Literary multilingualism in Cora Sandel's novel *Kranes konditori*

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Abstract
Krane's Café (1945) is a major novel by the Norwegian writer Cora Sandel (1880-1974). The quality of this work is largely due to the linguistic fabric of the text, as well as the Norwegian and Swedish spoken by the two protagonists throughout. This bilingualism owes itself to the author's proficiency in both languages and the phenomenon of Scandinavian receptive multilingualism that is particularly strong in Norway. On a broader note, the novel's literary multilingualism consists in interweaving voices from the town, thereby creating a public space, with a set of compositional and stylistic devices that form part of the development of the modern novel, as highlighted by Bakhtin in his reflections on discourse in the novel and Spitzer's analysis of free indirect speech. My final focus is on the challenging processes of adaptation of this kind of multilingual novel into a play and of its translations into other languages.[1]

Keywords
adaptation; Cora Sandel; literary multilingualism; Scandinavian receptive multilingualism; translation

1. Introduction

In this article, multilingualism will be dealt with in two different but interacting ways; one is linguistic, and the other is literary. My aim is to

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highlight the qualities of Cora Sandel's novel *Kranes konditori. Interiør med figurer* (1945; *Krane's Café. An Interior with Figures*, 1968) both as a bilingual literary work in Norwegian and Swedish, and additionally, as a technically advanced multi-voiced, polyphonic narrative. Biographical contexts and sociolinguistic studies need to be considered in order to clarify the preconditions of the bilingualism and multilingualism represented in and by the novel. Ultimately however, bilingualism and multilingualism are seen as artistic functions, and my aim is to offer a close reading of the novel that helps appreciate its unique literary quality. Relevant theoretical contributions by scholars such as Leo Spitzer (1887-1960) and Mikhail Bakhtin (1895-1975) – who were Sandel's contemporaries, although they did not consider her authorship in their research and most probably were not even aware of it – focus on the collective voice that is typical of the novel as a genre, and on free indirect speech as a means to conveying this collective «chorus». As we shall see, «heteroglossia» is the English translation of the Russian term used by Bakhtin (2004 [1981]) in circumstances where the authorial voice meets and merges with the other voices in the novel, and it is precisely this interweaving of voices that constructs a social space. I argue that Spitzer and Bakhtin underscore a polyphonic trend in the development of the European novel, of which *Kranes konditori* is part and parcel, and that the novel's status as a Nordic literary masterpiece owes much to this quality.

To the best of my knowledge, the Norwegian-Swedish bilingualism in *Kranes konditori* has of course been noted, but not as of yet duly analyzed as a literary element. On the other hand, the workings of the collective, plural voice in the novel have been studied in depth in a number of Scandinavian contributions (Lervik 1977; Björck 1978; Wærp 2005b). This has not however been connected to a broader European trend, in both literary output and literary theory, in particular to the connection between «chorus» and free indirect speech, as studied by Spitzer, and to the stylistic multilingualism Bakhtin terms heteroglossia. I hope my article offers an original contribution on these aspects.

Finally, the status of *Kranes konditori* as a Nordic literary classic is evidenced by the fact that it has been actualized and reenacted through adaptations (from novel to drama and film) and has also been translated. An important question that arises in the final part of my inquiry is about

how the novel's peculiar bilingualism and multilingualism are, at the same time, preserved and transformed into something different, when they are adapted into another medium or translated into another language, and about the challenges and open questions these processes present.

2. Cora Sandel, a Norwegian writer in Sweden

There are events in the life of Norwegian writer Cora Sandel (1880-1974), pseudonym used by Sara Fabricius, that help us understand how she was able to write a novel like *Kranes konditori*, in which the Swedish language plays a prominent role.

Sara Fabricius was born in Kristiania (Oslo) to an upper middle-class family. When she was twelve, her family moved to Tromsø in northern Norway. In 1905 she left Tromsø, and the following year she moved from Kristiania to Paris to study art and become a painter. There she met the Swedish sculptor Anders Jönsson; they got married in 1913 and had a son, Erik in 1917. In 1921 the family moved to Sweden, and soon it became clear that Fabricius was not going to continue in her aspirations to become a painter but was instead set to become a writer, the Norwegian writer Cora Sandel. Her trilogy of novels about Alberte, published between 1926 and 1939[2], and partially based on the author's personal experience, describes a woman artist and writer's formation on her problematic path to emancipation and meaning. The trilogy is a milestone in Nordic literature in terms of style, psychological insight, depiction of characters and settings, as much as it is a legacy for the feminist movement and for many women writers of Northern Europe[3]. Furthermore, it has a European scope, connecting the

[2] *Alberte og Jakob* (1926; *Alberta and Jacob*, translated by Elizabeth Rokkan, 1962), *Alberte og friheten* (1931; *Alberta and Freedom*, translated by Elizabeth Rokkan, 1963) and *Bare Alberte* (1939; *Alberta Alone*, translated by Elizabeth Rokkan, 1965). New editions of the same translations have followed.

[3] See Tuominen 2017 (originally written in 1947; first published in 1949); Olsson 1948; Moberg 1955; Zuck 1981; Hunt 1986; Korsström 2002; Billing 2002; Øverland 2012; Olsen, Tolnes Fjellestad, Hildung 2022. The fact that Sandel did not consider herself a feminist (Jönsson 2005, 7), does not change this important pattern in the history of her reception.

far North with the central metropolis of Europe, where avant-garde and Modernism were developing in the first decades of the twentieth century.

Fabricius' marriage was not a happy one. The process of separation and divorce from Jönsson lasted from 1922 to 1927. Nevertheless, she decided to stay in Sweden because she wanted to be with her son and take care of him. In Sweden, during the thirties, Fabricius had a hard time as a single mother and writer; she was talented, and the Norwegian publisher Harald Grieg at Gyldendal in Oslo, who had discovered her talent, wanted her to be a prolific novelist (Øverland 1995, 235-238, 266-276, 283-311). Sandel however, composed slowly, writing in her spare time and publishing short stories more often than novels; the long intervals between one part of her trilogy and the next are indicative of such circumstances (Gimnes 1982, 33-34). She was paid in advance by Grieg, who therefore supported her financially, while simultaneously pressuring her. When World War II broke out with the Nazi occupation of Norway, Sweden was a safer place, and Sandel remained there. As a matter of fact, she stayed there for good, spending more than half of her life, first in the Stockholm area and then from 1921 to 1974 in Uppsala[4].

Despite the elements of displacement and exile that marked her life, Cora Sandel was not torn between language and identity. She was clearly Norwegian and could regularly visit her home country except during the war years; she wrote all her books in *bokmål* – one of the two official standards of Norwegian adopted by a large majority of the population – and her settings, when not French, were Norwegian frequently from the northern province where she had grown up (Billing 2002, 56-67)[5].

[4] For relevant biographical information about Sara Fabricius / Cora Sandel see Solumsmoen 1957; Øverland 1995; and, more briefly, Billing 2002, 14-17; Jönsson 2005; Øverland 2005; Rees 2010, 28-41; Øverland 2012, 2022; Olsen 2022. Rees also discusses the problems of the biographical genre, i.e. how critics have dealt with the relationship between Fabricius' life and Sandel's fictional world (2010, 15-28; see also Billing 2002, 12-13, and Øverland 2022).

[5] AnnaCarin [*sic*] Billing (2002, 62) mentions in fact the linguistic problems Sandel had in keeping herself up to date on the spelling reforms of *bokmål* Norwegian, and in clearly distinguishing Norwegian and Swedish, as she had lived outside the social space of spoken Norwegian for such a long time. It may have required some effort, but to me as a reader of her novels, Sandel masters the differences and nuances between the two neighboring languages perfectly and with artistry.

