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A New Look at Recital Song Translation

The University of Texas at Dallas

Modern Scandinavian Literature in Translation at the University of Nebraska Press

by Anita Hodge

More than 50,000 books are published in the United States yearly, creating an extremely competitive market, especially for non-English works. Nonetheless, the University of Nebraska Press intended to corner its share of that market by developing the Modern Scandinavian Literature in Translation (MSLT) series, targeting previously untranslated Scandinavian works. Nebraska is not the first university press to embark on a such a venture; between 1965 and 1970, the University of Wisconsin Press published fourteen volumes in its Nordic Translation Series. According to both Harald S. Naess, the former editor of the Nordic Translation Series, and Niels Ingwersen, the current editor of *Scandinavian Studies*, a major contributing factor to the demise of the Wisconsin series was that specialists in Scandinavia, not in the United States, made publication decisions. Those specialists were interested primarily in disseminating classic works, with no attention to what the American market would bear. Another factor was the publication of hardcover copies only, which proved too expensive for classroom use. MSLT, however, avoids those shortcomings. Both Naess and Ingwersen agree that in America, MSLT holds the reins tightly and conducts superior market research, which should increase the longevity of the series.

The ambitious MSLT series is the brainchild of Willis S. Regier, Director of the University of Nebraska Press, and Robert E. Bjork, Professor of Old and Middle English Language and Literature at Arizona State University and General Editor of MSLT. It is also a direct offspring of Bjork's translation of Jan Fridegård's Lars Hard trilogy, *I, Lars Hård, Jacob's Ladder, Mercy*, which he published with Nebraska in 1983 and 1985. Darla Beckman, marketing manager of the Press, states that after Bjork's translation had appeared, "We found that there was this huge body of literature—particularly Scandinavian—that was known around the world and translated into all the major languages but not English."¹ Both impressed with the superior quality of Bjork's translation and lamenting the lack of adequate renditions of excellent modern Scandinavian literature into English, Regier, then Editor-in-Chief of the Press, invited Bjork in 1984 to submit a proposal for a series and recommend nominees for an editorial board. His series plan was simple: the series' aim would be to develop and publish new translations of major works in the five Scandinavian languages that have appeared since 1880, the traditional date for the modernist breakthrough in Scandinavian literature. The volumes would be chosen

on the basis of their literary excellence and historical impact, and book-length fiction would be preferred, since American audiences would not be sufficiently interested in drama and poetry. Each volume would include an afterword in the range of ten to fifteen pages, offering a critical analysis of the work as well as an assessment of both the book's and the author's place in Scandinavian literature, a selected bibliography, and, where appropriate, notes directed at an American audience likely to be unfamiliar with the work and the cultural milieu.

In order to ensure nationwide support for the series, Bjork proposed a board of nine prominent Scandinavianists with experience in literary translation, representing a wide geographical area in the United States, the major Scandinavian studies programs in the country, and the five languages: Danish, Finnish, Icelandic, Norwegian, and Swedish. The following nine scholars agreed to serve on the board: Evelyn Firchow, Icelandic Studies at the University of Minnesota; Niels Ingwersen, Danish Studies at the University of Wisconsin and editor of *Scandinavian Studies*; Torborg Lundell, Swedish specialist at the University of California at Santa Barbara; Patricia McFate, former president of the American-Scandinavian Foundation in New York; Harald S. Naess, Norwegian expert and chair of Scandinavian Studies at the University of Wisconsin; Sven H. Rossel, professor of Danish and chair of Scandinavian Studies at the University of Washington; Paul Schach, Icelandic specialist at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln; George Schoolfield, Swedish and Finnish Studies at Yale University; and Ross Shideler, Swedish specialist at the University of California at Los Angeles. The board is an active one that would advise the General Editor, and its members would serve as ambassadors for the series in the university community through such means as informing their university officials of its existence, soliciting reviews in journals and newspapers, and using MSLT books in their classes. The board's first official task was to prepare a list of books in their language specialty that they thought should be available in English. Bjork collated the individual lists into one, then sent it to the board members for recommendations on the entire list. A second collation produced a master list, which Bjork again sent, together with his proposed series guidelines, for final board approval. With those two tools available for translators, the Press could announce the series and begin negotiating for manuscripts. The Danish novel *Winter's Child* inaugurated MSLT in 1986. Since then the series

has published nine volumes, with eight more books forthcoming.

