I'm not sure. They never told me as such.

EK: Do you think you were first on their list to be the translator because -

MP: I think I was first on their list to be the translator for this one because I think Christopher MacLehose had wanted me to do a translation for him for a while. At that point certainly he trusted my judgement and thought that I would be able to do it.

EK: Brilliant, that's good. How... why did you get that impression? I've missed a bit of the puzzle, I think...

MP: I don't know why, but the fact that I was the go-to Reader for Scandinavian languages. He'd asked me to have a look at a translation, one of his earlier works - and I'm not allowed to say which - but something he had done previously, that he thought wasn't quite up to scratch, and asked me if I could have a look and see if I could straighten it out. I did what I could before they sent it to be edited.

EK: That's interesting. So you - obviously, like you say, you're not going to say what it was - but you looked at both languages? You mean you looked at both versions, the Scandinavian and the English?

MP: - and the English. Tried to iron out the creases!

EK: **Then** it was sent to an editor.

MP: Yes.

EK: Okay, that's interesting - another step.

MP: So I think he thought he could trust my grasp of the English language and my taste.

EK: Did your final version then get any editing... how did that process work?

MP: Yes, it did. Quite a bit, I think. Particularly with *Liberty*. Which I submitted just before I fell quite ill. That needed more work. *Exile* wasn't edited as heavily.

EK: Okay, I see. I suppose *Liberty* is quite a big... tome -

MP: - it's a beast of thing!

EK: - okay - did you... I don't know enough about this process of editing, so they do the editing and did they then come back to you and say, are you happy with this?

MP: Yes, several times. Detailed lists of questions. I was sent...

EK: What sort of things?

MP: Um, 'on page 78 you translate whatever as such-and-such, two lines further down you translate... is that the same word in Danish, or is that something different?'

EK: Okay, so linguistic stuff and terminology.

MP: And then of course they sent me the proofs and it had to be proofread and, obviously, yes, it was my translation I could veto anything, I could've vetoed an entire editing, but that would've been silly. Especially as a Dane, and not a native English speaker. It would've been absolutely ludicrous.

EK: So some of it was down to that level of language, you think, with native changes. You're happy with the resulting texts?

MP: I think they've done a **fabulous** job. Paul Engles, who did most of the work on *Revolution* and *Liberty*, I thought he did **enormously** well and was very patient with me!

EK: I've heard his name. He wrote a very good report, didn't he, on... was it on crime fiction specifically? Scandinavian fiction anyway in translation... can't remember the title of it. [...] You said you didn't have much to say, but I think it's all interesting to me, as I'm at a starting point - obviously as my research goes on I know more - don't know if there's anything maybe we haven't really covered

about the Ejersbo books...? You work quite closely with Christopher MacLehose, and he obviously brought over Peter Høeg's *Smilla* and that - in terms of my project - is obviously a turning point, and everyone tells me it's a turning point, in the British market for Danish literature. Do you think... he's aware of that role, I guess?

MP: I think he is, yes.

EK: These readers reports, is there some sort of sense that you're looking out for the next big thing, or is that somehow separate, like an unusual outlier?

MP: No, I think that was always my role. I was asked to look out for the next big thing. If ever I came across something I thought would be interesting, would I please drop him a line and say, you need to snap this up, or do let me write you up a report. And that's still the case. I think if I come across something that would suit him, I would always let him know that this could be important.

EK: That's interesting. But you don't go to *BogForum* or anything like that, you don't consider it part of your...

MP: Well, not any more. I'm not sure I'm ever going to do another translation. As it happens I can't [attend *BogForum*] this weekend. It's a bit too much hustle and bustle for me, I don't thrive with that many people.

EK: It is huge now. It's quite... like you say, overwhelming. It can get very busy. And I suppose you need to have a purpose to be there in a way - I know it's a public book fair in Denmark, but you'd want to go with something in mind.

MP: It is. You do need to know what you're going for. Whether that is to network, or it is to see someone read something, or whatever it is you want to do. {pause} Right now, I'm just teaching.

EK: That's interesting. [...] I'm hoping I'll write some sort of case study about this trilogy and Peter Høeg *Smilla* and - because it's the same publisher, fundamentally. To see where the differences lie. Because one was a great success, one, as you say, didn't sell that many, and you can't really point at one thing and say why -

MP: No, but it's interesting... [...] I have no idea why Peter Høeg sold that well. Obviously it's a **good** book, but I don't think it's a **great** book as such, and I think these are {taps *Ejersbo book*}

EK: Something about the expectations of the readers, maybe. {pause}

MP: I spoke once to the people at Atlantic Books, who we worked with at Portobello, and they focused a bit on the fact that it was helpful for a British reader if they thought they could pronounce the name of the author. People were more likely to buy books with people they could speak about. But you wouldn't think that people could pronounce the name 'Høeg' any more than they could 'Ejersbo', so I don't think it was that.

EK: No, I don't think it can be as simple as that -

MP: No. {laughs} Even if - it's a lovely and very simplistic theory!

EK: It's a nice theory, isn't it. But I think that Brits would just happily mangle a name if they wanted to. {pause - interview closing}

MP: I'm sorry I can't tell you any more about them.

EK: It's all useful stuff, it'll all piece together as a jigsaw. [brief description of case study again, omitted from transcript]

MP: I could imagine both Paul Engles and Christopher MacLehose might be willing to make the time for that.

EK: That's interesting what you say about Paul Engles, I'll have to get in touch with him -

MP: He did brilliant work. And was very passionate about it, and came to Copenhagen, and interviewed, and video-taped, did all sorts.

EK: That's really good then.

Interview with Paul Engles

Meeting room, Quercus/MacLehose Press offices, Carmelite House, London. 20th January 2017

EK: It was funny your reply [to my email] when I said I'd spoken to the translator, Mette Petersen, you were wondering what she said - but she just said completely positive things. I've got quotes here. She thinks it was really fabulous and that you did really well - 'enormously well' - as an editor, that you were very patient and passionate about it. Because you went over to Copenhagen then, didn't you?

PE: Yeah, I did -

EK: To meet her specifically?

PE: We-ell. That was... why did I go... it was partly to go on holiday, but we just wanted to find out a bit more about what Danish people thought of it [Ejersbo's trilogy]. [The trip] wasn't entirely successful.

EK: Oh, okay.

PE: I did meet Johannes Riis [Gyldendal]. Did a bit of a film with him talking about the books. But it didn't really come together. I mean, it didn't really help very much, but nice to meet him. Nice to meet Mette.

EK: When did your involvement start? Were you involved from the beginning, do you know the story of how it became published in English?

PE: I don't know the story of how it was acquired actually, because it had already been acquired when I arrived. But I think not long since. So presumably what happened, presumably it was offered to Christopher MacLehose by the... I can never pronounce it... Gyldendal? I think they would have offered it and he would have had reports, possibly by more than one person, but definitely by Mette, so she recommended it, and we acquired it, and we lined her up for translation. I know that Don Bartlett had done a sample for someone, I think maybe for the Danish... I don't know, there was a possibility that he would have done it, but he didn't. So... I joined in 2010. I think it was delivered in 2011. It was one of the first things that I worked on. We had quite high hopes for it at the beginning. It was in that period where MacLehose Press - the third book of the Stieg Larsson trilogy had come out in 2010 I think and so it was a bit like after the Lord Mayor's Show in terms of what we had next. So that was something that we were quite keen on.

EK: Yeah - I saw a quote somewhere saying it's difficult to sell foreign literature but we knew a trilogy by a dead Scandinavian author **could** sell!

PE: Yeah. Unfortunately these didn't work very well. Not in the same way, or even well at all. It's difficult to say why. I think we... yeah, it just didn't take off in any of the editions of any of the books, unfortunately.

EK: What was your... take me through it a bit more in depth, because I feel like I'm learning a bit about the publishing industry as well! You were involved in editing the first book, so all three of the trilogy?

PE: Yeah, I ended up editing all three.

EK: So what does that involve, then? Mette sends a full draft?

PE: Yeah, she sent a full draft. I think in this case Christopher MacLehose also edited it - for the first book - so he went through making notes in pen on paper, and then I edited it on screen.

EK: Great, okay -

PE: It's a case of looking for mistakes. I thought... I'm locating things that don't quite make sense, sentences that don't quite hold together, don't quite make sense, that kind of thing.

EK: So the actual language -

PE: Yeah, the language, yeah. I did that. I referenced the Danish text, even though I don't really speak Danish, but it's close enough that you can kind of get a sense of what is meant to be said. There's no nuance, but you can kind of get an idea of the words.

EK: Do you speak any other languages?

PE: No. Then the second book... so the first one published in 2011, the second one I think was maybe the next year, 2012 - *Revolution* - then *Liberty* came a bit later, because *Liberty* was very long, that took a long time to edit. I think possibly translating it almost killed Mette(!) *{slight laugh}*

EK: Ye-es. She made veiled references to her health not being very good with that one.

PE: I think it was... but also there was some idea that we might cut that book. Initially, it might be cut,

and then it turned out the family didn't want it to be cut, and I'm not actually sure where you would've cut it -

EK: Okay, so not **not** publishing it at all, but somehow -

PE: - Trimming it a bit, like a hundred pages of it. But that never happened.

EK: That's really interesting. I think she [Mette] mentioned that before it was actually sold - or bought by MacLehose Press - there was talk of maybe just publishing one of the books, instead of all three.

PE: Yes. I wonder what that probably would have been. Because *Liberty* is the one he didn't finish himself, isn't it? He left notes and then Johannes Riis finished it for him.

EK: Okay. Yes. Because they were completed/semi-complete transcripts, weren't they.

PE: Yeah, I think the other two were finished and he left... the short stories. I think *Exile* was the longest of the short stories and then it became the first novel.

EK: Oh, I see. Okay.

PE: Have you read them?

EK: No I have to confess -

PE: Are you going to read them for this?

EK: I think so! Yeah.

PE: In Danish? Do you read Danish?

EK: I do read Danish, yeah.

PE: Are you Danish?

EK: No. I learnt Danish at university, I did a BA in German and Scandinavian Studies.

PE: Do you want to be a Danish translator?

EK: I don't know... it's funny, the more I interview translators, the harder the job seems! I think the difficulty for me would be the challenge of - because it's freelance work - that overhanging stress of 'where's my next job coming from', set deadlines and everything like that. The translators I've met seem very passionate about it, even if they claim they're not - they'll say, 'this is something I do because I speak Danish and I'm trying to make some money', but they all actually - underlying - they actually have a passion for what they do. So that is nice.

PE: Translators tend to work on books they like.

EK: But it must be difficult. You can't only do that, I suppose, to make a living. That's the difficulty, isn't it. You work with various translators, I guess? But not Danish ones... What's the impression you get?

PE: Whether they like it or not? I think it can be a bit of a hand to mouth existence. I mean... {pause} They don't seem to retire. That's not necessarily a good sign of a profession! That you don't retire... {laughs}

EK: {laughs} Not making their millions!

PE: Apparently one of our translators writes emails or phones Christopher MacLehose and says things like {laughing} 'I need another translation otherwise I'll have to dress up as Santa Claus in the supermarket or the shopping mall over Christmas'! I think we occasionally get the feeling that we need to keep translators alive by publishing books that they can translate, or buying books that they can translate.

EK: What's your background then? I read your MA thesis, which was good, about Scandinavian and Italian crime fiction. It's quite inspirational actually as you interviewed - got a lot of information from people. Were they all or mostly via correspondence? Some of them were face-to-face as well?

PE: No, I... let's see. Some was correspondence... I met Gary Pulsifer, I met the Italian crime lecturer [Dr. Giuliana Pieri], and I met the Danish - or was he Swedish? - the Swedish literary agent [Joakim Hansson]. In fact I'm not quite sure how that worked, I think I went twice to Copenhagen and the first time I met him in Malmö. He met me, he was probably the most shaping influence on it, because he talked to me for a long time and changed the idea behind it. The idea behind it was probably more negative than it ended up being.

EK: I see, that's good. So what made you do that MA, were you already working in publishing?

PE: No, I had worked in bookselling. Then I left and did an MA in publishing. I had done a bit of work experience in publishing. Then I worked at an independent book shop for a few years - five? four years? - and then left and did this MA. Mostly on a whim really, just thought might as well!

EK: {laughs} [...]

PE: Doing the crime thing, I don't know quite how it came about.

EK: Well, it's sort of of its time? When would you have been writing it, 2009? 2008?

PE: I think it was 2009. It's probably why I got the job here. I did interview Christopher. Well, not interview, just by email.

EK: What's your impression of how things have changed since then? In terms of the Scandinavian market specifically, I mean, as that's what I'm looking at in the UK. It's nearly ten years actually. Sort of.

PE: Yeah, it will be ten years since *The Dragon Tattoo*. Came out in 2008, isn't it. Um... how has it changed? I think... there's a lot of it. Every year, every Swedish agent has another thriller. There have been a lot of them and they don't always work. We turned down two last year. One of them we were quite close to buying, it got published by Bonnier and did quite well. I think it was called *The Ice Beneath Her* [by Camilla Grebe]. So there's just so many of them. But they still do quite well. Probably the best selling after Stieg Larsson is Jo Nesbø, possibly. That was the thing - publishers spend a lot of time trying copy each other. So when Jo Nesbø was successful, and had that blue cover with the yellow sting saying 'the next Stieg Larsson', all the sales people were trying to get our... Åsa Larsson whose another - trying to get her books like that. We have to have a woman in peril, need to have the quote and everything...

EK: And the titles as well, *The Girl blah blah blah* -

PE: Yeah, the 'Girl' thing is a bit of a controversy. That came from Stieg Larsson and apparently someone who used to be sales director at Quercus says that she told Christopher when he first presented those books, the title has to change - is this off the record? Possibly -

EK: I don't know if this story has been told anywhere else though? That's the thing. Obviously the original title is something like *Men Who Hate Women* -

PE: Yeah, *Men Who Hate Women* -

EK: I can see why that wouldn't quite work -

PE: - And then he came back with that, but I think she has also variously claimed that she said 'what about...?'. But in fact now obviously we are publishing more Lisbeth Salander, *Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* series books, with David Lagercrantz. There's one more next year. There was one last year. Which did well. It didn't do that kind of epoch-defining numbers of... it was maybe in the top ten, top selling paperbacks of the year in 2016.

EK: That's really good then, for anything in translation.

PE: It was a number one bestseller in hardback fiction and in paperback and did really well in export. It's very good actually. Very hard to tell that it's **not** Stieg Larsson, I thought. I just didn't really... to me it seems very much like him.

EK: So it was definitely marketed as the next one -

PE: Yes. But then, we published another book by the author beforehand, a book he wrote about Alan Turing. We published it before we did his *Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* series novel because we wanted people to see that he was a writer in his own right. That came out a bit before. It was well reviewed. 'I did it, it's in safe hands'. I guess it's a sign that... as a translated property that it's worth continuing after the author's death. It's done quite a lot now, there's a new Agatha Christie, Ian Fleming...

EK: There's a particular strategy already there.

PE: I have a slight theory. I had to do a talk in Korea about a similar subject. I think as part of my MA thesis there was the idea that you could get people to read literary books in translation via crime, or whether that's not true. But I did wonder whether it's a coincidence that the biggest - *The Hundred Year Old Man Who Jumped Out of the Window and Walked Away* - whether there was a certain receptiveness to Swedish literature that allowed that to become... That's sold like a million copies or something? More? I wonder if there's any connection between whether people - the same people - have read a Swedish book, that somehow Swedish was associated with books in the same way that it's associated with furniture.

EK: You do feel that there is - it is a gateway...?

PE: I think there might be a connection. But then again, when I did this talk in the book cafe in Korea, I sat behind some guy afterwards and I think he'd written his notes saying something like '*Hundred Year Old Man* follows/came about because of *Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* - LOL!' {laughs} So I don't know

whether it's complete nonsense, I don't know! It's just something I wonder, whether it's a coincidence that it was a Swedish crime novel that got really, really big and then it happened to be another Swedish genre book. There's been a subgenre of that sort of thing. *A Man Called Ove*, the editor of that is in the building. I don't know who it is actually, someone at Sceptre? It's probably Drummond... anyway, that book, that sold around... may have done more than 100,000 copies as well. That's... is that Swedish? Norwegian?

EK: Norwegian, I think? Not Danish. I mean, I'm sure it's not Danish, part of my research has been to look up a corpus of what books have been published from Denmark in the UK.

PE: Is it Norwegian?

EK: It might not be - it might be Swedish. The name sounds Norwegian to me... Back to the Ejersbo book: can you tell me what you know about the marketing strategy for that?

PE: Yeah, what did we do... I think I got a grant from the Danish Arts Council. We made a film trailer which was pretty cool.

EK: I've seen that on YouTube. The cartoony style, graphic novel style, yeah... So the market was...? Young readers, young adults?

PE: I don't know really... I think the idea... because it's always kids. I guess the second book has stories from other people's points of view. But in the first book it's from the girl, the English girl: Samantha. So then we did a few other things: we did try to do some kind of Facebook competition, but it didn't really go anywhere. We did a screening of *Nordkraft* in a cinema in somewhere fancy - not that fancy - somewhere trendy, like Church Street. So we did a few things but it just didn't **really** do anything.

EK: What impression do you get of why?

PE: I just... I dunno. People were not... {fades}

EK: You're not - you weren't the marketing...?

PE: I think I sort of was. There was a marketer working on it, but [as] the editor, a lot of the time you end of driving a lot of this.

EK: I guess you know it inside out.

PE: Yeah and it's whether we got it wrong or it's just not something that you could... it hasn't done that well in other countries, I don't think. I don't think it worked that well in Germany, or in Spain, or anywhere. I'm not sure how that transferred. And then I think there was maybe... I wonder if those books would have been more talked about when they came out and if there had been that kind of the culture of... A lot of people talk about who had the right to talk about people's stories, or do you have the right to write in this person's point of view. I read an article that was quite critical of the Pidgin English of the black narrator of the third book. I sent that article to Mette and said, what do you think of this, she said absolute bollocks. I think we were always a little bit worried that there was... a white person writing about Africa - there was always a bit of a worry that, 'is this a bit racist? I don't **think** so, but I don't know!' That kind of thing.

EK: It's difficult because it's a book by a Danish author writing about Africa as well, because from a British point of view you could market it differently or whatever.

PE: Yeah, it was that I think and it worked... Unfortunately he didn't have the profile - because he already had the profile in Denmark when these came out and it was the idea that he went silent and then they said he died and there is a book, it will come out, so there was a bit of a news story, but it didn't seem to work in any other country. We did try. I mean I spent a lot of time... I was quite passionate about it - more than I was about anything else at the time - but it just didn't translate into sales. We wonder whether the covers were wrong, because they are incredibly striking images, but then it didn't really convey that the book was being narrated by... it's the kind of book that young, teenage girls would've maybe quite liked the first book, but then I didn't see there was any reason why they would pick up a book that had an 'angry Africa' on it. I think in Denmark, the fact that he was known, that didn't matter so much. But they were such striking images that we felt we couldn't **not** use them. So that was always a bit of a bind, 'what shall we do with this?'

EK: And the trilogy aspect - they all looked very good, like you say.

PE: So if we'd done them - I mean, if we did them again and we reissue them, would we do it with, I don't know, a girl's feet in the water...?

EK: That's what I was thinking as well. Since then, you've had things like *The Killing* and you've had -

really recently - the whole *hygge* hype. So you could... the marketing now, say for some reason you were just bringing them out now, would that marketing aspect change?

PE: I think *The Killing* was around even then?

EK: Yeah, well, I suppose it kicked off in 2010.