3. Stivhatten, a Swedish character in a Norwegian novel

As a Norwegian writer, Sandel had a keen ear for linguistic variety, and there are traces of Swedish in her authorship, with the most remarkable being Stivhatten's voice. This man is the main secondary character (or even co-protagonist) in *Kranes konditori*. In my pocket edition, in small type, the novel consists of approximately 130 pages (Sandel 2007, 237-373); I have calculated that Stivhatten's direct speech amounts to almost nine pages. From a quantitative point of view, it is a limited portion of the text; however, Stivhatten's voice is so distinctive and so finely interwoven into the Norwegian fabric of the novel that it makes *Kranes konditori* one of the most stylistically accomplished works of Scandinavian 20th-century literature. The Swedish poet and critic Gunnar Ekelöf expressed this idea in his review, which considers both the original Norwegian edition and the newly published Swedish translation (Sandel 1946): «Cora Sandel's book is among the most essential ones in a long time; personally speaking I have read it four times since it came out (in Norwegian) last spring»[6]. Similarly, and over the same period, the Finland-Swedish writers Mirjan Tuominen (2017, 10; written in 1947 and first published in 1949) and Hagar Olsson (1948, 28) defined *Kranes konditori* as a masterpiece.

Stivhatten speaks Swedish because he is a Swede who lives in Norway. He is a former sailor who now works at the docks, and who supports the protagonist, the dressmaker Katinka Stordal in her protest against the majority of the provincial town in northern Norway. From a literary point of view, the qualitative impact of his voice as an outsider is connected to this circumstance; while the standpoint of the majority is expressed by the town's bourgeois, sententious and moralistic «chorus» that runs throughout the novel (in the extended sense of a collective voice conveyed by the narrator that simultaneously constructs the plot and comments on it), Stivhatten's

[6] Orig.: «Cora Sandels bok är en av de väsentligaste på länge, för min del kan jag gärna bekänna att jag läst den fyra gånger sedan den kom ut (på norska) i våras» (Ekelöf 1946, 882). The original edition of *Kranes konditori* indicates 1945 as its year of publication, but it was distributed and available for the first time in the spring of 1946. Translations are mine if not otherwise indicated.

voice stands alone, whether it be in opposition to the town, or caring and supportive toward Katinka.

4. Katinka's voice of disillusionment

In contrast, almost all of the people in the town think they have the right to reproach Katinka, who is divorced, middle-aged, slow at her job, rumored to be prone to drinking and the mother of two demanding youths who do not show much understanding of her, at least initially. Suddenly, Katinka refuses to be exploited by her clients and her children any longer and stops working one Saturday afternoon; she is exhausted and simply cannot take it anymore. Although her actions do not seem to have been planned in advance, it becomes a personal strike (Gimnes 1982, 63-64). Katinka remains sitting in the café drinking with Stivhatten, listening to his life story and exchanging views on life with him. Most of these views express disillusion and bitterness. Stivhatten is the more talkative of the two, and occasionally manages to prompt her to say something about her past life, for example about the time when she could have become a more creative dressmaker in Trondheim:

> Så är det i början. Och nu? Grund och skär och tjocka? Svårt att hålla kursen?
> Kursen? Det er ingen kurs. En likesom ikke eksisterer lenger, en er under med hele hodet. En tenker ikke lenger enn til penger og mat. I min alder – –.
> I din alder? Du är ung nog. Och söt i alla fall. Jag tycker, du är söt. Många är inte så noga dessutom. Dom ser mest till sinnelaget, dom lär sig det. Har du aldrig varit riktigt borta?
> Jeg var i Trondheim engang, for å lære mig sy. Hos Matheson, det flotteste firmaet nordenfjells. Jeg var alt skilt da. Det var under krigen, folk tjente penger, det gikk å få lånt litt. Morsomt, så lenge det varte, vi sydde pene ting der. Riktig pene. Fullt op av nydelige tøyer. Hadde en en ledig stund, kunde en gå og se på dem og sette dem sammen i tanken. Jeg blev flink, sa de. Men så kom jeg hit igjen da. Og her – –. (Sandel 1945, 112)

> 'That's how it is, to begin with. And now? Shallows and reefs and fog? Difficult to hold course?'
> 'Course? There is no course. I don't seem to exist any more [sic], I'm right under, head and all. All I think about is money and food. At my age –'

> 'At your age? You're young enough, and pretty into the bargain. I think you're pretty. Besides, plenty of people aren't so particular. They've learnt to be more concerned with someone's character… Have you really never travelled?'
> 'I was in Trondheim once, to learn dressmaking. At Matheson's, the best firm in North Norway. I was already separated then. It was during the war, people were earning money, I was able to borrow a little. It was fun as long as it lasted. We sewed beautiful things there. Really beautiful. It was chock-full of lovely materials. If you had any spare time you could go and look at them and make them up in your mind's eye. They said I was good at it. But then I came back here. And here…'. (1968, 97-98)[7]

Katinka remains sitting in the café on that Saturday and on the following day, causing the town to panic as her customers need new dresses for the town's forthcoming centenary celebrations, and Katinka is the only talented dressmaker who is up to the job. Of course, Katinka is not just a dressmaker. She is a creative artist – if only people understood that she needs time and peace to create: a room of her own one could say, borrowing from Virginia Woolf's famous statement[8]. Striving for independence as a woman artist, the main issue in Woolf's essay, is paramount for Katinka Stordal, who has to struggle to be respected both as a woman and an underpaid worker[9]. The novel *Kranes konditori* opens with two mottos that reflect both its bilingual character and its subject matter; one is in Norwegian, by Agnes Mowinckel, also a woman artist, actor and director; the other one is in Swedish, by the writer Hjalmar Söderberg. His motto, taken from his novel *Doktor Glas*, observes that poverty is the misfortune that affects you the most profoundly (Sandel 1945, 5; Söderberg 1905, 101). Even if not a

[7] Rokkan's translation loses the subtle bilingual quality of the original dialogues between Stivhatten and Katinka or, elsewhere, between Stivhatten and the representatives of the small town. No mention is found in the paratext of this edition (Sandel 1968) about this problem. See section 9 of this article for further discussion. In addition, the English version introduces inverted commas to mark direct speech; they are kept here.

[8] «[A] woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction» (Woolf 1977, 7). The essay *A Room of One's Own*, based on lectures held in 1928 and first published in 1929, considers the intersections of gender, (lack of) economic agency and artistic creativity that have shaped the subjugation of women for centuries. As such, it is a peak of 20th-century literature and literary criticism.

[9] Øverland sees the connection between Woolf's essay and Sandel's condition, as expressed through her novel's character Alberte (2012, end of the section «A female flaneur»).

strictly autobiographical novel, *Kranes konditori* reflects some of the author's life and work experience in quite an obvious manner.

5. Contexts and meaning of a bilingual novel

This bilingual novel has two preconditions. The first is that the author is proficient in both languages. The second is that the target cultural system is sufficiently receptive to accept that a literary work, written in *bokmål* Norwegian also includes parts written in Swedish, its neighboring language. Sandel's life story has been outlined above; in addition, Norwegians are, for several reasons, the most accepting of receptive multilingualism in Scandinavia.

