Selling Ice to Eskimos

TRANSLATED CRIME FICTION AND BRITISH PUBLISHING

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Abstract

This report is an investigation into the recent trend that has seen British publishers translating unprecedented numbers of foreign crime novels. This phenomenon is noteworthy in the light of a long-standing resistance to translation in Anglophone countries and the fact that for the majority of the 20th century the texts selected for translation tended to be elite literary works with modest sales expectations. It has been highlighted by the Crime Writers’ Association controversy in 2005, the BBC’s television adaptations of the Swedish crime writer Henning Mankell’s works in 2008, and by the Swede Stieg Larsson becoming the first foreign author to top the British fiction hardback charts in early 2009.

The report takes for its starting point Lawrence Venuti’s reading of the translated crime fiction phenomenon, which is initially examined against academic, media and industry secondary sources. Paramount amongst the potential implications of the trend discussed in the report is the possibility of literary fiction being displaced as a translated genre by crime fiction. This potential eventuality is considered alongside the converse possibility that readers of translated crime fiction will cross over into reading translated literary fiction on the strength of that experience, therefore expanding the readership for translated fiction across the board.

In order to narrow the research, discussion was limited to crime fiction from Sweden and Italy, with the former figured as the dominant exporter and the latter as an exporter with unfulfilled potential. Accordingly, consideration is also given to possible explanations for Swedish and Italian crime fictions relative breakthroughs in the UK.

The essential research problem of whether the success of translated crime fiction will expand the British readership for translated fiction or begin to limit imports to a single genre was interrogated by seeking qualitative perspectives from industry insiders and academics from the UK, America, Sweden and Italy. In addition, dedicated readers of crime fiction were surveyed to assess the importance of foreign settings and cultural details to their enjoyment of translated crime fiction and the extent to which they are crossing over to literary fiction in translation.

The commitment to translating literary fiction demonstrated by British publishers suggested that its status as a translated genre is not in serious peril, and the fact that over a quarter of surveyed readers testified to having crossed over implied that translate fiction as a whole could benefit from the translated crime fiction trend. The conclusion was reached that translating commercially-orientated fiction could lead to a softening of the traditional Anglophone resistance to translation.

Venuti’s reading of the trend, though astute in many areas, was found to be too Anglocentric in its focus, and research that placed the phenomenon in its full international context was recommended. In addition, publishers were encouraged to study in detail the way in which foreign publishers market translations and to investigate whether branding translated fiction by language or country would serve to highlight foreign novels and aid readers in crossing over from translated crime fiction to other translated genres.
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Chapter 1: Introduction
1.1 The Research Aims

*Selling Ice to Eskimos* is an investigation into a recent trend that has seen British publishers translate crime fiction on a far greater scale than has ever been seen previously. The title is derived from the fact that crime fiction is widely seen as an Anglo-American genre that has been adopted by writers the world over. Amongst the possible implications of the translated crime fiction phenomenon that will be discussed in this report is the danger that imports of literary fiction will suffer as a result. This notion, in the case of this research, originates from Lawrence Venuti’s case study of translated crime fiction in *The Translator’s Invisibility*. Therefore, *Selling Ice to Eskimos* will also examine and critique Venuti’s reading of the translated crime fiction boom. The research has been narrowed to focus in detail on crime fiction translated from Swedish and Italian, with Sweden figured as the leading exporter of crime fiction to the UK and Italy as an exporter with unfulfilled potential. The three broad aims of the research can be summarised as follows:

- To assess whether the success of translated crime fiction is likely to expand the readership of translated fiction in general or begin to limit fiction exports to a single genre.
- To discuss possible factors in Sweden’s status as a leading exporter of crime fiction to the UK and to examine possible reasons for Italian crime fiction’s lesser impact.
- To weigh Lawrence Venuti’s reading of the crime fiction phenomenon (termed for the purposes of this research as ‘The Venuti Critique’) against the views of British and overseas publishers and commentators.
1.2 Chapter Breakdown

- **Chapter 2: Context and Industry Analysis:** This section will outline the wider context, including the Anglophone resistance to translation and the 20th century preference for translating literary fiction titles, before examining the success of Swedish and Italian crime fiction in the UK.

- **Chapter 3: Literature Review:** The appeal of Swedish crime fiction will be discussed in detail alongside the respective merits of the Swedish and Italian translation subsidy programmes and the impact of English-language crime novels set in Italy on the translation of Italian crime fiction. The Venuti Critique will be outlined and developed into the question of whether literary fiction imports will suffer as a result of the success of translated crime fiction.

- **Chapter 4: Methodology:** This chapter will detail the research design and methodology, which break down in GROUP A, B and C research phases. Research limitations and potential methods not used will also be discussed.

- **Chapter 5: Findings** The findings of the three research phases will be presented in turn.

- **Chapter 6: Discussion:** The research findings will be discussed alongside the secondary research presented in the literature review, with final conclusions drawn.

- **Chapter 7: Conclusion:** The conclusions reached in Chapter 6 will be summarised alongside suggestions for further research.
Chapter 2: Context
2.1 The CWA controversy and the Anglophone resistance to translation

One of the clearest indications of the rise of translated crime fiction in Britain emerged in 2005, when the British Crime Writers Association announced that its principal award, The Golden Dagger, would no longer be open to crime novels in translation. As Maxim Jakubowski (2006) writes:

“discontent (or jealousy, maybe?) stemmed from the fact that the prestigious award had been scooped three times in the last five years, respectively by a Spanish writer, Jose Carlos Somoza for *The Athenian Murders*, Swede Henning Mankell for *Sidetracked* and, just a few days before the change of policy announcement, Icelandic author Arnaldur Indridason for *The Silence of the Grave*”.

A new subsidiary prize for best international crime novel was established to compensate, which Christopher MacLehose (2006) described as “an affront”. This “bold decision” (MacLehose, 2006) highlights the fact that “over the past decade foreign mystery authors have begun to appear in translation in the UK and the USA on a much more frequent basis than previously” (Jakubowski, 2006). The case of translated crime fiction in the UK is particularly interesting because it is widely acknowledged that the genre is Anglo-American in its origins, evolving from “from the Gothic novel and mystery novel” (Mullen, 2008), with Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and Edgar Allen Poe two of its most influential early exponents. Mirna Cicioni and Nicoletta Di Ciolla (2008) write in the introduction to an edited volume on Italian crime fiction that:

“it is usually accepted, however, that as a genre, crime fiction belongs to geographic and cultural areas different from Italy, and that French and Anglo-American works provided the models upon which Italian authors initially constructed their stories”.

Maxim Jakubowski (2006) highlights a “strong resistance to reading books in translation among Anglo-American readers and publishing houses” as the main reason why “we have not been allowed to see the sheer richness and diversity of crime writing in other languages”. This resistance is often succinctly encapsulated by a percentage, perhaps the most notorious percentage in the history of
publishing. It is widely estimated that of all the books published annually in Britain and America only three per cent are translated from other languages, and “that wretched three per cent”, as MacLehose (2004/5) memorably dubs it, accounts for all types of books – children’s books, cookery books, biographies etc – not just translated fiction.

Lawrence Venuti (2008a, 155), whose works provided a crucial grounding for this research, writes that:

“The spate of foreign crime novels in English represents an unprecedented development in British and American publishing, not simply because their sales have been high, but because they belong to a popular genre. Since the Second World War translated foreign fiction has consisted mostly of elite literary works usually with low sales”.

This is illustrated by an anecdote published by the Swede Per Gedin (1977, 213) in a book comparing Swedish and British publishing practices in the 1970s:

“The situation is even worse in Britain for translations. At a symposium on the publication of German books in English, a publisher stated that four different translations of Germans novels had sold an average of 500 copies each, which produced a loss of £1,200 a book in direct costs”.

In an article in *The Guardian* in 2007, in which Kate Figes (2007) asked a number of publishers about books that had not lived up to their expectations, Juliet Annan of *Fig Tree* suggested that a translation of a light-hearted historical German novel had not been reviewed because it was “a debut novel, in translation and not earnestly literary”. This highlights the expectation that novels translated into English will be “elite literary works” (Venuti 2008a, 154), an expectation that is now being challenged by the recent wave of translated crime fiction.

### 2.2 Swedish and Italian crime fiction translated into English

In her Editorial to the 2009:1 issue of the *Swedish Book Review*, Sarah Death (2009a) exhorts her readers to:

“be upbeat in downbeat times. Everything seems to be coming together, and we can justifiably talk of a new
Swedish wave. The seemingly unstoppable Stieg Larsson juggernaut steams on. Kenneth Branagh drew huge audiences for his BBC appearances as Henning Mankell’s Kurt Wallander. This led Boyd Tonkin of The Independent, to write in December 2008: “Now we can realistically expect that Henning Mankell’s beyond-genre novels will pick up a substantially enhanced UK readership... Nordic crime fiction has dug a deep and relatively cosy niche on these shores”.

In April 2009, Alison Flood (2009) reported in The Guardian that “Swedish crime fiction dominated book charts across Europe last year with the late Stieg Larsson joined by fellow novelists including Henning Mankell, Liza Marklund and Jens Lapidus in an impressive assault on the bestseller lists”. Stieg Larsson, whose bestselling Millennium trilogy was posthumously published, occupied the number one spot in a chart devised by Rüdiger Wischenbart, “who compiled the data from fiction bestseller lists in book trade magazines from France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and the UK” (Flood, 2009). Three months previously, Larsson’s second novel, The Girl who Played with Fire, had entered the UK Hardback Fiction Bestseller List at number one, ahead of such perennial bestsellers as Patricia Cornwell, James Patterson and Maeve Binchy. This was the first time that a translated novel had ever reached pole position in the hardback fiction charts (Tonkin, 2009).

Later that month, Victoria Gallagher (2009) revealed in The Bookseller that “total sales of The Girl Who Played With Fire and The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo in the UK currently stand at 120,765 copies”. The same publication reported in April that “Patrick Janson-Smith at HarperCollins imprint Blue Door has bought UK and Commonwealth rights in a hotly tipped Swedish literary thriller, The Hypnotist, paying ‘a good six-figure sum’”, with the book’s new editor describing it as “‘the new Stieg Larsson’” (Page 2009).

The Larsson success story is not an isolated phenomenon, but rather a natural development in a trend that has seen British and American houses publishing “an increasing number of foreign detective stories and police procedurals” since the early 1990s, to the extent that “Anglophone
readers can now sample crime novels from a broad and diverse range of foreign cultures, including Algeria, China, Cuba, France, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Norway, Russia, and Spain” (Venuti 2008a, 153-4).

Sweden can certainly lay claim to being the most successful exporter of translated crime fiction to the UK: Harvill Secker publish Henning Mankell and Åke Edwardson; Penguin publishes Åsa Larsson; Macmillan publishes Håkan Nesser; HarperCollins publishes Camilla Läckberg; Canongate publishes Karin Alvtegen; Transworld publish Mari Jungstedt and Johan Theorin; Quercus, under their MacLehose Press imprint, publishes Stieg Larsson.

Third place in Rüdiger Wischenbart’s Bestselling Fiction in Europe 2008-2009 chart is occupied by Gomorra by Roberto Saviano, a book about organised crime in Naples (Wischenbart 2009). There is some doubt about whether it qualifies as fiction, with Wischenbart (2009) noting that it was “listed as fiction in its original Italian edition, yet as non fiction in others, but is written in the form of a novel, therefore included in this ranking”. This confusion notwithstanding, Saviano’s presence on the chart, along with that of the theatre-director-turned-crime-writer Andrea Camilleri in 17th position, highlights Italy’s potential as an exporter of crime fiction. Venuti (2008a, 154) writes that “approximately twenty-five crime novels by eight Italian writers appeared in English” between 2000 and 2007. Carol O’Sullivan (2004/5), in a paper delivered at the Shelving Translation conference held at Oxford University in 2004, asserts that “this is a good moment for the translation of fiction from Italian into English”, and that “what strikes us is the diversity of genres, periods, publishers, translators represented”, but also suggests that “this pattern may be changing slightly”, as “for the last couple of years, crime has been the most represented genre in translated Italian fiction”. The roll-call of Italian crime writers picked up by UK publishers is not quite as extensive as that of their Swedish counterparts, and it is often smaller, independent publishers who have secured the rights. The major exception concerns the aforementioned Camilleri, who has now had ten novels
published in English by *Macmillian’s Picador* imprint. Elsewhere, Carlo Lucarelli, Massimo Carlotto and Amara Lakhous are published by *Europa Editions*, a company based in the USA and Italy whose books are distributed in the UK by Turnaround Publisher Service Ltd; Gianrico Carofiglio is published by *Bitter Lemon Press*, who specialise in translated crime fiction and also publish *Crimini*, an anthology of Italian crime writing; Michele Giuttari is published by *Little Brown’s Abacus* imprint; *Harvill Secker* will publish the second of Giulio Leoni’s Dante Alighieri mysteries in 2009.

One can reasonably extrapolate from these parallel lists of publishers that the larger houses have not invested in Italian crime fiction to the same extent that they have in Swedish crime novels. When comparing Henning Mankell’s 2008 volume and value sales to those of his closest Italian counterpart, “the most successful author in Italy” (Bailey, 2006), Andrea Camilleri, the implication is, again, that Italian crime novels have not made the same UK breakthrough (Fig. 2.1). Camilleri achieved just under half the sales of Mankell, though it should be noted that he has been available in English for roughly half the time Mankell has.

![Figure 2.1: Henning Mankell & Andrea Camilleri: 2008 UK Sales. Source: Nielsen BookScan](image-url)
Figure 2.2 shows the volume sales of the highest ranking product by Swedish and Italian crime writers present in Nielsen Bookscan’s 2008 Crime and Thriller category, which ranked 4,479 titles. Encouragingly for the Italian cause, the top-ranked products by Camilleri and Giuttari outsold the top-ranked products by all Swedish writers ranked bar Stieg Larsson. However, the number of Swedish writers ranked is three times the number of Italian writers ranked\(^1\).

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\(^1\) Valerio Massimo Manfredi and Umberto Eco, Italian authors whose top-selling products ranked highly, were omitted on grounds of not comparing like with like. Manfredi writes historical rather than crime thrillers and Eco’s work is more likely to be found on literary fiction shelves.
Chapter 3: Literature Review
3.1 The appeal of Swedish crime fiction

Swedish and Scandinavian novels have long been central to the translation of crime fiction into English. Between 1965 and 1975, married couple Maj Sjöwall and Per Wahlöö collaborated on a series of ten crime novels featuring Detective Inspector Martin Beck. In 1968 Victor Gollancz Ltd published the first novel, *Roseanna*, in an English translation: by 2006, Richard Shepherd (2006a) was able to write, in the ‘P.S’ section of the *Harper Perennial* edition, that “translated into 35 languages, the Martin Beck novels have sold approximately ten million copies around the world”. Sjöwall, whose husband and co-author died in 1975, was astonished by the series’ success:

“Reaching the other Scandinavian countries was almost beyond our expectations – being published in English was for Strindberg, Lagerlöf, and Astrid Lindgren, not us” (Shepherd 2006b).

Henning Mankell (2006), in an introduction to the same edition, observes that:

“They broke with the previous trends in crime fiction. In Sweden Stieg Treter dominated the market in the 1950s, along with Maria Lang and H.K. Rønnblom. They wrote detective stories in which solving the mystery was the main concern. In Treter’s books, the streets, pubs and food are all described in great detail, but the setting is merely the setting – there is never any direct, real-life connection between the crime and where it occurred... Of particular importance was the fact that Sjöwall and Wahlöö broke with the hopelessly stereotyped character descriptions that were so prevalent. They showed people evolving right before the reader’s eyes”.