PE: We gave it a go, by saying this is also Danish. One of those things: if you like this, would you like that? 'If you like bacon, you'll like this' - it all gets very silly! Desperately trying to think of things that will connect with people. [...] I think the fact that the main character dies at the end of the first book - so having a second book, you're not thought in that second character. That was different. The second book is short stories. I think what he's done, it's a really great achievement in a sense. I think the writing is not - the writing could have been better, perhaps. I'm not sure he was... He wasn't like a... I mean, they were written - I guess there's a cloud - but then it's quite **simply** written. Although I like them. It's from the - is it from the first person? - I think it is. It captures the characters, the two narrators. So it begins, so the first book is the story of Samantha who is an English girl who ends up - her father is a mercenary, her parents split up, she basically spirals down into eventual death. Her father's colleague - a mercenary who works with her father - she ends up having a relationship with him and then she goes to his house and finds another girl that she knows in his bed and then she gets annoyed and snorts a load of cocaine and dies and then gets buried. But then the second book is all different characters - ten different stories from ten different characters - some of them who have been in that book. So there's a story about one guy, half-Greek guy, who got kicked out, got sent away from the school because he beat someone up, was something to do with Samantha, he climbs a mountain and lights a candle for her. There's a story about Sophie who hardly appears in the first book, she just happens to be - I think Samantha goes to her house and they talk briefly and then someone else turns up - but it tells her story of how she came from Greenland to Africa. And then the third book goes back to the beginning. It's split between two perspectives: a white boy called Christian and a black boy called Marcus. Christian lives in, comes to, Tanzania with his father, and Marcus is a houseboy I think at another family. Christian is good friends with Samantha and sort of a bit in love with her and she dies, so it tells everything from the beginning, so all the scenes you see in the first book from Samantha's perspective then you see from his, and you've also got Marcus. Marcus is trying to make money - they're both trying to make money - and they join together in the disco business. They're trying to get nightclubs and all these funny things - they're talking about 'the good music' and the 'Zaire rock' and all this - I don't know what the 'Zaire rock' is! And they end up falling out and I think at the end Christian leaves Tanzania and Marcus... what happens to Marcus?... I think he ends up with no money and quite a bitter man, drinking, couple of kids, that kind of thing. Then at the end there's this kind of foreshadowing of the AIDS crisis where people are talking about it. So I thought they were really - a lot of pages, isn't it. The way the trilogy works, with that kind of - I'm not sure he intended it to be that way - but the idea of from one point of view and then ten different point of views and then two but you see it from the beginning: I think it's really clever.

EK: It's really interesting, yeah. And it's quite filmic almost.

PE: It is quite filmic. It's very...

EK: Was he a journalist, is that right? Ejersbo?

PE: I don't know. I think he might have been a journalist. But he had - there was a book called *Nordkraft* which was kind of a bit like *Trainspotting* -

EK: That's what everyone says, the Danish *Trainspotting* -

PE: It's quite good, it's alright.

EK: But I don't think it's been published in the UK, strangely. Published in English in America or -

PE: Yeah, in Canada or something. Canada. I think maybe it was turned down for being too druggy by Christopher [MacLehose] at some point before being *{inaud}*. But then these books are not... there's a lot of... I guess we were all probably worried that people who should read this, most likely to read it, were... but is it too... can you market it as YA [Young Adult]? But it is mostly young people. Some of the stories have older people.

EK: But then I don't think it was marketed as that [YA] in Denmark, was it? But then, it was a different market as he was already known.

PE: Yeah... I don't know what the comparison would be. If Zadie Smith had died after one book, and left

a legacy, it was just like that. He was quite well known, he'd won the biggest, the Golden whatever?

EK: The Golden Laurels?

PE: Yep.

EK: That's right. And he'd had funding from things like the Danish Arts Foundation and Authors' School and things like that so he was obviously known in that way.

PE: Um. All hope is not lost though. I think someone is going to do - I think the people that did *The Killing* are going to make a ten-part series of *Liberty*.

EK: Really?

PE: So that's kind of our next hope. Maybe confidential, I don't know. Have a look and see what you can find anything on the internet.

EK: Are they making it in Denmark?

PE: I think so, I think it's going to be Denmark and maybe it'll be on HBO or something.

EK: So in Danish, not in English.

PE: I think in Danish, yeah.

EK: I feel like Mette said something about that. That there was going to be a film, but I hadn't seen anything about a film.

PE: That would obviously make a difference. I think we'd probably repackaging it.

EK: I was going to say - if that becomes popular -

PE: That might be what makes it work.

EK: Do you think that helped with - or maybe you don't know - but with Jussi Adler-Olsen, they had a film of his first book as well actually. Although he sells fairly well for Scandinavian crime fiction.

PE: I don't know. I think it was Penguin who did it then they got it into supermarkets and we were looking at it and going 'why is this one selling like mad?'. And we were all very jealous. Even though we'd had Stieg Larsson who'd sold ten times more! We're still jealous of anyone else having success with it.

EK: Do you think because it rode on the back of the Swedish crime fiction?

PE: I don't know. I think he's [Adler-Olsen] quite a good writer. I think Steph is a very smart publisher. It just got into a supermarket and was selling a few thousand a week. Ended up 80,000. We're publishing him now. I've not read any of his books. Actually no I have - I read one that wasn't published in English, it was a thriller about something to do with Nazi Germany and people getting caught - I think pilots who crash and then get on a train with wounded German soldiers coming back from the front and then end up in an asylum for... then they realise there are other people who are not mad who are trying to steal something - anyway! It was alright.

EK: You read what, the manuscript, somehow?

PE: Yeah. We considered it at some point but we didn't go for it. *{inaud}* It really wasn't bad.

EK: And what did you mean, you're now publishing the *Department Q* series?

PE: Yeah, or Quercus is. Not MacLehose Press, but Quercus.

EK: It's been Penguin - like you say - and Random House broadly. When I spoke to one of the translators, they said they were dealing with a person in the US or something about it. But then that must have been earlier...

PE: Who **is** the translator for those?

EK: At the moment it's somebody called William Frost. But they've had three others.

PE: Okay. I don't actually know... those were sold to an American company, I think. I think they've been published in America from the beginning. I don't know who the translator is...

EK: Of the next? Of the one that you've got - uh, do you know which number? Seven or eight?

PE: I think it's up to eight now?

EK: You're on eight? Number seven is the one where I was speaking to the translator -

PE: Might even be nine, then.

EK: There's going to be ten, apparently. Or maybe more - I don't know, he's still writing!

PE: They do quite well, I don't think they do the levels that they did in the first couple - was it called *Mercy*, the first? I think it was those one-word titles that worked quite well at the time.

EK: Yeah, it was one-word titles. Although in America, they had different titles. I forget it now but the name of the film was then that... it's probably all on Wikipedia, let's see *{searches on phone}* Oh - *The*

Keeper of Lost Causes, that was it. That's called *Mercy* in the UK and [*The*] *Keeper of Lost Causes* in America and then the film was then called *The Keeper of Lost Causes* so then it was repackaged or reissued in the UK with that title to try and mop up some of those viewers. But it was a Danish film, so it wasn't like a blockbuster US film or anything. But he's quite charismatic actually, the author.

PE: Have you met him?

EK: I haven't met him but I've seen him at the Copenhagen Book Fair and also he's done some things like - I've seen somebody blogging about him doing something in America, some sort of author interview thing.

PE: Have you been to Louisiana? The gallery [near Copenhagen]?

EK: No, I should go.

PE: Really worth it. Nice setting for a literary event. So you said you wanted to ask something about...?

EK: The whole idea I have at the moment for the structure of my PhD. I'm going to write a bit about the corpus of books itself: Danish literature in the UK. A bit about Danish culture - or 'Brand Denmark', if you like - in the UK: the market and what people understand by Denmark. And then one of the case studies I'm going to do about the 'agents' who bring Danish literature over, I was going to look at MacLehose Press as publishing this trilogy of Ejersbo and compare that with *Miss Smilla*, because obviously that was the sort of gateway, turning point, if you like. That's why I'm starting my research in 1990, because that was 1993. I don't know if you know much about where that sits in the folklore of MacLehose Press, any impressions that you get at all about *Miss Smilla's Feeling for Snow*?

PE: Right, it was a Harvill book.

EK: Yeah, absolutely. But Christopher MacLehose was obviously the person involved.

PE: I have to say, it's not mentioned a huge amount.

EK: I'm just wondering if some of these books... if there's any impression of 'we want the next...' - well I suppose at the moment, 'the next Stieg Larsson'!

PE: Yeah, I don't think I've ever heard 'the next Peter Høeg'. Actually. Weirdly. It's quite a funny thing. Have you read that book?

EK: Yeah.

PE: It doesn't have a police detective in it, does it?

EK: Uh, no. And there's a bit of an argument about whether it's crime fiction at all. I suppose some people are not really sure it fits in the box. But there is a main protagonist who is leading us through this mystery, yeah... there's a crime element there.

PE: The one thing that I find quite striking and ironic is that in theory - or in practice - the MacLehose Press does **not** publish thrillers. It publishes police procedurals. The idea is that the crime books that we publish will have a detective and his team. But going back even as far... well, since MacLehose Press has started, the most successful books have been the ones where the detective is an amateur. So... going through - Stieg Larsson: there are police in it, but in the first book there's pretty much no police at all. Then in the second book there are police. But it's kind of, the detectives are Salander and Blomkvist. *The Truth about the Harry Quebert Affair*: there is a police officer working with, but it's not really a police thriller, again it's an amateur, just Marcus who's writing the book. Then a book we're publishing next year, an Italian thriller we're calling *The Mountain*, is another one where there is a police chief in it, but the person doing the detective is just someone else who's trying to write a screenplay. I guess *Miss Smilla* - similar - so it's the ones with amateurs as detectives seem to be the ones that break out. That's not entirely... I guess the [Jo] Nesbø ones, that's Harry Hole, it's not entirely accurate to say - but that's kind of the impression I get. We have done quite well with Pierre Lemaitre: he writes our bestselling police procedurals. But even the bestselling one of those - *Alex* - was kind of a mix between police procedural and psychological thriller. The main character Alex is a bit like the *Gone Girl* woman. But yeah... I don't think it's [*Smilla*] mentioned that often, I have to say. {thinks} Because he didn't really write anything similar, did he?

EK: No. And a similar thing where he had a big gap before he published the next thing and got a bit of a mixed reception in Denmark for what he was doing. But then also I get the impression at the same time that anything that Peter Høeg writes will get translated and published in Britain.

PE: Yeah. It's probably Harvill Secker that does it.

EK: Yeah.

PE: But eventually Harvill Secker will stop doing it. Then we'll do it, probably *{laughs}* Eventually I reckon they will stop doing it. They'll go so far and then eventually they'll look at the figures and say, this is now not working, and they won't do it.

EK: And then no one will, or do you mean it will be passed down to someone else? How does it work?

PE: Well, I don't know whether they have options on them. For example, Andreï[?] - I think eventually they can't, even if the editors want to do it, they can't get them signed off, to continue with some of the authors from back then. Whether they'll carry on with him [Høeg], I don't know. But then, when was his last book?

EK: There's one that's due out now, must be due to be published this year. *The Susan Effect*.

PE: *{inaud}* D'you think there's hope it'll be a massive bestseller?

EK: Well, I haven't heard any publicity for it **yet** but who knows.

PE: It's funny actually - it's not as even that we... that I've heard that we were offered it or anything. I guess they're happy, the agent. I guess it's an interesting thing. It's like all of [Umberto] Eco's books were after *The Name of the Rose*. But then I think he still did very well. That would be interesting. Have you ever looked up the sales figures of Peter [Høeg] to see?

EK: I haven't looked at all of the books actually, I should. The difficulty of looking at the Nielsen data is

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PE: - it's meaningless before 2000, yeah.

EK: 1998 or something.

PE: Even then it's quite patchy early on. Now it's fairly accurate.

EK: Yeah, the later the better. *{pause to think}* I think we have covered things really. You don't know much about how or why it [Ejersbo trilogy] was chosen?

PE: I think it was chosen on the strength of the report from... and on the sales figures in Denmark. It was **loads**, considering the population. It was like a book here had sold 2 million. Obviously not sure that it works that way.

EK: I see what you mean. Do you know why Mette was chosen as the translator? You said maybe Don Bartlett but then don't know if he was working on something else?

PE: Don Bartlett did a sample for **someone**. Now whether - we may not have known about this. I think maybe we didn't know about it. Maybe I found it, or he asked me about it a while later or he did it a long time ago. Because I think he did translate *Nordkraft* now I think about it.

EK: Do you know what, I think you're right, yeah.

PE: So maybe it was for...

EK: For the same publisher, maybe? Which would be in Canada.

PE: I don't know the deal with that. So anyway, he **didn't** do it. We do work with him, so he might have done it. But I think Mette was a good choice because she was really passionate about the books and she hadn't translated that much before and it's unusual as you know for someone... it's the whole target language/mother tongue thing, but I thought it didn't seem to be much of a problem in that respect.

EK: That's good - yeah, because she'd lived in the UK, hadn't she.

PE: Yes.

EK: Not long though... but I don't know...

{brief mention of personal details redacted}

PE: She's quite a presence, I thought. I think it was quite a lot on the strength of the report on the sales figures [in Denmark]. I think it seemed like... it was a trilogy, but I think that fact that it wasn't crime was difficult. It just... I think there were a few years where things didn't go quite so well for MacLehose Press. Pretty much the first five years that I worked there, nothing really worked like we wanted it to. Most things we had high hopes for - like *Alex*, the Pierre Lemaitre book that I mentioned, we had high hopes for -

EK: I can picture that one now, feel like I've seen the marketing -

PE: We got a lot of attention and put it in supermarkets. I thought we had a really good cover, pretty good I think the cover, but then I think a lot of them came back, just didn't really work in supermarkets, so it was a bit... it didn't quite, I mean it worked very well, everyone really likes Pierre in the whole Hachette building, but it's never quite... But then in 2014 onwards, and 2015, then it's just been going really well since then. *Norwegian Wood*! We haven't spoken about *Norwegian Wood* at all, have we? So

that was a book that was I think that was offered to Christopher either it might have been a meeting with NORLA who are the Norwegian [Arts Foundation], it was either that or... I think it was, NORLA suggested it, I don't think it was the publisher, but I could be wrong. When that book was first told to the sales director at the time, she had to give a number for how many UK copies that she would sell, she actually wrote down zero

{both laugh}

EK: Scathing. Do you feel like it's part of a whole movement, this whole Scandinavian brand in the UK now? This nice attention on Norway and its slow living thing, then this *hygge* phenomenon that happened...

PE: Chicken or egg with that. *Norwegian Wood* - I think a really passionate editor

- Katharina Bielenberg, who's an Associate Publisher - she just **loved** the idea of this book. I think she's got a wood burning stove at home, she's really into ecological issues. She did a tour with Lars [Mytting], obviously got a bit of coverage, and then just suddenly... there was a lot of good social media done for that. I wasn't aware social media worked much better than what we do. Someone came up with a 'show us your stack' tagline, people were taking pictures of their wood. It was something, one of those things, more easy to resonate with a lot of people than potentially a book about Africa and teenage angst!

EK: Yeah, sure. It's almost something more mundane about it I suppose.

PE: My father likened it to the *Zen and the art of the Motorcycle [Maintenance]*. Suddenly it just went wild. No one could quite believe how many copies were being sold. He came and he did radio. That always helps. There's almost nothing better than radio for books, that really works well. He did radio, he was on TV, there was an article - Robert Crampton did an article in the Sunday Times. It just **worked**. So we do wonder whether that had something to do with *hygge*. But I think there's some sense that *hygge* is something that almost British publishers have invented - I know it did exist in Denmark, it is a thing. Actually a funny story about *hygge* is that while editing *Revolution*, I came across the word: 'it's *hygge*'. So Mette didn't translate it. I wrote to her, what about this, she said {laughing} I don't think I can translate it, it's just a 'thing'. I'm like okay, fine, what about a footnote? We don't really want a footnote or something. So I was just like, well, whatever.

EK: Do you remember what you did? Did you change it?

PE: No, we left it. We left it. It doesn't matter that much, once somebody has bought a book and is reading it, if there's a word that they don't understand twenty pages in, it doesn't really matter. Probably not going to take it back to the shop! {laughs} Then I met a girl at a publishing event. She was quite a new editor - she worked here first, at Random House, now she's at Viking - might be worth you getting in touch with her except I can't remember her name. Nice girl, what was her name? I could find out. She thought there should be... I think she commissioned that [*hygge*] book, the one that did best was a book that she commissioned, she found the author -

EK: Because there were two weren't there, there was *The Little Book of Hygge* which was Meik Wiking -

PE: Yeah, this one.

EK: That was the one that did best. And the others were for some reason miles behind. I think it's funny because it was almost like a stocking filler thing, people just saw that one and went for it.

PE: I think my girlfriend bought it for someone.

EK: I got given it as a birthday present.

PE: Did it do more than *Norwegian Wood* in the end? Maybe? More than 100,000?

EK: Last I looked, it did 150,000, yeah.

PE: Wow! That girl's sorted for life for her career anyway. Amazing.

EK: We've probably got her name somewhere because there was that nice long read -

PE: That article, yeah yeah yeah.

EK: - in the Guardian about the whole thing.

PE: I'm sure she'll talk to you; she talked to me.

EK: - And like you say she was saying something about how it's a British-created phenomenon; British publishing phenomenon. Where Danes would look at it and say, what's this all about?

PE: That's probably where I got that from, then. I think I read it and then I met her and I said, are you the one who published the successful one? And she said yes. Cheers!

EK: That would be really good actually to be put in touch with her.

PE: I used to play softball with the guy who sits next to her, so I can ask him.

EK: Back to Christopher MacLehose as well. Is he quite amenable to people talking about his work? He's still very involved in picking the books?

PE: Yeah, very much so.

EK: Does he go out to these book fairs?

PE: Yeah, yeah, he loves the book fairs. He's always at Frankfurt, goes to Guadalajara, he loves it. He lives for the book fairs. London Book Fair. I think Frankfurt's the favourite. He's still very much involved.

EK: It would be interesting to speak to **him** somehow. But I'm not sure how best to approach him. If it's a case of sending an email and seeing if he would like to speak about my research - maybe give him an impression of what I've found out so far about the market...

PE: What specifically do you want to talk to him about?

EK: A bit about the *Miss Smilla* story. Which I'm sure has been recounted over and over. But then comparing that with other Danish books that have come since, Ejersbo especially.

PE: Is it on Scandinavian or particularly Danish?

EK: Particularly Danish.

PE: Did you look us up and the only Danish ones you could find were the Ejersbo ones? Have we not done any other Danish?

EK: No, no, there are others.

PE: Have **we** done others, though? I know I shouldn't be asking you, I should know, but I can't think of any.

EK: I can open up my data set, that would be a really easy way of checking *{opens corpus spreadsheet file on smart phone}* A lot of them are all the way down: Harvill, then as the years go on things get merged and things... we've talked about Adler-Olsen as well, let's take a look. *{waiting for spreadsheet to load}* There's just over a hundred books, since 1990, from Denmark in the UK.

PE: Wow.

EK: Does that sound a lot or not a lot?

PE: It's thirty years, isn't it. It's not a huge amount. 3 a year.

EK: Not a great average. But then it has shot up since 2010. Average 2-3 a year until then.

PE: It's almost like there's more books **about** Denmark than actual Danish books. Manufactured books.

EK: *The Year of Living Danishly* kicked it off - early last year? Right at the beginning of 2015, that was. That sold fairly well. But almost bad luck to her really because that set the scene then for this whole stocking filler *hygge* thing, but if she'd somehow held off, I'm sure that would've done really well. *{looking at data spreadsheet}* But then she's a journalist as well, Helen Russell, so she's writing a lot about Denmark -

PE: There were some Danish crime novels that we were looking at. I've turned down Danish books, a couple of authors. I think there was one... there's a Danish author published by Headline, I don't think she did very well, Elsebeth Egstrom or something? [Elsebeth Egholm] Did she do well, do you know?

