



Seminar

OUTI PALOPOSKI

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*Transnational Encounters -
Translational Practices:
Swedish-Finnish Cultural Influences in
Emergent Finnish Literary Practice*

Tuesday, 23 March 2021, 2:15 p.m.

Due to the precautions imposed by the current Corona pandemic, the Thunberg Hall will be closed to the public until further notice.

You are therefore invited to join the seminar via Zoom instead:

<https://uu-se.zoom.us/j/61468756874>

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ABOUT OUTI PALOPOSKI

Outi Paloposki received a PhD in Translation Studies at the University of Helsinki in 2002. Her research focuses on the cultural history of translation in Finland. She is perhaps best known for her work on retranslations together with Prof. Kaisa Koskinen from the University of Tampere (e.g., “Reprocessing Texts. The Fine Line between Retranslating and Revising”, published in *Across Languages and Cultures* in 2010). Paloposki was one of the editors of the two-volume history of literary translation into Finnish (*Suomennoskirjallisuuden historia*), published by the Finnish Literature Society in 2007, and of its companion volume, a history of non-fiction translation into Finnish (*Suomennetun tietokirjallisuuden historia*, 2013). She has recently published on issues related to book history, bibliography work and translators’ archives.

Outi Paloposki has given a number of keynote lectures at national and international conferences and delivered guest lectures in universities in Finland and abroad. In the spring of 2016, she spent two weeks as Moore Institute Visiting Research Fellow at the National University of Ireland, Galway. She is a member of the board of the Doctoral and Teacher-Training Translation Studies Summer School (DOTTSS; <http://www.dottss.eu>) and has been involved in planning and executing national and international PhD seminars and methodology workshops. She regularly serves as a referee for national and international publications.

There is a strong Scandinavian focus in Paloposki’s work, and the Swedish imprint on Finnish translation history is a key research area in her work, to be further developed during her SCAS Fellowship period.

ABSTRACT

Translation is often taken for granted as a transnational activity, but the text to be translated is only one part of the various cross-border encounters involved in translation. Before a work gets translated, a number of conditions need to be met. There needs to be knowledge about the work and practical ways of acquiring it: circulation of knowledge and distribution networks extending over national borders. Furthermore, there needs to be an understanding about potential methods and ways to transfer the work across linguistic and cultural borders, and available models for translation. These include textual and paratextual strategies, which also need to be acquired, appropriated or learned – largely through reading translations and debates on translation in other languages. My project at SCAS aims at examining these conditions and processes in the emergent Finnish translation culture during the 19th century, following the flow of translation discourses and practices from Sweden to Finland, Sweden’s former Eastern province. While concerned with translations, the project illuminates the larger picture of writing practices and their cross-border nature.

In my presentation, I will discuss *The Way to Wealth*, Benjamin Franklin’s compendium of Almanacks published in 1758, and its travels to Sweden and Finland. I first zoom in on the phase before the actual translating took place through studying newspapers and journals, which advertised, excerpted and serialised translations, and then examine the resulting translations more closely. The methodological tool I have developed for the purpose of studying translators’ practices is “the translator’s desk”: I reconstruct an imaginary translator’s workspace and populate it with the potential material objects they may have had at hand. Some of the evidence is circumstantial – such as availability of certain newspapers and booksellers’ catalogues, as well as book ownership statistics (auction lists, catalogues of library and manor house book collections) – while other evidence comes from the individual translators’ archival records (letters to booksellers and publishers) and paratextual clues, referring to original texts and/or intermediary translations, sourcebooks such as handbooks, lexica and encyclopedias the translator has consulted.

I hope my study will add to our knowledge on translators and their choices, by highlighting the complex activities of knowledge acquisition and mediation, and to enhance our understanding of the multilingual and international elements in the everyday work and practice of translators. In the 19th century Finland, they were often the ones who decided what to translate, with a direct influence on the concrete reading matter offered to the public.