In 1993 a Danish novel by Peter Høeg featuring a female amateur detective was published in the UK as *Miss Smilla’s Feeling for Snow*. Christopher MacLehose (2006), who bought the rights for *Harvill*, recalls that “every modest expectation was shattered... [it] sold more than a million copies on each side of the Atlantic”. In 1997 MacLehose introduced the UK to the work of Henning Mankell, whose Inspector Wallander novels are credited by Carol O’Sullivan (2004/5) with being “partly responsible for opening the door for the translation of crime fiction ranging from hardboiled noir to the classic whodunit”. MacLehose (2006) notes that “Henning Mankell was a playwright and the emerging
author of outstanding literary novels set in Africa, one of which, *The Eye of the Leopard*, a Swedish critic has described as the finest post-war Swedish novel”.

John Crace (2009), writing in *The Guardian* remembers that:

“while some of Scandinavia’s literary elite looked down on Høeg and Mankell abandoning serious fiction in favour of something unashamedly mass market, there’s little argument that they set the standard for what followed. Their books may have been populist but they were never pulp, and the quality of writing in Scandinavian crime fiction has remained, in general, a notch or two higher than elsewhere”.

The quality of the writing and characterisation clearly was a large factor in these pioneering novels’ broad appeal, but much has been written also about the appeal the Scandinavian setting holds for international readers. Venuti (2008a, 160) comments that, for a regular reviewer of crime fiction for *The New York Times*, “the weather seems to have been the most memorable feature of Mankell’s novel *The Fifth Woman*”, before quoting her evocation of “heavy atmospheric pressures” hanging over “a southern city on the Baltic Sea where it seems to rain all the time”. Nathaniel Rich (2009) in *Slate Magazine* posits that “much of the attraction of the Mankells and Fossums is that even when their novels are based in cities, they rarely lose the quaint, small-town feel”. He then ventures into parody:

“maybe the genre will keep putting along as always, with catatonic detectives tramping across frozen tundra. As long as there’s a dead Nord, it’s hard to go wrong” (Rich 2009).

In an excoriating riposte in *The L Magazine*, Larissa Kyzer (2009) pours scorn on critics whose speculation about “exotic locations and ‘sense of the other’” fails to acknowledge that “more often than not, the gruesome goings-on in Scandinavian crime novels have their root in everyday societal tensions and shortcomings” and that this reflective tendency invigorates the genre in these countries. Søren Bondeson, quoted in an essay by Charlotte Wittingham (2000) concurs, asserting
that “detective stories and thrillers are the only places in literature where you can find social criticism” and that “power, corruption and criminality go together”. Maj Sjöwall and Per Wahlöö were the influential foster of this tradition and it was a conscious development, as Sjöwall explains to Tom Nolan of The Wall Street Journal:

“Swedish crime-writers wrote Agatha Christie-like books and seldom had policemen as main characters. Crime novels were considered pulp-literature in those days. Intellectuals rarely admitted to reading those kinds of books. We wanted to contribute to improving the linguistic quality, and to changing the way media treated that type of literature... our intention was also to describe and criticize certain changes in our society and the politics of that decade” (Nolan 2009).

Henning Mankell (2006) reads the presence of a Vietnamese tourist in Roseanna (“A Vietnamese tourist! In Sweden in 1965”) as “a nod to the major event of my generation, the Vietnam War”, suggesting that the couple’s societal concerns looked outwards as well as inwards. Mankell often grapples with issue of race and immigration in his own novels; Stieg Larsson’s The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo dramatizes the abuses of power that Sweden’s “two-levels of social welfare protection – trusteeship and guardianship” – are open to (Larsson & Keeland 2008).

Christopher MacLehose (2006) writes that “fine” crime writers in Scandinavia have “earned the collaboration of the finest translators”, highlighting the importance of quality translation to the success of an imported novel. As the cost of translation is an added cost when publishing a foreign novel over an English-language one, Sweden’s active translation subsidy programme could be a factor in Swedish crime fiction’s prominence. Helen Sigeland (2008), Literature Officer for the Swedish Arts Council, explains in The Swedish Book Review that from 2008,

“Swedish authors will now qualify for travel grants in conjunction with the subsidy scheme. A foreign publisher whose application for a translation grant has been successful will be able to invite the Swedish author to take part in readings and presentations, with their travel costs paid for by the scheme’.
Sarah Death (2009b), editor of the Review, adds in an email conversation that:

“responsibility for promotion and translation of Swedish literature was shifted to the Swedish Arts Council a few years back (after a very hairy hiatus in which both SRB and individual translators around the world had no idea what future they had, but there was an international outcry that took the Swedish government by surprise and a solution was found)“.

That an international outcry should arise suggests that the Swedish Institute, from whom the Arts Council took control, had hitherto enjoyed some success in promoting Swedish literature to the rest of the world. One of tools applied in this promotional effort is The Swedish Book Review itself. Launched in 1983, it publishes extracts from and reviews of the works of Swedish writers and prints the contact details of their foreign rights representatives. The “About SBR” page on the Review’s website states that “SBR is editorially independent, but gratefully acknowledges regular funding by the Swedish National Council for Cultural Affairs, the Swedish Institute, and the Swedish Information Service (New York)”, which allows it to distribute “a substantial number of free copies to publishers and others with a potential interest in Swedish literature in English” (SRB Website 2009). Although the vast majority of titles sampled and reviewed do not fit into the crime genre, Sarah Death (2008) writes in her editorial to the 2008:1 issue that “not wishing to ignore the Eurocrime wave, we are also pleased to present a sneak preview of The Reluctant Reporter by Jenny Nordberg and Nuri Kino, highly successful journalists who have collaborated on this eagerly-awaited thriller”. In addition to the work of the Swedish Book Review, the Swedish Arts Council also publishes a survey of new work by prominent Swedish authors. Another factor that may have facilitated cultural exchange between the UK and Sweden is the erosion of the language barrier between them. Don Doneri (2001) writes in the National Post in 2001 that “a recent newspaper poll found that 80% of all Swedes spoke English as a second language“.
3.2 Italian fiction exports

The *Results of the second report on import-export of copyright in Italy (2003-2007)* reveals a measure of unease on behalf of the Italian Trade Commission and the *Associazione Italiana Editori* regarding the balance of trade between Italian and overseas publishers. Adult fiction is a genre in which Italy consistently imports more than it exports: it accounted for 30% of total imports in 2007 and 17% of total exports, or 2,316 titles bought and 602 sold (Italian Trade Commission 2008). Likewise, Italian publishers purchase far more rights from publishers in the UK than they sell to them, 1,916 titles purchased compared to 120 sold in 2007 (ITC 2008). These figures must go some to explaining the relatively modest breakthrough achieved by Italian crime writers in the UK. Another revealing element of the report concerns the difficulties encountered by Italian publishers attempting to sell rights to their foreign counterparts. Of the publishers surveyed, 19% had found foreign markets closed due to extended literary production, 16% found that Italian authors were not considered interesting and 8% that Italian literature is not deemed characteristic (ITC 2008). Linguistic difficulties also present an obstacle: 13% of respondents complained of a lack of translators and 9% found high translation costs a barrier to the sale of foreign rights. The system of translation subsidies in Italy is not widely known for its efficiency, a fact which Giovanni Peresson of the Research Office of the Italian Publishing Association, who prepared the comments that gloss the report, ruefully acknowledges:

> “It has become impossible to procrastinate any further in implementing a serious reform of the methods for granting these funds. International comparison is pitiless: the Italian system is certainly the most removed from the norm, as it is the only one with a procedure for collection and evaluation of requests which is not centralised (indeed it involves the Italian Cultural Institutes, the Embassies and finally the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) with resulting delays which are often incompatible with editorial plans” (ITC 2008).

This damaging lack of centralisation (illustrated by figure 3.1) is compounded by a deficiency in funding:
“If the sale of rights increased from 2001 to 2007 by 94%, as the Doxa research indicates, the funds which were initially available can no longer be sufficient to respond to the growing needs of Italian books. It is at the very least necessary to align the efforts made in Italy with those of the major publishers who are our competitors” (ITC 2008).

More positive indications collected by the report include the fact that fiction exports have risen from 8% of total exports in 2002 to 17% in 2007, and that 91% of fiction rights sold are to titles written since 1990, compared to 75% of fiction rights purchased, suggesting that younger authors are finding opportunities overseas (ITC 2008). Moreover, the report suggests that the Associazione Italiana Editori is moving towards playing a more proactive role in the promotion of Italian books abroad:

“we should develop new forms of support, which allow, for example, the promotion of books translated from Italian in the United States and the United Kingdom, according to formulae similar to those used in France in 2002 under the banner “A la découverte de l’Italie”. Support in the marketing stage of the Italian product could be much more effective than the traditional forms of support to companies in the preliminary stage of the rights” (ITC 2008).

This is a conclusion that the Swedish Arts Council seems to have already reached and acted upon in the form of travel bursaries for translated Swedish authors. If Italy’s publishing infrastructure can
streamline its translation subsidy scheme and contribute towards marketing and travel costs, it may encourage larger UK publishers to invest more heavily in importing its crime fiction. The quality is there, and the novels attracting academic interest, as evidenced by two new or forthcoming books on the subject, *Differences, Deceits, and Desires: Murder in Mayhem in Italian Crime Fiction* (2008) and *Italian Crime Fiction* (due 2010).

### 3.3 Literary and postmodern leanings in Italian crime fiction

A noteworthy strand in the development of Italian crime fiction or *giallo*, as it is referred to in Italy, concerns, as Rita Wilson (2008) writes:

> “distinguished writers who used the detective format to create what is essentially a postmodern novel: that is, a mystery not only about a detective figuring out what his purpose is in the text, but what his relationship to the author of the text is; in other words, a metaphysical detective story”.

Wilson (2008) highlights Antonio Tabucchi, “perhaps Italy’s most celebrated novelist of the last two decades”, as an exponent of the metaphysical detective story, while Angela Barwig (2008) notes that the “post-modern novels” of Carlo Lucarelli, one of the most famous novelists to emerge from the crime writers’ collective Gruppo 13, founded in Bologna in the early 1990s, “are characterized by a fragmentation of plot” and by a “multi-narrator perspective”. This tendency to write within but against the conventions of the genre are highlighted by the struggles experienced by Andrea Camilleri, the leading Italian crime writer in English translation, in persuading his publisher to accept his linguistic innovations:

> “Elvira Sellerio shared with Sciascia a major concern regarding the language used by Camilleri: too many [Sicilian] dialectical terms, proverbs, expressions that would be hard to understand for the mainland reader” (Eckhert 2008).

Eckhert (2008) goes on to assert that “Camilleri’s literary traditions are not limited to the language he uses” and that “he appears to have identified a composite audience” including “those who like to
read mysteries and low-brow popular literature” and “serious readers in search of intellectually stimulating books”. Italian crime writers share a tendency with their Swedish counterparts (see 3.1) for firmly rooting their work in social and political contexts. The most notable exponent of this trend is the Sicilian Leonardo Sciascia, who “used the investigation to reveal social and political realities often ignored or suppressed, including the connivance of the authorities with illegal organizations” (Wilson 2008). Anne Mullen (2000) writes that:

“For Calvino, Sciascia’s detective novel is not a detective novel; he has dismantled the traditional form without alienating the reader. In Calvino’s view, this is because Sicily and, by extension, Italy are the extreme cases where the traditional form of the detective novel is impossible due to the nature of their politics and police forces, and of course the mafia”.

This is where Italian and Swedish crime fiction diverges: Boyd Tonkin, quoted by Sarah Death (2009a), may refer to Henning Mankell’s “beyond-genre novels” but he is not seriously suggesting, as Calvino is of Sciascia, that his fiction is not detective fiction. When Paul Diffey (2000) notes that “serious writers of Italian fiction have used the giallo format to explore epistemological issues by leading the reader from a given ‘crime’ towards its attempted but failed solution”, he is highlighting a trend for detective fiction in which the pivotal crime is not solved. This is a clear subversion of generic conventions and one that sits well in a cultural context where “the connivance of the authorities with illegal organizations” (Wilson 2008) is widely suspected. Mullen (2000) concludes that:

“the ‘decapitated structure’ of Sciascia’s detective novels, his game-playing with the traditional aspects of detective fiction, is for a specific purpose, not for delight in play itself. The disguise of fiction and, more specifically, the simplicity of conventional detective fiction, allowed him to communicate more complex notions regarding the nature of politics, power, and mafia, as well as other more metaphysical concerns”.

Wilson (2008) writes that Sciascia and Tabucchi’s works “can be differentiated from the mainstream giallo”, but as their influence is traceable in the works of Camilleri and Lucarelli, two of the most
successful contemporary crime writers, it is possible to argue that their generic innovations are becoming the rule rather than the exception.

3.4 English-language crime novels set in Italy

One other possible factor in Italian crime fiction’s comparatively modest success may be competition from what O’Sullivan (2004/5) refers to as “pseudotranslations”. “The case of Italian fiction”, she writes, “is perhaps unique in that it is being translated into a literary milieu in which English-language thrillers set in Italy already have a very high profile” (O’Sullivan 2004/5). Mark Chu (2000) writes that “the lengthy list of series and one-offs set in Italy... far outstrips the production of English-language detective fiction with a contemporary setting in... any other non-Anglophone country”, and suggests that this is “due partly to the fact that in the popular British perception, Italy stands essentially for the ‘southern’ traits of criminality, corruption, violence, and passions”.

O’Sullivan (2004/5) gives the examples of the late Michael Dibdin, who “has written nine highly successful novels featuring Aurelio Zen”, Donna Leon, whose “forthcoming Blood from a Stone will be the fourteenth in the bestselling series featuring Commissario Guido Brunetti”, and Magdalen Nabb, who wrote crime thrillers set in Florence before her death of a stroke in August 2007. O’Sullivan (2004/5) takes a positive view of the pseudotranslations’ influence, concluding that their success “has had a positive knock-on effect for translation, in that the public’s appetite for novels set in Italy has been well and truly whetted” and that “any marketing problems that might be posed for publishers in promoting translations” are “resolved by figuring the translations as copies of the pseudotranslations”. Her argument, based largely in the similarity between the covers of the translations and pseudotranslations, and on the fact that “Dibdin et al. are called upon to endorse the new arrivals” (O’Sullivan 2004/5), is not entirely convincing. Given assertions that translated
crime novels’ foreign settings help to avoid “a sense of familiarity” (Crace 2009) and that “some publishers have explained the marketability of the translations by suggesting they communicate information about foreign cultures in a fairly direct way” (Venuti 2008a, 155), along with the “strong resistance to reading books in translation amongst Anglo-American readers” (Jakubowski 2006), it could be argued that Leon, Dibdin and Nabb sate the appetite for crime fiction set in Italy as much as they whet it.

On the other hand, sales figures for 2007 and 2008 demonstrate that translated writers such as Camilleri, Giutarri and Leoni are more than holding their own against Leon, Dibdin and Nabb, though the issue is complicated by both Dibdin and Nabb passing away in 2007. Giutarri’s notable success (volume sales totalling 54,447 in 2008) suggests that these translated novels are destined to be more than “a flash in the pan” (O’Sullivan 2004/5).

![Figure 3.2: Translations vs. Pseudostranslations: 2007 UK Sales. Source: Nielsen BookScan.](image-url)
3.5 The Venuti Critique

In their introductory paper to the *Shelving Translation* conference, Rebecca Beard and Brenda Garvey (2004/5) stress that they wanted to sideline the ethical and political elements of translation studies because “there seems a danger that, when followed to the extreme, they turn the translated text into an ethically overburdened entity whose existence in translation theory is increasing at odds with the practicalities of its actual life on the shelf”. In a footnote, they identify Lawrence Venuti, the renowned translator and academic, as standing “for a markedly political line” (Beard and Garvey 2004/5).
One of Venuti’s primary theories, detailed in *The Translator’s Invisibility*, builds an opposition between what he figures as ‘foreignizing’ and ‘domesticating’ translation practices. Venuti (2008a, 15) offers a succinct definition of the two strategies, asserting that a translator may choose between:

“a domesticating practice, an ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to receiving cultural values, bringing the author back home, and a foreignizing practice, an ethnodeviant pressure on those values to register the linguistic and cultural differences of the foreign text, sending the reader abroad”.

