



## **Call for papers**

# **Translating Scandinavia Scandinavian Literature in Italian and German Translation, 1918-1945 Rome, Italy, 20-21 October 2016**

The Danish Academy in Rome and The Italian Institute for Germanic Studies are organizing the international conference “Translating Scandinavia” in Rome on 20-21 October 2016. The conference is supported by the Carlsberg Foundation ([www.carlsbergfondet.dk](http://www.carlsbergfondet.dk)).

## **Confirmed speakers**

Steen Bo Frandsen (University of Southern Denmark), Karin Hoff (University of Göttingen), Outi Paloposki (University of Turku) and Chris Rundle (University of Bologna).

## **Conference description**

Bringing together scholars from different disciplines such as translation studies, transfer studies, history, comparative literature and Scandinavian studies this conference aims to further our understanding of the translation and reception of Scandinavian literature in Italy and Germany from 1918 to 1945.

Linguistically, Scandinavian literature can be defined as literature originally composed in one of the three Scandinavian languages: Danish, Norwegian and Swedish. Scandinavian literature has been present in German literary space since at least the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Existing studies have particularly explored the German interest in Scandinavian literature as regards the period from 1870 to 1914, when important authors of the so-called Modern Breakthrough attained cult status among German readers.

The public craze for translations from the Scandinavian languages persisted in the Weimar era and during the Nazi period. But what were the changes and the continuities in the publishing of translations from Scandinavia in the period under scrutiny? Did Scandinavian literature become

associated with conservative and reactionary agendas already in the Weimar years and even before WWI? Were existing translations of Scandinavian authors modified and recontextualized to fit new racial agendas in the Nazi era, as some case studies have suggested? Did authors' Scandinavian background serve as an excuse for publishers to issue translations that could be seen as politically problematical from the point of view of the Nazi authorities? Such and other questions can be asked of the popularity of translations from the Scandinavian languages in Germany from 1918 to 1945, a popularity which, despite pioneering studies, still requires further research and consideration.

It is a well-known fact that Germany was the gateway to world literature for many important Scandinavian authors. They only achieved international fame and had their works translated into many different languages, because they had been launched and translated in Germany first. In Italy, translators of Scandinavian literature were often translators specializing first and foremost in German literature and the practice of relay translation (with translators translating from a German translation rather than from the Scandinavian original) was widely diffused. It is thus to be expected that the canon of Scandinavian literature in Italy depended, at least in some degree, on the German one.

In the period between the two wars, however, Italian writers and intellectuals consistently began to voice the opinion that direct translations were preferable to indirect ones and that the former signaled Italy's independence from foreign cultural hegemony. But did translators really begin to translate directly from the Scandinavian originals or did indirect translation continue as an accepted practise? Did Italian mediators carve out their own image of Scandinavia or did they depend on a German one? Did they become increasingly interested in Scandinavian literature after the advent of Nazism as a reflection of the greater interest in Scandinavia that Italian politicians are said to have shown in the 1930s in an attempt to contain Hitler's influence in the region? In the same period, the Italian publishing sector underwent a process of modernization and industrialization, a process largely driven by the publishing of translations. In the 1930s Italy translated more than any other country in the world. What role did Scandinavian literature play in the general translation boom? Did Scandinavian literature become popular in Italy or was it the reserve of the intellectual elite?

We invite papers related to the overall theme of the conference. We especially invite papers that, while presenting a specific case study, also address broader methodological and theoretical problems in writing translation history. Participants may choose to focus on Scandinavian literature in Italian or German translation or on the interaction between the canons of Scandinavian literature in the two countries.

Topics might include:

- Translators of Scandinavian literature
- Cultural mediators between Scandinavia, Italy and Germany
- Scandinavian literature in publishers' series
- Scandinavian literature in world literature anthologies
- Changing functions of Scandinavian literature before and after the advent of Fascism/Nazism
- Relay translations

- Censorship (e.g. banned authors like Karin Michaëlis, Sigrid Undset og Martin Andersen Nexø)
- Racism
- ‘Nordicity’ in Italy and Germany
- Scandinavian literature during the Second World War

Other suggestions are welcome.

## **Bibliographies**

An online bibliography of Scandinavian literature in Italian translation from 1918 to 1945 compiled by Anna Wegener will be available on the homepage of the Danish Academy from approximately May 1 2016 ([www.acdan.it](http://www.acdan.it)). Bruno Berni has edited a bibliography of Danish literature in Italian translation (*Studi Nordici*, Quaderno n. 1, Pisa 1999). As for Norwegian and Swedish literature in German translation, we refer to the following bibliographies: Fritz Meyen, *Die deutschen Übersetzungen norwegischer Schönliteratur 1730-1941*, Oslo 1942; Fritz Paul *et al.*, *Schwedische Literatur in deutscher Übersetzung 1830-1980*, Göttingen 1987/1988.

## **Paper proposals**

Proposals should include the paper title, a 300-word abstract, the speaker’s institutional affiliation (if any), and a brief CV. All submissions must be received by June 1 2016, and participants will be notified of the outcome of the selection process by approximately June 15 2016. Please send submissions to [wegener@acdan.it](mailto:wegener@acdan.it) and [berni@studigermanici.it](mailto:berni@studigermanici.it).

After the conference, the organizers will prepare an edited volume in English based on the conference papers.

## **Presentation format**

Each paper will be allotted 20 minutes for presentation and 10 minutes for discussion. The conference language will be English, but papers in other languages (Danish, Norwegian, Swedish, German and Italian) will be considered under special circumstances.

## **Conference fee**

50 euro.

## **Organizers**

Anna Wegener and Bruno Berni.

## **Scientific board**

Massimo Ciaravolo (University of Florence), Sara Culeddu (University of Florence), Alessandro Fambrini (University of Pisa), Hanne Jansen (University of Copenhagen) and Anna Lena Sandberg (University of Copenhagen).

## **Conference venues**

The Danish Academy  
Via Omero, 18  
00197 Rome  
Italy

The Italian Institute for Germanic Studies  
Via Calandrelli, 25  
00153 Rome  
Italy

The Danish Academy holds a list of appropriate hotels within walking distance of the Academy.