EK: *{Looking at spreadsheet}* Not too badly but not amazing figures...

PE: I turned that down and I was delighted to see it had not -

EK: There's two: *Dead Souls* and *Three Dog Night*.

PE: Okay, there's only two. I was pleased to see it hadn't done very well.

EK: I take it back, it **didn't** do very well! No, a few hundred copies, under a thousand copies each. That's interesting actually, makes you feel like they could have marketed that differently.

PE: Mmm. I didn't think they were particularly good, didn't really like them. Then there's another -

EK: Good translators, though. It says it was Charlotte Barslund **and** Don Bartlett. Don't know how they did it - I'll ask one of them how they worked.

PE: But Don Bartlett works with other people a lot.

EK: I don't always know how they divide it up. Like I know that Martin Aitken is working on one of the latest Knausgaard books with Don Bartlett, but how that's actually working is that Martin's doing a big chunk of the book, and then Don's doing the last bit or something. I always wonder if what they sometimes do is almost like editing.

PE: Yeah, I think one does it, one edits. The translations he [Don Bartlett] does of Roy Jacobsen for us are very, very, very good. And he does it with Don Shaw? Don Shaw, I think his name is - "The Dons" - but I have no idea how they do it. I have had experiences where I've got into arguments with translators where it's really hard to know, because then if you're thinking, why is this not very well translated - not going to name any names - but it's a funny one.

EK: That's interesting, I was going to ask that as well about the editing process. About whether it's different every time, is the process the same: you get sent a draft, you work on it, send it back to the translator, or is it different each time?

PE: We have that Christopher [MacLehose] will sometimes edit things, sometimes won't. Then other people edit it as well. We get freelance copy editors to do it. Sometimes you do a bit, and the freelance copy editor finishes it off. Sometimes you copy edit the whole thing yourself. It's all very different. I always think it's quite a tricky... {pause}

EK: It must depend on the translator?

PE: Generally you don't get into fights. But there is always a concept in translation fiction publishing of falling out with a translator, and it can happen. Where they don't like the way things have been edited or... I think that's happened a couple of times to me. I think that's why I was a bit worried when you described Mette as saying I was very a 'hands-on' editor, have I been a bit heavy - because you do wonder if you're being too heavy handed -

EK: No, she meant it in a positive manner - she said you were very thorough and passionate about it. Nothing negative!

PE: I wasn't sure: with *Liberty* I thought maybe she did say 'there were times when I thought you'd been a bit heavy-handed but then everything you took out you put in somewhere else'. You never know.

EK: That dynamic is interesting because - like you said already - she's not a native English speaker, so if you're saying 'this sounds better in English', she's probably -

PE: - but actually I was more probably changing what the Danish said. I think you do a fair bit of... In translation, editing is a bit of a minefield, and people outside of publishing will be very briefly scandalized if they heard that you just change things in a book.

EK: ... If it's too Danish?

PE: It's not so much that. If you just think, well, that sentence doesn't really make sense {gestures striking out text} I don't know...

EK: Like if it's a cultural difference, you mean, or a language thing?

PE: No I just mean, like cutting sentences that you don't think are necessary. Americans do it loads. Americans really like to edit translations. We had an offer for - not an offer, but interest in that book *The President's Gardens* from an American editor but she wanted to do substantive [sic?] rather than just line editing. She wanted to make stuff, put stuff more in the character... I don't know. The offer didn't materialise so we didn't have to consider it. I think Americans, they're a lot more... do a lot more of that; of actually cutting things out. We worked with an American editor on *The Truth About Harry Quebert* and that editor really wanted to do a lot of chopping.

EK: {looking at corpus data spreadsheet} You asked about - the only ones I've got on my corpus list from MacLehose Press were the Ejersbo books, but Quercus have done a few -

PE: Oh they did the *Dinosaur Feather*! Mmm.

EK: Exactly, Sissel-Jo Gazan.

PE: So Charlotte Clark[?] was the editor for those and I don't think she works in publishing anymore.

EK: Oh okay. *The Dinosaur Feather* and *The Arc of the Swallow*. And actually *A Dinosaur Feather* did pretty well.

PE: That did probably quite well in America -

EK: I remember it did well. And then there's these other couple which are from somebody called Steffen Jacobsen, I think they're a bit older are they, let's see... oh no, they're not.

PE: Isn't he Norwegian?

EK: Well, no - I don't think so. It came up in my database of Danish books and the translator is Charlotte Barslund, although -

PE: - she does do Norwegian as well -

EK: - there are - yeah, that's the difficulty with [trying to ascertain book origin via] translators, they

obviously do other languages because they're Scandinavian -

PE: Maybe she's better at Danish than Norwegian... Yeah, those books [Steffen Jacobsen], they didn't really take off at all. I think they just weren't really published with much... it was more kind of, we might as well, I don't know... I probably shouldn't... the editor who acquired them became a yoga teacher quite soon afterwards. I don't know, maybe she fell out with...

EK: {laughs} This is not the same editor for Steffen Jacobsen and... um -

PE: All these books had different editors.

EK: And yet for those two they left publishing straight after? Is that what you're saying? Sissel-Jo Gazan and Steffen Jacobsen.

PE: No, yeah, sorry - *The Dinosaur Feather*. Two different editors, and they both left publishing for separate reasons.

EK: Okay. Not somehow related to these books!

PE: One of them became a yoga teacher and one of them had babies, at least one baby. Steffen Jacobsen, just... nothing. They didn't look -

EK: - But, marketing, or?

PE: I doubt **any** marketing was done whatsoever and they probably came out at a weird time, I imagine, maybe Quercus was being bought at the time. Might have been the lost - not 'lost years' - but they're kind of the...

EK: 2013 and 2014, I've got.

PE: Yeah, so that was, I think that was a bit of a... But they looked a bit generic, I think. Maybe they were. I read some of one of them, I think. Not sure if I was ever - don't think I ever leapt out of my seat in joy!

EK: I think we've talked about most of what I wanted to talk about. I'd be interested to know if there's anything else - like I say, I'm naively learning about the publishing world -

{FIRE ALARM TEST INTERRUPTS FLOW OF CONVERSATION}

- I've interviewed a few translators who translate from Danish to English. I haven't interviewed all the translators I'd like to speak to yet. But I just - that was the only other question I had really, the relationship between translators and publishers and editors. The impression I got from talking to a lot of them was that some of them really go the extra mile to almost be an agent or a scout.

PE: Who have you spoken to?

EK: I've spoken to a range of people. A couple who are just getting started, somebody called Lin Falk van Rooyen and Paul Russell Garrett.

PE: Oh, Paul Russell Garrett?

EK: I went to university with him actually, we both studied Danish together.

PE: His girlfriend's Danish, isn't she? Or Norwegian?

EK: Wife, yeah, she's Danish and does a theatre company... What's he working on for you?

PE: He's translated Lars Mytting's novel, which is coming out later this year. What's it called, it's got a title... *Sixteen Trees of the Somme*, we've called it. It was called - I think the literal translation is *Swim With Those Who Drown* or something. But I think we wanted to get trees in it. Because of *Norwegian Wood*.

EK: Of course! Well, there we go, there's the new thing - not *The Girl With...*! Martin Aitken as well, I've spoken to - he was obviously really good to speak to.

PE: Are you going to search out Don [Bartlett]?

EK: Um, yeah, I might do, but actually he has not translated that many on my corpus. I'm going to speak to Charlotte Barslund if I can. Obviously she's one of the most prolific on the list.

PE: Oh yeah, Charlotte Barslund.

EK: And then Mette obviously I spoke to about more specifically Ejersbo -

PE: - what on the phone?

EK: No, face-to-face - it was when I was in Copenhagen for the book fair, so they all happened to be there. And William Frost was the other one who's just getting started, he's done the two Jussi Adler-Olsen.

PE: There's not that many Danish translators...?

EK: No. There aren't, no. The biggest names are Martin Aitken and Charlotte Barslund, they kind of do

most of the jobs as far as I -

PE: I don't know Martin Aitken.

EK: You do or you don't, sorry?

PE: I don't. But I think it's true, translators do often... *The President's Gardens*, it's a funny one: the translator translated it and then sent it to us. That's why we bought it.

EK: Really? Okay.

PE: But I had previously... there's a woman that runs an Arab literature blog. I think when it was long-listed for a prize I asked her about it. Then she knew I was interested, I don't know how he was going to go about it. There was another publisher interested in it, it might have been in America, *American Cairo Press*? I don't know if he'd actually... but so there are a lot of agents... I think Pushkin does a lot of this. Does a lot of buying stuff, translates it, and then - just anecdotally - I think Pushkin does them. I think one of the very few we've done it with is *The President's Gardens*.

EK: As in the translator approached you, you mean?

PE: Yeah. I mean, translators do send me stuff. Fairly often. The only time anything's come of it is with *The President's Gardens*. Partly because we in particular like to pick our translators, rather than have the translators pick us. It'd be a shame for someone to approach a publisher with it and then they not end up being able to translate it.

EK: How does it normally work, do they normally send... do you normally ask for a sample translation and a reader's report like you were talking about before?

PE: Yeah.

EK: Do you ask a number of translators for that?

PE: Some books it will go out for sample and you'll get three different translators to do a sample and you'll pick one. That's not that often.

EK: Do you or even Christopher have translators in mind sometimes?

PE: Yeah, I think - more Christopher than I. Definitely.

EK: Based on previous jobs? Or relationships?

PE: Yeah, or you just think they're... Not entirely sure how he would pick them, but for example we bought a French book called *The Gardens of Something-or-Other* - or we made an offer for it, maybe it has been acquired, anyway - so Christopher said, yes, so who should translate it? I said Euan Cameron and he said why? I said it just sounds like Euan Cameron book!

EK: That's nice. There are certain... almost genres or something that make you think of a translator...?

PE: I don't know if there's any particular reasoning behind it. Translators can really... Like Mark Freed[?], for example, who translates Mexican crime for us, he'll do launches in Canada for the book. Or Geoffrey Strachan, who publishes [translates] Andreï Makine: he does readings of his own, he's been publishing [translating] Makine for years, and they do a thing that they call 'Notre Show'[?]. It's all very camp. Makine does it.

EK: With, um, sorry - back to Ejersbo then, do you remember doing any kind of marketing - you said about doing the screening of *Nordkraft* and that sort of thing, but nothing that would have involved the translator in any way?

PE: We didn't do because there was no author. Maybe that was a big problem, actually, the lack of an author. Maybe that was... it may have been a problem.

EK: That is a challenge isn't it, yeah. I get the impression that's happening more and more that authors become a bit of a star - they're the brand - so it's nice to be able to bring them over for these sort of events. Then if you can't do that, what do you do? Do you remember how it was presented in bookshops or anything like that? Any particularly good publicity?

PE: Um... {pause to think} I don't know if it was ever actually presented to Waterstones, so that didn't help {laughs} Because not all books can be, I think is the idea, so I don't know if that one was.

EK: Well, that's a big factor.

PE: That might be a factor.

EK: [...] {looking at corpus spreadsheet list} Oh there's Carsten Jensen but that's Vintage -

PE: Carsten Jensen, of course.

EK: That was Vintage, so Harvill, but I don't know how connected all these things are.

PE: I don't know if that did well. It had a really good cover when it came out.

EK: Yeah, actually - *We, The Drowned* did do well. People keep quoting it as a Danish book that has sold well. 11,000 - 12,000 copies when I last looked, so that's pretty good.

PE: That's not bad at all. That **is** good.

EK: When was that then? That was 2011, okay.

PE: It was a really nice package that. No idea what the book was like, it looked quite long to me.

EK: Yes, definitely 'literature' in inverted commas. Let's see - a few independent publishers and things. *{browsing corpus spreadsheet}*

PE: Maybe we should look for another Danish author then. Bit of a wake up call. We've only done one in ten years. There was a Danish crime writer we were looking at last year, it just was a bit... macho.

EK: I think it's interesting because I don't know how much overlap there is between the markets as well, because what does well in Denmark might not do well in the UK. There's quite a few so-called minimalist authors there like Helle Helle and Naja Marie Aidt, who has been published in English but in America, but I don't know...

PE: Is there a novel called 'Grace' published by Picador in there, or is that Norwegian? I remember reading that.

EK: I don't recognise the name. Picador... Just got by them *Earth in the Mouth* which is a Carsten Jensen one.

PE: Maybe it's Swedish, actually, think it's Swedish.

EK: Anyway, sorry I feel like I shouldn't keep you any longer. I've got my list of questions, let's just check we've covered everything about these books. Like I say, I'm hopefully going to write this as a kind of case study of publications that have been chosen by Christopher MacLehose and ring the differences really. *{looking at list of questions}* Oh, we didn't really talk about the Danish state funding, but I don't know if that really...

PE: Well, they funded - the first translation [of Ejersbo's trilogy], I don't think they funded because the translator didn't have sufficient experience.

EK: You mean they didn't fund it?

PE: They didn't fund *Exile*. Then *Revolution* and *Liberty* they **did** fund, because by then, having done *Exile*, she did have sufficient experience. We did apply, we applied all three times, and they also gave us a marketing grant which you know maybe we squandered! We did our best, we thought the trailer... I think the trailer - it was my dream to make this into an animated thing, so we got the money and it was like 'right, we're doing it!'. That was a school friend we did it with.

EK: Okay. Did you get funding from anywhere else for the general publications?

PE: No. No. Not sure there's any other funding available.

EK: Fair enough. Whichever arts agencies or whatever. I guess that's it really. Just wondering - once I've written something up - if Christopher MacLehose would be interested in what I have to say or my research more broadly on this area?

PE: Do you want to ask him stuff or do you want to tell him stuff?

EK: Bit of both. I wouldn't want to use his time as me just asking him stuff. I'd like to be able to say, well here's a few interesting things, what do you think to these interesting things?

PE: Okay yeah well if you let me know when you're ready and I'll speak to him and see if he can do it.

EK: That would be really good. I'm thinking in maybe a couple of months' time. And then also I'd have this as a sort of broad narrative of what's happened and then he could always say well no that's not how it happened!

Interview with Paul Russell Garrett

Hotel Comfort Vesterbro Lobby, Copenhagen. 12th November 2016.

EK: I've brought your first book, *The Contract Killer*, Benny Andersen - which actually you gifted to me, it's a signed edition(!) - tell me about how that came into being?

PG: Och. That's a long story. You probably read the article or have seen the article anyways that I actually wrote about my experiences about it, I think that was for Norvik Press as well. There was a lot of luck involved. I found it by chance. And that was how I broke into translation. Hadn't really considered being a translator before that. I remember meeting you at the Nordic [Translation] conference in Norwich [2013] and you reminding me that I had once said that I never wanted to be a translator. *{EK laughs}* Look at me, here I am!

EK: Look at you now, yeah. I wish we'd recorded yesterday's [DENT] meeting actually, because you talked a bit about networking and how it's important for when you're just starting out. Don't know if you can retell that a bit? Basically how did you go from - like you say - not thinking you're going to be a translator, to then deciding, well, I want to be a literary translator, so what next?

PG: Some of it was desperation. I've been working in catering for most of my life and had had enough of it and was tired of it and really wanted to use my degree for something as well - in Scandinavian Studies. So I was looking for something else. Then when I had this opportunity, and I made the most of the contacts that I had from university, the Scandinavian department there, I think with Jakob [Stougaard-Nielsen] and Claire [Thomson] and even some of the other people at the department, and just really made the most of them. And at times, as I was saying yesterday, you have to be a little bit cheeky and a little bit forward and go outside of your comfort zone and do things that might feel a little bit awkward. So I kind of forced myself to do that - partly out of desperation because I'd stopped working my other job and needed to make a living. I mean, I really love doing it, I'm not just going to put it as pure money, but I really had to push myself and put myself out there and expose myself. That was how this book [*The Contract Killer*] got published: it was by making the most of those contacts that I had at UCL and at Norvik Press and I was very lucky that it happened. Then I kept doing that into the Danish publishing market, as I was saying yesterday, just tried to use the same technique: to meet as many people as I possibly could, which *Kulturstyrelsen* was immensely helpful in doing that. Once I'd met them, they were very supportive and I came to the book fair four years ago and tried to meet as many people as possible.

EK: So tell me about that, how did you come to know about the book fair?

PG: That's a good question, I'm trying to remember now. I was introduced to *Kulturstyrelsen* at an event at The Danish Embassy [in London] about five years ago, and I think that was just after I'd translated this book, the play. Jakob Stougaard-Nielsen had got me invited to this event. There was a bunch of Danish translators there, there was publishers there, um -

EK: British or Danish publishers?

PG: British publishers, I should say. I think some of the translation students were there as well. So I met Annette Bach, who was - I can't remember what her role at *Kulturstyrelsen* is now - but I think it was through her. I might've followed up with her and we had a bit of contact and then she - in those days I think they actually reminded people individually and asked them to apply for it. I think now it's -

EK: - it's bigger -

PG: It's bigger and you have to follow the news and see what's happening.

EK: Okay, great. And what did you do that first time you came to the book fair programme?

PG: I can't remember if I said this yesterday, but I was quite lucky in that **that** year... they used to go around - the whole group of translators used to go round to all the publishers. They would spend a day going to publishers - all the translators, which was maybe 30 getting up to 40 the last year they did it - and they would do what they did at the speed dating but at their own place.

EK: In their offices?

PG: In their offices, yeah. They're all located quite close to each other in Copenhagen.

EK: Yeah, I saw one was round the corner.

PG: What they did the year that I came - the first year they'd done that, and the last one I think - is they chose only the new translators to take on that trip, so we were seven or eight translators that had never been to the book fair before.

EK: That's nice. Okay.

PG: And they took us around to five or six of the biggest publishers and agents. In that sense, I think I was quite lucky to meet them all on a much more intimate level. I had business cards all printed up and all ready and I made sure to talk to them all and find out about all the books. Took some books home with me, asked them to send me some books. And then... like one of those things I said - following up when I got home, writing back to them and asking, just reminding them who I was, and what books I was interested in, and they're very happy to share that kind of information.

EK: Did you get any work from that?

PG: Uhm... I'm trying to remember directly... I think I might have gotten some samples out of it, actually.

EK: I was going to ask you about the sample translations, because I'm looking at your website {online on phone} your lovely CV -

PG: - I haven't updated it in a while! -

EK: There's quite a nice long list of Danish samples. So obviously you've got the book and there's the iPad app [*Wuwu & Co.*] as well and then there's this big list of Danish samples. Are there any you want to talk me through - well, firstly did you apply for the sample translation fund for all of these?

PG: It's been a mix. I've applied for one or two a year depending on the situation for the publisher or author (if I'm working directly with an author). In some cases, the publishing house applies directly. Usually, if it's one of the bigger publishers like Gyldendal, they've applied directly for that themselves.

EK: They apply for the Translation Fund?

PG: They apply for the Sample Translation Fund.

EK: Oh they can do that, okay.

PG: It can be either - either the translator or the publisher.

EK: I see. So they've already got the money ready and they contact a translator.

PG: I think they can only apply for it after they've found a translator actually. If I remember. So they will ask me if I can do it, and then they will apply for the funds afterwards generally. Turnaround's fairly quick on the Sample Translation Fund.

EK: That's good. Did any of these come to anything? Some of them I recognise the titles.

PG: Actually some of my first ones did. Or should do. There was one... Alen Mešković's *Ukelele-jam*. There's a book contract out for that now. It's been delayed a little bit for various reasons, but I was asked to do a sample translation for that by Gyldendal and I did that... so they actually asked - so we did a... sort of for the maximum you could do under this fund - and then they actually asked me to do another big chunk as well which they paid for themselves. Because they really liked it and the author really liked it, but the British publishers, sometimes they like slightly longer. They want to get a better feel for it. The rights were bought by Seren Press in Wales. That should come out... might be 2018 when it comes out now.