Danish, Norwegian and Swedish, although national languages, have historically been part of the same North Germanic dialect continuum, and they are considered, as far as modern linguistics is able to measure, to be the closest among the European languages (Gooskens 2020). Within this primary Scandinavian community, mutual understanding and communication across national borders is possible be it with a certain amount of effort (Vikør 2001, 114-139; Lindgren, Havaas 2012). In particular, Norwegian and Swedish are the closest languages because their phonetic systems, and not only their written forms, are close, whereas the more distant Danish phonetic system requires additional effort in inter-Scandinavian oral communication. The Norwegian language can be seen as being somewhere between Danish and Swedish and is the youngest of the three as a modern national language. Norway was part of the Danish kingdom for more than four centuries (1380-1814); eventually Norway was included in the Swedish reign for almost one century, before it finally gained sovereignty in 1905. While written *bokmål* is a development of Danish, the other official standard of Norwegian, *nynorsk*, adopted by a minority of the population, shows kinship with the Swedish dialects, and is strong evidence of the dialect continuum in the Scandinavian peninsula. Finally, if one considers that Norwegians, in addition to their official national bilingualism, experience the multilingualism of their dialects on a day to day basis, it can be concluded that they are used to Scandinavian linguistic variety more so than Danes and Swedes (Vikør 2001, 121-127, 206-214).

Forms and expressions in the north Norwegian dialect are included in *Kranes konditori*, and this is also the case for *Alberte og Jakob*, which is explicitly set in Tromsø (Wærp 2005b, 99). It is therefore no exaggeration to say that Stivhatten's idiomatic Swedish, colloquial and at the same time distinguished, appears in *Kranes konditori* as just another variety – distinct enough to sound foreign, but close enough to be understood by the other characters, and by the Norwegian readership. Again, similar patterns are found in *Alberte og Jakob*, where the character Lady Buck, a former Swedish actor and the widow of a Norwegian captain, speaks an idiomatic Swedish, whereas her unruly daughter Beda, one of Alberte's true friends, can intentionally mix Swedish, *bokmål* and north Norwegian dialect in her speech (Sandel 1926, 24-29, 33, 75, 222-224, 253-254). As a matter of fact, the Norwegian reception of *Kranes konditori* has always considered the presence of Swedish in the novel as a factual feature, not giving it a second thought, and it is precisely the acceptance of this as the norm that makes it all the more interesting.

From a socio-linguistic point of view, the fictional creation of Stivhatten has a historical basis. Swedish movable labor force was a common feature in Norwegian society in the first half of the 20th century – especially in but not exclusive to the Northern regions. There was mobility across the national border between Norway and Sweden for both the *luffare* (Scandinavian tramps) and the *rallare* or railway navvies who crossed over in search for work[10]. In addition, Sandel's personal situation shows that the Swedish elements of her life (everyday living, language, society, culture and literature) enriched her Norwegian authorial profile in terms of stylistic skills and her points of reference. Her long-lived exchange of letters with her Norwegian friend and literary critic Odd Solumsmoen, who would author the first monograph on Cora Sandel (1957), serves as proof. In the early forties for example, Sandel was able to borrow her good friend the psychiatrist Eva Lagerwall's apartment in Beckomberga, a major psychiatric

[10] Sandel seems to have been inspired by conversations with a random man at a bus station in Stockholm, and considered the *rallare*-tradition, when creating Stivhatten (Solumsmoen 1957, 169-170; Øverland 1995, 324). See Örjan Lindberger (1986) about the *navvies* as a Swedish-Norwegian labor force and about their literary legacy.

hospital outside Stockholm, and work there undisturbed in a rather unusual room of her own (Øverland 1995, 311-321). Sandel believed that the world of lunatics and outsiders has something to teach those considered normal. Over the same period, Sandel read the Swedish woman writer Victoria Benedictsson (1850-1888) with great interest and assiduity (Eidsvik 2022, 96-97)[11]. However indirectly, these elements tell us something about the genesis of *Kranes konditori*.

Katinka and Stivhatten mainly speak in their own language while also understanding each other's language; «[c]haracteristic of Nordic language contexts is parallel lingualism, in which speakers of mutually comprehensible languages each use their own language without code-switching or translation» (Hansen, Bodin 2022, 166). The term «receptive multilingualism», adopted by Charlotte Gooskens (2020), underscores the skills required in this context of inter-Scandinavian communication. Still, the earlier term in use, «semi-communication», proposed by Haugen (1966) and discussed by Vikør (2001, 121-127), retains something useful for my understanding of the novel; the prefix 'semi-' implies the obstacles that must be overcome in order to make communication work, as well as the mutual motivation to do so, both on the sender's side and on that of the recipient: for the sake of effective communication, you need not only receptive listeners who are eager to understand, but also speakers who can make themselves understood.

In this respect, as Julia Tidigs underscores, literary multilingualism is not simply the reflection of socio-linguistic conditions; in literature, multilingualism becomes an artistic function of the text and is there to create effect in terms of style, narration and themes – ultimately, to create meaning (2014, 29-32, 40-41, 45-105). One thematic center of *Kranes konditori* is that Katinka and Stivhatten are outsiders who come across each other at a critical moment in time; they share an urge to communicate that bridges the gap between them despite their many differences. They can hear each

[11] See Cora Sandel's letters to Odd Solumsmoen on December 14, 1942, and March 28, 1943, about life at Beckomberga; and on June 14, 1944, July 9, 1944, September 4, 1944, and December 1, 1944, about Victoria Benedictsson (Nasjonalbiblioteket in Oslo: Brevs. 677). Extraordinary insight is offered, and not just from a literary point of view, into Beckomberga as a psychiatric institution in Sara Stridsberg's novel *Beckomberga: ode till min familj* (2014; *The Gravity of Love*, translated by Deborah Bragan-Turner, 2016).

other's voice beyond the rules of class and appearance, and they can speak about life beyond the conventions, small-mindedness and self-complacency of the small town. Thus, they can hear and understand each other despite language differences. As we can observe, they are able to borrow a word from the other's language, almost plucking it from what the other speaker has just said, and hence 'merge' their utterances in a linguistic, as well as an emotional and existential encounter. In the above-quoted passage, Stivhatten should have replied in Swedish «I din ålder?» («At your age?»); instead, he borrows from Katinka's Norwegian and almost identical expression and replies «I din alder?».

We find a similar occurrence when Stivhatten comments on Justus Gjør, Katinka's old friend and once her lover, a journalist who left the provincial town in the north and has now returned to visit for a news article. Just like Stivhatten, Gjør is the other character who shows an understanding for Katinka's protest against the town (Wærp 2005b, 107-108). Unlike Stivhatten however, Gjør tries to mediate between Katinka and the town. In a short dialogue, Stivhatten and Katinka borrow similar words from each other's language, again intertwining their voices in a uniquely bilingual way:

> Du – – den där du tyckte om en gång – – han är egentligen en hygglig kar.
> Jada.
> Tycker du om honom än?
> Jeg tycker ikke om noen. (Sandel 1945, 168)

> '[…] Listen, Katinka – that fellow you were sweet on once – he's a good fellow really.'
> 'Oh, yes.'
> 'Are you still sweet on him?'
> 'I'm not sweet on anyone.' (1968, 147)

Here, Stivhatten's speech shows the Norwegian spelling for *kar* (chap); in Swedish the spelling would be *karl*, although the word is also pronounced /kar/[12]. In a similar fashion, Katinka, in her reply to Stivhatten, uses the

[12] In the edition of *Kranes konditori* contained in Cora Sandel's *Samlede verker* (Collected works), volume 6, the spelling in this passage is the same (1951, 153). Later editions differ and read: «han är egentligen en hyggelig karl», with the Norwegian spelling of *hyggelig*

Swedish verb *tycka om*, the most common one meaning 'to like' or 'to be fond of'[13], which would normally correspond to the widely used Norwegian verb *like*, although *tykke om* also exists in Norwegian, but is less common. The author could have used the more unusual verb in Norwegian, as «Jeg tykker ikke om noen»; instead, she keeps to the Swedish spelling of the same verb in «Jeg tycker ikke om noen». As far as phonetics are concerned, it makes no difference; the spelling seems more of a stylistic marker, indicating Katinka's intention to stay close to Stivhatten's utterance. Stivhatten and Katinka can in fact play around with these minimal and frequently occurring differences between the two languages, for example when Stivhatten mentions that he would like to give her some daisies, called *tusensköna* in Swedish and *tusenfryd* in Norwegian («a thousand times beautiful» and «a thousand joys» respectively):

