

Support Policies in the Semi-Periphery: the Impact of Italian and Portuguese Cultural Institutes in the Swedish Literary Field

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How does literature circulate within the semi-periphery? In this presentation we explore the hypothesis that semi-peripheral literary circulation is achieved due to initiatives and financial support from national funders in the source culture. Drawing on van Es & Heilbron's (2015) observation that analyses of the dynamics of the global literary field tend to ignore the impact of subsidies, we aim to put emphasis on the importance of financial support in the neglected literary semi-periphery (D'haen 2012) by investigating two national funders of translations into Swedish: the Italian Cultural Institute and the Portuguese Cultural Institute Camões in Stockholm. Following de Swaan (2001), we argue that the publishing grants from these institutes are crucial for elevating the positions of Italian and Lusophone literature in Sweden. We will describe and compare how these two institutes are organized and analyse the titles and publishing houses who have received financial support from them during the time span 2000–2018. How many of the total amount of translations from Italian and Portuguese into Swedish have received financial support from these two institutes in the studied period? Is it true, as is generally suggested, that the supported titles as well as the publishers in the target culture belong to the pole of small-scale production? Had the supported titles been translated into more central languages before reaching semi-peripheral Sweden or did the institutes provide an alternate way for connecting semi-peripheral cultures? Moreover, we will analyse the effects of the support: were the writers invited to Sweden and/or did they receive attention in the Swedish media? By analyzing and comparing the promotion of two semi-peripheral literatures in a third semi-peripheral context we can shed some light on an unresearched circulation path.

References

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