EK: But you've completed the translation?

PG: I haven't completed the translation yet, no, no. There's been some funding delays. But I should be starting on that before Christmas and submitting it in February or something like that.

EK: That's quite quick. Or you've done most of it?

PG: I've done a big chunk of it, I've done about a third of it already for the sample. I'll have to go through that again because it was a long time ago. That kind of spoiled me - I kind of expected that to happen all the time!

EK: I've seen that there was an application to the Translation Fund at *Statens Kunstfond* for that book and they were successful with their application for funding. They apply for a certain amount and sometimes they're given the full amount, sometimes it's a proportion. So the delay with funding was... do you mean, to your end?

PG: Yeah, it's to me, yeah. The publisher got less than they'd hoped for, I think they applied just after there was a new panel - the new *udvalg*, the new committee for the translation who decide as much - and they decided to give smaller percentages of translation for books, but to more authors. In the past - and

in some cases, still - generally in the past, they would award up to one hundred percent and it was reduced. I think on the website now it says up to a maximum of fifty percent and in this case I think we only had twenty or twenty five percent of the entire translation fee was granted. Then they also applied for an English PEN award which also delayed it a little bit and they got an English PEN translation fund grant for that which covered another big chunk of the expenses, but unfortunately the publisher is not very good at keeping in touch! So I've sent an invoice for the initial payment several times and they haven't replied to me -

EK: Oh dear -

PG: I think they're just bad at... as publishers generally are, but this one in particular is bad at keeping in touch. Because they were meant to send, I think, a third of the fee upfront before I start working on it.

EK: And that's fairly normal, is it, that kind of arrangement?

PG: Yeah. Yeah, and I just wrote to them and said, well, I will start as soon as this, but I think I will have to chase them up a little bit more seriously soon.

EK: That's fair enough. Okay.

PG: {laughs}

EK: That was something I wanted to cover - what stage that book's at - because that's really good that you got the contract.

PG: The other one which is also quite unique is the *Erik Menneskesøn*, the Erik and the Gods book - not sure if that's on there -

EK: It might not be, actually {looking at CV on screen}

PG: Is it in my upcoming ones, maybe? Lars-Henrik Olsen. It's a children's book. That was one of my big first steps as well. It was another smaller publisher and Jakob [Stougaard-Nielsen] again had put me in touch. Someone was looking for Danish children's books and they contacted Jakob and so he put them in touch with me and I went on a trip to Copenhagen to find out about - because I knew nothing about Danish children's books - and bought a stack of books, and found this book. I actually pitched a few of them to them and they suggested this one - Erik and the Gods, which we're now calling it - *Erik Menneskesøn* - they liked that one, so I applied to the Sample Translation Fund myself and got that.

EK: Sorry, wind back - who was this?

PG: Yeah, sorry, Aurora Metro is the publisher.

EK: Okay. So the people who you were dealing with, that was an editor or an agent?

PG: It was an editor at Aurora Metro, yep. I'm racing ahead.

EK: No, no, that's good. So then you did a sample, they liked it...

PG: They decided to buy the books. Then again they applied for funding and they were in a similar situation as the other book where they'd hoped to get more and they got a smaller amount than they'd expected and they did the same thing and got an English PEN award as well. I make it sound like you can just get them, but I think they award about ten a year, so it's quite... I'm quite happy that I got it and quite fortunate to have got that. I submitted that in the spring, so that should be coming out I think it'll be early next year.

EK: Great!

PG: Yeah, yeah, it's very exciting.

EK: And how involved do you think you'll be then? As in, do you know if you'll be involved in any of the marketing side of things?

PG: I hope so, yeah. We've talked a little bit about it. Because I've played the intermediary between the author as well and they've asked if the author was interested and he said he was but he's a bit older as well and his English isn't amazing so I've said that I would do anything reasonable to help out.

Considering the author I would expect that they would want someone to at least assist in that. I'm very happy to.

EK: That's really good. So you've used the Sample Translation Fund quite a few times. Have you... I've got a couple of questions about that. First question, have you done a sample translation which has then gone on to be translated by someone else?

PG: Yes.

EK: And... tell me a bit about one or two of those.

PG: {laughing} Um... I did, it was another one for Gyldendal, it was Simon Pasternak's *Dødszoner / Death Zones* which Harvill Secker has published and I did a sample for that for Gyldendal. I got into a habit very early on of putting my name at the bottom of every page of my translation, putting a little 'copyright - translated by Paul Garrett' because, y'know, everything we write is copyright, copywritten. So they knew that I was the translator and I'd had contact with them, I think it might have been at the International Translation Day or might've met them at another event, and they'd said to me - I can't remember who I heard it from, directly from them or through someone else - that they really liked my translation, they thought it was a great translation. And then they chose another translator. It was Martin Aitken as well. I felt really... it was really painful, I was really gutted actually. It was still fairly early on and I hadn't been exposed to some of the tough decisions that happen in publishing so it felt really personal. But at the same time, Martin Aitken was the translator they chose, and I know that he's an excellent translator and he was more established than me and I understood the decision they were making but obviously it was really... {fades}

EK: Why do you think it happened like that then - was it somebody at Gyldendal who said they liked your version or someone at Harvill?

PG: I think it might've been Gyldendal who told me - Harvill Secker had said they liked it, yeah. So it was Harvill Secker had said they really loved it, it was a really good sample translation - so either that means they're used to getting not very good ones, or it was exceptionally good. I think it was just the bigger publishing houses, they have translators that they're comfortable with and they're familiar with and that they know and I didn't know them that well back then. I've gotten to know them a little bit better now and I've - not for this publishing house, but for MacLehose - I've submitted a book earlier this year, a Norwegian book, so I'm getting the chance to work with publishers who before only worked with one or two translators.

EK: Oh that's interesting. I assume you mean people you have relationships with there. As in, an editor or...

PG: Yeah, yeah. Editors. I think it also is because not only that the number of Danish translators there are, that they were limited and they had them, but it feels like there's more Danish literature being published and the two translators that were working before can't possibly keep up with all of the stuff. I think that's a positive thing as well. It's given me a bit of break: a way in.

EK: Yes, it's given you a break, exactly. When it comes to the sample translations - because that seems to be a big part of what you're doing - have you made any applications to the Sample Translation Fund that haven't been successful and what did you do then?

PG: I think I did have one that was unsuccessful, actually. But that was only because I think I'd applied in December but the fund had run out and they just told us to reapply in the new year and then we got it.

EK: Oh okay, so it wasn't for any literary reason! Purely funding.

PG: I'd asked at one point - I think what they told me, there are three things that they were looking for - I think in general, but I think in particular for this fund - it was the author, the translator, and the target language. They told me that two of those three were almost... as a translator they supported me, and English is one of their key languages, so if it was an author that... which is where it gets a little bit, what's the word for it, there's some judgement involved there, who they think is a good author or not. But I think the range of things that I've submitted, it's quite varying levels. I mean, it was a children's book, which is not the most literary book, but it was a big seller and it was very well loved. Had a play that I did a sample translation for and that was successful. So I think it's generally... I think sometimes that fund is also underused. So it is a matter of applying.

EK: That's interesting. I don't know if you had any thoughts about whether *Statens Kunstfond* fulfils its role of promoting Danish culture. You probably did read these news articles in Denmark about whether its role should be more protective of translations and whether they should be vetting or editing at some point in the process. I don't know if you had any thoughts about that?

PG: Uh, yeah, yeah - that came up on the DENT [Community, online]? Yeah. I had some thoughts and I don't think I shared them, I thought I'd keep them to myself. I know that there was a story about Dalkey Archives - the American publisher - one of the biggest publishers of translated literature in America. They had bought a whole bunch of Korean translations that the Korean, uh - the equivalent of *Kulturstyrelsen* - they had commissioned these translations, often from not very good translators,

apparently, and then Dalkey had bought them all and published them as they were without editing. So I just thought there was a danger that if they get too involved and don't know enough about the process of translation and don't have the right people involved in it, I think it's a really dangerous way to go. I agree that I think it's great that Denmark and Scandinavia really supports - Norway is very, very good at it - promoting and supporting literature. I think it has an important role to play, but they have to be careful how they go about that and make sure that the right people, the people who can be trusted to do the right roles, are involved in it.

EK: Who is that then?

PG: Well, just the right translators. If you're looking to promote translations and making sure - I think there was the case of the... as they called him, some rich banker who decided to translate it for a hobby - and I'm not sure if that was the case, I don't know enough about -

EK: I don't know yet, I'm going to speak to him. This 'businessman'!

PG: Okay, so maybe you'll find out a little bit more. I haven't read the translation so I can't - I mean, they were quite critical of the translation.

EK: The articles were about the translation itself, weren't they.

PG: Yeah. I just think if they are going to have some control over that, then they have just to make sure, have to decide who is the qualified translator and who is... who is going to ensure that it's done properly, if that is the case. There is the danger in Scandinavia of Scandinavians being too confident in their English skills, some of them are very good, particular in spoken, but translating a book is an entirely different matter.

EK: Yesterday at the DENT meeting we talked a bit about how you've used book fairs to build relationships with publishers and authors that kind of thing, I don't know if there's any more you can tell me about that? *{both pause to think}* Can't remember exactly what we talked about... you arrange to have meetings with people in advance, generally?

PG: Yep.

EK: Or you could tell me what you're doing this year? That would also give me an idea of how you use the book fair.

PG: Yeah. I generally try to approach it with - people who I've got ongoing projects with, I try to meet up with them if there's something we need to talk about, what do we need to do next. If it's a sample that I've applied for personally or the author's applied for, how do we go about promoting it, who do we send it to. It could be as simple as editing it as well. Looking through and commenting on it and seeing what stage we're at. Sometimes it's just a matter of meeting them and putting a face to a name. I really like doing that. Not everyone is as keen on that. I think it's really important for me. It's part of the building relationships for me and I think it's more important actually in the UK. I think the publishers... as much as publishing is changing rapidly, I think the old publishers and the editors that have been around for a while, they really rely on relationships. I think it's very old school in that sense. They build long-term relationships. They won't start trusting you with bigger projects until they've known you for a while and they know that you're going to be around and to continue to be in the industry for a few years. It's like they often say that a publisher will buy an author. They don't want to buy a book, they want to buy an author, because they want to translate him for a number of years and not just a one-off generally. And I think it might be the same for translators, is they want a working relationship with someone they know and trust who will be in it for a while and worth investing in.

EK: So do you go to the London Book Fair as well? Have you found that useful?

PG: Yep. I do much the same there. London's a bit different because it's a trade fair. So it is more business-oriented so I do have a few more meetings. Generally with people I've worked with before, possibly not met, but I also do a lot of the networking with other translators or there's sometimes events going around, there's dinners and things like that where you get a chance to mingle with the publishers and meet them which is also quite useful. In theory it's not much different. It feels a lot different when you're in London because it's... I wouldn't say it's more professional, but it's just got a very different air to it. I guess more or less the same kind of things happen there - apart from the events, there's more events in London, more translation-y kind of events.

EK: Which networks are you a member of?

PG: DENT, obviously. The Emerging Translators' Network - which I use less now. I was part of the planning group for that for a while and we talked about where it would go in the future, I think they're not sure where to take that now because there's a group of translators who are 'emerged' already who offer a great deal of support and advice to the younger translators -

EK: It's a difficult one isn't it, if you're going to be an 'emerging' translators' network, obviously people are going to get more established as time goes on.

PG: - and we've talked about handing it over to somebody, but we don't know - now we're kind of disconnected from them, we don't know who to hand it over to. I'm also part of the Translators' Association which is a branch of the Society of Authors. I'm on the committee for the Translators' Association. I've just done my first year there.

EK: Oh great, I didn't know it had been that long, that's good.

PG: Yeah - I started last November -

EK: So what does that involve?

PG: As they usually say, it's drinking coffee and eating biscuits(!)

EK: Do you have an official role or just part of the...

PG: Part of the... we have co-chairs at the moment, so there's two people who chair the group and then there are a number of people who sit on different panels. I think I was talking a bit about this yesterday, we're quite involved in the promotion of events - at the Free Word [Centre] and English PEN, International Translation Day, the London Book Fair. Somebody on there also has a representative on all of these different planning things. At the moment I'm part of the - can't remember what they officially call it - the planning committee for the International Translation Day. I've just been taken onto it, so I'll be starting for the planning for next year's International Translation Day. And that's with all the big organisations - English PEN, Free Word, British Library, must've been the Arts Council as they fund that as well -

EK: And I assume this is unpaid? Volunteering?

PG: Yeah.

EK: Which is interesting because yesterday in the meeting you were very clear that you were doing literary translation to pay the bills.

PG: Ye-eah. Yeah. I guess that's not...

EK: You do this in your own time, or how does it impact on your career?

PG: Um. It makes a busy career even busier. Yeah. Hm.

EK: Have you ever found that these networks have got you actual paid jobs?

PG: Just being a member of the Translators' Association, not being part of the panel, but we have profiles on their website, and somebody - a Swedish publisher, a Swedish agent - had found me through that. They just happened to search for Danish translators and they found me. The funny thing was that they had seen... they were looking for a crime translator, and they saw that I had translated *The Contract Killer* so they assumed that I was a crime translator! Which I hadn't done before, but I was happy to do that. I did explain to them that it wasn't a crime novel but I did a short sample for them and they liked it anyways, so yeah, I've got a job as being a member of the Translators' Association. A whole book translated because of that. I think it was my first book actually. My first novel, first crime novel.

EK: What was that?

PG: It never actually got published. Or it hasn't yet. It was... I think we ended on calling it *Derailed*. It was by Michael Katz Krefeld. It was just a nice little Copenhagen crime story. It's got, I think it sold to twenty other countries, but just didn't get taken up in the UK for some reason.

EK: That's interesting. I feel like I've seen it, I've seen the title and everything in English.

PG: Yeah -

EK: But the rights haven't been sold to an English publisher?

PG: No. They haven't been sold to the UK or to a US publisher. The last I heard from them which was a year, year and a half ago, is that they were looking for film rights for it, actually. There was going to be a Scandinavian film made of it. So maybe that would get the impetus for the translation to come out afterwards.

EK: That's reminded me that you've had a couple of books published - was it a Canadian publisher?

PG: Yep -

EK: Can you tell me more about those? They were crime fiction too.

PG: Going to try and remember them...

EK: They'll be on this list, won't they? *{looking at CV webpage on phone}* mmm. Jakob Melander.

PG: Jakob Melander. *Øjsten* it was called in Danish. *The House That Jack Built* we called it in English. That was for a Canadian publisher and that was actually through my contacts at Gyldendal. I'd been doing loads of samples for them - that was my bread and butter for a while - and they recommended me to the Canadian publisher. They didn't really know any Danish translators and they said 'well, here's this Danish translator, oh and he happens to be Canadian - oh, even better!'.
EK: That's nice!

PG: So I got the book. Then it was... again, I think I did a short sample for them and I think I got the book on that basis. It didn't sell very well as far as I can tell. I'm not sure to what level they promoted it. I know they did an event with the author for a book fair in Canada, but I didn't even hear about it, which I was a little bit disappointed, I would've liked to... not necessarily be there, but at least be able to share and promote it and tell people about it. But I don't think they worked in translation that much so it was... I don't think they know what role translators can take or are willing to take. I think the role of translators is becoming more fluid and we are becoming more... we're agents of Danish culture, we're trying to promote it as much as anything.

EK: So you'd see that as part of your role, you'd be happy to promote...?

PG: Mm. Yeah. Because it's both sides of the coin - as you've said: yes, I'm trying to make money, and sometimes I'll take on jobs that I don't necessarily like that much because I need to pay the bills. But I also love Danish literature and I love Denmark and Danish culture. So it's that dual role. Yes, there's some self interest in there, of me trying to get a job [and] potentially the book sells millions and then I'll get some royalties from that, but I really want it to be successful, yeah. There is both sides of that role there. There is a passion for doing it as well.

EK: So how do you feel about this Danish network of translators, then, the DENT one. Do you feel like you're all pushing in the same direction? It's an interesting professional network, isn't it, because you also are all trying to get jobs.

PG: I guess you could say we're effectively competing against one another, but I don't think we are. I think there's a lot of different types of translators in the group, people doing different things, that I don't think that is necessarily the case. I think I'm probably the one doing the most... now with Kyle [Semmell] not translating any more and Kerri's [Pierce] not as involved... I think I'm the one focusing on more literary stuff. Michael [Goldman] - he does a lot of poetry, but he does the poetry he's interested in doing. Sounds like some of the other translators do more commercial related stuff. Not exclusively. I don't feel there's competitiveness too much. Hmm. It was interesting to see, to talk about the other day, about what direction could we take it in - do we do more events, do we do more to promote Danish literature, because - as I was saying - some of the translators are more commercially minded or out of necessity will take on jobs that are more commercial jobs because they'll pay twice as much and take half the time. I think it's a really great group and it would be nice to see where we can take it and coordinate all of our different interests into something. I think it's a good network to have.

EK: That's good. The other thing I was thinking of talking about was the events that you do in London. Some of them are about Danish translation, the plays and things, but some of them are other languages. I don't know if there's much to say about that?

PG: With 'Foreign Affairs' mostly? Yeah.

EK: You're a translator with them. You don't do the acting(!) -

PG: No *{laughs}* We did readings: with *The Contract Killer*, that was the first one, with the *Helmer Hardcore* play by Jakob Weis, which we did a few readings for and staged it last November. The author was over for the reading and the staging. We did post-show talks with the translator, the director, and the author. Those were a lot of fun. Those were very much about promoting Danish culture.

EK: Was that funded by any of the agencies?

PG: His trips were. The author's - we invited him over and we paid for hotel and flights for him. We got that both times we applied for that.

EK: From which? Which one was that?

PG: It would be the... it wasn't the promotion fund... the International... I could double-check what the specific name of it is, but there's a specific one for the authors travelling from Denmark to another country and they need to be invited by an arts organisation in another country.

EK: And 'Foreign Affairs' is official enough to do that now, or...?

PG: They're a registered company in England and Wales, whatever it is, yeah.

EK: And are they involved in this thing next Friday, the 18th, the Speakeasy? *{unrelated 30-second conversation about Speakeasy omitted}*

PG: We also have the translation programme, I don't know if you've heard about that? 'Foreign Affairs' runs a translation programme now which I'm also working on with Trine. A couple of my translation colleagues, I invited them - I begged them to come and help.

EK: People you met through the Translators' Association?

PG: Yep, and ETN as well. Roland Glasser and William Gregory, who's also done some stuff at UCL. They're both quite established translators as well. So the three of us form the translators' side of things, and Trine and Camilla, they're the Foreign Affairs side, and then they've also got their ensemble of actors involved. We've taken three translators this year - nothing to do with Danish, but working from Swedish, Serbo-Croat, and Hungarian. We did an application [process] for them, they all applied, we chose three of them, and we're going to be performing a short extract of their plays in December. What we've done is we've done a whole series of events for them, so that they have taken their play from page to stage. We've done readings, three readings now, with actors, we did a really... we wanted to break down the relationship between theatre companies and translators so we invited them to come in and do really weird theatre-y kind of things like movement workshops and rhythm things. To see them working side-by-side and trying to change the relationship and make translators seen as writers, as dramaturges, and not just translators who are, I don't know, just brought in at the last minute to do a job.

EK: This all seems very much in the model of how you came to translate *The Contract Killer*.