> Jag skulle vilja ge dig någonting. En blomma? Får jag inte ge dig en blomma? Jag såg bra vackra i blomsteraffären, då jag gick hit. Jag såg Bellis. Är inte det vackert, Bellis, säg? Så har du något att titta på i morgon. Då är det söndag. Och söndagen är den svåraste dagen, eller hur?
> Søndagen er den svåraste dagen, sier Katinka efter som en papegøye og taler halvt svensk, hun også. [...]
> Bellis? Sånnt vakkert navn. Det må være latin.
> Det vete fan. Vi säger så i Sverige. Fast många säger tusensköna.
> Tusensköna? Åja, tusenfryd.
> Just det, tusenfryd, tusen fröjder, sitter Stivhatten der og vrøvler. (1945, 50)

> 'I'd like to give you something. A flower? Won't you let me give you a flower? I saw some beautiful ones in the flower shop on my way here. I saw some *bellis*. Aren't *bellis* beautiful, don't you think? Then you'd have something to look at tomorrow. It's Sunday. And Sunday's the most difficult day, isn't it?'
> 'Sunday's the most difficult day,' repeated Katinka like a parrot, mimicking his Swedish accent. […]
> '*Bellis*? What a beautiful name! It must be Latin.'

(nice; Swedish *hygglig*) and the Swedish spelling of *karl* (1990, 168; 2007, 353). Norwegian and Swedish are so close that a single letter can at times determine whether a word is spelt in one language or the other. And these inconsistencies – whether a result of misprint or editing – are so minimal with respect to the understanding of the text, that critics have (comprehensibly) never paid any attention to them.

[13] Rokkan uses «to be sweet on», which means «to be in love with».

'God knows. That's what we call them in Sweden. Though a lot of people call them English daisies.'
'Oh yes, daisies.'
'That's right, daisies, daisies,' drivelled Bowler Hat. (1968, 43)

This kind of inter-Scandinavian word play is undoubtedly difficult to render in translation, a difficulty that is observed in Elizabeth Rokkan's changes and adjustments[14]. In the original novel, these are devices by which the metalinguistic dimension of the novel is kept alive, together with a deep sense of sharing human experience through words.

So-called false friends are a recurring obstacle in inter-Scandinavian communication. Since the two languages are so close, words with the same etymological origin may acquire different meanings and create misunderstandings. At the beginning of the novel, the waitress Sønstegård pretends not to understand Stivhatten whom she considers a despicable person and has just entered the café. He orders *bakelser* (creamy pastries in Swedish), but the same word in Norwegian – spelt *bakkels*, *bakkelse* or *bakelse* – commonly means a dry cookie, prepared on special occasions and feasts, and this is what Sønstegård knowingly chooses to understand:

En kaffe, två bakelser, ordinerer Stivhatten, han sitter der på den utekkelige måten sin, med bena utover gulvet og hatten på hodet. At ikke fru Krane kan si til om den hatten ialfall. Dårlig av henne.
Bakkelse har vi bare i julen. Sønstegård vil ikke forstå mer enn nødvendig er. Han kan gjerne vennes av med å gå her.
Er det småkaker, De vil ha, så har vi det, oplyser hun kort, uten å se på mannen. Ordren er å være imøtekommende mot kundene, og slikt sitter i.
Men Stivhatten er ufordragelig. Han hermer hennes norsk: Småkaker? Så sjutton heller. Stora kakor, riktiga kakor, med vispgrädde på. Mycket vispgrädde. Två. To. Genast. Straks vill säga. Förstått? (1945, 22)

[14] Another problem of Rokkan's translation, here and elsewhere, is that the original alternating use of the past and present simple tenses is not respected. Translating from Norwegian to English, this stylistic marker and authorial intention could and should have been kept. See Rees (2010, 8, 12-13, 40); and see section 7 of this article for further discussion.

> 'One coffee, two cream puffs,' prescribed Bowler Hat, sitting there in that improper manner of his, with his legs sprawling and his hat on his head. If only Mrs Krane would say something about that hat, at least. Foolish of her.
> 'We only have cream puffs at Christmas time.' Søstegård had no intention of understanding more than was strictly necessary. He might as well be discouraged from coming.
> 'If it's biscuits you want, we have them,' she informed him curtly, without looking at him. Her orders were to be obliging to the customers, and you get into the habit of that.
> But Bowler Hat was truculent. He mimicked her: 'Biscuits? Damn it all, I want big cakes, proper cakes, with whipped cream on top. Lots of whipped cream. *Två*. Two. *Genast*. At once, I mean. Understand?' (1968, 18-19)

As the novel's text underscores, communication is also a matter of will – whether you *want* to understand or prefer not to. Thanks to his bilingual expertise, and his 'rude' character, Stivhatten is able to unmask this kind of complacent attitude.

6. Multilingualism as literary heteroglossia

All the above-quoted passages have evidenced how *Kranes konditori* works as a bilingual Norwegian-Swedish novel. The last one also emphasizes how its multilingualism operates in the specific manner examined by literary scholars Leo Spitzer and Mikhail Bakhtin. As we see, the function of the narrator's voice is to adopt the collective perspective of the town in judging the scandal that has taken place. Previous research has offered useful analysis of the collective voice in *Kranes konditori* and of its workings (Lervik 1977, 193-203; Björck 1978, 184-186; Wærp 2005b; Pantaleoni 2023, 52-86)[15]. What I would like to elaborate on here, is the connection between Sandel's technique in this novel and the development of the European novel as a genre, considering both the literary output and the theoretical response to it[16].

[15] Other sources have incidentally observed this trait. See Olsson 1948, 25, 28; Moberg 1955, 44; Lervik 1979, 216; Hunt 1986, 5-6.

[16] Matteo Pantaleoni's master's dissertation at Ca' Foscari University in Venice (2023), whom I tutored, includes the discussion of Spitzer and Bakhtin.

The town's voice in *Kranes konditori* is based on what Spitzer defines as *erlebte Rede* in German, free indirect speech. Formally, it is the narrator's voice speaking, but this voice either contains and echoes the spoken voice of the town chorus, or the voice of individuals, when they express the values of the town. Spitzer, an Austrian Romanist who enlarged the scope of stylistic and comparative literary studies, dedicated an essay to the Italian and Sicilian novel *I Malavoglia* by Giovanni Verga (1880), translated into English as *The House by the Medlar Tree*, and the most representative literary work of Italian Naturalism, called 'Verismo' in the Italian literary tradition and historiography. The first French translation of the novel, *Les Malavoglia*, was published in Paris in 1887[17], which at the very least indicates that it was present in the French cultural system when Sandel lived in Paris and France.

Spitzer uses the word *coro* (chorus) to define the notion of the collective voice and conscience of the fishing village, Aci Trezza, which consistently comments on the tragic events concerning the Malavoglias, a local fisherman's family:

> From the outset, Verga plunges us into the local atmosphere and gives us the illusion that we are hearing a collective being, a "chorus" […]. Through his outstanding art, Verga makes us perceive the chorus […] as a composite, anonymous character, who does not even appear with an explicit pronoun. […]. The originality of Verga's technique in *I Malavoglia* consists, thus, not in the use of *erlebte Rede* as such, which had been practiced by the classical Italian novelists as well as by all great French nineteenth-century novelists, as in the *systematic* way his narration of a whole novel is filtered, from the first to the last chapter, through a semi-real chorus of speakers of the people […]. [I]t is precisely "what is heard" that forms the plot of the novel. And "what is heard" is precisely the ground of *erlebte Rede*.[18]

[17] *OPAC SBN. Catalogo del Servizio Bibliotecario Nazionale*. URL: <https://opac.sbn.it/web/opacsbn> (01/2025).