Domesticating translation, he argues, is the dominant mode in the Anglophone publishing world, a world which he highlights as being resolutely resistant towards purchasing foreign rights, engendering:

“a trade imbalance with serious cultural ramifications. British and American publishers travel every year to international markets like the Frankfurt Book Fair, where they sell translation rights for many English-language books, including global bestsellers, but rarely buy the rights to publish English-language translations of foreign books” (Venuti 2008a, 11-12).

His ideas are influential: in 2008 Marilyn Booth (2008) contributed an article to *Routledge’s Translation Studies* journal that details the revisions made to her translation of a Saudi novel and “discusses translation practice... and the strong bias toward ‘transparent’ translation”. Booth’s term of transparent translation is synonymous with Venuti’s (2008a, 12) idea of “fluent translations that invisibly inscribe foreign texts with British and American values and provide readers with the narcissistic experience of recognizing their own culture in a cultural other”. Such statements do leave Venuti open to accusations such as Beard and Garvey’s of overburdening texts that may be intended chiefly as entertainments, but his argument is given unintended weight by comments such as Anthea Bell’s (2004/5), who, in her contribution to the *Shelving Translation* conference, writes that:
“all my professional life, I have felt that translators are in the business of spinning an illusion: the illusion is that the reader is reading not a translation but the real thing”.

Bell’s translation strategy figures the English-language text as ‘the real thing’, therefore insulating the reader, to a lesser or greater extent, from the essential ‘foreignness’ of the material.

The terms ‘foreignizing’ and ‘domesticating’ apply not only in regard to the actual translation of texts, but also to the process which determines which texts are chosen for translation and the way in which they are marketed and received. Venuti (1998, 127) illuminates this most extensively in The Scandals of Translation, where he analyses the enormous success of the Italian writer Giovanni Guareschi’s popular stories featuring “Don Camillo, a priest in a northern Italian village who engages in amusing ideological skirmishes with the Communist mayor”. His books were translated during the Cold War, and Venuti (1998, 140) illustrates how the provincial squabbling depicted became a metaphor for global ideological conflict, concluding that:

“the scandal of Guareschi’s American reception is not that it rested on the popular aesthetic (this would be scandalous only from a more elite cultural position), but that it fostered questionable domestic values. The Don Camillo books at once managed and sustained an American paranoia about Communism... whilst distorting the cultural and political situation in Italy.

When Carol O’Sullivan (2004/5) writes how Italian crime novels were figured as “copies of the pseudotranslations”, quoting reviews that assert that Camilleri “deserves a place alongside Michael Didbin and Donna Leon, with the additional advantage of conveying an insider’s sense of authenticity”, she is essentially describing a domesticating process of marketing and reception. In the updated, 2008 edition of The Translator’s Invisibility, Venuti applies his domesticating/foreignizing paradigm to the translation of crime fiction into English in general.
In many ways, the Anglophone translation of foreign crime fiction can be termed as the ultimate
domesticating translation project. This notion hinges primarily on suggestions that crime fiction is a
genre “usually treated as native to British and American narrative traditions” and that “the British
and American canon of crime fiction has exerted an enormous influence on foreign novels in the
genre” (Venuti 2008a, 158-9). Venuti is supported here by the Italian crime writer and Judge
Giancarlo De Cataldo (2008) who acknowledges that “since England gave the world detective fiction
and America gave the world Noir writing, there’s a certain amount of ‘selling ice to Eskimos’ about
Italian writers’ success in Anglo-Saxon countries”. He goes on to signal clear differences in the way
Italian writers approach the genre, but the Anglo-American influence is also highlighted by Henning
Mankell (2006) in his introduction to Sjöwall and Wahlöö’s *Roseanna*, where he writes that “the
British-style detective novel was the dominant form until” that novel’s publication and that the
couple:

> “have said that they did find inspiration of their work in the United States. I’ve already mentioned Ed McBain. But
> I suspect they most likely sought inspiration farther back in time, at least as far as Edgar Allan Poe in the
> nineteenth century”.

Venuti (2008a. 155) rejects claims that the high sales achieved by translated crime fiction can be
credited to the reading public’s desire to learn about foreign cultures on the grounds that the
relatively low sales of translated ‘literary’ novels suggests that “readers must not be much interested
in descriptions of foreign cultures presented in novels that don’t belong to the crime genre” even
though “it might be argued” they offer “a more incisive representation of foreign cultures” as they
are “unconstrained by generic demands”. This assumption about incisive social and cultural
commentary should be treated with caution, especially in the light of claims such as De Cataldo’s
(2008) that:

> “the modern Italian equivalent is about psychological and societal disorder; it’s rooted in reality and maps the
> evil and corruption in politics and society” (see also 3.1 & 3.3).
Venuti (2008a, 163) is more convincing when he insists that:

“the recent increase of foreign crime fiction in English shows quite clearly that patterns of selecting texts for translation tend to be informed by literary canons in the receiving culture where the decisions to translate is usually made”.

However, even this jars somewhat with John Crace and Christopher MacLehose’s comments that “Scandinavian crime fiction may still be something of a novelty act in the UK, but it’s a well-established genre in the rest of Europe” (Crace 2009) and that “statistically Britain is a long way behind Europe in the sales of certain crime writers” (MacLehose 2006). If the decision to translate crime fiction is based largely on the genre being an Anglophone literary development, one might question why the United States and the United Kingdom have been relatively sluggish in doing so. One the other hand, this objection needs to be qualified by the enduring notion that “while other European countries are happy to publish roughly 25% of their books in translation, in the UK that figure is nearer 3%” (Crace 2009). Venuti (2008a, 163) goes on to question whether the “foreignness of the crime fiction is part of its attraction”:

“because literary traditions in the receiving culture possess cultural capital, they are likely to be so deeply ingrained in reading experiences that the foreign texts selected for translation may offer no more than an exoticism, a superficial difference that does not affect familiar cultural values”.

The essence of this argument is that English readers find the generic elements of translated crime fiction more fundamental to their reading experience than those that encapsulate cultural differences, and that these differences, diluted by the process of translation, register as exotic rather than truly foreign.

3.6 Implications for the translation of literary fiction

In an essay presented at the 2007 Frankfurt Book Fair, Venuti (2008b) argues for a new approach towards the publishing of foreign literature in English. He suggests that novels should not be
translated in isolation, but that “to enable English-language readers to understand and appreciate a translation, publishers must restore in English at least part of the context in which the foreign text was written”. Foreign literatures should be translated extensively and systematically as “focusing on a single foreign text or a single foreign author... gives the false and misleading impression that any literary work can be understood on its own” (Venuti 2008b). Venuti’s treatment of translated crime fiction in The Translator’s Invisibility implicitly criticises Anglophone publishers for choosing to translate texts in which the foreign elements serve merely as an exotic gloss. However, the mass of crime fiction being translated from a wide range of languages could be considered the incipient fulfilment of Venuti’s publishing vision. English readers do not have to read Stieg Larsson in isolation: context is provided by translations of novels by Mankell, Nesser, Edwardson, Läckberg, Jungstedt, Marklund and others. He acknowledges this in a question and answer session with Words Without Borders magazine that reveals what could be seen as a contradiction in his attitudes towards translated crime fiction:

“A reader who has read a few works translated from a foreign literature, past and present, will feel better equipped to brave some newcomer. This is undoubtedly what’s happening with the foreign crime fiction, which is selling in unprecedented numbers for translations. Each of Henning Mankell’s crime novels has sold more than 100,000 copies in the UK alone (according to Christopher MacLehose, formerly director of the Harvill Press). Readers who wouldn’t read a Swedish novel now avidly read all of his and then look for other Swedish, Norwegian, Icelandic crime writing. Genre matters enormously here. But the case is also worth the attention of publishers who might want to invest in more literary works” (Venuti 2008c)

One can sense genuine excitement in this passage, yet in The Translator’s Invisibility he observes that “the popular audience is not crossing over to elite literature” (Venuti 2008a, 155), and certain passages imply that numbers of such titles published in English may be reduced by the greater commercial potential of translated crime fiction:
“Between 2000 and 2007, for instance, approximately twenty-five novels by eight Italian writers appeared in English, almost equalling the contemporaneous translations of Italian fiction that do not fall into the crime genre. During the same period, approximately fifteen crime novels by eight Italian writers appeared in English, far outstripping the other kinds of Norwegian fiction that were translated” (Venuti 2008a, 154).

Christopher MacLehose (2004/5) laments in an essay entitled A Publisher’s Vision that “the inclination in Britain to be curious about other cultures or to learn languages has been pared away in schools by new curricula” and expresses fears that “the devoted publishers of other literatures will be driven back into a kind of cultural ghetto” as “for the most part now the majority of even the finest books that are translated find their way to sales of between 1,500 and 6,000”. Though it is not a notion that the publisher of Henning Mankell and Stieg Larsson is likely to endorse, it seems possible that English-language publishers may increasingly turn to translated crime fiction at the expense of translated ‘elite literature’ because generic familiarity gives it a higher chance of commercial success. Conversely, readers attracted to translated crime fiction because of this familiarity may be encouraged to read translated literary fiction on the strength of that experience. MacLehose (2004/5) encounters a similar duality when considering the low percentage of books published in English that are translations:

“You can take the view that Britain is deliberately absenting itself from European literary cultures, or you could take the view that within that wretched three per cent are the very best books that Europe (and all the other languages in the world) has to offer”.

If these ruminations are taken into consideration alongside Gill Davies’ (2004) observation that “there are editors who watch other publishers’ lists and use them as a crib to create ones of their own”, the danger that the success of translated crime fiction could skew the chances of the ‘very best’ novels being translated emerges in greater clarity.
Chapter 4: Methodology
The questions raised by the secondary research and literature review needed to be addressed by three distinct groups of respondents: British (and American) publishers (preferably of Italian or Swedish Crime fiction) and commentators; Swedish and Italian crime fiction experts or insiders; readers or the general public. The methodologies for obtaining information from these three groups will be examined in separate sections of this chapter.

4.1 GROUP A: British publishers and commentators

4.1.1 Core questions

The questions to be addressed by British publishers and commentators centred on a core of issues raised by the literature review:

- Does the success of translated crime fiction discourage or encourage publishers from translating novels that do not fall into that genre?
- Is the success of translated crime fiction a trend that is likely to continue?
- Are readers of translated crime fiction likely to explore other fiction genres in translation?
- Does the cultural infrastructure of specific countries make importing their books a more or less attractive option?

Ultimately, the research was intended to shed light on whether:

- The success of translated crime fiction is likely to expand the readership for translated fiction in general or begin to limit fiction exports to a single genre.
4.1.2 Research methods

As the intention was to examine rather than prove a theory, qualitative research was appropriate because its core methodologies “celebrate richness, depth, nuance, context, multi-dimensionality and complexity rather than being embarrassed or inconvenienced by them” (Mason 2002, 1). Leedy and Ormrod (2005, 106) write that qualitative research is more applicable when “you believe that no single reality underlies your problem, but that, instead, different individuals may have constructed different, and possibly valid, realities”. On the other hand, as the theory examined was essentially a dissident reading of the translated crime fiction phenomenon, some structure was necessary to prompt respondents to address the issues.

In practice, the vast majority of respondents were unable to spare the time to be interviewed, requesting instead that questions were put to them via email. Therefore, the methodology applied was closer to a quantitative approach than was intended for, as Mason (2002, 62) writes, open-ended questions “derive from survey, not qualitative, methodology”.

4.1.3 Data collection

The following publishers and commentators took part in the research:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christopher MacLehose</td>
<td>Publisher, MacLehose Press</td>
<td>Open-ended questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ellie Steel</td>
<td>Ass. Editor, Harvill Press</td>
<td>Open-ended questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>François von Hurter</td>
<td>Publisher, Bitter Lemon Press</td>
<td>Open-ended questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gary Pulsifer</td>
<td>Publisher, Arcadia Books</td>
<td>Semi-structured interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawrence Venuti</td>
<td>Professor, Temple University</td>
<td>Open-ended questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sara Death</td>
<td>Editor, Swedish Book Review</td>
<td>Open-ended questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Smith</td>
<td>Editor, translatedfiction.org</td>
<td>Open-ended questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boyd Tonkin</td>
<td>Literary Editor, Independent</td>
<td>Email Exchange</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.1.4 Research limitations

As stated above, the research method employed in gathering data from the majority of ‘Anglophone’ respondents was a child of necessity. In some respects this proved beneficial, as it focused responses on issues that certain respondents might find uncomfortable. On the other hand, these circumstances exposed this area of primary research to certain limitations:

- Responses to questions were in some cases decidedly laconic, lacking in depth, context and texture.
- The most searching and controversial questions, those crucial to the core problem of the research, were often those that elicited the most laconic responses.
- In at least one case, sending the questions on request may be considered giving “too much information” (Leedy & Ormrod 2005, 100), as no response was received, perhaps because exception was taken to the nature of some of the questions.

The interview agreed with Gary Pulsifer, which was conducted once all the open-ended responses had been received, was an opportunity to gain context by moving away from “a complete and sequenced script of questions... to allow researcher and interviewee... to develop unexpected themes” (Mason 2002, 62).

Limitations relevant to this phase of the research that do not relate directly to the largely forced choice of methodology centre on the number of respondents interviewed. While the publishing industry is perhaps too small for it to be necessary to adhere to Moore’s (2006, 141) advice “the need to process some of the data in a quantitative way suggests that the smallest sample you can realistically contemplate is around 100 people”, a larger number of respondents would have been advantageous. Naturally, the time-frame for the research, March to September 2009, was a limiting
factor on the research relevant to this point. No apology is made for employing theoretical sampling, “selecting groups or categories to study on the basis of their relevance to your research questions” (Mason 2002, 124), and indeed the small sample size is partially resolved by Mason’s (2002, 134) assertion that “if you are using a theoretical or purposive sampling strategy, then whether or not the sample is big enough to be statistically representative of a total population is not your major concern”.

4.2 GROUP B: Italian and Swedish experts or insiders

4.2.1 Core issues

The aim of this stage of the research was to gather contextual information about crime writing and its place in the literary scene in Sweden and Italy. The core questions were as follows:

- Does the translated crime fiction trend represent literary trends in Sweden and Italy? Is it the pre-eminent genre in these countries at this time?
- Are fewer ‘literary’ fiction titles being translated?
- Is there a perceived ‘status gap’ between crime and ‘literary’ fiction in these countries?
- Does the state of the cultural/publishing infrastructure in these countries help or hinder translation projects and the sale or rights?

4.2.2 Research methods

Qualitative interviewing was judged to be the research method most appropriate to this stage of the research. Blaxter, Hughes and Tight (2006, 173) provide a succinct outline of the range of approaches that can be applied to qualitative interviewing:

“At one extreme, the interview may be tightly structured, with a set of questions, with a set of questions requiring specific answers (cf. questionnaires), or it may be very open-ended, taking the form of a discussion. In
the latter case, the purpose of the interviewer may be simply to facilitate the subject talking at length. Semi-structured interviews lie between these two positions.”

Semi-structured interviews were the chosen method for this research phase because an initial set of questions was necessary to draw the interviewees’ attention to the potential negative implications of a phenomenon that was likely to be received in an overwhelmingly positive light in the exporting countries. On the other hand, as the interviewees were almost certain to raise unexpected topics and issues, an overly rigid and inflexible approach would have risked closing off potentially fruitful avenues. The interview with the Swedish respondent was more structured than the interview with the Italian respondent, partly because the latter took place subsequently and the researcher had developed confidence and skills in conducting a discussion, and partly because of the differing positions of the two interviewees.