PG: Exactly! *The Contract Killer*... we did another play *The Applicants* after that, along similar lines, which was that I'd found a play that I was interested in, I started translating it, the theatre company invited actors to do readings, and so on and so on. I went to see the rehearsals and got involved in that stage. So it's been very much modelled on that. For me, I really love translating theatre, it's one of my favourite things to do. Which there's not as much to do and it's difficult to make a living doing that, but really we wanted to share that with other translators. So we set up this programme so that other people who are interested in translating theatre could get that opportunity. And we purposely selected three people who we thought could benefit the most from it. We had a number of applicants from people who had translated twenty or thirty plays and had been performed in different places around London and we thought, well, that's not the purpose of this. We want people who haven't had a chance to really get the chance to do this. So it's been an amazing experience. It's the first year of it. We'd like to get support for it in the future, but because we're working from different languages we wouldn't be able to get support from any **one**... maybe for events or something like that, but I think we'll have to look to the Arts Council England to continue doing that.

EK: Or do you know how easy it would be to find out if there was a similar agency to the Danish Arts Foundation in different countries?

PG: In each? Yeah, mmm -

EK: Or translators themselves might know?

PG: Yeah. That's what we've generally relied on until now, is we've asked them to - any contacts for support that they have - we've asked them to share them with us. But it's really hit and miss in different European countries. Some have them, some don't have them.

Interview with William Frost

Hotel Comfort Vesterbro restaurant, Copenhagen. 11 November 2016.

EK: I've got a copy of the book, actually - the book that you translated, Jussi Adler-Olsen -

WF: - I've not seen it -

EK: *The Hanging Girl* - you've not seen it? Okay, okay. Well, you take a look *{handing book over}* - this is definitely the British one. Though I guess the paperback -

WF: It's the same. The book is Danish-English. They didn't publish them separately.

EK: Oh okay, great. You did start telling me on our walk, but how did you... tell me about the story of this book, how you came to be the translator?

WF: I just got an email that said would you be interested in doing it. And I have no idea why.

EK: *{laughs}*

WF: I don't know how they knew me. I don't know why they contacted me -

EK: *{interrupting}* Who's 'they'? The publishers?

WF: Random House. Under Penguin. So I just said yes. And went ahead and... *{pause}*

EK: So they contacted you via email and then sent the PDF?

WF: They asked me if I would be interested. I said, yes. I expected there would be some sort of trial translation, there was none of that, it was just 'if you want to do it, here's the contract, if you sign it, we'll get started'.

EK: Okay. And how did that work then? Was that one of the contracts where you got it checked over? *[by the Translators Association, referencing conversation in earlier DENT meeting]*

WF: No, I didn't get the contract checked over. I mean it was for a large amount of money - it was I think \$25,000, and I just kind of thought, I'm not going to question that! So I just thought, yeah. And it's the same with the one I'm doing now, it's the same fee. Do a hundred pages, then you get paid half, and then the other half when you've handed the rest in.

EK: Where did they get your contact details?

WF: I have no idea. *{dramatic pause}*

EK: *{laughs}* Are you a member of one of the translation associations?

WF: No. I'm a member of the translation association in the UK **now**, but I wasn't at the time.

EK: Hmmm. Okay. That's interesting. Do you know why... this is number 6, is it? *{referring to book on table}* in the Department Q series?

WF: I think it is number 6.

EK: So it's been through different translators...?

WF: I think they've had three other translators, so I'm the fourth translator. Plus they've had a 'language consultant' involved in some of the books. So when Martin [Aitken] was doing it, he was the translator, and then Jussi has a friend from America who he employed as a 'language consultant'.

EK: Language consultant?

WF: Yeah.

EK: I don't know what that means.

WF: I don't think anyone really knows what it means. I think it just meant he had a friend who was checking that he thought the translation was good enough, which I think is one of the reasons that they have had four translators, because everyone else has said they don't want to carry on.

EK: That's interesting. Do you know if... have you read this book? As in, the published version?

WF: Have I read my translation since I translated it?

EK: Yeah.

WF: Never.

EK: Okay!

WF: I've seen bits of it. There are a lot of editing issues with the book. For example, it's published simultaneously in the US and the UK. One of the issues with the book is that sometimes, inconsistently in the editing process - for example, the word mum M-U-M is changed to M-O-M - but not consistently throughout the book. One of the things with the book is that I don't get to see the edited proofs before it's

published. I'd say there were quite a few inconsistencies, and some spelling mistakes, and other things, yeah.

EK: I wonder why.

WF: It was just, it was in a rush.

EK: Was it quick?

WF: It was really quick, so I think from when I handed in the final draft, almost within a month, a month and a half, that was it - out, printed.

EK: And the language consultant person that you mentioned, were they involved with yours?

WF: My deal with it is - I shouldn't have any contact with the author. And I have no language consultant working with me. And I think that was part of the... as I've understood it from the publisher I'm working with, they decided that Jussi should not have **any** connection to the translation. That was the way it was going to go forward.

EK: Fine, okay -

WF: And without it being said to me **officially**, I think there were issues with the author being too involved. In the translation.

EK: Okay. So how are you getting on with number 7?

WF: I've translated three pages so far.

EK: You've started it. You've read it?

WF: Yes. I've read it. I've only started.

EK: So, you don't work with him directly. Any questions or communication you have about the book, you contact the publisher, or...?

WF: *{pause to think}* I don't contact the publisher about questions as such. Sometimes I have to - for example in this book, there is a character who speaks Danish, but makes mistakes in Danish. And so we had discussions about whether or not they should make mistakes in English, or whether or not it would just be seen as a typo. I think we came to the conclusion that they **wouldn't** make mistakes in English, because then we would have to change - I think he was... there was a character who was German but living in Denmark and making mistakes, where if we suddenly said he was German and living in Denmark but in the English book he's speaking English, it just suddenly doesn't make sense somehow. There were some other things - maybe I get some feedback about 'what do you want me to do when it says "and suddenly, to everyone's surprise, someone said something in English", do I just leave that sentence out? Is it okay if I leave a paragraph out, where they're explaining why someone can speak English? Or do you want me to include it?'

EK: That makes sense. I suppose that would come up in all sorts of translations, wouldn't it, where you're referring to a specific language and that's different. So... you're not sure how they got to know you as a translator - I was going to ask, have you found translators' networks beneficial in that sense, but you're not sure that's where the job came from?

WF: Yeah, I really don't know where they got my contact details from.

EK: Not another translator?

WF: *{pause to think}* I met Martin [Aitken] **after** I had translated the book, so it couldn't have been the previous translator. And actually it was only because I got this book contract that I decided that maybe I should try and be a translator. Which is when I then joined DENT and tried to think I might get more involved in networking as a translator.

EK: Are you a member of the Translators' Association, did you say?

WF: The one in the UK?

EK: Yeah, the Society of Authors -

WF: Yeah, yeah, Society of Authors. But I'm not a member of the Danish one.

EK: You were saying in the [DENT] meeting, it's quite expensive?

WF: Yeah.

EK: So not great if you're not working full-time or reliably getting contracts full-time *[repeating what he said in the meeting]*. Have you been to the book fair in Copenhagen before?

WF: I've never been. I haven't really known what to use it for, I guess.

EK: What about other book fairs, have you used any of them?

WF: I've never been to a book fair before! Well, I've been the the Edinburgh book fair, that's it. And never in a professional context, never to promote myself, or 'network'.

EK: Okay, just starting out. We've already talked a bit anyway [*on the walk to the hotel*] about how you came into learning Danish at university and then coming here [*Denmark*] - what brings you to become a translator?

WF: I think in contrast to many people who are translators it's just because I do have Danish language skills and I would like to be able to use those skills. It's just for the money. I'm not a huge lover of - I'm not a huge reader, I'm not a huge literature buff. It's just a career. It's just a way of making money. So I read a lot more **now** that I'm doing translation. Yeah.

EK: That's fair enough! Have you used the - do you make much use of the translation funds that are available from *Statens Kunstfond*?

WF: I've never used them.

EK: They have a sample translation fund.

WF: Yeah. So I have two agreements with two authors that they want me to do a sample translation, and I've got the okay from the publisher that I can also do it, I just haven't got around to applying for money from the translation fund. Mostly because I don't work full time as a translator. I've always been busy teaching or doing proofreading or most of the time I'm doing academic translations of articles that are going to be published in various English-language journals which pay far better than most translation. I think Jussi is an exception - I think what I earn for that is in no way indicative of what most people would earn for a book translation. At the moment I wouldn't be able to afford to do a book that I just fell in love with and spent two or three months doing it, I don't have the financial capacity to spend time doing that. Not just now anyway!

EK: Is that the dream?

WF: I would like to, there are Danish books that I'm very keen on, I have a lot of books that I'd like to translate, mostly from younger authors who've come up through *Forfatterskolen* in Denmark and who I have communicated with and we've agreed that that would be a good thing to do in the future. I'm very reticent about doing it, because I don't see myself as being able to sell or pitch the books to a publisher in the UK and I don't know how to do that. There's an element of... you can get I think 8,000 kroner to do a trial translation, but if I don't know what to do with it afterwards, I'm not sure whether or not there's any point doing it.

EK: Who do you have a relationship with in relation to Jussi's books? Is it someone at Quercus?

WF: My contact is at Random House.

EK: America?

WF: In New York. So, it says Quercus on here {*opens title pages of book*} but I know nothing about -

EK: - I just wasn't sure if it's a UK or US -

WF: Except I've never even seen the word 'Quercus' before, I have no idea what it is! Is it part of Random House?

EK: Yeah. It's an imprint. Used to be an indie and now it's been bought up by them -

WF: So I think they did have a British version and an English version [*sic: American*] of some of Jussi's books, maybe at the beginning -

EK: They did and they had different titles - the British ones were quite short and snappy, like *Guilt* and *Redemption*, the longer ones seem to be in the US. The Danish film version when it was brought over even to the UK it had the American title - *Lost* something...

WF: Right. The new book now is called *Selfies* which seems like it could be a good title, but for Random House, they want it to be something that fits in with their longer titles of the series, so it won't be called *Selfies*. It's going to be called something else.

EK: Oh that's sort of a shame, isn't it, because it would have been an easy 'same' title. Who gets to decide the title, then, do you suggest something?

WF: We communicate about... Before I start the translation, they have an expectation that I will read the book in Danish, then I'll write a summary of the book, I'll give some character analysis, and also say what are the key points in the book, what could be things that we might consider for a title. They create the blurb on the back. I've only translated three pages of the new book, but they've already written the blurb for the back of the book based on the analysis that I've given of what the book is about. So that

they can start - because they start pitching the book now. Pitch - I'm not sure what they mean, that's the word that she used about pitching it -

EK: Promoting it?

WF: Yeah maybe, promoting it.

EK: I'm not sure. They've already got the rights, they're already definitely publishing it -

WF: They've got the rights and they're publishing it, so I'm not sure who she's pitching it or promoting it to! Or maybe they're just telling people about 'this is the next thing we're publishing from Jussi'. Maybe it's internal, I'm not sure.

EK: Could be. They're a massive organisation, could either be internal or...

WF: Or maybe it's the book shops. I don't know.

EK: I suppose they could also be pitching it to their own sellers within Random House, couldn't they, to say this is our next big book, can you do this with it? Or even taking it to book fairs, maybe, I guess? [...]

WF: Yeah, at least that's how it's working with me, I don't know how it worked when they did it with the earlier books. I find it useful that I have read the whole book before I start, but it's quite time-consuming at the beginning. I mean, I can spend two or three weeks: I'm reading it in Danish, and then writing this review and analysis, which I find very, very time-consuming. And it's all part of the period that I get for the translation. So it feels like the first part of the translation period is gone. Which is a little bit stressful.

EK: But it's not wasted work.

WF: No, no, of course not. The timescale is... I think I started on the first of November and I have to hand it in on the 14th of February. That's the timescale.

EK: And it's the same... thickness of book, or?

WF: It's **slightly** shorter. I think it's about twenty pages less, so 500-something pages - can't remember what this one was *{leafing through book}* so this one's almost 600. The one I'm doing is maybe 520 pages.

EK: Okay. That's interesting about the blurb. Like you say, I don't know how much that process is the same with other books, and I guess you don't know?

WF: No.

EK: What did you do with this one - you did the same process?

WF: Yeah, it was the same process for this one.

EK: Okay, so there's two of these books. But then as it's part of the series, maybe they already had in mind... they already know where it will fit in with the series.

WF: Yeah, I guess, yeah. It's quite a good book to be - it's quite a good author to have in terms of, it's part of a 10-book series, so I did book 6, now I'm doing book 7, and it's quite nice to know that there's some translation security - as long as nothing goes wrong - after this one there's still another three books to come. Although one of the things I found difficult with the contract I have now is almost a year and a half ago I should've got the book and that kept getting postponed and postponed because he hadn't finished writing it, which is the thing I find hard with trying to move into translation, that I have to maybe not take work in teaching or proofreading because I think I'm getting the book and then it doesn't come and then I haven't got any work. Then this book came at the start of November and now I'm **extremely** busy with teaching and proofreading.

EK: That must be really difficult in any freelance work, to work out where you're going to be busy, and your contracts and deadlines and things. Is this the only literary translation you've done then?

WF: Yeah. That's it.

EK: Other translation?

WF: So I've translated a book about - what was it about? It was a huge book for Århus University Press about I think it was the history of Danes in the Congo. Well, not Danes, it was partly about Danes in the Congo, but it was a postcolonial take on European history in the Congo and what they did. So it was an academic book.

EK: How did you get that contract?

WF: I've been working with translation with Århus University now for almost ten years. Doing academic translations of articles and doing proofreading. I've also taught academic English at the university. Someone that I had worked with contacted me and said would I like to do that. That was a collaborative translation with a Danish person, I don't think I would've been able to translate the book on my own, there were elements of the Danish that I would've been lost without a Danish person to spar with and discuss what it should have been in English.

EK: Okay, and were they an expert in the topic?

WF: No. I just happened to be married to them!

EK: Fine okay, just a native Danish speaker and you're a native English speaker.

WF: And then we were just jointly... written, both our names were in the publication as translator.

EK: And you got that because you worked at Århus, you lived there...?

WF: So I was working with the university as a freelance translator for academic texts. That was why.

EK: Yeah I've done similar *[conversation about my previous translation experience omitted]*

I just remembered you went to the Summer School in Roskilde. What was your experience of the Summer School?

WF: I thought it was brilliant. It was really, really useful for me. Firstly, it was useful to meet other translators and hear that it was difficult to get a foot in the door, as it were, into translation and that a lot of it is luck. Luck. Contacts. And also just hearing other people saying that the networking thing is hard, you know, there are other people who feel shy or inhibited or anxious about it. If they're doing it then just give it a try and see how it goes.

EK: When was that, that was in June last year, is that right?

WF: Yeah I think so.

EK: And you'd already published the Jussi Adler-Olsen book last year...?

WF: I think I had finished, yeah. I must've done. I actually can't remember. Yes, I must've done, it must've been finished.

EK: What did you take part in at the Summer School? There were workshops weren't there, but they weren't necessarily practical translation workshops, in a way -

WF: No, they weren't. There was someone who came from the police and was talking about different titles that they use in the police force and what we call different things which was really useful but it was too late for me! Unfortunately. It was really useful to be at that workshop. There was a workshop with Pia Juul which was really interesting, talking about translation, and that was more practical - we looked at some texts and tried to translate bits of them. *{pause}* I don't remember now.

EK: But it was useful to network with other translators, like you say?

WF: It was brilliant. It was the first time I'd heard of this trial translation fund. I knew nothing about how the system worked in Denmark. Some of the publishers we met at the speed dating, I've never heard of that publishing house before. It was a good way to realise that if you want to make this a career, you're going to have to make more of an effort to find out who are the people where your money comes from.

EK: The state funding, the...?

WF: Yeah, for example. And having a rough idea who the people are. Just knowing the woman who's in charge of giving money to translators is useful, you know. Now I've forgotten her name again! The one who was at the DENT meeting?

EK: Anne-Marie.

WF: Anne-Marie. When she said hello to me yesterday, and could remember my name, I was like well obviously that's good that they remember who you are - maybe it's for the wrong reasons that they remember who you are(!) but she remembered me. I thought I guess that's part of the whole networking thing. That you slightly build something up there.

EK: Absolutely. Meeting face-to-face. Okay *{pause}* I think we've covered everything I wanted to talk about really. Like you say, this is a career choice for you, you're not necessarily a passionate fan of Danish literature, or are you?

WF: I am a fan - I mean, there's Danish literature that I really like. Most of the stuff that I like I would say that I can't really imagine being translated into English. Well, I can imagine it being translated, I can't imagine anyone buying it. Maybe it's an author that's not really known, or a story that's really

bizarre. It would definitely be an alternative indie-type book. I mean, I have things I would like to do... yeah. I do do trial translations as well. I haven't applied for money for them, but I've done trial translations for other companies. For instance, there's a Swedish company called *Salomonsson* and for some reason **they** have contracts for Danish books being translated to English and I've done lots of trial translations for them, and they keep coming back and asking me to do them. But when the book is translated, I don't get the job. Which I've heard from other people is quite common. They'll use someone for doing the trial and then they've got someone that they want to do it further down the road. I'm assuming there's nothing wrong with what I do because they keep asking me to do other trial translations.

EK: I wonder why that would happen. Do you think they then have another translator in mind or do you think the author or the publisher intervenes?

WF: No, I don't know. I'm not sure how that happens.

EK: But they're the Scandinavian side of publishing, maybe the relationship they have with the British or American publisher changes that...

WF: And I got in with them through networking. It was Neil Smith, who translates from Swedish to English, so he works with that company and he had recommended me to them for something.

EK: And you knew him from university?

WF: Yeah. *{pause}* I guess there's another side of the networking thing that sometimes is a bit odd. So there have been times when I've done a trial translation and maybe someone else like Paul [Garrett?] has also done a trial translation and then maybe he's got the job, so there's an element of networking where, I like meeting other translators, I think I'm slightly reticent in terms of... I don't think I would say to someone, 'there's this book that's really good and I've been asked to do a trial translation' because they could in theory contact the publisher and say 'I'm really interested in that book'. So I'm - at the moment anyway at this stage in my career - I'm not sure to what extent one shares information, or what it is you share. I'm happy to share things about wages, and contracts, but if I found a great book and thought I wanted to translate it, I probably wouldn't tell anyone 'I want to translate this book' in case they also thought it was a great book.

EK: So there's that early bit of the process, it's almost competitive, I guess. Well, competitive maybe is not the right word -

WF: I'm not sure if it's competitive, it might just be in my head!

EK: No, I think you're right, that's the weird tension about these professional networks. That we're trying to build up DENT, for example, to be a supportive network for translators, but there's a bit of an imbalance between the people who are just starting out and people who are very well established. Even it's known, like you say, that some people might have done a sample translation then another translator did the full book, is there a tension there, is there competitiveness there? So, it's a funny thing about professional networks. Well, maybe it's unlike some other careers actually, I'm not sure what you think?

WF: It definitely seems easier - the whole idea of promoting yourself as a translator - **seems** to be easier if you're based in certain places. I personally don't think you're at an advantage if you're in Denmark. It's very fluid I think the type of events that are taking place. You can maybe get to know people, but... I haven't met anyone from the Culture Ministry [*Kulturstyrelsen*] when I've gone to any literary events, so it's not like going to a book reading is a networking event in Copenhagen. Whereas I guess if you're based in London and are going to events that are organised by UCL or the Translators' Association, you're going to be meeting people maybe who are interested at the other end where you're trying to sell the stuff which I guess they're the contacts that are more important.

EK: Absolutely, I think you're right. It's a strange situation, isn't it, where they arrange publishers from Denmark to come and meet translators, which is nice, but you also need the other side of that...