[18] Orig.: «Il Verga ci immerge dal principio nell'atmosfera locale, e ci dà l'illusione di esser presenti al parlare di un ente collettivo, di un "coro" […]. Con la sua arte somma il Verga ci fa sentire il coro […] come un personaggio composito, anonimo, che non appare neanche in un pronome esplicato. […] L'originalità della tecnica del Verga dei *Malavoglia* consiste dunque, non nell'uso dell'*erlebte Rede* coltivato dai romanzieri classici italiani come da tutti i grandi romanzieri francesi dell'Ottocento, ma nella filtrazione *sistematica* della sua narrazione di un romanzo intero, dal primo fino all'ultimo capitolo, attraverso un coro di parlanti popolari semi-reale […]. [È] proprio "quello che si ode" che forma la trama del romanzo. E "quello che

Krane's konditori undoubtedly adopts the same technique, and the results of Spitzer's accurate analysis can also be applied to the Norwegian novel, acquiring a more general meaning from a theoretical and comparative point of view. However, while *erlebte Rede* in *I Malavoglia* conveys a tragic story and atmosphere, in *Kranes konditori* it results in dark comedy, whereby the chorus' utterances elicit a sense of irony and parody in the reader, directed against the chorus (Lervik 1977, 197-198; Gimnes 1982, 54-55; Wærp 2005b, 100, 116), as well as against the characters who reproach Katinka and represent the town's small-mindedness (Langholm 1981). Through the stylistic device of *erlebte Rede*, the implied author of the Norwegian novel makes the readers feel sympathy for Katinka and Stivhatten, who are victims of the narrow-mindedness conveyed, through the narrator, by the chorus.

Bakhtin's essay «Discourse in the Novel» explains why and how this genre can render the plurality, diversity and even the conflict of social languages, accents and world views – which he calls *raznorečie* in Russian, translated into English as heteroglossia by Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist – and how the social space of the novel is an artistic construct by which the writer can make a cosmos out of this manifold, contradictory and multi-voiced reality. A series of observations in this long essay, written in the mid-1930s, are seminal for the history of the European novel, or at least for the specific dialogic and multilingual quality pertaining to it as a genre. And although Sandel's prose is out of Bakhtin's line of sight, it appears clear that it holds a place in the same history and development. Bakhtin writes:

> The novel orchestrates all its themes, the totality of the world of objects and ideas depicted and expressed in it, by means of the social diversity of speech types [*raznorečie*] and by the differing individual voices that flourish under such conditions. Authorial speech, the speeches of narrators, inserted genres, the speech of characters are merely those fundamental compositional units with whose help heteroglossia [*raznorečie*] can enter the novel […]. (2004, 263; brackets and italics by the editors)

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si ode" è proprio il terreno dell'*erlebte Rede*» (Spitzer 1976, 304-306; Spitzer's italics). Spitzer's essay «L'originalità della narrazione nei "Malavoglia"» (The originality of narration in "I Malavoglia") was first published in Italian, in the Italian journal *Belfagor* (vol. 11, n. 1 [1956]: 37-53). It was eventually republished in a collection of Spitzer's Italian studies, *Studi italiani* (1976), and this later source is employed here.

> The orientation of the word amid the utterances and languages of others, and all the specific phenomena connected with this orientation, takes on *artistic* significance in novel style. Diversity of voices and heteroglossia enter the novel and organize themselves within it into a structured artistic system. This constitutes the distinguishing feature of the novel as a genre. (Ivi, 300; Bakhtin's italics)

In Bakhtin's opinion, literary stylistics should be more concerned with «the social life of discourse outside the artist's study, discourse in the open spaces of public squares, streets, cities and villages, of social groups, generations and epochs» (ivi, 259). In Spitzer's research which was already evolving in the 1920s, Bakhtin recognizes an endeavor that moves in a similar direction, since Spitzer «came close […] to dealing with the problem of the artistic representation of another's speech – which is the central problem of novelistic prose» (ivi, 337). Bakhtin's analysis of the ironic and parodic mode in Charles Dickens' novel *Little Dorrit* (1855-1857) comes close to what Spitzer describes as the collective form of *erlebte Rede* that finds expression in a chorus (ivi, 302-308). Here, Bakhtin observes how Dickens' novel produces a «parodic stylization of that everyday language of banal society gossip», «the speech of 'current opinion'». Bakhtin defines it as a «hybrid construction», in the sense that the authorial unmasking of social hypocrisy occurs as the narrator adopts that same hypocritical speech, with a parodic intention:

> What we are calling a hybrid construction is an utterance that belongs, by its grammatical (syntactic) and compositional markers, to a single speaker, but that actually contains mixed within it two utterances, two speech manners, two styles, two "languages,", two semantic and axiological belief systems. […] [T]here is no formal – compositional and syntactic – boundary between these utterances, styles, languages, belief systems; the division of voices and languages takes place within the limits of single syntactic whole, often within the limits of a simple sentence. (Ivi, 304-305)

Bakhtin defines «quasi-direct discourse» as the «examples of an intrusion of the emotional aspects of someone else's speech into the syntactic system of authorial speech», and he concludes: «With only three templates for speech transcription (direct speech […], indirect speech […] and quasi-direct speech […]) a great variety is nevertheless made possible in the treatment of character speech» (ivi, 320). A final, relevant observation by

Bakhtin is that this narrative mode is also metanarrative and metalinguistic: it exposes speech and creates an «artistic image of a language» (ivi, 359), «the novelistic hybrid is *an artistically organized system for bringing different languages in contact with one another*, a system having as its goal the illumination of one language by means of another» (ivi, 361; Bakhtin's italics).

With specific reference to *Kranes konditori*, Wærp underscores that the novel has two foci and two objects of inquiry: individual destinies on the one hand, and the very dynamics of gossiping on the other; these dynamics of discourse produce what Wærp defines «småbyens kompakte trivialitet» (2005b, 111), the compact triviality of the small town[19]. A concluding example of how *Kranes konditori* can interweave individual and collective perspectives can be seen in the following passage, where the respectable Mrs. Breien has come to fetch Katinka from the café, trying to get her to go back to work. Her voice and gestures conflict with Stivhatten, who firmly supports Katinka's refusal; meanwhile, the chorus' comments are heard in the narrator's voice:

> Akta Er för henne, sier han til Katinka.
> Tenk så uforskammet.
> Fru Breien ofrer ham naturligvis ikke den minste opmerksomhet. Og hvad enn fru Stordal gjør, hun sier intet. Ikke da.
> Men Stivhatten fremturer: Låt inte henne få tag på Er. Hon bara gör en fattiglapp av Er. Jag menar, hon får Er att känna Er som en fattiglapp. Och då är det *slut*.
> Så går vi da Katinka, sier fru Breien rolig og overhører det frekke mennesket: Jeg skal samme veien. Kom nå.
> Får hon där råda, blir det ingenting kvar av Er. Stivhatten reiser sig og kommer frem på gulvet: Såna som hon kan göra usla tiggare av oss allihop.
> Tenk å si sånt om den snilde fru Breien. Til henne sier han: Låt Ni den stackarn vara. Hon är trött, ser Ni väl. (Sandel 1945, 30)
>
> 'Watch out for *her*,' he said to Katinka.
> Imagine, the impertinence!

[19] «Den kompakte trivialitet» was already used by Lervik (1977, 208) as an expression connected with the collective voice in *Kranes konditori*. It refers to the winged words «den kompakte majoritet» (the compact majority), taken from Henrik Ibsen's play *En folkefiende* (*An Enemy of the People*) from 1882.