### 4.2.3 Data collection

The following respondents took part in this phase of the research:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Joakim Hansson (Swedish)</td>
<td>CEO, Nordin Agency, Malmo</td>
<td>Semi-structured interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Giuliana Pieri (Italian)</td>
<td>Senior Lecturer in Italian, Royal Holloway University</td>
<td>Semi-structured interview</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Joakim Hansson was approached on the recommendation of Sarah Death, editor of the *Swedish Book Review*. Dr. Pieri was approached because she is the editor of a forthcoming volume on Italian crime fiction. Their positions, as literary agent and lecturer respectively, do not correspond directly, but gaining a more commercial Swedish perspective and a more academic Italian view was deemed appropriate as the literature review figures Sweden as the more successful exporter and Italy as the
emergent, less fulfilled market, and because Italian crime fiction in particular has been the subject of recent academic study.

4.2.4 Research limitations

The clearest limitation on the Group B stage of the research relates to the small sample size. Efforts were made to approach additional Swedish literary agents from contact details printed in the *Swedish Book Review* and to reach representative of *Mondadori Editore* in Milan, but no responses were forthcoming.

4.3 GROUP C: Readers or the general public

4.3.1 Core questions

Certain questions raised by the literature review in general and the work of Lawrence Venuti in particular seemed most appropriately addressed to the reading public:

- Do the ‘foreign’ settings of translated crime novels significantly add to readers’ experience of these books?
- Do readers of translated crime fiction cross over into what Venuti (2008a, 155) terms as “elite foreign literature” and do they consider themselves likely to do so in the future?

Investigating the experiences of readers also seemed a valuable way of gauging which languages were popular in terms of translated crime fiction, and which authors readers had read or heard of. This data could also qualify the researcher’s perception that Sweden was a more successful crime fiction exporter than Italy to date.
4.3.2 Research methods

The research method applied to the Group C research phase centred on a reader survey designed to gather quantitative data. This took the form of a self-completion questionnaire survey, “probably the most commonly used social research method” (Moore 2006, 120). Moore (2006, 120) writes that such surveys tend to elicit “an immediate rather than a considered response” and advises that they be used to build up “a broad picture rather than exploring issues in depth”. As the rendering of a broad picture was the aim of the Group C research phase, this research method was considered the most appropriate.

4.3.3 Data collection

One of the most important decisions facing the researcher when designing a self-completion questionnaire concerns the size and constitution of the sample. Walliman (2001, 232) summarizes the two broad schools of sampling thus:

“There are basically two types of sampling procedure – random and non-random. Random sampling techniques give the most reliable representation of the whole population, while non-random techniques, relying on the judgement of the researcher or on accident, cannot generally be used to make generalizations about the whole population”.

The core questions to be addressed by the Group C phase were focused on the characteristics of readers of translated crime fiction rather than determining the proportion of the general population that read translated crime fiction. Therefore, it seemed most appropriate to employ non-random sampling, specifically theoretical sampling, “a useful method of getting information from a sample of the population that you think knows most about a subject” (Walliman 2001, 234). This notion was confirmed by conducting a pilot study via a social-networking site that confirmed that a sample of
respondents that were not known to at least read crime fiction in general would gather a large number of essentially null results.

With this in mind the sample consisted of:

- Members of crime fiction reading groups based in libraries in Dundee (Scotland), Ascot Heath (Home Counties) and Erdington (Midlands).
- Readers of the Euro Crime blog (http://eurocrime.blogspot.com).

The leaders of the reading groups were contacted by telephone and printed copies of the survey were sent to each of the three libraries. The Euro Crime ‘blogger’ was contacted by email and asked to link to a survey created on the SurveyMonkey website. The results of the survey can, at the time of writing, be accessed at:

http://www.surveymonkey.com/sr.aspx?sm=6yeYHSMTYQc4uI0h7UC_2f_2bcT_2fIFMmkQFo9DEERgAPQys_3d

4.3.4 Research limitations

One of the advantages having a survey flagged up on a blog when applying a theoretical sampling approach, aside from the excellent response rate, is that respondents may post below-the-line comments on the survey which can be useful when evaluating the research. One comment questioned the decision not to allow space for respondents to offer qualitative statements in relation to the questions. This was a conscious decision as, given the limited time-frame for the research, analysing over fifty sets of qualitative information was not considered viable. If the time allowed for the research had been greater, or the aims of the research had been clarified earlier, a different decision may have been reached. Another comment suggested that respondents should have been asked what country they were from. This was an oversight that stemmed from the fact that the survey was designed for the library reading groups, with the link from the Euro Crime blog coming as
something of an afterthought. A further respondent offered scathing criticism of a question in the survey (Question 12) which asks respondents to rank elements of a translated crime novel in terms of their subjective importance. It was felt that not only was this question infuriating, but that the lack of an option to rank elements equally had the potential to skew the results severely. This points to the fact that researcher’s relative inexperience was a limiting factor that impinged on the Group C research phase. These comments are not quoted directly because the researched did not seek permission from all the respondents who offered comments. The post linking to the survey, with the comments below, can, at the time of writing, be accessed at:


4.4 Potential research methods not used

One research method that would have added considerable value to the Group C research phase centres on the use of focus groups to gather qualitative information. Moore (2006, 144) writes that “focus groups force people to consider how they feel about issues in the light of other people’s feelings”. The core questions relating to this research phase have the potential to generate interesting discussion. Moreover, the library reading groups surveyed shared “a common interest in the subject” that was being researched. This approach was ultimately ruled out as the groups’ next meetings were on dates too close to the research deadline by the time they were approached.

A further research method that was not employed due to time restrictions is that of observations. Quantitative data comparing the proportion of literary fiction titles in bookshops that were translated with the proportion of crime fiction titles that were translated might have allowed the researcher to draw conclusions as to whether booksellers supported one genre in translation more that they did the other. A pilot study was conducted by manually calculating the proportion of crime
fiction titles that were translated in three London bookshops, but it was felt that collecting enough data to be representative was not viable. In addition, attempts were made to use *Nielsen BookData* to determine how many literary fiction titles listed in a Swedish Arts Council bulletin had been translated into English, and to use *Nielsen BookScan* to compare the sales figures of books that have won the *Independent Foreign Fiction Prize* and translated books that have won the *CWA Duncan Lawrie Dagger* or the *Duncan Lawrie International Dagger*. In the former case, there seemed no obvious framework to gather further data of this nature. In the latter case, the fact that the award for international writing was only launched in 2005 and that previous to this a translated novel did not always win, meant that there were too many years when there was no translated crime novel to compare with the translated literary prize winner.

### 4.5 Ethical considerations

All Group A and B participants were offered anonymity and permission was asked, and granted, for their responses to be quoted. Joakim Hansson and Gary Pulsifer requested that any quotations be sent to them for review. None of the participants wished to remain anonymous. Group C respondents were not asked to provide any personal information apart from their sex/gender and a rough indication of their age (in addition, the surveying software retains respondents’ I.P. addresses).
Chapter 5: Findings
5.1 GROUP A Respondents
The responses of the British and American publishers and commentators who participated in the research will be analysed in terms of the core questions outlined in the methodology chapter:

5.1.1 Responses to the core questions

Does the success of translated crime fiction discourage or encourage publishers from translating novels that do not fall into that genre?

The majority of respondents rejected the notion that the success of translated crime fiction would result in publishers of translated fiction neglecting literary titles for commercial reasons. Ellie Steel, Assistant Editor at Harvill Secker, an imprint of Random House formed in 2004 in a merger between Christopher MacLehose’s Harvill Press and Secker & Warburg, insists that they “aim for a balanced list, bringing together the best international writing to an Anglophone audience, and so we wouldn’t publish more crime titles at the expense of translated works with lower sales expectations”. François von Hurter, Publisher at Bitter Lemon Press, who specialise in translated crime fiction, was adamant that the success of the genre “encourages us to branch out”. Christopher MacLehose conceded that “certain publishers might” begin to neglect literary fiction, but also suggested that “there are many more publishers here more liable to buy literary fiction for translation”. Gary Pulsifer of Arcadia Books was sure that “good literary fiction will always find a home here” and suggested that translated crime fiction titles are not guaranteed to achieve high sales:

“the first book we published in the series which was in English by an American author living in Portugal, and that’s set in Portugal, it’s a historical crime novel, and I suppose we’ve sold about 80,000 copies of that over the years and it still sells. But it was kind of an exception, in a way. All sorts of people tell us the one valuable imprint we have is the Eurocrime list, including people like Roger Katz from Hatchards, a very eminent bookseller. To be honest, the sales never have really
gone up there high enough to justify those expectations. Apart from that title, the most we’ve probably ever sold on a book is maybe 8,000 copies, and some are considerably fewer”.

Likewise, Ellie Steel opined:

“There are many loyal readers of foreign crime fiction and it’s an expanding genre, but there are no guarantees that a new author will be a huge success. We publish more literary crime titles (from UK authors and those overseas) and the sales figures, whilst healthy, don’t compete with the Grishams, Harlan Cobens and Dan Browns of the marketplace”.

Boyd Tonkin was able to offer a more detached, generalised perspective, pointing out that “crime divisions tend to be fairly autonomous” and that “mainstream fiction departments that do the odd translated thriller often don’t do any other foreign titles and probably wouldn’t anyway”. James Smith, editor of the website translatedfiction.org, highlighted the prestige associated with translated literary fiction as a factor:

“Publishers such as Bloomsbury, Harvill Secker and MacLehose Press pride themselves on bringing the best literature from other countries and cultures to the UK, and although I don’t know how their internal budgeting works, I’m sure they are happy to subsidise a few books like Juan Gabriel Vasquez’s (amazing) The Informers or Machaho de Assis’s A Chapter of Hats... with a bit of Harry Potter money”.

Somewhat predictably, Lawrence Venuti, disagreed with this point, suggesting that “publishers who invest in translations of crime fiction are not reinvesting their profits in more literary works” and that “Anglophone publishers will gravitate to the translated works that make money”. Sarah Death sided with Venuti, pointing out that “even some of the more established ‘literary’ publishers have been looking for ‘quality crime’ of late”, and suggesting a rationale for this position:

“If an editor finds a book they like, they have to get it past the marketing and promotion departments, which want to know such things as: is there an obvious marketing angle? Is the author going to write more in the same vein, or preferably in the same series”.
Is the success of translated crime fiction a trend that is likely to continue?

Ellie Steel seemed sure that the trend would continue, “especially as crime titles are often part of a series featuring the same detective, which means that authors build a loyal readership over time”. Harvill Secker “have just announced a new title in Henning Mankell’s Wallander series, the first to be published since the BBC aired their adaptation, and there’s a huge interest from the trade and readers alike”. François von Hurter stressed that “the trend is positive and should continue as readers tire of local writing and seek the more exotic”. Lawrence Venuti’s response was affirmative, but betrayed a hint of cynicism:

“Yes, or as long as it continues to make money. Henning Mankell’s success has brought into English a slew of Scandinavian crime writers, for instance, and they must be selling. Meanwhile profitable authors like the Italian Andrea Camilleri show no signs of stopping their production”.

Sarah Death was sure the trend would continue for five years and pointed out that “people have been forecasting the crime bubble will burst for many years now, and it still shows no sign of doing so”. Christopher MacLehose speculated that “maybe there will be a puncture in the market in a few years time and people will turn away from crime”, but concluded that there was “no way of knowing”.

Are readers of translated crime fiction likely to explore other fiction genres in translation?

Christopher MacLehose summed up the general attitude when he responded to this question with a simple “yes”. Ellie Steel expressed Harvill Secker’s hope that “the success of international crime fiction will encourage readers to look outside the genre” and suggested that “publishers may well be more receptive to all foreign language titles as a result. She also astutely alluded to the effect an active translation culture can have on authors:
“It’s always healthy for authors (and editors and readers) to have an awareness of international literature and I think authors can only benefit from seeing how others work, regardless of nationality or genre”.

François von Hurter concurred with MacLehose and Steel in thinking that “crime novels are a good way to lure Anglophone readers to reading foreign literature” and expressed a hope that “they will be ‘contaminated’ and then explore more general foreign fiction”. Gary Pulsifer was a little more circumspect:

“Well that’s often said. That it’s a way of making translated literature more palatable to readers, more accessible. And, that could be true”.

Lawrence Venuti was not consulted on this matter, as his opinions on whether readers are crossing over from translated crime to literary fiction are already a matter of record (see 3.4) It was left to James Smith to uphold his position:

“It’s possible, but I have the entirely subjective and probably incorrect view that readers of crime novels aren’t that bothered about the strange-sounding or –looking name of the author on the cover as long as the story is good and the characters strong. This isn’t a snobbish attitude – far from it; if all readers were like that, everyone would be reading a lot more translated fiction across the board – but I still can’t quite see that readers of Jo Nesbo’s Harry Hole novels would be interested in Per Petterson’s Out Stealing Horses. (A Swedish analogy would be any Henning Mankell novel and Bengt Ohlsson’s Gregarious).”

Does the cultural infrastructure of specific countries make importing their books a more or less attractive option?

The interview with Gary Pulsifer was particularly revealing in this area:

“I think the Norwegians are very good. The Danes, the Swedes, the Finns, the Germans, Dutch. Those spring to mind. I’ll tell you who is really bad at the moment. The Greeks no longer give a penny to their books being translated”.
When asked specifically about dealings with the Italian system he reflected that:

“Italians can be wonderfully anarchic at times, I think, and, in our own experience, the money forthcoming was always limited”.

His experience in this area corresponded directly with those of Christopher MacLehose and François von Hurter. MacLehose also began his list of ‘good’ countries with Norway and included “Finland, Holland, Spain” and “Germany”, whilst omitting Sweden. This omission could be telling since two of his greatest translation coups have been Swedish authors. He described Italy as being “not rich enough to help with the costs of translations”. Britain was labelled “the worst of all”. As befits a publisher whose company specialises in translating crime fiction, von Hurter’s response was focused on the support offered to houses translating this genre:

“When approached the Italian and French government authorities support the export of quality crime writing. The Dutch and Belgians take a more active stance, promoting and marketing their writers. The Germans have been more reluctant (one senses a feeling that crime novels are not quite worthy enough). The Italian process is very slow with extremely long intervals between approval and disbursement of translation funding”.

5.1.2 Supplementary findings

The Group A research phase also gathered a wealth of material that did not correspond directly to the four core questions:

The appeal of translated crime

Christopher MacLehose suggested that “people read translated crime fiction for... a glimpse into a different culture in a way that is often much more open than a film is or a literary novel might be”. Gary Pulsifer thought that people read crime “a picture of what’s going on in society... whether it be translated crime fiction or Donna Leon, Walter Mosley, or whoever”. François von Hurter offered a
reason for the seemingly greater appeal of Scandinavian crime fiction, though it was one that contained an element of damning with faint praise:

“I think the Nordic dark mood, straightforward plotting and the greater emphasis on violence have a strong appeal. Probably greater than the black humour, sensuality, irony and psychology of Mediterranean writing”.

MacLehose also suggested that “it’s just possible that the translated crime writers are better than their British counterparts”.

Whether translated crime fiction would invigorate the crime genre and contribute to a blurring of traditional divide between crime and literary fiction

Ellie Steel thinks that “the lines are already blurred, as many crime authors write in what is seen as a more traditionally literary style (Fred Vargas in particular from our list), and many ‘literary’ authors use elements of the thriller, suspense and crime genres in their work”. Lawrence Venuti was undecided:

“I’m not sure. Because we’re dealing with genre fiction, the experiment would have to cross boundaries between readerships, cross-over to more elite readers, including writers. My experience translating a more experimental crime novelist like Massimo Carlotto suggests that this is a difficult development. He has not sold as well as Camilleri and Carofiglio in English: his work is more extreme, brutal, and it addresses social and moral issues. The Japanese writers may be promising in changing the form”.