WF: I don't find meeting Danish publishers an issue in itself, in that I think that if there's a book that you're interested in, and you want to translate it into English, the answer I'm imagining is always going to be 'that would be wonderful, thank you - now go and sell it for us!'. Meeting publishers that are English-language publishers, that's the thing I think is more useful. I've never contacted a publisher in Denmark to say I was interested in a book where they've said no. So I think it's easy to get the contact with a Danish publisher. And if there's a book that's going, you can have it, it seems to me. It's getting someone to want it at the other end.

EK: Would they expect you to do that legwork yourself?

WF: The ones I was telling you about - the three books where I want to the trial translation - they're all published by *Gyldendal* and their response for me was, these books are not books that we're concentrating on, you have our permission to do a trial translation, but **anything** that's going to come out of it, is going to be because you've found a publisher or you've promoted the book.

EK: Fine.

WF: They're not going to do anything with it. They told me they had a series of maybe five or six books in any year and they're the ones they're promoting. Like at the 'speed dating' we did in Roskilde, they had certain books: these are the ones we want people to take.

EK: Yes, they show off their books that they think that would work well -

WF: Yeah and it was originally there where I'd said, well, what about this book? And they'd said, go for it if you want to, but we're not going to be working on it.

EK: And where does that leave you?

WF: That was the reason that I haven't done it. I don't know really how to promote it to someone in the US or the UK, so...

EK: And also you don't have the resources? Time, I mean.

WF: It's good - 8000 kroner is good, you don't have to translate that much.

EK: I suppose you could see that as part of your fee.

WF: I'm just starting out, so I guess I don't jump on every opportunity that comes my way. *{handling book}* Have you read it?

EK: No! Haven't had time -

WF: They didn't get very good reviews.

EK: Should I jump in at number six, though - do they hang together in the series?

WF: You could definitely read them independently. But there is a continuation of character development.

EK: Is there anything specifically Danish about it, apart from it's based in Denmark...

WF: No I don't think so. *[some of closing conversation on thesis case studies omitted]*

Are you talking to some of the other translators [of the Jussi books]? Are you talking to Martin, for example?

EK: I talked to Martin yesterday, yeah.

WF: Did he know anything more about what happened?! I obviously can't say anything...

EK: It's more or less... I can't spread rumours!

WF: No no no of course not, I could just ask him myself! [...] I think he did three. It must be **really** bad because if the money is as good as it is, then it's got to be bad to not want to continue.

EK: *[continues conversation about which translators I'm interviewing/proposed case studies]*

WF: Did you buy this then?

EK: Yeah. Do you get any royalties?

WF: No. I have no royalties in my contract. I'm sure if I sent my contract to the Society of Authors, my contract could be better, but then I think the money is **way** above and beyond what I... I would've done it for much less.

EK: So you're not going to pick holes in it!

WF: No!

Interview med konsultenter i *Kulturstyrelsen*: Anne-Marie Rasmussen (AMR); Marie Husted Dam (MHD); Jeppe Naur Jensen (JNJ)

***Kulturstyrelsen*, Copenhagen. 28th April 2015.**

[Anne-Marie]: Vi har jo flere roller herinde i Kulturstyrelsen som embedsmænd. En del af vores rolle er at promovere dansk litteratur i udlandet. Det er også med baggrund i både litteratur lån og i Statens Kunstfonds lovgivning, det nye Statens Kunstfond. Det gør vi blandt andet ved at deltage i messer, hvor vi holder møder med forskellige forlag. Vi har det med at vi promovere dansk litteratur ved at udsende nyhedsbreve og lave magasiner, som Danish Literary Magazine, som du er bekendt med.

Så har vi en lang række støtteordninger, som man kan søge hos som udenlandsk forfatter, udenlandsk oversætter, udenlandsk forlægger eller litterær arrangør, til at få støtte til forskellige arrangementer der har med dansk litteratur at gøre, på udenlandsk. Det er også de ordninger vi promovere når vi er på messe, men ordningerne er styret af Statens Kunstfond Projektstøtteudvalg for litteratur, for hvem vi er sekretariat for. Marie er decideret sekretær for udvalget, og jeg er så almindelig medarbejder i litteratur kontoret.

Så vi har en tvedelt rolle i at vi promovere en masse støtteordninger og litteratur i udlandet, samtidig med at vi behandler ansøgninger på vegne af udvalget herhjemme. Derudover så servicerer vi Kulturministeriet og ministeren selv på vegne af litterære spørgsmål som der skal besvares politisk set. Så vi har relativt mange forskellige roller.

[Marie]: Så kan vi jo supplere med, altså i forhold til for hvad vi gør for oversætterne generelt, så har udvalget jo en pris til en udenlandsk oversætter, som de giver hvert år. Netop også for at sætte fokus på oversætterne, for ligesom hylde det arbejde de laver. Sådan en har vi én gang om året. Så kan man sige at vi har en række initiativer som udvalget ligesom sætter i gang, netop også for at promovere dansk litteratur og særligt gøre noget for oversætterne. Det har det her nuværende udvalg som sit fokus område de næste fire år. I den forbindelse har vi jo netop taget initiativ til en sommerskole. Den er du bekendt med?

[EK]: Ja.

[Marie]: Det er jo sådan et initiativ som de enkelte udvalg kan beslutte sig for at have, og lægge det i fokus for oversætterne.

[EK]: Kan i fortælle mig lidt mere om sommerskole? Og hvorfor der er en sommerskole i stedet for bogmessens besøgsprogrammet?

[Anne-Marie]: Jeg tror det her, netop som Marie siger, det her udvalg har stort fokus på oversættelse, to af udvalgets medlemmer er oversættere. Udover de også er forfattere, er de også oversættere. Der har de måske haft en ambition om også at prøve nogle andre ting, som netop kan hjælpe oversættere i deres arbejde, med at oversætte dansk litteratur. Så på Bogforum, på besøgsprogrammet Bogforum, giver man normalt mulighed for at man kan mødes med forlæggerne, og herudover har man mulighed for at deltage på messen, hvor man så kan læse op på nye tendenser, høre nye oplæg og så videre ude på selve bogmessen.

Her vil man gå dybere ind og have en række foredrag og workshops som omhandler dansk litteratur, både genre-mæssigt men også rent teknisk set. Der er jo ikke tale om at det er studerende der kommer her, men faktisk professionelle oversættere, men derfor kan man stadigvæk udvide det niveau af hvad er det for en viden at de har brug for. Der tror jeg udvalgets præmis er at de ønsker også at give nogen viden om dansk kultur og litteratur som oversætteren måske ikke vidste at de manglede at vide, som er sådan samfundsmæssigt.

Det kan være alle mulige termer og hvad ligger bag de termer og så videre, og det er deres ambition med at lave en sommerskole, som flere af vores nordiske lande har lavet flere gange før. Vores norske kollegaer lavede sidste år en meget stor sommerskole, og vores svenske kollega har lavet det i flere omgange, to, tre, fire gange. Det har det tidligere udvalg ikke ydret ønske om at gøre, men det har det her udvalg, og de har tænkt sig fremadrettet at man skulle lave sommerskole for oversættere hvert andet-tredje år. Så oven imellem beholde besøgsprogram for Bogforum. Men at det ligesom vil dække nogen forskellige ting, og det bliver meget spændende at kører det, vi har jo ikke selv lavet det før.

Så for os er det også noget nyt at prøve at lave de her ting, og se hvordan det kan gavne det, og det regner jeg med at oversætterne vil give et feedback på. Der kommer jo 60-61 oversættere fra 19 lande, så det dækker alligevel ret bredt. Der er både blandet, meget erfarne oversættere, og oversættere som har færre værker i oversættelse.

Så jeg tror at det bliver spændende for os alle sammen, vi glæder os til at lave det. Håber det vil få nogen rigtig gode lærerige dage og også få tid til at være sammen, tale sammen, at lave meningsudveksling, diskutere deres arbejde, deres forhold, det at oversætte rent teknisk og have mulighed for ligesom at lave det sammen.

Når man er i København under BogForum kan man meget hurtigt blive spredt ud over det hele. Her er den samlet på et hotel i Roskilde. Det var ikke sådan man ikke måtte være i København, det gav bare god udgangspunkt for at vi skulle rundt på Sjælland at vi lagde det der.

[EK]: Ja, det lyder spændende.

[Anne-Marie]: Ja, det håber vi i hvert fald også at det bliver. Det er jo så i hvert fald en stor ambition og noget der betyder meget for udvalget, at det her bliver til noget, at det bliver godt. Det tror jeg er sådan noget vi vil arbejde videre med, lige så vel som de lægger vægt på oversætter netværkene som det forrige udvalg jo satte i værk. Det har man så lavet om til decideret pulje, i stedet for at have det som en *ad hoc* løsning hvor man kunne søge om midler, hvilket man gjorde tidligere. Men det forrige udvalg lagde faktisk også stor vægt på oversættelse, men her har man bare valgt decideret at lave nogen helt konkrete arrangementer som har med det at gøre.

Oversætter prisen er en gammel pris, den er faktisk fire udvalg gammel efterhånden. Eller i hvert fald 3 udvalg tilbage, og har været støttet af samtlige udvalg der har overtaget det, at det var noget man godt ville sætte fokus på og give oversætter prisen hvert år. Som jeg også synes er rigtig godt initiativ, som man gav sidst til Polen, fordi det gav stor opmærksomhed i Polen, både for polske forlag og gav os stort kendskab til en række oversættere fra Polen som vi ikke kendte.

{Jeppe enters room}

Jeg har inviteret Jeppe med her {*crosstalk*} for Jeppe ved rigtig meget om litteratur statistik, så det er mere på den del af det.

{*crosstalk*}

[EK]: Kan I fortælle mig lidt mere om de officielle kriterier eller retningslinjer der omhandler hvilken slags litteratur der modtager priser?

[Anne-Marie]: Vil du Marie?

[Marie]: Ja, det kan vi da forsøge. Hvis vi tager oversætterpuljen for eksempel, så har vi jo en række kriterier som udvalget støtter sig til når de skal beslutte hvem der skal have støtte. Et af de vigtigste kriterier i den forbindelse vil være at se på det der hedder oversætterens kvalifikationer. Hvilket jo giver nogen udfordringer når man oversætter til sprog vi ikke kan læse. Så vi støtter os jo i høj grad til det CV eller den værkliste som en oversætter medsender, i forhold til at vurdere om vi mener at oversætteren er i stand til at oversætte det pågældende værk der søges om. Det man subjektivt kan se, i forhold til udvalg, det er man at man vurderer det værk, der skal oversættes, om det har en væsentlighed som man gerne vil støtte. Og der kan man sige, at det er jo en form for subjektiv, at vi vælger om det er et væsentligt værk eller... Det udskiller udvalget jo også, hvilke lande, altså de sprogområder der oversættes til, der er nogle områder der ikke vil oversættes særlig meget til, om som man måske i højere grad vil prøve at støtte. De områder for at styrke dansk litteratur -

[EK]: Altså er der en særlig slags tekster, som bliver i fremmet i udlandet, i Storbritannien for eksempel?

[Marie]: Nej, men jeg vil sige, {*inaudible*} jeg ved i forhold til det engelske marked, det er jo væsentligt at blive oversat til engelsk, ikke? Og vi ved også at støtten er væsentlig for dem, der nu udkommer på engelsk. Men jeg tror, man bliver primært vurderet på oversætterens kvalifikationer her, og så forsøger man først at sikre at det er ordentlig oversat. Jeg ved ikke, altså.

[Anne-Marie]: Engelsk bruger mange. Det er jo en enhver forfatters drøm, at udkomme på engelsk. Men der er sådan adgang et kæmpestort marked, der normalt er meget lukket om sig selv. Det engelsksprogede marked køber meget internt mellem områderne: Amerika, England, Canada og Australien osv. Så det, at få en kontrakt med et engelsk forlag, det er relativt stort. Når det går rigtig godt for dansk litteratur, og det er en kæmpesucces, så kommer der nye værker, og så bliver der købt omkring ni

værker på et år, det er rigtig stort for et lille sprog som dansk. Vi er jo ikke særlig mange, og overhovedet i forhold til det, vi har af oversættelser til for eksempel hollandsk og tysk, som er de største markeder vi har udover Skandinavisk. Så jeg vil sige, at jeg synes at udvalget kender godt det her med at folk gerne vil udkomme, men de ser på litterær kvalitet også, og her vil de også sige at krimier er nok ikke det, man vil støtte til engelsk, men der er stadig kommet flere værker ud idet, at man behøver ikke at rette sig *{inaud}* om en krimi. Altså det er oversættelsesstøtte, men det er jo også vigtig, hvad vi giver dem som udvalg. Det er relativt ofte, at små forlag, der køber dansk litteratur. Der er der mange sprogområder, men hvor det er mere, at man har en forkærlighed for at købe dansk eller skandinavisk litteratur. Det ville være et forlag som udgiver et sted mellem fem og 25 værker om året, og køber en dansk bog, og de har brug for den støtte, der er. Det er jo også et setament til at de rent faktisk køber det i stedet for at købe i det engelske, anglo-saxiske område, hvor de ikke behøver en oversætter. Så de ser absolut på kvaliteten af værket, og krimier er stadig støttet, og de har været meget velvillige til at yde støtte, men de giver ikke mere støtte til det engelsk sprogområde i forhold til andre. Altså per værk, så ville de sige "De fleste andre har fået 30%, 40%, 25%, det giver vi også til det her". Og så ville de sige "Jamen fordi det er kommet på engelske marked, giver vi fuld støtte". Der har det den kommission, med som mange som muligt, hvor det stadig er brugbart, og derfor oversættelsehonorar stadig bliver støttet med mellem 30% til 50% af det ansøgte beløb, og ikke op til 100% - (det giver vi ikke) i det engelsk sprogede marked i forhold til andre markeder.

[EK]: Okay.

[Marie]: Man har jo også en forventning om, at for eksempel krimilitteraturen i højere grad ville kunne tjene sig selv hjem. Altså, hvis man vælger at udgive en krimi, så har man en forventning, om at den kan klare sig på markedets vilkår, hvorimod en Smilla bog eller en mere litterær bog generelt vil have det meget svært ved at klare sig, på næsten ethvert marked. Så der er man i høj grad tilbøjelig til at give støtten.

[EK]: Ja, det kan jeg godt forstå. I jeres erfaring, hvem er det, som driver processen med at udgive, er det små forlag, eller oversættere?

[Anne-Marie]: Det er en kombination. Jeg ville sige, at vi har jo den pulje, der hedder prøveoversættelsespuljen, som har som regel har det med det daglige. Men for 90% af de indkommende ansøgninger, er det oversættere, som sender ansøgningen og de sidste 10% er forlag, der gør det. Forlaget eller agent. Men det kan for begge dele at lave prøveoversættelser. Netop på det engelske område, som du arbejder med, der ville jeg sige, at man kan få forskel, fordi der er rigtig mange forlægger i sig selv ville lave en sample-translation på engelsk, fordi det bruger de jo til at sælge internationalt. Hvor, hvis det ville være til det tyske marked, der ville forlæggeren måske stadig ønske at læse det på tysk, eller italiensk hvis det er i Italien, eller spansk osv. Men det er i høj grad en promovering af værkerne ved at oversætterne også selv selvølgelig skaffer sig selv arbejde ved at kontakte forlag, og have et netværk, og promovere værker som de tror, at ville gøre sig godt på deres hjemmemarked. Men der også det modsatte, og jeg har oversætter der sidder og læser en masse, jeg synes det er fantastisk, jeg elsker den og den forfatter, men det duer ikke på det hollandske marked. Der har de måske en lidt større fornemmelse for det her, at det nogle gange er det, forlagene vil have, og har deres krav om dansk kultur og litteratur og derfor bruges de meget sådan nogle scouts for forlagene. Nogle bliver bestilt til at gøre det, mange forlag anmelder, og bruger oversætterne til at lave en 'reading-report', som det kalder det på, et værk for at vurdere, om de vil købe det eller ej. Og så på anbefaling af oversætteren, og så er der så også forlæggere, som selv opsøger og også kender til og kender til det land, hvordan man kan søge støtte, og er klar til at mødes med os, når vi er på messe primært i London eller Frankfurt, hvor stort set alle er, altså i Frankfurt, de engelsk sprogede er mere i London, det ville mange andre ikke efterhånden, men de ville i hvert fald være i Frankfurt. Så jeg ville sige at, den er tveddelt, ville du ikke sige det, Marie? Altså i forhold til det med, at forlæggerne selv får kendskab til det, og at de danske agenter er dygtige til at have kæmpe netværk og er meget dygtige til at promovere danske værker og har mange møder, og de er på messer, og de sælger rettighederne, både forlag og agenter.

[Marie]: Jeg har jo sådan lidt på fornemmelsen af, at oversætterne, de driver ret meget frem i forhold til hvad der bliver oversat. Det kan vi se på hvad de søger af titler i prøveoversættelsespuljen. De må stå for en stor del af det.

[Anne-Marie]: Ja for at gøre opmærksom på værker, som ser de forlag, de har arbejdet med, og giver dem tips om at det her det er et rigtig godt værk, det kunne jeg godt tænke mig at oversætte og lave, og det her ville være noget for jer, både for noget som forlaget før har købt, men jeg tror også nogle forlag har købt forfatteren som de ikke har købt før, som de spørger til, som de har hørt om, eller hvad mener vi? Og så støtter de sig for eksempel sig også op ad teksterne fra Danish Literary Magazine, det her det noget som vi er meget, det må jeg sige, det her det ikke nødvendigvis de 30 bedste bøger som er i Danmark lige i år, men det er et udpluk af, hvad branchen selv mener, er værker som kan gøre sig godt på det udenlandske marked, men den bruger de som inspiration også. Så det er en kombination af hvor de får deres viden fra, og deres egen interesse.

[EK]: Okay, det kan jeg godt forstå. Nu vil jeg tale lidt mere om mit projekt, fordi det handler om Storbritannien og er lidt mere akademisk, så for eksempel, synes I at det betyder noget, om bøger fra Danmark bliver oversat til engelsk og udgivet i Storbritannien, eller er det forskelligt at blive udgivet i USA, end at blive udgivet i Storbritannien?

[Anne-Marie]: Jeg tror, at det er som regel lettere, altså det er aldrig let at få en kontrakt, men det er lettere at få en kontrakt med et britisk forlag end det er med et amerikansk forlag. Der er rigtig mange, der drømmer, om at udkomme på amerikanske forlag fordi det man tænker, det er gigantiske salgstal, som jo meget ofte slet ikke bliver indfriet uanset hvad, fordi amerikanerne læser meget lidt oversat litteratur. Det er min fornemmelse, at briterne dog læser mere og har jo større kendskab til, kulturelt set, også i forhold til, med TV-serier for eksempel, der jo har hjulpet dansk litteratur også, på grund af krimiserierne. Jeg ved fordi engelske forlag de vil ofte se på om et værk udkommer i Tyskland, og gør sig godt i Tyskland, på det tyske marked, uanset at der er forskellige kulturbaggrund. Hvis de ser den succes i Tyskland, vil de britiske også mere turde at tage et værk, der ikke er udkommet. Man ser meget på om det er udkommet på det tyske marked med 85 millioner læsere. Men om det har større effekt ved at udkomme i Storbritannien fremfor USA er jeg lidt i tvivl om på nuværende tidspunkt, fordi med statistik har vi ikke fokuseret så meget på at se på de to markeder individuelt.

Nogen køber også World Rights, til at udgive det både det ene sted og det andet sted, eller nogen køber rettigheder til kun at udgive i USA/Canada. Der er også nogen der udgiver det, hvor det først udkommer i England, og så derefter når man har rettighederne til at udgive det, så i USA/Canada. Til primært når de har delt det med et forlag som man er i samarbejde med, eller imprint sammen med under et konglomerat måske, det har vi set før.