Before an MSLT translation reaches the bookshelves, however, it passes through a rigorous evaluation process. After querying the General Editor, translators submit either a completed translation or a prospectus for one. In the first instance, the General Editor consults with the relevant board members to find two appropriate external reviewers for the book (and to decide whether or not the book itself is appropriate, if it is not on the master list), then sends the translation to those reviewers. They assess its quality and offer an opinion about the importance of the book in the author's oeuvre and in Scandinavian literature generally and about the book's potential appeal to an American audience. If their reports are favorable, the General Editor writes a report of his own to the Director and Editorial Board of the Press, who have final authority over whether or not a book is published. In the second instance—that of a prospectus being submitted—the procedure is the same except that the contract offered is a pre-completion contract with the proviso that the entire translation be reviewed once more on completion. A complete prospectus consists of a twenty-to-thirty-page sample translation, a brief tentative afterword describing the importance of rendering the book into English, an estimate of the length of the completed typescript, and a firm completion date.

The series' initial publication goal was to produce two to four volumes per year. By the 1986 Editorial Board meeting in Iowa, at the annual convention of the Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Studies, it was obvious that that goal was easily attainable. The series had already attracted first-rate translators such as Joan Tate, George and Lone Thygesen Blecher, and Sverre Lyngstad, whose excellent works enriched the reputation of the series and the Press; it was garnering grants from the Danish Ministry of Culture, the Finnish Literature Information Centre, and Norwegian Literature Abroad (those institutions, as well as the Swedish Institute, continue to support the series and its translators); and it had, according to the board meeting's 1986 guest speaker, Dea Trier Mørch, become well known in Scandinavia, with many major authors hoping to have their works eventually included in it. Competition for a place in the series was keen: by 1986 nearly fifty manuscripts had been considered for publication. For every book published, twelve manuscripts had to be turned away, a situation that the board members and Press Director Regier continue to bemoan.

Other indicators of the series' success were fast in coming: favorable sales and favorable reviews in the media. The favorable sales figures stem from certain strengths of the series. MSLT's market analysis, for instance, is naturally geared toward the American market, since all decisions are made by the American Editorial Board and not the Nordic Council, as was the case with the Nordic Translation Series. Its packaging is also partially tailored to a university market. Because paperback editions prove most useful in classrooms, especially in literature-in-translation classes, the series published

paperback editions either simultaneously with the first hardcover edition or after it has sold out. The successful and solid sales of the series can be attributed largely to these factors. Joan Tate's translation of Mørch's *Winter's Child* has been especially well-received, having gone through two hardcover editions and then appearing in paperback. Acquisitions Editor of the Press, Pat Knapp, points out an additional forte of MSLT from the editorial and marketing perspective: "On the editorial side . . . a series enables us to bring in top editors and scholars on a given subject, and their expertise enhances the books. And since the books give us a reputation for top quality work, we can continue to attract the most knowledgeable experts for the rest of the titles in a series. That line of thinking," she continues, "also applies to the marketing side. Once you have an established series, the booksellers know that it's high quality and a steady seller so they are more willing to take a chance on the new books in the series as they come out."² And finally, board member Ingwersen considers it a strength of the series and wise editorial policy to publish more than one work by the same author. There are presently two works by Mørch, two by Villy Sørensen, two by P.C. Jersild, and forthcoming are three by Fridegård and two by Ivar Lo-Johansson.

The second indicator of MSLT's success—favorable reviews in the media—derives entirely from the quality of the literature it produces. Professor Rochelle Wright, at the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana, describes the nine volumes already in print as "modern classics." They are works that are distinctly Scandinavian in many respects but, by means of their distinctive art, reach beyond parochial boundaries to a world market. MSLT's inaugural volume, *Winter's Child* (Dan. 1976; Eng. 1986) by Mørch (1941-), perfectly illustrates that balance. The novel is set in a hospital in Copenhagen, where all of the women's situations are specifically Danish, marked by various dialects, social standing, education, family status, and life philosophy; the work, however, charts one of the few experiences common to all human beings, childbirth. Mørch's novel was inspired by her own child-bearing experience; like Mørch, all of the authors in the series create out of a specific biographical, historical, or literary background, with particular topics and themes governing the individual works, which often recur throughout an author's oeuvre.