Sarah Death thought that it would be “a very gradual process” and pointed out that “it’s over a decade since a prime crossover book such as Kerstin Ekman’s Blackwater was published”. She also mentioned Fred Vargas, but admitted to a suspicion that “it’s a case of ‘smuggling’ in the non-mainstream elements”.
The impact of the recession on translation subsidy

Gary Pulsifer did not have “a problem” with the possibility of translated crime fiction displacing translated literary fiction to a lesser or greater extent, but did express fears that translation as a whole could be under threat:

“I think the problem that might negate against more translated titles being published in the UK is that, with the credit crunch, it seems to us at least, the number of national literature organisations that support some of the translation costs of their national literature into other languages seems to be going down in terms percentages of what they will give towards a translation. So, certainly for us, if we’re doing a book where the translation costs might be 18,000 Euros and then you find out after the fact that you will be given 6,000 Euros... Well, if you print 2,000 copies, you’re making a loss straight off. Most publishers don’t want to make a loss straight off”.

5.2 GROUP B Respondents

5.2.1 Responses to the core questions

Does the translated crime fiction trend represent literary trends in Sweden and Italy? Is it the preeminent genre in these countries at this time?

When asked whether he represented any crime fiction authors, Joakim Hansson, owner of the Nordin Agency, replied that “crime fiction is what we in particular represent at the moment” and that “there has been a very clear wave of Scandinavian crime fiction and it works really well”. He also revealed that there are significant Swedish crime fiction authors that have not yet been translated:

“I’ve done a lot of crime fiction authors that perhaps work better in the home market than abroad, that are important for us anyway”.

The example he gave of a top bestseller in the Swedish market was a crime fiction author:
“A huge bestseller would be, Camilla Läckberg, who sells around 250,000 hardcovers, about the same in paperback, about half a million in total”.

When asked whether crime fiction titles are consistently the most popular in Sweden, he said that they were, but also provided an exception to prove the rule:

I would say yes. But then every now and again, there comes a title, have you heard of Linda Olsson? *Let Me Sing You Gentle Songs* has been a number one bestseller in New Zealand, Australia, and top ten in the US. In England it’s been decent, you know? And in Sweden it’s also been in the first spot”.

Dr. Pieri thought that “from more or less the early nineties, but particularly from the mid-nineties onwards, there’s been a huge boom and explosion of Italian crime fiction”. She went as far as to compare the impact of Andrea Camilleri’s books to that of J.K. Rowling’s:

“Andrea Camilleri comes on the scene and his books are an immediate success. They certainly made the publishing house, Sellerio, a very high brow publisher that produced beautiful editions that didn’t sell very well, immensely popular. I think he did for them what the Harry Potter books did for Bloomsbury”.

She had no doubt that “from the 1990s onwards, Italian crime fiction has been a literary phenomenon”, with “new, home-grown talent, a new generation of writers and publishing houses that are keen to get involved”, including “houses that, before, wouldn’t have been interested”.

**Are fewer ‘literary’ fiction titles being translated?**

Dr. Pieri seemed quite certain that fewer ‘literary’ fiction titles were being translated into English from Italian than crime fiction titles:

“I think at the moment this is what is happening. I don’t think many other contemporary Italian writers are very prominent in this country, or published much. I can’t really think of any big or small Italian names, writers of narrative fiction, who are translated at the moment. There certainly seems to be more of an interest around
Italian crime fiction, which is, I think, partly in response to what is happening in Italy, and also perhaps because of the context and the huge readership there is in the English speaking world for crime fiction”.

Joakim Hansson was more circumspect in his response, but it seemed clear from his agency’s dealings that this was the case:

“Let’s look at my role and my position. We’re the leading agency. Look at my list. We had such fantastic literary authors before, now we have, I would say, twenty per cent in that category. These authors get really good reviews. But our focus is more on the commercial, you know, bestseller driven books, that’s how the market responds now. First you have to tell them how good the book is, they read as well, of course, and if they like it they say “how many copies have you sold in Sweden?” It’s always like that. It’s like a copycat behaviour, where if something has done really well in one market, then people will want to translate it into their own market as well”.

He said that previously, the percentage of literary authors on their books had been around “fifty, quite a difference”, and that since he realised that “what we’ve really managed to sell a lot of is thrillers” the agency “increased turnover by 100%” in a single year.

Is there a perceived ‘status gap’ between crime and ‘literary’ fiction in these countries?

Both Joakim Hansson and Dr. Pieri alluded to media stories that seemed to confirm the existence of some form of deficit in prestige and status suffered by crime fiction in relation to ‘literary’ fiction. Joakim Hansson revealed that “It’s been quite a big debate” in Sweden, giving the example of a literary feud where “one of the female crime authors was attacked by one of the main authors”, who said that she wrote like a famous “cartoon character” spoke. Dr Pieri thought that the gap in Italy was less than it had been, but gave an example that demonstrated that it was still extant:

“Camilleri had the great of honour of being published as part of a special series of Mondadori’s that includes all the great authors of the Italian literary canon. There was a huge row in the press saying ‘does he deserve this, can he be on par with the great masters of the past, has Mondadori done this just because he’s selling so well?’”
Does the state of the cultural/publishing infrastructure in these countries help or hinder translation projects and the sale or rights?

Joakim Hansson’s most revealing comment in this context suggested that publishers of translated crime fiction have not benefitted from translation subsidy money:

“There’s some sort of jury that chooses the quality, is it the right country, how commercial is it? Then they pay around one third of the translation costs. So that has of course helped literary fiction, but crime fiction has not been able to use that money, they think that genre can finance itself”.

When Dr. Pieri was informed of the trade imbalance concerning Italian fiction detailed in Section 3.2, and was asked if the Italian cultural and publishing institutions should shoulder blame for this, she highlighted instead the Anglophone resistance to translation, reminding the researcher that “out of all the books published in those countries, only something like three per cent were in translation”.

She admitted that she did not “know how good Italian publishers are at establishing links with the British publishing world”. When asked whether she thought that the presence of writers such as Donna Leon may have retarded the process of translating Italian crime fiction into English, she considered, but ultimately rejected the notion:

“I think you’re right, it may have done, in many ways, because you already had your own writers and the novels are very good, and because they had such strong links with Italy they wrote with a flavour and knowledge of the country that made them very palatable to the British public. I always thought that provided a bit more of a context and built up public interest in an Italian setting, but I suppose one could see it from the other point of view. It would be interesting to look at dates. I wonder whether they were much earlier. If it had already started in the late eighties and early nineties, then my answer would be that, no, I don’t think they were an obstacle, they probably helped to build a context”.
5.2.2 Supplementary findings

The appeal of Swedish and Italian crime fiction

Perhaps revealing, Joakim Hansson’s comments in this context focused on the international appeal of Swedish crime fiction, whereas Dr. Pieri’s could be construed as focusing on Italian crime fiction’s domestic appeal. Joakim Hansson thought that:

“People are interested in the Scandinavian mindset, I think, it’s a little bit darker, that is what foreign publishers tell me. It’s also, I would say, a very equal society in the crime books. If you read Camilla Läckberg here, you will see that a lot of the action takes place in the relationship, in the family relationship, does she take care of the kids, what happens when she’s pregnant, how about her job, really discussing these issues”.

He concluded that crime fiction from another culture represented a positive synergy of education and entertainment:

“But, yeah, absolutely, some exotic elements attract. So maybe it’s a good thing. Some killing, some learning about other people. Yeah, why not?”

Dr. Pieri highlighted the importance of social commentary to the Italian crime fiction boom:

“I personally see it as a resurgence in interest what we in Italy call impegno, social and political commitment, which is not new in Italy at all. From the late forties, through the fifties, sixties and seventies, politically and socially committed intellectuals wrote for newspapers as well as writing literature, people like Italo Calvino, they were public figures also. I think that disappeared, but has now come back, in a different way. I think one of the reason crime writers are so successful is that they are the only writers that write in a realistic style about issues that are very much at the core of public opinion”.

She also highlighted the stylistic revolution that this new generation of Italian crime writers has engendered:

“A lot of the new writers write with an awareness of the screen. There is a way of constructing chapters as scenes. They all write as screen writers as well, so I think that influences enormously their way of writing. There’s a sense of the dialogues being much more immediate. I think these elements are part of the reason for the success of the
books. I don’t think it just makes them more readable, in a simplistic way. It was almost like a breath of fresh air: from a tradition of quite formal Italian to one where there is much more of a flavour of the spoken language”.

5.3 GROUP C Respondents

77 individuals responded to the survey. 21 were members of the crime fiction reading groups and 56 followed the link from the Euro Crime blog.

5.3.1 Responses to the core questions

Do the ‘foreign’ settings of translated crime novels significantly add to readers’ experience of these books?

The vast majority of respondents, 89%, thought that the ‘foreign’ settings added to their enjoyment of translated crime fiction.

In addition, respondents were asked whether they agreed with the following statement by Edward Kastenmeier, director of Random House’s Black Lizard imprint, quoted by Lawrence Venuti (2008a, 155) in The Translator’s Invisibility: “if you’re going to read a crime novel from another country, you’re going to read it by and large because it tells you something about a culture you’re not familiar with”. 49.4% of respondents answered “YES” to this question, with 48.1% answering “NO”.

Respondents were also asked to rank seven elements of translated crime novels in terms of their subjective importance. Very few respondents who answered this optional question ranked such elements as “SETTING” (9.4%) and “CULTURAL DETAILS” (1.6%) as the most important element, although 17.2% ranked “QUALITY OF TRANSLATION” as the number one element. “PLOT” was the element most often ranked the number one element by respondents (38.4%), followed by “CHARACTERISATION” (20.3%). “CULTURAL DETAILS” was most frequently ranked as the sixth most
important element (30%); “SETTING” was ranked as the fifth most important element by 20% of respondents and as the seventh by the same proportion. These results suggest that although readers almost invariably enjoy the ‘foreign’ settings of translated crime novels, they don’t consider them to be as fundamental to their enjoyment of these books as elements such as plot and characterisation.

Do readers of translated crime fiction cross over into what Venuti (2008a, 155) terms as “elite foreign literature” and do they consider themselves likely to do so in the future?

26.8% of respondents said that they had read a translated literary fiction title on the strength of having enjoyed a crime fiction novel translated from that language.

Of the 64.9% respondents that answered “NO” to this question, 30.5% said that they thought they could see themselves doing so in the future, with 52.5% unsure.

5.3.2 Supplementary findings

• The notion that Sweden is the leading exporter of crime fiction to the UK is supported by the fact that 84.4% of total respondents have read a crime novel translated from Swedish. The nearest rival is Norwegian (71.4%), whilst 66.2% have read a crime novel translated from Italian.

• 77.9% of total respondents have noticed an increased number of translated fiction titles in bookshops over the last ten years. 75.3% have noticed increased media and review coverage.

• 85.7% of total respondents have read English language crime novels set in a foreign country.

• Henning Mankell is the most read author (76.6%) of the selection included in the survey. Stieg Larsson is the second most read (64.9%). The most read Italian author is Andrea Camilleri (46.7%).
Chapter 6: Discussion
This chapter will analyse the primary research alongside ideas discussed in the literature review. Not all quotations from the primary research have been presented in the findings, but all are recorded in Appendix I. No secondary sources will be quoted in this chapter: readers are invited to refer to the relevant section in the literature review.

6.1 Italian crime fiction’s lesser impact compared to Swedish crime fiction

The efficiency and generosity of Sweden and Italy’s translation subsidy programmes was discussed in the literature review (see 3.1) as a possible reason for the greater success of Swedish crime writers in the UK market. However, the primary research revealed that Sweden’s translation subsidy money is probably not a factor in its crime writers’ success abroad because, as Joakim Hansson pointed out, “crime fiction has not been able to use that money”, as the powers that be “think that genre can finance itself”.

On the other hand, Christopher MacLehose, Gary Pulsifer and François von Hurter all suggested that the Italian process was defective in some way, that it was either slow or that the money made available compared unfavourably with the sums offered by other national literature organisations. Whether or not translation subsidy is directly relevant to the importing of Italian crime fiction, these seemingly widely held negative associations may discourage publishers regardless. It is surely significant that the problems highlighted by Giovanni Peresson of the Italian Publishing Association (quoted in 3.2) should be echoed so exactly by three UK publishers.

Another possible factor discussed was the impact of writers such as Donna Leon (see 3.4). The accepted stance on this issue holds that these writers provided a context into which Italian crime writers could be more easily assimilated, and though this logic was challenged in the literature review, no compelling evidence emerged to support this alternative theory. Dr. Pieri thought that if these pseudotranslations had first been published in the late eighties or early nineties, then they

A further factor, hinted at in the literature review (see 3.3), was developed by Dr. Pieri’s insights about the nature of the new generation of Italian crime writers. They write in a style that is groundbreaking in terms of Italian fiction, and have resurrected the tradition of *impegno*, of social and political commitment; Pieri suggests that “there is a sense of literary game or pastiche” in their novels. She makes some revealing comments about the way Camilleri has been translated into English, which echo Venuti’s theory of domesticating translations (see 3.5):

> “Having read some of them in the English translation, I think that Camilleri loses a lot in terms of the humour of his writing, it makes it a little more conventional. One of the things the translator has done to keep the flavour of the Sicilian is using English that is heavily accented in Italian that you would find in American films”.

Perhaps Camilleri’s commercial impact in the UK is due in part to the translations of his novels placing greater emphasis on generic convention. It may well be, perhaps ironically given the premise of this research, that Italian crime writers are in a sense too ‘literary’ to compete commercially with what von Hurter terms as the “straightforward plotting and greater emphasis on violence” of the Scandinavian novels. Joakim Hansson’s description of the Stieg Larsson novels as “not the best literature you’ve ever read”, and his assertion that the format “works with an international readership” nonetheless, can be deployed to support this notion.

6.2 Critiquing the Venuti Critique

The ways in which Hansson and Pieri explain the appeal of Swedish and Italian crime fiction, in terms of their reception both at home and abroad, suggest that Venuti may be making an unfair assumption when he asserts that ‘literary’ or ‘elite’ fiction offers more incisive glimpses of the cultural contexts it is shaped by because the lack of generic constraints allows greater artistic
freedom (see 3.5). Dr. Pieri thinks that the new Italian crime writers are “the only writers that write in a realistic way about issues very much at the core of public opinion” and Joakim Hansson describes the way in which a writer he represents discusses issues surrounding Swedish family life and gender politics in her crime novels. Indeed, Christopher MacLehose suggests that crime fiction can represent aspects of the culture in which it is set in “a way that is often much more open than a film is or a literary novel might be”, taking a stance which can be seen as the polar opposite of Venuti’s. As the interview with Gary Pulsifer was the final piece in the research puzzle, it was possible to brief him on both points of view and ask him where he stood on the issue. He argued that “it depends on the writer”, a philosophical response that somewhat deflates the debate.

On the other hand, Venuti’s claim that generic familiarity tends to be more fundamental than cultural differences to the reading experience of readers of translated crime fiction (see 3.5) was upheld by the primary research. It is supported by the fact that, although 89% of Group C respondents thought that ‘foreign’ settings increased their enjoyment of a translated crime novel, only 49.4% agreed with the statement of Edward Kastenmeier’s (see 5.3) in which he asserted that finding out about another culture was the primary motivation for exploring the sub-genre, and very few highlighted such elements as setting and cultural details as the most important element of such a novel. Intriguingly, Joakim Hansson’s phrase “some exotic element” echoes the terminology used by Venuti, although when he sums up the formula as “some killing, some learning about other people”, the implication is that these elements carry equal weight. Gary Pulsifer refused to endorse a binary opposition between cultural difference and generic familiarity as the most important element, reflecting that “it could be both”.

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Somewhat ironically, given Venuti’s status as a passionate advocate for literary translation, his critique of translated crime fiction was shown to be a little anglocentric or anglo-saxon-centric in itself by some of the findings of the research. If the success of translated crime fiction is primarily due to the genre’s widely accepted Anglophone origins, what is one to make of its impact in countries such as Germany and France? This question was raised in the literature review (see 3.5), and the primary research did little to resolve it in Venuti’s favour. Joakim Hansson was certain that in terms of the Stieg Larsson phenomenon the UK had “seen nothing yet, compared to what’s happened in other markets”, and revealed that the novels had made an impact even in “countries like Korea”. He describes how, even before the Larsson wave of Swedish crime fiction, Germany went through a phase in which they “basically bought everything that came from Scandinavia”, and how “it went crazy for a while”. Likewise, Dr. Pieri revealed that “the first to translate Italian crime fiction were the French”, although she explains this in terms of an enduring close relationship between these countries. In the light of this evidence, it seems that the crime fiction boom should be seen primarily as an international phenomenon, rather than exclusively in terms of its impact on Anglophone publishing. Venuti’s position is understandable, given that the translation of crime fiction served as a case study in a dissident critique of Anglophone publishing’s long-standing attitudes towards translation, but his argument is weakened when the wider context is examined.