[Marie]: Jeg tror da også det er for den enkelte forfatter. Altså om man udkommer i Amerika eller i Storbritannien måske ikke har den største betydning, men det at man udkommer på engelsk, på det engelske marked, imed at ens værk ligger på engelsk lige pludselig, så åbner der altså store muligheder. At de sjældent bliver indfriet? Men det at det udkommer på engelsk, jeg tror det er det der tæller. Fremfor det om det er i Storbritannien eller.

[Anne-Marie]: Ja, fordi de tænker værket kan jo alligevel købes online, hvis du søger på værket kan det stadigvæk handles det ene sted og det andet sted. Men vi har også set en stigning fra amerikanske forlag det senere år. Vi har været i USA og lavet opfølgning på det, der er købt flere danske værker, men det er igen samme type forlag, små forlag, der har stor forkærlighed for enten dansk eller bare nordisk litteratur. Så de har samme type baggrund, og har lige så stort brug for støtte til det som de engelske har. Der er da nogen der udkommer på Random House eller Penguin eller noget, men det er ikke særlig mange.

[EK]: Okay. Kan vi tale lidt om Smillas fornemmelse for sne og Peter Høeg? Fordi det var et vendepunkt for dansk litteratur i Storbritannien, men selvfølgelig den blev de udgivet for over 25 år siden. Hvad er jeres mening om den bogs påvirkning?

[Anne-Marie]: Jeg tror det havde en betydning for dansk litteraturs gennembrud, som ved at være dansk litteratur og gjorde, at det åbnede op for at flere værker blev købt. Der var ikke nogen af os der arbejdede dengang, men det havde en stor gennemslagskraft. Det havde det også især på det amerikanske marked, og også hvor han er vildt kendt, og stadigvæk vil være kendt for det. Hans værker købes også ofte af forlag uanset hvor henne i verden, uanset om det er godt eller dårligt, på baggrund af den bog.

Der er gået mange år imellem hans udgivelser, så jeg tror helt sikkert at det engelske bogmarked har været en milepæl, at han fik så gigantisk succes på det engelsk sproget marked. At man i hvert fald fik

øje for at der var noget der hed dansk bogmarked eller bare Danmark. Mange steder hvor vi kommer ud, må jeg sige, der er altså stadigvæk en meget blandet holdning til det her svensk, norsk, dansk, de taler om en forfatter som, "Han er så fra Norge men.." men hvis vi tager lignende eksempel hvor de kan skille det ad.

Der har helt sikkert været et før og et efter, når det gælder Peter Høeg, det er jeg ret overbevist om. Men det har jo ikke betydet at der ligesom har været solgt massivt mange, men inden Peter Høeg tror jeg bare der stortset ikke der blev solgt andet end klassikere til oversættelse. Indimellem en Random bog her og derimellem. Så det tror jeg har gjort rigtigt meget for dansk litteratur og promovering af Danmark generelt. At man ligesom fik øje på et land der hed Danmark der havde med det her at gøre, det tror jeg. Det er min fornemmelse uden at jeg har noget statistisk baggrund for det. [laughs]

[EK]: Hvad tror du britiske læser forventer af bøger som er oversat fra dansk? Forventer de en anden Peter Høeg? Hvad er din mening, erfaring?

[Marie]: Jeg tror de har forventning om en bog af en høj litterær kvalitet, hvad det så end er. Altså her i nyere tid der har vi jo et eksempel på Helle Helle, der er udkommet.

[Anne-Marie]: Jeg vil sige det er meget minimalistisk litteratur de faktisk køber, det vil sige, der kommer selvfølgelig sådan noget som Kim Leine, store tykke bøger, men det jeg ser de mest køber, er faktisk den smallere litterære litteratur, Pia Juul, Helle Helle, som hun siger og så videre på den her måde.

Nu er 1864 lige udkommet, som jo er en faglitterær bog til dels og den er jeg rigtigt spændt på, hvordan den overhovedet kommer til at gå, at der er nogen som turde kaste sig ud i det. Det er svært for os at vide hvad læserne ønsker, for dem kommer vi ikke særlig tæt på, det er mere hvad vi har fornemmelse af hvad forlæggerne er interesseret i, og hvad deres profil er.

De synes jeg ofte, fordi det er de små forlag, har en meget høj litterær kvalitet, og de vil ofte se på det og så sætte sig ud over salgstal. De er godt klar over at det vil være fantastisk hvis de sælger massere af værker. Men jeg synes, at de virker meget realistiske i forhold til hvor meget de vil sælge, og deres oplag er heller ikke særlig store på forhånd, selvom der kan komme flere editions af det.

[EK]: Okay, og hvordan vil I definere succes?

[Anne-Marie]: Jeg tror til dels i antallet, ikke af værker der er støttet, men af værker der købes og udgives på det engelske bogmarked.

[EK]: Ikke for mange eksemplarer der er solgt?

[Marie]: Jo, problemet er at det har vi ikke altid kendskab til. Men vi har jo en fornemmelse af at hvis der er stigende antal ansøgninger fra et land, så har vi en antagelse om at det nok er gået godt med de første værker de har købt, og derfor er de villige udgive mere dansk litteratur, men det er jo blot en antagelse. For tit ved vi jo altså kun tilfældigt om værket også har solgt godt, men det er da klart det vil da være et succes kriterie, ikke at bogen blot blev oversat, men at den også udkommer eller bliver solgt i mange eksemplarer.

[Anne-Marie]: Og i hvert fald sælger så godt at forlaget har lyst til at købe enten flere danske forfattere eller vedkommendes næste bog. Men det er jo noget af det vi ikke har statistik på endnu, det er meget på fornemmelse af, hvad er vores oplevelse når vi mødes med dem, når vi taler med dem. Hvad vi kan se i ansøgninger af puljerne, og hvad vi kan se at der er solgt af rettigheder som vi får oplyst via Danish Literary Magazine, hvor vi har de her halvårige status opdateringer.

Men statistisk, er der noget du gerne vil tilføje på det her?

[Jeppe]: Det er jo faktisk lige præcis det vi har sat et projekt igang med. Projektstøtteudvalget har sat et projekt i gang for at kigge på de her ting. Blandt andet oplagsstørrelse og salgstal, fordi det er jo sådan et mørketal som vi sjældent ved, det er jo helt tilfældigt hvis vi får det at vide i virkeligheden. Så er det når Anne-Marie møder nogen på messerne der siger, at den her bog har solgt så og så godt, så den er blevet genoptrykt.

Så her hen over foråret prøver vi så lidt mere systematisk at samle de her oplysninger ind, ved at tage kontakt dels til de oversættere vi kender, og høre om de vil give os nogen oplysninger om hvordan det er gået med de værker vi har givet dem støtte til. Eller som de har været inde over, som de kender på deres sprog, de har jo ofte sådan en bedre fin føling med markedet i det pågældende land end vi har. Så vil vi også prøve at kigge på nogen alle de forlagskontrakter vi har liggende. Til sidst vil vi så prøve også at

gøre det til en del af den formalje omkring ansøgningerne her i huset, så vi ligesom får oplysninger ind allerede når folk de ansøger, i den grad det så kan lade sig gøre.

[EK]: Ja, vil du fortælle mig lidt mere om det?

[Jeppe]: Jeg ved ikke hvad du ved om det, men der er jo i det hele taget sådan et oversæt litteratur, det er jo ret svært at danne sig et overblik over. UNESCO driver sådan en database over oversætter litteratur. Men den er bare ikke opdateret så vidt jeg kan se på dansk så går den, så det sidste opdaterede år det er 2009, og det er så jeg tror heller ikke det er komplet, det er H.C. Andersen, der fylder det hele.

[EK]: Ja!

[Jeppe]: Og så driver vi jo selv en database herinde, hvor vi prøver at registrere alle de værker vi får kendskab til, det er jo en del af, det er en del af afrapporteringen når man får støtte, at man sender værket ind, simpelthen den fysiske bog, og så sidder vi og registrerer det i vores database, men altså, den er heller ikke komplet, det er jo kun det der bliver støttet og i øvrigt også kun hvis de husker at få det sendt ind, at det bliver registreret rigtigt og sådan noget, ikke.

[EK]: Ja det lyder godt. Et af mine projekter har været at opbygge et korpus, en liste af dansk litteratur i Storbritannien siden 1990, og jeg har fundet næsten 100 bøger. Som du siger, er nogle af dem er krimier, og har ikke haft støtte fra Litteraturstyrelsen, men selvfølgelig kan jeg dele listen med dig.

[Jeppe]: Altså det kunne være meget sjovt at sammenligne med den liste vi har, og så se hvad vi har, hvad sagde du siden 1990?

[Marie]: Det kunne være interessant at se. {crosstalk}

[Anne-Marie]: Der er nogen forlag som gode til, Gyldendal er rigtig gode til at sende værker til os, i oversættelse som ikke er støttede. Det beder vi forlagene om at gøre, så vi har det fordi vi har det eneste bibliotek i Danmark over oversat litteratur som jo ikke er komplet, og til databasen, men der er masser af andre forlag der ikke gør det, så den er, altså det er ikke komplet. Det er en lille smule det vi har viden om det der er der, så vi vil rigtig gerne have den liste, og lave en komparativ analyse af den.

[EK]: Databasen skal handle om alle oversat fra dansk...?

[Jeppe]: Ja, alle sprog ja, i princippet. Så der er alt muligt i, og der er også mange gamle ting i, der ligger før langt før 1990. Den indeholder alt muligt. Men som sagt, det er især i de nyere år tror jeg hvor den er ukomplet, så det er det vi skal prøve. Det er også en del af det her projekt at ligesom prøve at sætte nogen, vi får en praktikant fra Tyskland blandt andet, der så ligesom med sin viden skal prøve at gøre den tyske del bedre, og så tager vi os selv af resten. Nu må vi se hvor langt vi kan komme.

[EK]: Ja okay -

[Jeppe]: Fordi man kan ikke gøre det automatisk, der er ikke nogen der har de her oplysninger nogen steder i verden, så det er sådan noget med at hente dem ind, lidt herfra og lidt herfra, og så prøve at få det stykket sammen -

[EK]: Ja det var min erfaring også. Fordi man kan søge British Library's *British National Bibliography*, men det er ikke helt komplet, det kommer an på hvad forlag fortæller British Library, og faktisk er World Cat online, og Amazon, lidt hjælpsom, med nogle oplysninger. Jamen vi har aldrig mødt før, hvad er din rolle?

[Jeppe]: Altså jeg er ansat til at lave statistik, især. Men altså ikke kun på den oversatte del, på dansk litteratur i det hele taget, og jeg har været ansat her i et år snart. Og har brugt meget af tiden på at finde ud af hvor hullerne i osten egentlig er, og så prøve at få dem dækket ind.

[EK]: Okay, ja, er der noget andet vi skal, som vi ikke har diskuteret, som I gerne vil snakke om, med hensyn til dansk litteratur i udlandet, i Storbritannien, jeres rolle? For eksempel, hvorfor er det vigtigt at besøge bogmesserne i udlandet?

[Anne-Marie]: Altså messerne er vigtige på den måde at det giver os mulighed for at mødes med forlag, som ikke vidste at vi var der, ikke ved der er støttemuligheder, som vi så fortæller dem om, at der er mulighed for at få støtte til oversættelse, til promovering, til projekter, til prøveoversættelse, til besøgsprogrammer. På den måde siger vi, at hvis I køber dansk litteratur, så har I mulighed for at få de her penge med til at gøre det. Det er sådan set derfor, man ligesom er brohovedet for udvalgets støttemuligheder, og de forlag som vi mødes med, kan være forlag der har søgt tidligere, hvor jeg følger op på dem, både nogen der har fået tilsagn og nogen der har fået afslag, det vil sige nogen der har stødt på tidligere, nogen man følger op på, men det kan også være nogen hvor vi kan se at rettighederne er købt, men at vi aldrig har mødtes med, hvor vi lige ville hjælpe dem lidt på vej og sige "Prøv at hør, vi

eksisterer vi laver de og de ting, har du tid at mødes på London eller Frankfurt eller hvor man nu skal mødes næste messe, så fortæller jeg dig om vores støttemuligheder". Og de bliver ofte rigtig glade for at have den her mulighed for at søge om støtte som, nogen er meget bekendte med hvis de har købt nordisk litteratur før, for alle de nordiske lande har støtteordninger, men udenfor de nordiske lande er der altså udover Belgien, Holland og så videre, og måske lidt Tyskland er der næsten ingen steder at søge om støtte. Og så kommer de fra andre lande, så har de nødvendigvis ikke tænkt tanken, at man kan søge om støtte, og det er måske også mellem os en anledning til at sige, jamen er der mulighed for at få det her, og går det godt med den her bog, så er vi også villige til at købe mere dansk litteratur fremadrettet. Så vi bruger det relativt meget også til at netværke med forlag både vi kender, møde nye forlag, informere om at der findes dansk litteratur, at der er et Danish Literary Magazine, som man kan abonnere på online gratis, og få en opdatering på det uden at skulle lægge den store, skal vi sige, energi i det, så vil man få det gratis ind, og så fortæller jeg dem også, at forlaget så kan komme på individuel research program i Danmark, hvis nu man siger, jamen jeg spørger for eksempel forlæggeren: "Har du nogle møder med danske forlag mens vi er her, i London er der forlag agenter, det er der også i Frankfurt". På mange andre messer er der ingen danske forlag, der er det kun *os* der er der, det vil sige litteraturcentre eller litteraturkontorerne, det har det været i Kina, eller andre steder hvor vi har været i Japan, Rusland, så siger de måske "Jamen de har noget med den eller den, og så siger jeg nå men du kan også mødes med den og den og den, hvilke værker udgiver I? Hvad er det for en type i er interesseret i, så synes jeg du kan mødes med de og de". Og hvis ikke de har tid til det, der har de jo lavet en mødeplan når du er på en messe, og det skal måske mødes ind og sige nej jeg har ikke nogle aftaler, men jeg skal mødes med dem og dem fra de andre nordiske lande. Okay, har du lyst til at dykke ned i dansk litteratur eller kunne du læse om det, så er du meget velkommen til at søge og komme på research programmet i København, og så er der mulighed for på to dage at mødes med en seks-otte forlag og få det her indtryk til det, og det er hvad der er af dansk litteratur, ligesom give dig selv tid til at dykke lidt ned i dansk litteratur. Og dem der rent faktisk har været på research program, de køber også dansk litteratur. De køber måske ikke mange værker, men så har de købt et to værker og så begynder de derefter, og så ved de de eksisterer, og de har deres kontakter. Så det er den måde vi gerne vil give det der brohoved til hvad er det, hvad er dansk litteratur, gøre dem opmærksom på at det faktisk er der i den der store konkurrence mellem alt hvad der er af værker rundt omkring i verden og sprogområder. Så derfor er det *vigtigt* at vi er på messerne. Men vi dækker så også mange messer på et år afhængigt af samarbejde med udvalget, hvad er det for områder man gerne vil hjælpe dansk litteratur på vej i. Man kan jo ikke deltage alle steder. Vi deltager altid i London og Frankfurt, på børnebogsmessen i Bologna, og i disse år er vi i Kina sammen med andre nordiske lande. Sammen med andre nordiske lande har vi fælles stand, som vi havde i London. I Beijing og Shanghai der vil vi måske være i to-tre år. For nogle år siden havde vi en stor satsning i Rusland, hvor vi var i hvert fald fem år i træk i rusland eller mere, og det gav rigtig rigtig stort, der blev købt meget dansk litteratur siden, og fortsat. Det vil sige der gav indsatsen faktisk pote.

[Marie]: Ja der kan man sige der for eksempel der gjorde vi jo nogen år der at deltage, på messen der motiverede vi til at man fik etableret et oversætter netværk i Rusland, som nu kører af sig selv, som nu kører af sig selv og de holder seminarer og så videre, og på den måde holder vi liv i det kan man sige. Og samtidig gjorde vi også det, at vi fik forfattere over, som besøgte universitetet og holdt forelæsninger for de studerende, og på den måde fik vi også, altså studerende som vi mødte i starten og som siden hen er blevet professionelle oversættere, det synes jeg er meget sjovt, som netop er blevet oversættere af den grund, som er forfattere men -

[Anne-Marie]: Som ikke er blevet ansat af Lego eller i et kommercielt foretagende, som mange sprogstuderende er kommet til *{crosstalk}*

[EK]: Og hvilke forfattere var der?

[Marie]: Jamen vi har haft mange forskellige med derover, vi har haft Kirsten Thorup. Så har vi jo de to, Oskar K. og Dorte Karrebæk, de har jo lavet workshops for børn. Jamen, vi har haft mange forskellige med derover, også findes der tyske forfattere med hvert år. Og nu kan vi se at det der oversætter-netværk, at nu søger de selv om at få en forfatter over og afholder selv seminar. De har lige haft, hvad hedder hun? *Astrid Salsback[?]* der var med derover til seminar.

Jeg kom lige til at tænke på en anden ting i forhold til det nuværende Udvalg. Fordi da dette udvalgt blev ansat, der formulerede de for sig selv en international strategi for hvordan de ville arbejde de

kommende fire år. Selvfølgelig er det ikke andet end indenfor for lovens rammer, men der kan man jo læse deres fokusområder. Jeg ved ikke, om Klaus nu allerede har givet dig den strategi, ellers kan jeg give dig den, og du kan læse den eventuelt og se hvordan man har fokus på oversætterne, blandt andet, hvordan man vil arbejde for oversætterne.

[EK]: Jeg har ikke læst nogen officielle dokumenter -

[Marie]: Jeg kan lige finde den til dig. Du har møde med Thomas Harder, har du ikke det? I overmorgen? Eller i morgen?

[EK]: På torsdag

[Marie]: På torsdag, ja. Så kan jeg lige finde den frem til dig. Det er et lille dokument, men det kan jo lige netop sige hvordan man vil prioritere simpelthen, med hensyn til oversættere.

[EK]: Ja, det vil jeg gerne lære mere om.

[...] Jeg skal til Odense for at finde ud af mere om HC Andersens by og City Branding. I jeres mening, hvilke symboler på danskhed genkendes som sådan i udlandet?

[Anne-Marie]: Jeg tror sådan set mere, at altså indenfor det moderne, uden nogen statistisk baggrund for det, så tror jeg at de er mere over i Nordic Noir-krimi og politik også ligesom på baggrund af vores tv-serier og værker, end de er funderet i HC Andersen og Karen Blixen, som jeg ville sige er meget stærke, står meget stærkt i Østeuropa og Kina, hvor de stadig efterspørger nye oversættelser af dem. Det synes jeg ikke, vi har set særlig meget klassikere til - udover Lykke Per - har der i virkeligheden ikke været specielt fokus på klassikere til Storbritannien i forhold til andre sprogområder. Jeg tror bare, faktisk at det er mere til det moderne. Jeg tror, at der er fokus, det der indkøbes -

[Marie]: Det ved jeg ikke om du kan afkræfte, den klassiske litteratur fra Danmark eller om det er mere moderne?

[EK]: De fleste kender HC Andersen selvfølgelig og er der ikke nogen nye udlag, nye oversættelser af HC Andersen til engelsk?

[Marie]: Til engelsk?

[EK]: Fra HC Andersen Centret, eller?