> Naturally Mrs Breien took not the slightest notice. And whatever Mrs Stordal *did*, she *said* nothing. Not at that point.
> But Bowler Hat persisted. 'Don't let her get a hold on you. All she'll do is turn you into a pauper. And then you're *finished*.'
> 'We'll go now, shall we, Katinka?' said Mrs Breien calmly, ignoring this impudent person. 'I'm going your way. Come along.'
> 'If you let her decide, there'll be nothing left of you.' Bowler Hat got to his feet and advanced across the room. 'People like her can turn the lot of us into miserable beggars.'
> Imagine saying that about kind Mrs Breien! He turned to her and said, 'Leave the poor woman alone. Can't you see she's tired? (1968, 25-26)

7. Discourse, time and the small-town space

Kranes konditori has many speakers and listeners, all of whom concerned with the same scandal: Katinka has stopped working. The opening of the novel defines the temporal frames of this event through a skillful use of verb tenses; the scandal has already taken place, it is a past event still echoing in the present, whereby the narrator alternates past and present tenses:

> Det var jo ikke bare skandalen i og for sig[20]. Det var all uroen for om det skulde ordne sig. Knappe otte dager til hunderårsfesten, den største festen i byens historie.
> [...]
> Bokstavelig talt hørt og sett blev ikke hver smitt og smule, det er klart. Men to og to er fire for den, som kan legge sammen aldri så lite. Og tre var de der, fru Krane selv, frøken Larsen og frøken Søstegård. Eller Larsen og Søstegård som stamgjestene sier. Den ene oppfattet ditt, den andre datt. Og er en først innstilt på å ha øyne og øren med sig – –. (1945, 11)

> Mannen [Stivhatten] albuer sig gjennem den halvåpne skyvedøren til privaten, setter sig ved vindusbordet derinne, slapt, med hatten fremdeles på, og bena utover gulvet. Fru Krane bøyer sig frem, ser altsammen og sier: St, st, st. Fra

[20] The edition in *Samlede verker* corresponds to the above-quoted first edition on this point (Sandel 1951, 8-9), but later editions read: «Det er jo ikke bare skandalen i og for sig», with the present tense (1990, 11; 2007, 242).

> første ferd hadde hun følelsen av at noe leit forestod, sa hun siden. Hvordan hun da kunde la det gå så langt, som det gikk, er virkelig ikke til å forstå. (Ivi, 21)

Unfortunately, this stylistic choice disappears in the English translation due to a debatable domestication principle, which conveys the whole action in a standardized simple past:

> After all, it wasn't just the scandal itself. It was all the uncertainty about whether everything would turn out all right. Scarcely a week to the Centenary Ball, the biggest ball in the history of the town.
> [...]
> Every crumb wasn't actually heard or seen, of course. But even those who have difficulty adding up can make two and two equal four. And there were three of them there, Mrs Krane herself, Miss Larsen and Miss Sønstegård. Or Larsen and Sønstegård as the regulars say. The one caught a hint here, the other there. And if you set your mind on keeping your eyes and ears open… (1968, 8-9)

> The man [Stivhatten] elbowed his way through the half-open sliding door into the parlor and sat down at the window table, slouching, his hat still on his head and his legs sprawled in front of him. Mrs Krane leaned forward, took it all in and said, 'Tut, tut, tut'. From the very beginning she had a feeling that something dreadful was going to happen, she said afterwards. So how she could let matters go as far as they did is beyond understanding. (Ivi, 17-18).

As we can see in the original text, the diegetic parts serve two purposes: they record what *is happening* whilst commenting with the benefit of hindsight on what *happened*. The continuation of the novel mainly employs the present tense to this end, but it is important that the start of it defines the temporal levels through the interaction of past and present tenses, which is an admirable achievement, as it shows the process through which collective discourse turns a past event into an ongoing scandal[21].

The process also suggests a spatial dimension, as the event is/was in fact, limited to the interior of the café but, through the fundamental mediation of

[21] I do not find it necessary to resort to two different narrators, an identifiable «frame narrator» who uses the past tense and an unidentifiable narrative voice that uses the present tense (Bretteville-Jensen 1969; Rees 2000, 182-183; 2010, 134-135). The same sententious, prude and discriminating voice is speaking, whether in the past or in the present tense. See Lervik's analysis (1977, 202-203, 239 n. 2).

the three eyewitnesses and eavesdroppers Krane, Larsen and Sønstegård, becomes a version of the facts shared by the town as a community and chorus. In fact, Lady Krane's position in the novel becomes ambivalent and particularly interesting; she can be considered as the first source of the town's sententious attitude, but at the same time it would be wrong to identify the narrator's voice entirely with Lady Krane's position. She is a fundamental eyewitness and, in fact, the first to judge the event, but once the episode becomes a collective scandal, shared by all the righteous persons in town, even Lady Krane is open to reproach by the chorus for her hesitation and lack of initiative; she should have got rid of the troublesome Stivhatten from the very start, according to public opinion (Lervik 1977, 200-202, 217-219; Wærp 2005b, 105-106). This effect adds to the multilingual and polyphonic quality of *Kranes konditori*, which in «Discourse in the Novel» Bakhtin defines as heteroglossia.

8. The challenges of adaptation from novel to play and film

The examples above suggest that *Kranes konditori* is a 'theatrical' novel, or at least that its form is inspired by some basic dramatic conventions; this experimental hybridity has been underscored by scholars and critics[22]. The subtitle of the novel is «An Interior with Figures», and its two parts are called «First picture» and «Second picture» («Første billede» and «Annet billede»), which could easily correspond to the acts, or scenes of a play (in Rokkan's translation «Scene One» and «Scene Two»). The two-day action plays out in the interior of the café over the course of a weekend, which is unusual in a novel; limitations such as the unity of time, place and action belong more so to the history and tradition of drama. The adapter of *Kranes konditori* for the stage in 1946, Norwegian playwright Helge Krog, evidently found a text that was already 'prepped' in this respect (1963)[23]. However, there can also be additions in performance adaptation (Hutcheon

[22] Ekelöf (1946, 881); Salomsmoen (1957, 174-179); Lervik (1979); Øverland (1995, 322-328); Rees (2000, 2010, 147-158); Pantaleoni (2023, 36-38, 46-48).

[23] I have been able to read the 1963-version of the play script by Krog, typewritten at the time for a television production. The pages of the script are unnumbered.

2013, 37); Krog filled one gap, the main ellipsis in the novel, for which he added a new act in the middle (now the second act), showing what 'really' happens between Stivhatten and Katinka at Stivhatten's place on Saturday night, in between the two days spent at the café, thus explicating what is implicit and partly unknown in the novel (Lervik 1979). In a creative way, the Norwegian film version of the novel (and of the play), directed by the Danish director Astrid Henning-Jensen in 1951, develops this interlude situation; in addition, it exploits – as a film would normally do – the technical possibilities of exterior settings and environments in the small town (Henning-Jensen 1951, cf. Hutcheon 2013, 42, 64, 123-124). The effect produced by the novel is that the whole town seems to take part in the action, although we never move outdoors. The wider social space – with its norms, hierarchies and relations – is conveyed by the dialogues among the many characters who happen to be at the café at one time or another. This aspect certainly gives the novel its basic dramatic structure, but the constant presence of the chorus – a narrator's resource intertwined with dialogue – amplifies the collective and polyphonic trait. The mimetic and the diegetic elements interact, so that we can imagine these choral voices both inside and outside the café, in the wider space of the town.