**Will the success of translated crime fiction expand the readership for translated fiction in general or begin to limit fiction imports to a single genre?**

While this most fundamental of research problems was not explicitly addressed in Lawrence Venuti’s *The Translator’s Invisibility*, it emerged as what appeared to be the logical extension of his argument (see 3.6), a perception that was supported by his contribution to the primary research, in which he suggested that “we may just be getting more genre fiction” as a result of the translated crime fiction boom. Sharp contrasts were evident between the findings of the Group A research phase and the
Group B research phase in relation to this question. The majority of British publishers and commentators consulted insisted that, in the words of Gary Pulsifer, “good literary fiction will always find a home here”, citing the prestige associated with translating such fiction as a major spur in this regard. François von Hurter, whose house specialises in translating crime fiction, said that the sub-genre’s success “encourages us to branch out”. However, the Group B respondents both gave evidence to suggest that the squeeze on literary fiction in the international marketplace potentially exerted by the success of crime fiction had already begun. Joakim Hansson’s revelations about the reduced proportion of literary fiction authors on his agency’s books were telling. In addition, he spoke of a book hailed by “the largest newspaper in Sweden” as “the best book that has been published in Sweden for the past thirty years” that had still not been found a home in English as late as a month before its Swedish publication. “Sometimes we have these struggles, absolutely”, he admitted. Dr. Pieri, when asked whether potential difficulties lay ahead for literary fiction, answered that she thought that “at the moment this is what is happening”. Christopher MacLehose’s laconic “certain publishers might” response to the question of whether houses could begin to neglect the translation of literary fiction can be seen as a taut admission from the one person who has done the most to bring ‘foreign’ crime fiction to these shores that the danger is real. However, to reiterate, the British publishers consulted demonstrated a strong commitment to, in the words of James Smith “bringing the best literature from other countries and cultures to the UK” and perhaps this brand of publishing impegno will safeguard literary imports. Ellie Steel cites “in-house enthusiasm” as a major factor in the decision to acquire rights, suggesting that commercial considerations are not the be all and end all. In addition, Joakim Hansson, though dropping hints to the contrary, concluded that “the amount of translated [literary] fiction is the same, but not as many of the large houses focus on it”.

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If literary fiction from abroad does indeed continue to find a home in English, the primary research suggests that its readership may be boosted by readers of translated crime fiction exploring other genres in translation on the strength of their enjoyment of a ‘foreign’ crime novel. **26.8%** of **Group C** respondents said that they had already done so, and 30.5% of those who had not said they thought they might do so in the future. That **26.8%** is a problematic statistic, even allowing for the small sample size. If it were five or ten per cent, or fifty, it would be more straightforward to draw conclusions from. On balance though, it seems to reasonable to consider the fact that in excess of a quarter of respondents had crossed over as a small success for the notion that translated crime fiction could expand the readership for all translated fiction genres. Of the **Group A** respondents, Christopher MacLehose, Ellie Steel, François von Hurter and Gary Pulsifer (cautiously) all supported this crossing over as a possibility, with only James Smith siding with Venuti in discarding it.

Furthermore, it seems reasonable, given Hansson and Pieri’s descriptions of waves and booms of crime fiction in their respective countries, to argue that British publishers would be derelict in **not** translating crime fiction. There is also the possibility that translating fiction that can compete with the Cornwells and the Grishams as Stieg Larsson has (see 2.2) could alter British publishers’ attitudes towards translated fiction, perhaps to the extent that translation begins to be seen as a commercially viable rather than a worthy but financially perilous exercise. Caution must be advised in reaching this conclusion, Stieg Larsson is an exception and a phenomenon, but when Joakim Hansson reveals that publishers who were previously too busy to see him at book fairs now “call me up to set up meetings” and are “definitely interested and also scared of missing out”, one can sense that a long-standing dynamic is changing. One could even figure British publishers’ new interest in buying commercial titles from abroad as attitudes towards translation maturing and moving more in line with those of other countries since, as Hansson also points out, “internationally, there is a clearer focus on bestsellers”. Gary Pulsifer, who runs a small house, acknowledges that “there are
advantages by being published by a conglomerate, in terms of you can splash Henning Mankell on
the tube, on the Underground, you have budgets”. If larger houses continue to translate crime fiction
and bring their budgets to bear in promoting these titles, and their readership does indeed cross over
to explore the translated literary fiction that we are assured smaller houses will continue to provide a
home for, one can envisage a situation beneficial to all. Perhaps even a small but welcome increase
to that fabled three per cent. Another note of caution: Pulsifer warns that the recession could see
“translations dip in the short term”; but, as everyone knows, after recession comes opportunity.
Chapter 7: Conclusions
7.1 Conclusions

- Italian crime fiction may be lagging behind Swedish crime fiction in terms of being translated into English partly because it’s relatively inefficient subsidy arrangements and a dearth of funds have hampered the country’s potential as an exporter of books. This is a situation acknowledged both by the Italian Publishers’ Association and the British publishers consulted in this research. It also arguable that Swedish crime fiction is more commercially-orientated and less literary than Italian crime fiction, and therefore appeals more directly to an international readership.

- Lawrence Venuti’s critique of the translated crime fiction phenomenon is significant because it analyses and interrogates it rather than simply celebrating it. He makes valid points about the reasons for its success in Anglophone countries; it does seem to be the case that generic familiarity is the key factor, although he almost certainly underrates the potential of crime fiction to offer incisive commentary on the country it is set in. However, his account arguably examines the decisions of Anglophone publishers too much in isolation, without giving due consideration to the crime fiction boom’s status as an international phenomenon.

- The GROUP C research focused on a small number of particularly dedicated crime fiction readers and therefore its findings should be applied with caution. However, the results suggest that readers crossing over from translated crime fiction to translated literary fiction is not a possibility to be ruled out, especially when it is one that all British publishers consulted endorsed.

- With this in mind, it seems reasonable to conclude that the success of translated crime fiction in the UK is likely to expand the readership for translated fiction in general. There seems to be enough of a commitment to translating good literary fiction amongst publishers to ensure its continued status as a translated genre. Translating commercially-orientated
fiction could be the key to fostering a less resistant attitude towards translation amongst British publishers.

7.2 Predictions

- It seems very likely indeed that the trend for translating crime fiction will continue for at least the next five years. Swedish crime fiction looks set to consolidate its dominant position, with Larsson’s third book due to be published in October 2009. Blue Door’s acquisition of The Hypnotist for a six-figure sum (see 2.2) demonstrates that the race to find the ‘next Stieg Larsson’ is already underway.

- The Italian Publishers’ Association seems to be aware of the deficiency of its translation subsidy programme (see 3.3), although it remains to be seen if the money to remedy will be made available. Regardless of whether Leon et al originally helped or hindered the process of translating Italian crime fiction, it seems likely that the deaths of Dibdin and Nabb will create an opening for as yet untranslated Italian crime writers. Michele Guitari’s strong 2008 sales (see 3.4) may encourage larger publishers to invest in his contemporaries. The next development in the translation of Italian crime fiction will probably see female crime writers being translated, as has happened with Sweden (Camilla Läckberg amongst others) and in France (Fred Vargas and Dominique Manotti).

- It is conceivable that the translated crime fiction wave will engender a situation whereby larger publishers compete for crime novels and literary crime novels, leaving the field open for smaller or independent publishers when it comes to more literary foreign novels. If readers continue to (and increasingly) cross over from translated crime to literary fiction, and if publishers are aware of and trust in this trend, independent fiction publishing could be valuably invigorated.
• In the short term, it seems likely that the number of translated fiction titles will dip due the recession squeezing translation subsidies (see 5.1.2). This will primarily affect literary translations, as the money is often not made available to the translators of crime fiction.

7.3 Industry recommendations

• Research could be conducted into whether branding translated fiction by country or language could help readers explore fiction from a country they are interested in learning more about. This could take the form of a coloured label on the spine, and could help translated fiction to stand out on the shelf, making the most of what is published. This would need to be a government or Publishers’ Association sponsored initiative, and due consideration would need to be given to whether it would have the desired effect rather than putting readers off.

• British publishers should study in detail the way in which European publishers promote translations and assess how profitable they are. If around a quarter of titles published in many European countries are translated, a good number of these must be turning a decent profit. It may be that readers are innately less resistant to translations, or that strong relationships between countries encourage readers from one country to read fiction from another, but if it is a case of effective marketing, there are surely lessons to be learned.

7.4 Suggestions for further research

• Although efforts to gather overseas perspectives were made, this study is too Anglocentric in its focus. New research should attempt to place the translated crime fiction phenomenon in its full international context, assessing the participating countries’ roles as both exporter and importer. In addition, representatives from larger British publishing houses need to be
consulted, as the majority of publishers who contributed to this study were from independent firms. Editors from *MacMillan* and *HarperCollins* were invited to participate, but no responses were forthcoming.

- Further study on the issue of readers crossing over would be welcome. A far larger sample could be surveyed, with data collected from casual as well as dedicated readers of crime fiction. The decision not to gather qualitative information during the GROUP C research phase was a limiting factor. Asking respondents to describe an example of them having crossed over from translated crime fiction to translated literary fiction could be instructive, as could asking readers who have never crossed over why they have not.

- None of the editions concerning research methods consulted during the course of this research discussed using online communities such as those that form around blogs for theoretical sampling. This approach proved very valuable to the project, and has the potential to gain informed international perspectives on a subject or phenomenon.

- Sarah Death, editor of the *Swedish Book Review*, has invited the researcher to submit a general reader-orientated adaptation of this research for the 2010:1 Volume, which will be dedicated to Swedish crime fiction.
Appendix I: Group A and Group B

Respondents
Ellie Steel – Assistant Editor, Harvill Secker 27th August 2009 (Open-ended Questions)

1. What are the most important factors in deciding to acquire the rights to a foreign novel/crime novel?

Primarily, we aim to acquire well-written fiction that we believe has the potential to sell well in our markets. A crucial factor in any acquisition decision is in-house enthusiasm (not just in editorial, but in sales, marketing and publicity), as so much work goes into each title that we publish. When acquiring foreign novels, we may commission a reader’s report if there is no English translation or sample available (and if someone in-house can’t read the original), and we will also consider reviews published in the press overseas. When considering crime novels, we would look at whether the book is part of a series and how it would sit on our crime list (the more commercial end of our publishing list).

2. Does the success of translated crime fiction encourage you to or discourage you from acquiring the rights to foreign literary fiction?

Roughly 50% of the Harvill Secker list is made up of works in translation, be that crime, more literary titles or non-fiction. We aim for a balanced list, bringing the best international writing to an Anglophone audience, and so we wouldn’t publish more crime titles at the expense of translated works with lower sales expectations.

3. Is there an element of "playing it safe" in acquiring the rights to foreign crime fiction as the genre has a long history and wide readership in the UK?

There are many loyal readers of foreign crime fiction and it’s an expanding genre, but there are no guarantees that a new author will be a huge success. We publish more literary crime titles (from UK authors and those overseas) and the sales figures, whilst healthy, don’t compete with the Grishams, Harlan Cobens and Dan Browns of the marketplace. Every acquisition is made after serious deliberation, but there is always an element of risk involved.

4. Do you think the success of translated crime fiction is a trend that is set to continue over the next 5/10 years?

We hope so! Yes, especially as crime titles are often part of a series featuring the same detective, which means that authors build a loyal readership over time. We have just announced a new title in Henning Mankell’s Wallander series, the first to be published since the BBC aired their adaptation, and there’s huge interest from the trade and readers alike.

John Crace wrote a good article in the Guardian about Scandinavian crime: http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2009/jan/23/scandinavian-crime-fiction - I think he’s right about
the locations and the quality of the writing. Japanese crime fiction (Kirino, Shuichi...) is also very popular, and as you know, we also publish Italian (Leoni), French (Vargas) and German (Jan Costin Wagner) crime writers, who are enjoying success, as readers are interested in unfamiliar settings, and different takes on the genre.

5. Do you think foreign experiments with the genre will invigorate the crime fiction produced in the UK and help to blur the lines between crime and literary fiction?

I think the lines are already blurred, as many crime authors write in what is seen as a more traditionally literary style (Fred Vargas in particular from our list), and many ‘literary’ authors use elements of the thriller, suspense and crime genres in their work (Juli Zeh, whose Dark Matter we publish next year is good example – a philosophical thriller with physics and kidnapping...). It’s always healthy for authors (and editors and readers) to have an awareness of international literature and I think authors can only benefit from seeing how others work, regardless of nationality or genre.

6. Do you think the trend will ultimately expand the UK’s cultural exchange regarding fiction with other countries or limit it to a single genre?

We hope that the success of international crime fiction will encourage readers to look outside the genre, and publishers may well be more receptive to all foreign language titles as a result.
François von Hurter – Publisher, Bitter Lemon Press 2nd September 2009 (Open-ended questions)

1. What are the most important factors in deciding to acquire the rights to a foreign novel/crime novel?

The quality of the writing, a strong sense of place, insight into the local society and the likelihood of the book being attractive to Anglophone readers.

2. Does the success of translated crime fiction encourage you to or discourage you from acquiring the rights to foreign literary fiction?

Encourages us to branch out.

3. Is there an element of "playing it safe" in acquiring the rights to foreign crime fiction as the genre has a long history and wide readership in the UK?

Crime is a resilient genre here and in the US so it has appeal but it is also one of the most over published sectors so sadly it is not really a safe haven.

4. Do you think the success of translated crime fiction is a trend that is set to continue over the next 5/10 years?

The trend is positive and should continue as readers tire of local writing and seek the more exotic (I like to think of the success of world music).

5. Do you think foreign experiments with the genre will invigorate the crime fiction produced in the UK and help to blur the lines between crime and literary fiction?

Latin American and Continental critics treat good crime novels as full-on literary fiction. The UK and the US continue to take it less seriously (in a similar way that film is not taken seriously as art here) and I don’t see that changing.

6. Do you think the trend will ultimately expand the UK’s cultural exchange regarding fiction with other countries or limit it to a single genre?

I think crime novels are good way to lure Anglophone readers to reading foreign literature. I hope they will be ‘contaminated’ and then explore more general foreign fiction.

7. Swedish crime fiction is the big European crime 'brand' at the moment: how far behind do you think Italian crime fiction is (if at all)? Do you think that the success of Camilleri's (or another writer's) books could do for Italian crime writers abroad what Henning Mankell’s have done for his Swedish contemporaries?
The Swedes (and certain other Scandinavian writers) sell better than the Italians and I’m not sure the gap is closing. I think the Nordic dark mood, straightforward plotting and the greater emphasis on violence have a strong appeal. Probably greater than the black humour, sensuality, irony and psychology of Mediterranean writing.

8. Do you think there are a significant number of readers who read translated crime fiction without reading any English language crime fiction?

No, crime readers start with UK and US novels and explore from there. Note I have no evidence to substantiate that generalization.

9. Do you think the success of translated crime writers indicates that there is an appetite for crime writing in the UK that cannot be met the number and output of English language crime writers?

Not really, supply outstrips demand. By a large margin.

10. Would you say that there are any countries whose institutions are particularly active in promoting their books for translation? Or any that are particularly passive? Are their efforts relevant to you as a translating publisher? [I’m particularly interested in your thoughts about Italy’s publishing infrastructure here].

Government sponsored funding: when approached the Italian and French government authorities support the export of quality crime writing. The Dutch and Belgians take a more active stance, promoting and marketing their writers. The Germans have been more reluctant (one senses a feeling that crime novels are not quite worthy enough). The Italian process is very slow with extremely long intervals between approval and disbursement of translation funding.