[Anne-Marie]: Det kan godt være, men de bliver så ikke nødvendigvis støttet herfra. De har selv en række penge, der kan også søges. Men det er muligt, men det ved de enormt meget om i Odense, men de har jo også selv en pris, som de giver til en HC Andersen-oversætter hvert år, som f.eks Bruno Berni *{inaudible}*. Så de ved måske mere om, hvad der i det hele taget er af nye oversættelser. Men der har været, de år jeg har arbejdet med litteratur, har der været en del oversættelser af værker men også en række nye oversættelser, det er der ingen tvivl om. Man har været inde og lave nye oversættelser til sprogområder. Men det kan så lige være til mindre sprogområder, hvor man nu har lavet en direkte oversættelse, hvor man før har brugt oversættelse via et hovedsprog, engelsk, tysk, fransk. Men jeg er ikke selv klar over, hvad der blevet lavet til det engelske sprog. Det ikke noget, jeg synes vi har set herinde så meget. Nu tager jeg måske noget andet op, det der med Lykke Per, vi støtter altså andre klassikere end HC Andersen og jeg tror at der er rigtig mange der tænker Danmark, så tænker de på slottespil og HC Andersen og lille kongedømme, vikinger og Borgen og grøn energi. Altså en blanding at et lille nuttet land som har en masse gode ting, det er noget gammel historie. Men hvad der købes synes jeg helt sikkert, har forlagene bestemt mere fokus på det andet. Men hvis jeg siger at oversættere der er meget glade for klassisk litteratur og har oversat det også, og så arbejder for at få det oversat, når de har en forkærlighed for det. Men om det sådan at få det afsat, de ved jeg ikke, det har jeg ikke noget evidens for.

Det er sådan lidt mere med smag og behag, hvad oversætterne nu også godt kan lide at lave. Jeg ved ikke, om det er en del af dit projekt hvor du skal interviewe nogle af oversætterne, eller hvad?

[EK]: Ja. Jeg vil gerne interviewe nogle oversættere og personer som arbejder i forlag i Storbritannien. Alle de agenter. *{pause}* Skal vi komme tilbage til ansøgningsprocessen for støtte til oversættelse, fordi jeg ved godt at tre eller fire puljen at man kan få støtte fra i Storbritannien. Men kan I fortælle mig måske, I kan benytte en nylig sag til at beskrive processen. Fordi det er en formular oversættere eller forlag skal skrive på og så man sender den...?

[Anne-Marie]: Hvis det skal være, det er jo Statens Kunstfond man søger, og ikke Kulturstyrelsen. Vi er jo netop bare dem, der behandler den for Udvalget. Men forlaget skal have købt rettighederne, det engelske forlag skal købe rettighederne til det danske værk af enten en dansk agent eller et forlag hvor

rettighederne lægger. De skal også have lavet en kontrakt med en oversætter om oversættelse af værket inden at de kan sende en ansøgning. Og den kontrakt skal medsendes, så Udvalget kan se vilkårene for oversættelsen. På det engelske sprogede-marked er det ikke meget af et problem at læse det. Det kan der selvfølgelig være hvis det er en oversættelse til serbisk, så ville jeg som regel sige, at det jo ikke er alle værker i oversættelse vi kan bedømme, om det er god litteratur eller ej, men for at følge det lidt, kan man altid bede om en proofreading af nogen. Men der ønsker man at se den her dokumentation for at man rent faktisk har tegnet en kontrakt med en oversætter. Herefter sender de en ansøgning som bliver behandlet indenfor tolv uger. Og vi, som gennemgår ansøgningen, sender den til Udvalget som læser ansøgningerne sammen med andre ansøgnigner, der skal behandles på samme tid og så vil det så blive besluttet på et udvalgs-møde, om det skal have støtte eller ej, hvorefter at Marie og jeg igennem oversætterpuljen, sender svar ud og udbetaler bevillinger, hvis der tale om bevilling eller begrundet, hvorfor de ikke har fået støtte ud fra hvad Udvalget har besluttet.

[Marie]: Her er det jo vigtig, at prioritere, at når det kommer til afgørelsen af, hvem der skal have støtte eller ej, så har vi ingen indflydelse på det. Det er jo udelukkende Udvalget, der beslutter. Vi er det vi kalder armslængdeorgan. Vi har ingen beslutningskompetencer, det er udelukkende Udvalget. Men vi formidler blot beslutningerne efterfølgende.

[EK]: Okay.

[Marie]: Fordi det kan være meget forskelligt andre steder, men her træffer vi ikke beslutninger overhovedet.

[Anne-Marie]: Vores norske kollegaer beslutter til dels selv hvordan de gør det, der er de en selvejende institution. Hvor vi er en del af Kulturministeriet, og vi servicerer et armslængdeorgan som er Statens Kunstfonds Projektstøtteudvalg for Litteratur i det her tilfælde, som sidder i fire år, hvorefter de bliver erstattet af et nyt udvalg. Således at man ligesom får både en ny tilgang til det ved at der bliver udskiftet, og så samtidig bevarer man måske en kontinuitet i hvordan sagsbehandlingen kører.

Vi kan naturligvis give et bidrag til hvis de stiller spørgsmål, udvalget undervejs i en sagsbehandling, og vi har kendskab til forlag, oversættere, værk eller noget som vi kan bidrage med, oplysninger som er rent objektivt til brug for deres beslutning, om at de ønsker at give støtte til værket eller ej. Som Marie siger, så er de væsentligste kriterier at det er en kvalificeret oversætter, at det er et værk som udvalget finder har et litterært høj værdi, og at det er væsentligt at få oversat. Det gælder begge veje, oversætterpuljen er jo også ind i landet, og ikke kun ud. Der gælder de samme kriterier for de værker der importeres, som for de værker der eksporteres. Så der er sådan en ret fast ting.

Det forlaget binder sig op på når de får støtte, det er at de skal kreditere udvalget i værket, og at de skal sende os to eksemplarer af værket. Så kan de blive udtrukket til en stikprøvekontrol indenfor fire måneder efter udgivelse. Det er en regel man har for samtlige tilskud på hele kunstområdet, og det er en regel der er aftalt med Rigsrevisionen. Hvis de bliver udtaget til en stikprøvekontrol, så skal de leverer dokumentation for at oversætteren er blevet betalt. Fordi det kan vi sådan set ikke se om de er her.

Nu har jeg ingen cases fra England om at oversættere ikke er blevet betalt, men det har jeg fra andre lande, hvor de har fået pengene - gået til forlaget, og forlaget skal videreudbetale til oversætteren. Det har jeg så fra andre hvor de så klager og siger, "Pengene er udbetalt men jeg har altså ikke fået honorar." Der bliver man så nødt til at prøve at køre en procedure hvor man forhåbentligt kan overtale forlaget til at udbetale pengene. Hvis ikke det gør det, så kræver vi pengene retur, men hvis det er et forlag der er på renden af at gå rabundus, så er de penge jo tabt. Det er på den måde man gør det.

Grunden til man ikke udbetaler støtten direkte til oversætteren, det er at så påhviler udgivelsen oversætteren. Her når forlaget søger udvalget, så er det alene en kontrakt mellem der er part i sagen, så er det forlaget og udvalget, med under forudsætning af at de betaler oversætteren. Det vil sige at det eneste oversætteren skal gøre for honoraret er at afleverer sin oversættelse, så vil det være op til forlaget at udgive den, det kan ikke påhvile oversætteren. Det vil det gøre hvis vi udbetaler pengene direkte til oversætteren.

Så det vil sige, i det tilfælde at et forlag har fået støtte til en oversættelse og honoraret oversætteren, men alligevel ikke udgiver værket, så skal pengene returneres. Altså der er ikke penge *{crosstalk}* til oversættelse hvis værket aldrig udkommer. De har op til to år, hvis det ikke er inden for det her, så skal der laves en aftale hvis det ikke er. Hvis man alligevel skrotter det, alligevel ikke tror på det, og der er

sket nogen ting, så skal pengene retur. Oversætteren er naturligvis blevet honoraret, for oversætteren har jo lavet arbejdet.

[EK]: Ja, selvfølgelig, okay. Kulturstyrelsen har en liste af alle bøger der støttes?

[Anne-Marie]: Ja, vi offentliggør efter en ansøgningsrunde. Så offentliggøres det på Kunst.dk, hvilket forlag der får støtte. Er det ikke Kunst.dk eller er det Kulturstyrelsen.dk? {crosstalk} Der står hvem der har fået støtte, der står ikke hvem, der ikke har fået støtte, og hvor mange penge de har fået til det.

[EK]: Okay, fantastisk. Og, ja, så det bliver interessant at sammenligne vores lister.

[Anne-Marie]: Det er i hvert fald når det gælder oversætterpuljen. Når det gælder prøveoversættelsespuljen, når forlagene og oversætteren har mulighed for det, det er en administrativ ordning som Marie sidder med, det vil sige at der er objektive kriterier. Der skelner man faktisk ikke til om at det er en krimi eller oversætteren og så videre. Der er af gives faktisk i princippet carte blanche til de fleste der får det her faste beløb. Eller er der kriterier som du sorterer på?

[Marie]: Ja, altså CV'et det kigger vi stadigvæk på, hvis man ikke har nogen erfaring med- {crosstalk}

[Marie]: - iværksættelse af skønlitteratur, hvis det nu typisk er et skønlitterært værk man skal oversætte. Eller hvis man ikke har erfaring med oversættelse fra dansk tidligere, så vil vi nok give et afslag, men ellers giver vi typisk et tilsagn.

[Anne-Marie]: Og det er en fast sum.

[Marie]: Ja, uanset hvilket {crosstalk} værk og hvilket sprog.

[Anne-Marie]: Så den er juridisk bundet op på at det skal være det ene eller det andet. På den anden side så følger man vel op på, det gjorde man faktisk ikke tidligere {crosstalk} med det her hvad det blev på, kan du ikke lige fortælle lidt om det?

[Marie]: Nu har vi indført at hvis man som ansøger har fået et stykke til fire prøveoversættelser, så vil vi bede om en rapport når de har lavet de der fire. Så vil vi spørge om hvem de har kontaktet for at få værket solgt, om det er blevet solgt, og hvad der ligesom er hændt med de fire værker.

[Anne-Marie]: Ja, hvad blev der af det?

{crosstalk}

[Marie]: Eller de fire prøveoversættelser, hvor er det blevet anmeldt, hvis det er blevet anmeldt. Nogen gange bliver noget af det jo trykt i et magasin, nogen gange er rettighederne blevet solgt, og nogen gange er der ikke sket noget som helst. Det har vi indført nu, at vi vil have de rapporter ind.

[EK]: Ja, okay. Det lyder da interessant.

[Marie]: Ja, det er vi begyndt fra i år, men det betyder så også at vi stort set ikke har indhentet nogle rapporter endnu, men her sidst på året, der begynder vi så at bede om de rapporter fra alle dem som har fået her i løbet af foråret og sommeren.

[Anne-Marie]: Det skulle gerne hjælpe til den store statistik over hvad bruges pengene til og hvad bliver det til.

{crosstalk} {laughs}

[Marie]: Ja, er der noget der bliver til noget? Det vil vi prøve at følge lidt op på.

[EK]: Til prøveoversættelsespuljen er der en forskel mellem skønlitteratur og bestseller litteratur, krimi...?

[Marie]: Hvad der bliver søgt om?

[EK]: Ja, og kriterier?

[Marie]: I kriterierne skelner vi ikke mellem om det er bestseller litteratur eller om det er smal litteratur, eller om det er faglitteratur for den sags skyld. Der giver vi til alle oversættere som opfylder kriterierne om at havde oversat fra dansk før. Med hensyn til hvad der bliver søgt mest om, det ved jeg faktisk ikke, det kan jeg ikke svare på.

[EK]: Okay.

[Marie]: Min fornemmelse er at det ikke er specielt meget bestseller litteratur egentlig.

[Anne-Marie]: Det tror jeg måske lidt er fordi, at rigtig mange forlag har på det vi forventer at være en bestseller, lavet en prøve oversættelse på engelsk, som de vil bruge i videst muligt omfang til de fleste lande de kommunikerer med. Der tror jeg mere at hvis der vil komme en prøveoversættelse ind på en bestseller, så vil det ikke være til engelsk, men til andre sprog end engelsk, fordi den engelske vil allerede forligge hos agent eller forlaget vil de ofte selv bekoste. Fordi de vil bruge det til at promovere

med det, de selv forventer skal være deres bestseller. Så jeg tror mere at de smider penge efter dem de gerne vil sælge, men ikke tror vil hæve det store salgstal hjem.

[Marie]: Ja, det rigtigt.

[Anne-Marie]: Men igen, det er hvad vi tror.

[Marie]: Vi kunne jo godt trække en liste over alt hvad der er blevet søgt på ansøgere i prøveoversættelsespuljen og se alle titlerne, men så skal man jo gå ind og kategorisere dem som enten bestseller eller ikke bestseller. [laughs]

[Anne-Marie]: Når oversætterne søger om prøveoversættelse, så skal de have tilladelse fra rettighedshavere til det, det vil sige det danske forlag eller agent, til at søge prøveoversættelsen. Det får de i videst muligt omfang, der skal vi bare have en bekræftelse per mail eller noget i den stil. Forlaget er altså ikke hængt op på at de skal anvende prøveoversættelsen på den måde overhovedet. Så i princippet kan de selv bekoste en anden prøveoversættelse hvis det er det de vil. Det gør de sjældent, tror jeg. Men det vil sige at de ikke er juridisk bundet op på at der sidder en oversætter og siger, "Jeg synes Helle Helle's nye værk er enormt spændende, det vil jeg gerne lave en prøveoversættelse på, til russisk" Så siger de bare, "Ja, gør du det" De har måske slet ikke nogen intentioner om at sælge det til det russiske marked, eller gøre noget ved det. Men de skal bare give tilladelse til at oversætteren kan lave søgeprøve på oversættelsen. Så vil oversætteren jo selv lave et arbejde med at prøve at sælge den her eller promovere den til russiske forlag. Så de har ikke, medmindre forlaget ikke er begejstret for oversætterens kvalifikationer, så vil de som regel ikke sige nej til at en oversætter beder om at lave en prøveoversættelse. Men det skal det være fordi de må i princippet kun give tilladelse til at lave en prøveoversættelse per værk per sprog. Vi giver kun tilladelsen en gang per værk per sprog. Altså vi kan lave syv til tysk. Det betaler vi ikke for.

[EK]: Ja, det kan jeg godt forstå.

[Anne-Marie]: Men så ville jeg sige, hverken det købende eller det sælgende forlag er altså på nogen måde bundet op på, at de skal anvende den oversætter til at lave oversættelsen.

[EK]: Ja, okay.

[Anne-Marie]: Det er sådan set mere en metode til at prøve udbrede litteraturen og få den solgt ude af landet, at man har prøveoversættelsespuljer.

[EK]: Er det muligt for mig at læse nogle ansøgningsformularer? Ikke dem, der handler om finansielle oplysninger, men for eksempel oversættere eller forlag skal skrive en lille motiveringslinje?

[Anne-Marie]: Må vi det?

[Marie]: Det skal vi lige undersøge.

[Anne-Marie]: Det er jo en konkret ansøgning. Altså hvor du kan se en konkret ansøgning, fra et forlag, det er...

[EK]: Måske med en sample, specielt dem der er fra Storbritannien {crosstalk}

[Marie]: Hvis man fjerner for eksempel forlaget, så er det vigtigt at koble det med det enkelte forlag, for så kommer fjerner man jo hvem det der {crosstalk} britisk forlag.

[Anne-Marie]: Jeg ved ikke om man kan muligvis gøre det med nogle, som har fået støtte, der vil det blive offentliggjort, at de får støtte uanset... Men jeg har ikke selv noget imod at udlevere det, spørgsmålet er, om vi må udlevere det. Altså, vi har jo en persondatalov, og jeg ved ikke, om vi må gøre det, men det må vi undersøge om vi kan give dig nogle eksempler på det. Det må vi lige tjekke.

{crosstalk}

[Marie]: Vi skal lige tjekke med juristerne, om vi kan udlevere -

[Anne-Marie] - eller man skal tjekke med forlæggeren, om man kan udlevere deres ansøgningsmateriale.

[EK]: Jeg vil ikke læse noget om finansielle oplysninger osv.

[Anne-Marie]: Det skriver de heller ikke sådan, det eneste de sådan set leverer, det er hvor meget de søger, hvor meget der skal laves, men der vil være kontrakten med oversætteren, for eksempel. Og det ligger jo i, og spørgsmålet er om det må udleveres, eller det bare skal være motiveringen for det, de søger, de og de bokser der er i selve ansøgningsskemaet, der motiverer om.

[Marie]: Vi har jo også de forsider fra TAS, så vil du få den der...

[Anne-Marie]: Ja, vi undersøger vi hvor meget vi kan udlevere af det, ikke? Ellers er det ikke noget... Altså vi vil gerne give, men spørgsmålet er nu, hvad vi må udlevere og hvem det nu er, som skal give tilladelse, men det tjekker Marie med vores jurister.

[EK]: De er elektronisk i hvert fald - jeg kan læse dem i storbritannien.

[Anne-Marie & Marie]: Ja, ja *{crosstalk}* det kan PDF'es og sendes, det er ikke noget problem.

[Marie]: Det er nok rimelig uinteressant *{laughs/griner}* men det prøver jeg lige at finde ud af, hvis vi ikke kan gøre det, så kan jeg bare sende det til dig.

[EK]: Okay, dejligt, tak. [til Jeppe] Vi skal emaile med hinanden om listen om litteratur. Ja, måske var det det hele.

[Anne-Marie]: Ellers sender du bare nogle spørgsmål.

[Marie]: Vi står jo hele tiden til din rådighed, hvis der dukker spørgsmål op, som du gerne vil have svar på. Så kan du bare skrive til os, eller når du er her.

[EK]: Ja, ja okay. Og jeg håber, jeg kan skrive noget om projekter før min afleveringsdeadline, man kan sige en artikel, ja.

[Marie]: Du er endelig inviteret til at være gæst på sommerskolen i det omfang, at man har lyst til at komme, bare som observatør. Workshops, hvis det er det, eller taler med folk, eller hvad det nu er i, altså ikke som oversætter, men bare som gæst.

[Marie]: Jeg vil også være der nogle af dagene *{crosstalk}*

[Anne-Marie]: Jeg vil være der alle dagene, ikke?

[EK]: Jeg vil gerne komme og besøge, måske fra fredag til søndag, som jeg sagde -

[Anne-Marie]: Ja

[EK]: Men hvad er det der sker om søndagen? Om en tur?

[Anne-Marie]: Altså om søndagen er der tur ud i, der skal vi på besøg rundt og se nogle forskellige typer institutioner rundt omkring, sådan skal vi ud på tur i det sjællandske landskab, besøge højskole og skoler forskellige steder.

[EK]: Ikke sådan turistiske steder?

[Anne-Marie]: Nej, nej, det er noget som vi tror, at de skal bruge, der er i litteratur, som de normalt ikke har adgang til. Altså de kommer jo til København, og så bor de på et hotel, men de fleste af os er opvokset på et parcelhuskvarter, mange af os, hvordan ser sådan et område ud? Kolonihave, hvordan ser det ud? Hvordan er det? Fredag ankommer folk, lørdag har vi workshops og foredrag og middag og oplæsninger, søndag er der tur ud, bustur. Det er stadig ved at blive planlagt, det er ikke færdig endnu. Og så er der igen oplæg og foredrag, man kan tilmelde sig, så kommer forelæggerne, som meget gerne skulle komme derud og lave en speed-dating lidt, så man har mulighed for at møde dem, fordi vi laver ikke besøgsprogram i forbindelse med forum, og vil også være der til middag. Så er der så en del, som rejser hjem, altså de fleste rejser hjem først tirsdag morgen. Så det er det selve formelle program. Så du er velkommen, til at være der alt den tid. Men hvis du synes, du ikke har tid til at være der til det hele, det vælger du selv. Der har du lidt mere carte blanche end de andre, som er indlagt til at være der til hele sommerskolen. Hvis de vil med, så skal de være alle tre fulde dage, i det omfang i hvert fald.