As already noted, one could say that this novel contains or 'is prepped' for a play, and that a play can be 'extracted' from the novel through adaptation. This is what has happened in both Norway and Sweden, where *Kranes konditori* has also been part of the cultural canon in its adaptations for the stage as well as for radio, TV drama and film[24]. As far as Norwegian-Swedish bilingualism is concerned, we can observe that Norwegian adaptations of the novel to stage and film have always preserved Stivhatten's Swedish voice as a distinctive trait, with Swedish male actors playing him, including those parts that Sandel never wrote, which were added in the adaptation process

[24] I have considered, for Norway, the script for the stage adaptation by Helge Krog (here 1963, originally from 1946), the film version by director Astrid Henning-Jensen (1951), and a more recent stage adaptation by Otto Homlung and Tine Thomassen (2001), which does not include Krog's interlude at Stivhatten's place. For Sweden, I have considered the script for the stage adaptation, co-authored by the actor and director Allan Edwall and the writer Kristina Lugn (1999). A thorough examination of the adaptations of *Kranes konditori* to stage and film is in Rees (2010, 147-158).

from novel to play (Lervik 1979; Gimnes 1982, 61, 65, 68-69; Lervik 1990, 198-200). However, adaptation strategies have not been able to preserve the novel's chorus, or heteroglossia, since the parts that convey the town's sententious gossiping were removed.

As Linda Hutcheon explains in *A Theory of Adaptation*, adaptations often face a challenge in the shift from the printed page of prose narrative to performance on stage or in film, or better said, in changing the «mode of engagement» from telling to that of showing. While refusing to consider such a shift in terms of loss, and therefore rejecting the idea of a hierarchy (a purported superiority of the prior, original work to the adapted work), Hutcheon underscores how different sets of formal conventions in different modes, genres or media both constrain and enable, simultaneously limiting and opening up to new possibilities, thus highlighting different aspects of a story (Hutcheon 2013, xvi, xvii, 10-13, 19, 22-26, 34-42, 121). Dramatization, she observes, generally implies a distillation and a reduction in the size and complexity of a narrative text. The narrator function, with its subtle use of voice and point of view, must be transcoded into direct speech, action and aural or visual signs. The number of characters and voices is, from narrative prose to performing arts, often reduced: «because each character/voice must be aurally distinguishable, there cannot be too many of them» (ivi, 41). In its adaptation for the stage, *Kranes konditori* cannot contain the narrator's voice, a resource that pertains to narrative prose. Therefore, it cannot contain the chorus, as *erlebte Rede* is a device that pertains to a narrator. Without this narrative device, essential to *Kranes konditori* as a novel, there remains a basic plot centered around individual destinies in a small-town context (Lervik 1977, 231, 1990, 200; Wærp 2005b, 112-116). Staffan Björck observes: «*Kranes Café* has had such a success as drama, for the theatre, the film and the radio. Why paradoxical? Because the novel […] makes such an extreme use of the privilege of the epic delegation, unknown to the playwright»[25]. Ellen Rees notes this reduction (2000, 188; 2010, 149-150, 152, 155-156); at

[25] Orig.: «Kranes konditori [har] haft en sådan framgång som drama, för teatern, filmen och radion. Varför paradoxalt? Därför att romanen [...] gör ett så extremt bruk av den episka delegationens privilegium, okänt för dramatikern» (Björck 1978, 185). A similar argument is in Lervik 1979, 216.

the same time, she claims that Sandel in *Kranes konditori* wanted to «escape» and break free from the limits of the novel (2000, 181-182; 2010, 133-134). I would argue, on the contrary, that the novel as a genre offered the author specific resources that enabled her to artistically render the multilingualism that constructs the social space. This was also clear to Sandel, who ultimately considered *Kranes konditori* a novel[26], although she had chosen «An Interior with Figures» as its subtitle, and had certainly written a uniquely hybrid novel, that hinted at a dramatic structure, as noted above.

If one could imagine a new adaptation of *Kranes konditori* for the stage, the function of the ancient Greek chorus could be reused. But firstly, it would have to be a parodic use, since the Greek chorus was meant as a truly higher consciousness governing the plot of human affairs, and secondly, the Greek chorus resorts to self-contained parts in the tragedies, whereas the chorus in *Kranes konditori*, as we have seen, is interspersed with dialogue and is quite inseparable from it.

9. A multilingual novel and its (un)translatability

Literary multilingualism has always existed (Tidigs 2014, 13-18; Huss, Tidigs 2023), but the increasing theoretical interest of the last decades sees it often in connection with the contemporary process of globalization and unprecedented migration, or with the experiments of Modernism in the first half of the 20th century (Hansen, Bodin 2022; Raveggi 2023). Alessandro Raveggi reflects upon the consequences of multilingualism on the practice and theory of translation, concluding that translation tends to homogenize and eliminate the differences, variety and instability which characterize multilingual literature. Therefore, he concludes in support of the argument put forward by «non-translation studies» (Raveggi 2023, 9-59, 125-135; see also Tidigs 2014, 59-61), which plead for resistance to translation, and instead favor the theory of untranslatability in a stance against world literature, seen more as an oppressive rather than a liberating force.

[26] Sandel in Øverland (1995, 328), and in Rees (2010, 152). See also Sandel's letter to Odd Solumsmoen on September 6, 1947, Nasjonalbiblioteket in Oslo: Brevs. 677.

To me as a literary scholar and translator, a general non-translation theory seems too pure, absolute and abstract, and I think that perspectives introduced by the cultural turn in translation studies work in favor of and not against difference. However, a specific case where the non-translation argument is potentially viable is within the cultural system of the three neighboring, continental Scandinavian languages Danish, Norwegian and Swedish. For example, Gun-Britt Sundström, the Swedish writer who is also the translator of Sandel's Alberte-trilogy, questions the practice of translating Norwegian literature into Swedish altogether. Her statement is as clear as it can be on the matter:

> Såna som jag borde inte finnas. Det borde inte behövas några som översätter skönlitteratur mellan norska och svenska. Visserligen kan vi ha svårt att förstå grannländernas talade språk utan vidare, men det är faktiskt inte svårt att förstå de andra nordiska språken i skrift och vänja sig vid att läsa dem. Alla som har svenska eller norska eller danska som modersmål har tillgång till två andra språks litteraturer nästan gratis, det är en fantastisk gåva vi har i de skandinaviska språkens likhet, och det är synd och skam att vi inte tar vara på den gåvan bättre. (2005, 21)

> Such people like me should not exist. People who translate literature between Norwegian and Swedish should not be needed. It can be difficult indeed to understand our spoken neighbouring languages without further ado, but it is not difficult to understand the other Nordic languages in written form and get used to reading them. All those who have Swedish or Norwegian or Danish as a mother tongue have access to the literature of the other two languages almost for free; what a fantastic gift we have in this similarity among the Scandinavian languages, and it is a pity and a shame that we do not cherish this gift better.

Ekelöf explains, in his review of the first and only Swedish translation of *Kranes konditori* (Sandel 1946), why Ann-Mari Lindberger's work is unsatisfactory:

> Vad den svenska översättningen beträffar kan den inte sägas vara lyckad, men det är också ett ogörligt företag att översätta en bok där en av personerna, och en av de viktigaste, hela tiden talar en för övrigt utmärkt väl träffad bättre sjömanssvenska. Kontrasten mot norskan har gått förlorad, och översättningens degradering av "kubbens" mål för att få till stånd åtminstone någon nivåskillnad

> i de talandes språk är egentligen ett helgerån. [...] Boken *bör* läsas på norska. (Ekelöf 1946, 882; Ekelöf's italics)

> As to the Swedish translation, it cannot be said to be successful; it must however be an impracticable enterprise to translate a book where one of the characters, and a main character as well, all the time speaks a distinguished sailor-man Swedish, by the way exceptionally well caught by the author. The contrast with Norwegian is lost, and the translation's degradation of *Kubben*'s language, to produce at least some difference in register in the speakers' language, is, as a matter of fact, a sacrilege. […] The book *must* be read in Norwegian.