Local publishers and agents: no discernible differences, all want their books published in English so they are very active marketing their titles to UK and US publishers.
1. How did you come to acquire the rights to Stieg Larsson’s books, and did you anticipate them being so successful?

Impossible to have anticipated the level of success that the books have had and will go on having. One always believes, always hopes, but is never confident. On the other hand the Swedish publisher had already had a considerable success with two volumes, the French a certain success with one, maybe already two, by the time the books came to me, not yet a publisher with a single published book. They had been to seven English publishers and were turned down by all of them (and the same in America) in English translation of two volumes. Not all publishers are willing to work extensively on a translation, and this one had been made at a remarkable pace in the first instance for a film company, not for the publisher. But the publisher sent this swift version out and it may have discouraged English publishers that it was in American rather than English and it certainly, so the translator told me, discouraged certain American houses that the author was already dead. Apparently more than one marketing director decided that you could not have a success with an author who would only ever have three books. This is a cretinous orthodoxy that one has heard from time to time. In the event, the revised translations of two books were re-offered to a group of American houses and every one of them bid for the whole trilogy. The auction was won by the excellent house of Knopf and the second volume was #1 on the New York Times bestseller list a week or so ago and both volumes are selling extremely well. As here.

2. Miss Smilla’s Feeling for Snow is credited by many with paving the way for crime fiction translations. Did publishing it seem revolutionary at the time?

No. it isn’t a conventional crime novel, has no detective, no formal structure, is indeed in part a fine literary novel and in part a pastiche of many different crime thriller writers’ works. It may have been the first exceedingly successful crime novel in translation since Simenon (but don’t forget The Name of the Rose, likewise not a genre novel but capable of being categorised a historical crime novel. In terms of crime novels in translation, also from Sweden, most people would credit the husband and wife team (check the accents and spelling) of Per Wahlöö and Maj Sjöwall as having been the first to create a Scandinavian crime novel series which was successful in many other languages.

3. Could you please tell me a little about the fiction that was being translated into English at this time? Do you think the Høeg translation and then the Mankell novels have dramatically changed the translated fiction landscape or market?

This was post-glasnost, so the translation of Russian fiction was already in decline; there had been the huge successes of Umberto eco and Milan Kundera, but Høeg had created one outstanding additional element, the heroine of his book is like no other. That is what underpins the success of the novel, the reader is fascinated by this woman, also by the setting and the cause: the sufferings of the Greenlandic underclass in Denmark. No one had met anything like it and the book sold in millions (including in Britain) all over Europe as also in USA. I have no sense now of what else was being translated at the time. I remember publishing myself a month earlier a novel by Sebastien Jaaprisot, a brilliant commercial French writer, a books called A Very Long Engagement (which was made into a vastly expensive film three years ago). But you could look it up or ask the bookseller magazine for a
way into their best seller lists for the year -- was it 1993? But it turns out that Larsson is the first writer in translation ever to reach the #1 spot on the British fiction bestseller list. extraordinary, but true. What Henning Mankell was writing and continues to write gives encouragement to many Scandinavian writers, some of whom think they are superior to Mankell. Most of them are not. The success of one writer changes very little in a bookshop, there are already "translated crime" shelves in bookshops. Perhaps he made a difference to literary editors, because they have been more alert to welcome Arnaldur Indridason, the Icelandic crime writer, and Fred Vargas, who is French and has now won the CWA Gold Dagger two or three times, translated from French.

4. Do you anticipate that in the near future the number of crime fiction titles translated into English will exceed the number of 'literary' titles translated?

In most countries there is a welter of crime fiction now, but very little of it is translated because much of it isn’t good enough, or well-enough-adapted to British expectations. Very few British houses are willing to explore the foreign markets, most still wait to be offered books by foreign publishers or agents. There are many more publishers here more liable to buy literary fiction for translation. But you are right, the crime novel numbers have risen and risen. Maybe there will be a puncture in the market in a few years time and people will turn away from crime. No way of knowing.

5. Do you think that translated crime novels have contributed to a blurring of the traditional divide between genre and ‘literary’ novels?

Not really, but some publishers have made more of the crime aspect of a novel than they perhaps should have done. Philippe Claudel’s first-translated novel “grey souls”, was effectively ruined by it having been cast as a crime novel, which it isn’t. The publisher then turned down the next book -- presumably because it wasn’t a crime story -- and it has proved to be an outstanding literary novel. But will it have the same success as an outstanding crime novel? Probably not.

6. Do you think the success of translated crime fiction is likely to make readers and publishers in the Anglophone world more open to reading translated fiction in general? In other words, do you think there is audience crossover between translated crime and ‘literary’ fiction?

Yes.
7. Would you say that there are any countries whose institutions are particularly active in promoting their books for translation? Or any that are particularly passive? Are their efforts relevant to you as a translating publisher?

Norway is good, Finland, Holland, Spain, Germany. Some are not rich enough to help with costs of translation. e.g. Italy. The worst of all is Britain.

8. Do you think the success of translated crime writers indicates that there is an appetite for crime writing in the UK that cannot be met the number and output of English language crime writers?

I cannot tell because I know nothing about British crime writing or selling. It’s just possible that the translated crime writers are better than their British counterparts.

9. Do you think there are a significant number of readers who read translated crime fiction without reading any English language crime fiction?

I have no means of even guessing.

10. Do you think it is possible that English language publishers will begin to neglect foreign fiction that does not fit into the crime fiction genre because they can achieve greater sales by concentrating on translating crime fiction?

Certain publishers might.

11. Swedish crime fiction is the big European crime 'brand' at the moment: how far behind do you think Italian crime fiction is (if at all)? Do you think that the success of Camilleri's books could do for Italian crime writers abroad what Henning Mankell's have done for his Swedish contemporaries?

Camilleri seems not to have had the breakthrough he deserves. There is also Carlo Lucarelli. I would reckon that every country has a handful of seriously good crime writers, some of whom are writing in a way that may not appeal to the British. There are two very good Greek crime writers, for example, not well known here. Two very good Norwegian, even three, who are widely read here. Is a crime novel a symptom of a culture? Perhaps, and I think that people here read the translated crime fiction for just that: a glimpse into a different culture in a way that is often much more open than a film is or a literary novel might be.

12. Our publishing course went on a trip to Italy in May, visiting Mondadori Editore, where we learned from the Italian Fiction Publisher of a little renaissance in home-grown Italian fiction. Is this something that, to your knowledge, UK publishers are keeping tabs on and do you think we will see the its fruits in UK bookshops in the near future?
British publishers will be keeping pretty loose tabs, and only a very few of them will be keeping any tabs at all. This is because that process is expensive and time consuming. Certainly Italy is not being neglected. I have two Sardinian writers in translation now and two Italians too. All excellent, all very different and only one a crime writer and one a literary crime writer, one an investigative journalist, one a pure literary novelist.
1. Is there an element of "playing it safe" in acquiring the rights to foreign crime fiction as the genre has a long history and wide readership in the UK?

Yes. UK publishers are always cautious about translated books, and currently even more so. And even if an editor finds a book they like, they have to get it past the marketing and promotion departments, which want to know such things as: is there an obvious marketing angle? Is this author going to write more in the same vein, or preferably in the same series?
Even some of the more established 'literary' publishers have been looking for 'quality crime' of late.

2. Do you think the success of translated crime fiction is a trend that is set to continue over the next 5/10 years?

5 years, yes. 10 years - too long to predict, but people have been forecasting that the crime bubble will burst for many years now, and it still shows no sign of doing so.

3. Do you think foreign experiments with the genre will invigorate the crime fiction produced in the UK and help to blur the lines between crime and literary fiction?

I think this is very gradual process. It's over a decade since a prime crossover book such as Kerstin Ekman's Blackwater was published. Authors like Fred Vargas of France seem to do very well nowadays. She keeps winning the International Dagger. But I still get the feeling it's a case of 'smuggling in' the non-mainstream elements. Just the other week, I had a publisher on the phone sounding anxious that a proposed Swedish crime novel might be 'too literary'.

4. Do you think the trend will ultimately expand the UK's cultural exchange regarding fiction with other countries or limit it to a single genre?

See answer above.

5. As editor of the SBR, have you noticed a downturn in literary fiction translations from Swedish in recent years, as the number of Swedish crime novels translated increases? Such a trend would support the notion of literary fiction being squeezed out by the success of crime fiction.

Since I became deputy editor of SBR in the late 90s, and especially since I took over as editor in 2003, I have seen a general expansion in the number of titles being translated and published. Until recently, though crime outnumbered the rest, there was still a fairly cheering amount of non-crime. I think the ratio is slipping now, though general volume is still up on the 1990s. Look at the issues I sent you - you'll see that the 'Just Out and Coming Up' section covers 2 pages. In 2003, we could only fill one.

1. Could you please tell me a little about translatedfiction.org, its aims and the reasons for establishing it?

There were several reasons for setting up the translated fiction website. As a former bookseller and reader of translated fiction, I have always been aware of the genre’s low profile with UK readers. Booktrust aims to appeal to as wide a range of readers as possible and is in the lucky position of being able to promote books without having to sell them, so I thought that we would be able to do for translated fiction what we’ve been trying to do for the short story – another neglected genre – with our Story campaign and website (www.theshortstory.org.uk), which I also edit.

The aim of the site is to raise awareness of translated fiction by providing book reviews, information about forthcoming titles, news, feature articles and interviews with authors, translators and publishers. In short, I want to show that translated fiction isn’t scary and that the books are worth reading!

NB the site was launched in April 2008, so hasn’t been around that long.

2. In your role as editor, would you say that you have noticed an increasing number of translated crime fiction titles published over the last five years?

Without any statistical evidence to back this up, I would say yes. Harvill Secker, of course, continues to bring Scandinavian, French and other crime fiction to the shops, and most of the major publishers now seen to have at least one translated crime writer on their lists, but I’m more interested in the success of independent publishers like Bitter Lemon Press – whose entire list comprises translated crime fiction – and Arcadia ’s EuroCrime imprint. This, to me, is indicative of the UK readership’s seemingly insatiable desire for crime writing.

The occasional appearance of articles about translated crime in the national newspapers has also helped to raise the genre’s profile e.g.
http://www.translatedfiction.org.uk/show/feature/Articles/Translation-sleuths

3. Have you noticed a corresponding decrease in the number of translated novels that do not fit into the crime fiction genre over the same period?

I wouldn’t say so, no. It may be that I’m overly aware of how many translated novels are currently being published, but there does seem to be – dare I say it – a greater interest in translated fiction across the board. Remember, more than 100 novels were entered for last year’s Independent Foreign Fiction Prize.
4. Do you think that, as crime fiction is a popular genre, publishing translated crime fiction will encourage more readers to read translated literature in general?

Um, hard to say. It’s possible, but I have the entirely subjective and probably incorrect view that readers of crime novels aren’t that bothered about the strange-sounding or -looking name of the author on the cover as long as the story is good and the characters strong. This isn’t a snobbish attitude – far from it; if all readers were like that, everyone would be reading a lot more translated fiction across the board – but I still can’t quite see that readers of Jo Nesbo’s Harry Hole novels would be interested in Per Petterson’s *Out Stealing Horses*. (A Swedish analogy would be any Henning Mankell novel and Bengt Ohlsson’s *Gregorius*, I guess.) Maybe I’m doing everyone a disservice here.

5. Do you think it is possible that English language publishers will begin to neglect foreign fiction that does not fit into the crime fiction genre because they can achieve greater sales by concentrating on translating crime fiction?

No. Publishers such as Bloomsbury, Harvill Secker and MacLehose Press pride themselves on bringing the best literature from other countries and cultures to the UK, and although I don’t know how their internal budgeting works, I’m sure they are happy to subsidise a few books like Juan Gabriel Vasquez’s (amazing) *The Informers* or Machado de Assis’s *A Chapter of Hats* (translated short stories – a non-sale double whammy!) with a bit of Harry Potter money. You’d have to ask them of course …

It’s also worth bearing in mind that non-crime translated fiction occasionally does sell; think *The Shadow of the Wind* or *Suite Française* or *Beijing Coma*. If the story’s good enough …

Another thought: some publishers are funded by public money, which gives them the freedom to be more adventurous (I’m thinking particularly of Arcadia Books here, funded by Arts Council England [http://www.arcadiabooks.co.uk/about.php])
Lawrence Venuti – Professor of English, Temple University 17th July 2009 (Open-ended Questions)

1. Is there an element of "playing it safe" in acquiring the rights to foreign crime fiction as the genre has a long history and wide readership in the UK?

Yes, absolutely. Given the sales figures cited by Christopher MacLehose for most translations over the past thirty or so years, Anglophone publishers will gravitate to the translated works that make money. Most translations throughout the 20thc. probably did not make money, except for the huge bestsellers (e.g. Eco's The Name of the Rose) and the books that became reliable backlist sales because their canonical status gained them course adoptions (e.g. Dostoevsky, Kafka, Proust, more recently Calvino).

But crime fiction is genre fiction. That is to say, it appeals to popular taste, and since there is always a huge audience for the genre, one of the problems of translating foreign fiction—its unfamiliarity—is solved to a large extent.

2. Do you think the success of translated crime fiction is a trend that is set to continue over the next 5/10 years?

Yes, or as long as it continues to make money. Henning Mankell's success has brought into English a slew of Scandinavian crime writers, for instance, and they must be selling. Meanwhile profitable authors like the Italian Andrea Camilleri show no signs of stopping their production.

3. Do you think foreign experiments with the genre will invigorate the crime fiction produced in the UK and help to blur the lines between crime and literary fiction?

I'm not sure. Because we're dealing with genre fiction, the experiment would have to cross the boundaries between readerships, cross-over to more elite readers, including writers. My experience translating a more experimental crime novelist like Massimo Carlotto suggests that this is a difficult development. He has not sold as well as Camilleri and Carofiglio in English: his work is more extreme, brutal, and it addresses social and moral issues. The Japanese writers may be promising in changing the form.

4. Do you think the trend will ultimately expand the UK's cultural exchange regarding fiction with other countries or limit it to a single genre?

What seems to be happening is that publishers who invest in translations of crime fiction are not reinvesting their profits in more literary works. This point would need to corroborated on a press-by-press basis. But since some presses are either focusing on the genre (Bitter Lemon) or buying books for crime lists (Random House's Black Lizard), we just may be getting more genre fiction.

5. Do you think Italy could be the 'next Sweden' in terms of the volume of crime fiction translated?

It's possible, but see my comments above. Carlo Lucarelli may be selling better than Carlotto. Hence the continued translations. He is more experimental than Camilleri.
Boyd Tonkin – Literary Editor, *The Independent* 26th & 27th August (Email Exchange)

**26th August**

I'm not sure I agree totally with your thesis; crime divisions tend to be fairly autonomous and I doubt when it comes to translations that editors explicitly decide 'thriller vs literary novel'. Mainstream fiction departments that do the odd translated thriller often don't do any other foreign titles and probably wouldn't anyway. Of course some publishers use the bankability of crime to help support other translations - you should talk if you haven't yet to Gary Pulsifer at Arcadia and Christopher MacLehose at Quercus/MacLehose press. Hope this helps.

Boyd

**27th August**

Of course - quote what you like.

Another interesting issue to consider is the pressure on writers especially in Scandinavia to turn to crime as a fast track into the international marketplace. Potential 'literary' novelists in eg Norway or Sweden might I think develop a crime speciality because of the obvious advantages and some, eg Karin Fossum, more or less do both at once.

Best, Boyd
Gary Pulsifer – Publisher, Arcadia Books 16th September 2009 (Semi-structured Interview)

Note: Due to the extended nature of the interviews, the semi-structured interviews (Pulsifer, Hansson and Pieri) will presented as a list of questions and a list of quotations used in Chapters 5 and 6. This decision was also made to make it quicker and easier for interviewees to review their answers.

1. Could you tell me a little about the history of Arcadia Books?

2. What brought you into publishing translated crime fiction?

3. Where you encouraged by the success of any books published by other publishers?

4. Do you follow the trends in translated crime fiction? Are you aware of what other publishers are doing?

5. Is there anything you could say about the types and size have publishers that have started to publish the sub-genre recently?

6. Do you find your translated crime fiction sells better, worse, or the same as the other translated genres you publish?

7. There seems to be a lot of discussion about what it is that attracts people to translated crime fiction. Is it more that you learn about other countries, or do you think it’s more because the genre is well established?

8. Do you have any opinion on whether translated crime fiction or translated literary fiction is more incisive in terms of bringing across cultural detail? Lawrence Venuti, a professor and translation theorist, makes an assumption that what he calls elite literature brings more incisive detail, whereas Christopher MacLehose has said that to me that he think crime fiction brings it across in a more direct way.

9. I’m coming at this with a perception that sales of translated crime fiction are unprecedented in terms of translated fiction. Is that a perception you’d endorse?

10. There’s a widely quoted statistic – 3% of books in the UK are translated – not just fiction. If the amount of fiction translated remained static, do you think it would be a negative thing, if publishers published more crime fiction and less literary fiction?

11. Notwithstanding the recent credit crunch related decline, are there any countries that are very good or very bad about promoting their literature, or subsidising costs?

12. Have you had any dealings with the Italians?

13. Do the literature agencies differentiate between crime and literary fiction when it comes to subsidies?
14. Do you think there is a status gap between the two genres around Europe?

15. Which countries do you publish translated crime fiction from?

16. There is a theory from the professor I mentioned earlier that publishing one translated text damagingly takes it out of its national context and that publishers should work together to publish large blocks of writers from every country. What do you think about this?

17. Why do you think so few translations are published?

Quotations used in Chapters Five and Six

a. “Good literary fiction will always find a home here”.

b. “The first book we published in the series which was in English was by an American author living in Portugal, and that’s set in Portugal, it’s a historical crime novel, and I suppose we’ve sold about 80,000 copies of that over the years and it still sells. But it was kind of an exception, in a way. All sorts of people tell us the one valuable imprint we have is the Eurocrime list. Including people like Roger Katz from Hatchards, a very eminent bookseller. To be honest, the sales never have really gone up there high enough to justify those expectations. Apart from that title, the most we’ve probably ever sold on a book is maybe 8,000 copies, and some are considerably fewer”.

c. “Well that’s often said. That it’s a way of making translated literature more palatable to readers, more accessible. And, that could be true”.

d. “I think the Norwegians are very good. The Danes, the Swedes, the Finns, the Germans, Dutch. Those spring to mind. I’ll tell you who is really bad at the moment. The Greeks no longer give a penny to their books being translated”.

e. “Italians can be wonderfully anarchic at times, I think, and, in our own experience, the money forthcoming was always limited”.

f. “Why do you read crime fiction in general? It’s to get a picture of what’s going on in society... whether it be translated crime fiction or Donna Leon, Walter Mosley, or whoever”.

g. “I think the problem that might negate against more translated titles being published in the UK is that, with the credit crunch, it seems to us at least, the number of national literature organisations that support some of the translation costs of their national literature into other languages seems to be going down in terms percentages of what they will give towards a translation. So, certainly for us, if we’re doing a book where the translation costs might be 18,000 Euros and then you find out after the fact that you will be given 6,000 Euros... Well, if you print 2,000 copies, you’re making a loss straight off. Most publishers don’t want to make a loss straight off”.

h. “It depends on the writer”.
i. “It could be both”.

j. “There are advantages by being published by a conglomerate, in terms of you can splash Henning Mankell on the tube, on the Underground, you have budgets”.
1. Do you represent any crime fiction authors?

2. When do you think it was that British Publishers started taking an interest in translating the genre?

3. Do you recall what kind of fiction they were buying before this?

4. Do you think the crime fiction boom has led to these kinds of titles being displaced?

5. Do you think it has made fiction in other genres harder or easier to sell?

6. Speaking generally, if you can, do you get the impression that the export revenues are subsidising less commercial titles, or are publishers producing more genre fiction to meet overseas demand?

7. In Sweden, is there a perceived ‘status gap’ between crime and literary fiction?

8. Are crime fiction titles consistently the most popular in Sweden?

9. Can you think of any very good recent Swedish fiction that has not yet been translated?

10. Is crime fiction to English-language publishers a buyers’ or sellers’ market at this time?

Quotations used in Chapters Five and Six

a. “Crime fiction is what we in particular represent at the moment”.

b. “There has been a very clear wave of Scandinavian crime fiction and it works really well”.

c. “I’ve done a lot of crime fiction authors that perhaps work better in the home market than abroad, that are important for us anyway”.

d. “A huge bestseller would be, Camilla Läckberg, who sells around 250,000 hardcovers, about the same in paperback, about half a million in total”.

e. “I would say yes. But then every now and again, there comes a title, have you heard of Linda Olsson? Let Me Sing You Gentle Songs has been a number one bestseller in New Zealand, Australia, and top ten in the US. In England it’s been decent, you know? And in Sweden it’s also been in the first spot”.

f. “Let’s look at my role and my position. We’re the leading agency. Look at my list. We had such fantastic literary authors before, now we have, I would say, twenty per cent in that category. These authors get really good reviews. But our focus is more on the commercial, you know, bestseller driven books, that’s how the market responds now. First you have to
tell them how good the book is, they read as well, of course, and if they like they say “how many copies have you sold in Sweden?” It’s always like that. It’s like a copycat behaviour, where if something has done really well in one market, then people will want to translate it into their own market as well”.

g. “Fifty, quite a big difference”.

h. “What we’ve really managed to sell a lot of is thrillers”.

i. “We increased turnover by 100% that year”.

j. “Absolutely. It’s been quite a big debate here. One of the female crime authors was attacked by one of the main authors, saying she writes as... then he mentioned a cartoon character... she writes the way he talks, that cartoon character”.

k. “There’s some sort of jury that chooses the quality, is it the right country, how commercial is it? Then they pay around one third of the translation costs. So that has of course helped literary fiction, but crime fiction has not been able to use that money, they think that genre can finance itself”.

l. “People are interested in the Scandinavian mindset, I think, it’s a little bit darker, that is what foreign publishers tell me. It’s also, I would say, a very equal society in the crime books. if you read Camilla Läckberg here, you will see that a lot of the action takes place in the relationship, in the family relationship, does she take care of the kids, what happens when she’s pregnant, how about her job, really discussing these issues”.

m. “But, yeah, absolutely, some exotic elements attract. So maybe it’s a good thing. Some killing, some learning about other people. Yeah, why not?”

n. “Part of it is not the best literature that you’ve read, some chapters he drinks twenty cups of coffee and you wonder “where was the editor?” We do drink a lot of coffee, but it’s exaggerated. But it works with an international readership”.

o. “I think in England you have seen nothing yet, compared to what’s happened in other markets”.

p. “That’s when all the other markets have really exploded. France, I don’t know how many millions of copies they’ve sold, I think five million. Germany, Spain, Italy, I mean even countries like Korea. It’s a huge bestseller”.

q. “But then that happened was in Germany, they basically bought everything that came from Scandinavia, it went crazy for a while.”
r. “Hopefully it’s just a matter of time, but we have a very literary author... the largest newspaper in Sweden says that this is the best book that has been published in Sweden for the past thirty years. With the best critique ever. We haven’t sold it in English yet... it’s a fantastic story, it really is, but also could become one of those books that people study in literature, in the future. Sometimes we have those struggles, absolutely”.

s. “I think that maybe the amount of translated fiction is the same, but not as many of the large houses focuses on it anymore”.

t. “Now English publishers call me to set up meetings. So they are definitely interested and also scared of missing out”.

u. “Internationally, there is a clearer focus on bestsellers”
Dr. Giuliana Pieri – Senior Lecturer in Italian, Royal Holloway University 10th September 2009
(Semi-structured Interview)

1. Could you tell me a little about the quality of Italian crime fiction?

2. When you speak of a boom, do you mean domestically?

3. Could you say something about the Italian crime fiction is stylistic terms?

4. Do think these stylistic innovations explain why there is so much academic interest in Italian crime fiction?

5. Italian publishers are experiencing difficulties in exporting fiction. Do you think this could be an obstacle preventing more Italian crime fiction being translated into English?

6. Do you think the presence of writers such as Leon and Dibdin could have held up the translation of Italian crime fiction because they fulfilled the need for crime writing set in Italy?

7. Do you think there is still a status gap between crime and literary fiction?

8. What do you think of the idea of crime fiction as literary postmodernism?

Quotations used in Chapters Five and Six

a. “From more or less the early nineties, but particularly from the mid-nineties onwards, there’s been a huge boom and explosion of Italian Crime fiction”.

b. “Andrea Camilleri comes on the scene and his books are an immediate success. They certainly made the publishing house, Sellerio, a very high brow publisher that produced beautiful editions that didn’t sell very well, immensely popular. I think he did for them what the Harry Potter books did for Bloomsbury”.

c. “From the 1990s onwards, Italian crime fiction has been a literary phenomenon. There seems to be a cluster of interest in crime fiction, with new, home-grown talent, a new generation of writers and publishing houses that are keen to get involved. Publishing houses that, before, wouldn’t have been interested”.

d. “I think at the moment this is what is happening. I don’t think many other contemporary Italian writers are very prominent in this country, or published much. I can’t really think of any big or small Italian names, writers of narrative fiction, who are translated at the moment. There certainly seems to be more of an interest around Italian crime fiction, which is, I think, partly in response to what is happening in Italy, and also perhaps because of the context and the huge readership there is in the English speaking world for crime fiction”.

e. “Camilleri had the great of honour of being published as part of a special series of Mondadori’s that includes all the great authors of the Italian literary canon. There was a huge row in the press saying ‘does he deserve this, can he be on par with the great masters of the past, has Mondadori done this just because he’s selling so well?’”
f. “Out of all the books published in those countries, only something like three per cent were in translation”.

g. “I don’t know how good Italian Publishers are at establishing links with the British publishing world”.

h. “I think you’re right, it may have done, in many ways, because you already had your own writers and the novels are very good, and because they had such strong links with Italy they wrote with a flavour and knowledge of the country that made them very palatable to the British public. I always thought that provided a bit more of a context and built up public interest in an Italian setting, but I suppose one could see it from the other point of view. It would be interesting to look at dates. I wonder whether they were much earlier. If it had already started in the late eighties and early nineties, then my answer would be that, no, I don’t think they were an obstacle, they probably helped to build a context”.

i. “I personally see it as a resurgence in interest what we in Italy call impegno, social and political commitment which is not new in Italy at all. From the late forties, through the fifties, sixties and seventies, politically and socially committed intellectuals wrote for newspapers as well as writing literature, people like Italo Calvino, they were public figures also. I think that disappeared, but has now come back, in a different way. I think one of the reason crime writers are so successful is that they are the only writers that write in a realistic style about issues that are very much at the core of public opinion”.

j. “A lot of the new writers write with an awareness of the screen. There is a way of constructing chapters as scenes. They all write as screen writers as well, so I think that influences enormously their way of writing. There’s a sense of the dialogues being much more immediate. I think these elements are part of the reason for the success of the books. I don’t think it just makes them more readable, in a simplistic way. It was almost like a breath of fresh air: from a tradition of quite formal Italian to one where there is much more of a flavour of the spoken language”.

k. “There is a sense of literary game or pastiche”.

l. “Having read some of them in the English translation, I think that Camilleri loses a lot in terms of humour of his writing, it makes it a little more conventional. One of the things the translator has done to keep the flavour of the Sicilian is using English that is heavily accented in Italian that you would find in American films”.

m. “The first to translate Italian crime fiction were the French, but that is because of the very close link between the two cultures. There are a huge number of contemporary French authors that are not translated into English that have always been translated into Italian”.
Appendix II: Group B Results
Translated Crime Fiction Reader Survey

1. Please indicate your gender.
   - Male
   - Female
   - Other
   - Prefer not to say

2. Please indicate a rough age:
   - 18 or under
   - 19-20
   - 21-30
   - 31-40
   - 41-50
   - 51-60
   - 61 or older

3. Do you read both crime fiction and literary fiction?
   - Yes
   - No
   - Don’t know

4. Have you read a crime fiction novel translated from
   - Swedish
   - Danish
   - French
   - Italian
   - Dutch
   - Spanish
   - Portuguese
   - Russian
   - Other
   - Prefer not to say

5. Have you noticed when discovering books in bookshops or online?
   - Yes
   - No
   - Don’t know

6. Have you noticed increased media and review coverage of
   - Translated crime fiction
   - Japanese
   - Springer
   - Other
   - Prefer not to say

7. Have you ever read an English-language crime fiction set in a
   - Foreign country
   - City
   - Town
   - Village
   - Other
   - Prefer not to say

8. If you do read translated crime fiction novels, do you
   - Read more
   - Less
   - No change
   - Don’t know

9. Have you ever read a translated literary fiction book?
   - Yes
   - No
   - Don’t know

10. If you have read a translated crime novel, please rank it (1-7):
    - 1
    - 2
    - 3
    - 4
    - 5
    - 6
    - 7
    - Don’t know

11. Do you agree with the following statements?
    - Yes
    - No
    - Don’t know

12. If you are going to read a crime novel in another
    - Language
    - Country
    - Prefer not to say

13. Have you read or heard of any of the following?
    - Culture of China
    - Chinese literature
    - Korean literature
    - Japanese literature
    - Russian literature
    - Don’t know

14. Have you read or heard of any of the following?
    - Setting
    - Quality of translation
    - Pace
    - Characterization
    - Atmosphere
    - Plot
    - Don’t know

If you answer “no” or “don’t know,” please provide a reason below.

Please click as applicable.
Do you read both crime fiction and literary fiction?

Have you read a crime fiction novel translated from any of the following languages? (Tick as many as appropriate)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Swedish</td>
<td>84.4% (65)</td>
<td>5.6% (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>56.7% (46)</td>
<td>43.3% (34)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>66.2% (51)</td>
<td>33.8% (26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norwegian</td>
<td>71.4% (55)</td>
<td>28.6% (21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>28.9% (23)</td>
<td>71.1% (52)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finnish</td>
<td>29.9% (23)</td>
<td>70.1% (52)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>42.9% (33)</td>
<td>57.1% (43)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>44.2% (34)</td>
<td>55.8% (41)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>31.8% (26)</td>
<td>68.2% (51)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dutch</td>
<td>37.7% (29)</td>
<td>62.3% (45)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danish</td>
<td>36.4% (27)</td>
<td>63.6% (47)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>6.6% (5)</td>
<td>93.4% (70)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Have you noticed, when browsing in bookshops/online, an increasing number of translated crime fiction titles available over the last five years?

- Yes: 77.9% (60)
- No: 9.1% (7)
- Don't know: 5.0% (4)

Have you noticed increased media and review coverage of translated crime fiction over the same period?

- Yes: 75.3% (58)
- No: 9.1% (7)
- Don't know: 15.6% (12)
Have you ever read English language crime fiction set in a foreign country, such as Donna Leon’s Venice novels or Michael Dibdin’s Bolgona series?

If you do read translated crime fiction novels, do you find in general that their ‘foreign’ settings add to your enjoyment of the book?
Have you ever read a translated literary fiction title on the strength of having enjoyed a crime fiction novel translated from that language?

If no, can you see yourself doing so in the future?
Do you agree with the following statement: "If you're going to read a crime fiction novel from another country, you're going to read it by and large because it tells you something about a culture you're not familiar with"?

- Yes: 48.1% (37)
- No: 2.6% (2)
- Don't know: 49.4% (38)

If you have read a translated crime fiction novel, please rank these elements of the text in order of their importance to you (1 is most important, 7 is least important).
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Declaration of Authenticity

This report is my own work, contains my own original research and has not been submitted for any other degree or diploma.

Signed: ___________________________  Date: ________________