There is, on the one hand, the objective, unsolvable dilemma of the interplay and contrast of Norwegian and Swedish that gets lost in a Swedish translation. On the other hand, there is a strategy that would not seem compatible with today's ethics of translation, and that in 1946 already elicited Ekelöf's objection. Ann-Mari Lindberger arbitrarily changes Stivhatten's Swedish language (Sandel's true masterpiece as a bilingual author), to emphasize the difference in register between his language and the language spoken in the small town. Ekelöf is right; Stivhatten's utterances should not be changed in a Swedish translation and Ann-Mari Lindberger's emphatic changes do not seem necessary, also because the original text already displays a difference between Stivhatten's frank and direct utterances and the collectively hypocritical language of the small town. Additionally, Ann-Mari Lindberger changes the character's name from Stivhatten to Kubben, which again elicits an objection on the part of Ekelöf and rightly so. The word *stivhatt* does not exist either in Swedish or Norwegian; the name Stivhatten, «The Rigid Hat», is a literary creation and a fully comprehensible compound in both Swedish and Norwegian, as in both languages the adjective *stiv* means rigid and the noun *hatt* means hat. Strictly speaking Bowler hat is *kubb* in Swedish and, with a loan, *bowlerhatt* in Norwegian.

Kranes konditori would be better appreciated in Sweden if Swedish readers were willing to read the novel untranslated, but at the present time this remains somewhat unlikely. This is yet another facet of receptive multilingualism that is specific to continental Scandinavia, and that connects the Danish, Norwegian and Swedish languages in a unique way. It is a great communicative possibility, as Sundström underscores, which requires con-

scious motivation and effort. Proficiency in English as a second language among Scandinavians, however, often makes it easier, and more equalizing, for them to skip the obstacles of 'code noise' in semi-communication, and, as a result, they tend to lose or ignore Scandinavian receptive multilingualism as a useful resource in both oral and written communication.

In other cases – that is, when introducing Sandel's *Kranes konditori* outside continental Scandinavia – I do not think that the non-translation strategy is viable. The intended target group of the original novel, the Norwegian reading public, understood and continues to understand Stivhatten's speech; besides, Katinka and Stivhatten really 'speak the same language' with each other over the course of the two days, and the differences in register and tone between our two heroes on the one hand, and their environment on the other, can be rendered within any target language, if translators do their job properly. Even the loss of Stivhatten's Swedish difference can be, as Umberto Eco would say, «negotiated» (2003), and modern ethics of translation would at least mention, at a paratextual level, the kind of text that *Kranes konditori* is, in its original version, and why and how it is bilingual, as the translator Maria Valerio D'Avino does in her opening «note to the reader» in the invaluable Italian edition of *Caffè Krane* («Avvertenza al lettore», in Sandel 2002, 10). A brilliant example of how D'Avino *can* translate and yet preserve the language difference, is the above-quoted dialogue between Stivhatten and Katinka about the daisies (ivi, 57-58).

10. Conclusion: *Kranes konditori* as a Norwegian and European novel

Kranes konditori becomes a more comprehensible work of art when certain biographical and socio-linguistic contexts are explained, such as Sandel's personal multilingualism, Scandinavian receptive multilingualism, and the way it is practiced in the Norwegian cultural system. At the same time, these factors do not give sufficient credit to the novel. On the contrary, it is daring and experimental in both its bilingualism, through the presence of Stivhatten and the interplay of Norwegian with Swedish, and its polyphonic multilingualism, thanks to the town chorus at the narrator's disposal. As Sandel wrote in a letter to Solumsmoen on June 22, 1947, the creation of

her beloved Stivhatten, compelled her to stretch the formal possibilities of the novel to the limit (Nasjonalbiblioteket in Oslo: Brevs. 677).

Highlighting the Norwegian, and even the North-Norwegian aspects of Sandel's authorship should not make us forget that she was, from an early age and even before her move to France, an eager reader of European literature. If we are to believe that *Alberte og Jakob* depicts some truth about the author's life experience, we see that the reading of novels was already of vital importance to that teenage girl freezing in Tromsø, and that French novels were cherished by her, especially because they were forbidden; Guy de Maupassant's *Bel-Ami* (Sandel 1926, 46) is one example. Reading experiences continued to inspire Fabricius / Sandel in Paris while she was trying to become a painter; reading eventually encouraged her to find her own way and her voice as a writer. As Sandel explained (1954), Colette's works and life experience were particularly important with regard to themes and style, and to the example of a hard-earned independence and freedom as a woman writer and artist. Sandel's literary formation during her time in France and for the rest of her life in Sweden, included reading a great number of international authors as well as Scandinavian classics (Billing 2002, 56-67; Eidsvik 2022, 88-99), grounding her in the 19th-century literature of Realism and Naturalism, as well as making her well-acquainted with the tendencies of Modernism (Billing 2002, 45-55).

Sandel's development as a prose writer ran parallel to a growing awareness in European literary theory, as seen in the studies of Spitzer and Bakhtin, of «the problem of the artistic representation of another's speech – which is the central problem of novelistic prose» (Bakhtin 2004, 337). In Scandinavia, Sandel was not the only writer to make significant progress in this regard. Hjalmar Bergman's fictional, Swedish small-town universe in *Markurells i Wadköping* from 1919 (*The Markurells of Wadköping*) shows similarities to Katinka's environment in northern Norway (Ciaravolo 2022). Again, the regional, northern, and at times culturally specific traits of this production do not contradict their belonging to the broader context of the European novel.

Self-imposed limitations in form produce new creativity in *Kranes konditori*. The indoor space of the café becomes representative of the collective, social space of the town through the characters' direct speech and

through the skillful use of the narrator's voice to render the wider space of the town. Important details are referred to such as architecture, settings and landscapes, but we perceive the space more strongly in terms of social norms and hierarchies.

In the case of the adaptation of the novel *Kranes konditori* to stage and film, it is important to consider not only the losses (the narrator's possibility to render the town's polyphony; the different temporal levels of the novel) but also the gains. As Linda Hutcheon observes, adaptations correspond to the fundamental pleasure of experiencing a cherished story again, but in a new mode, a repetition with modification (2013, xiii-xviii, 3-4, 9, 21, 114, 117, 175-177). From the point of view of reception theory, reuse and actualization historically create and confirm what we call classics; works of art do not become classics thanks to a superior or timeless norm, but because they can be reenacted, reaching new horizons of expectation (Jauß 1974, 183-189). It is a fact that *Kranes konditori* has been kept alive in both the Norwegian and the Swedish cultural system on stage, and even as a film. In the Norwegian productions it has remained bilingual, hence confirming the general openness of the Norwegian cultural system toward Scandinavian multilingualism. In the Swedish play script by Allan Edwall and Kristina Lugn (1999, 20), readers and audiences understand from the very start, thanks to several spatial and linguistic markers, that the scene is set in northern Norway, and that Stivhatten is Swedish, a Swede in Norway. Even here, as in D'Avino's Italian translation, the dialogue about the daisies between Stivhatten and Katinka is an example that shows that it is possible to render the sense of difference between Norwegian and Swedish in translation.

Finally, even contemporary ethics of translation encourage us to reflect upon the gains and possibilities of the process, and not only upon its losses (Håkanson 2021, 26-30). The specific challenges of *Kranes konditori* include finding a viable balance between respect for the specific traits of the text and for the authorial intentions expressed in it, as well as the creativity required to negotiate the losses without eliminating the differences, and the kinship between Norwegian and Swedish. Other aspects, such as the polyphonic effect of the town chorus and the double temporality, can be solved by a competent translation. For paratextual purposes it makes sense to make

readers aware of the biographical, artistic and sociolinguistic contexts that have made *Kranes konditori* possible. If we believe that this novel is at the same time Norwegian, Nordic and European, it certainly deserves a wide and diverse readership that goes beyond regional and national borders.

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