In Mørch's case, the author embarked on an artist's career early in her life and then started to sympathize with the working class and the Third World.³ Mørch studied in the socialist countries of Poland, Yugoslavia, the USSR, and Czechoslovakia and pronounced herself a member of the Communist Party (1972-82).⁴ With her first publications, *Bittersweet Socialism: Soviet Sketches* (1968) and *Poland* (1970), she wanted to "create political and proletarian art."⁵ After the experience of three childbirths, she composed and illustrated with linocuts *Winter's Child*. The book has since been translated into sixteen languages and made into a movie in Denmark. Joan Tate's English translation for MSLT got impressive reviews in publications such as *The New York Times* and *The Chicago*

Tribune. Mørch features a hospital full of women with problem pregnancies and the ways they cope with their specific situation in passing throughout the various stages of pregnancy and the wards associated therewith: prenatal, childbirth, and neo/postnatal. Diane Wanek, from *Woman's Journal Advocate*, evaluates the novel thus: "While *Winter's Child* could be construed as a feminist novel and has much to say about repression and sexual prejudices, it never falls prey to cheap or faddish preaching. Its outlook is a cautiously, though cheerfully, optimistic one that eschews clichés. It is neither dogmatic nor self-righteous nor simplistic; it is scrupulously honest and humane."⁶

Winter's Child is a book utterly about the world of pregnant women, as critic Rahima Baldwin observes: "Mørch succeeds in presenting a panorama of women's experiences, emotions, interactions with their mates, relationships to the doctors and midwives, and to society. . . . She has done a good job in a domain where almost no other authors have ever ventured."⁷ The hospital itself represents a womb-like structure enclosing the women, their newborn babies, and the staff, temporarily obliterating the disparate socioeconomic backgrounds of all women so that childbirth, the great equalizer, can run its course. The sequestered state of the patients is accentuated by the manner in which information is conveyed to them. Contemporary events are channelled through magazines, radio, and television, all of which function like an umbilical cord to the outside world, whose "[r]eality," however, "does not penetrate. . . not here. . . where a wholly different reality makes itself felt."⁸ Mørch calls childbirth a "natural" revelatory "force" allowing women to make "a political statement."⁹ By presenting this female "collective experience" as a means of gaining self-awareness, Mørch intends to demystify childbirth.¹⁰

Mørch's second volume in MSLT, another Joan Tate translation, is *Evening Star* (Dan. 1982; Eng. 1988). The book chronicles the last year of Niels Peter's mother, Bett, who is suffering from terminal cancer. Most readers deem it a superb complement to *Winter's Child*, and it, too, is graced by Mørch's own striking illustrations. While human dependency is still the issue, the relationship becomes inverted: the children are now caretakers of the mother. The cyclic nature of this role reversal is encapsulated by the drug that the nurse gives to Bett in the final stage of dying: "only a pain-killer. It's what they use in childbirth."¹¹ All of the characters in the novel struggle with the approach of death, the ethics of death, and the question of a dignified death; the work explores the deepening relationships between mother and children in the face of annihilation, since Bett does not subscribe to the notion of an afterlife.

The second triumph for the series was Henrik Tikkanen's *The Thirty Years' War* (Fin.-Swed. 1977; Eng. 1987). The bilingual Finland-Swedish journalist (1924-84), who, like Mørch, illustrated both his own and the works of others, started out writing collections of aphorisms.¹² Like *My Helsinki* (1972), a guidebook to the city based on Tikkanen's experiences, most of his work contains highly personal accounts, which George School-

field labels "self-centered" fiction, because the author was uncomfortable with the term autobiographical.¹³ The young Tikkanen eagerly participated in World War II but left it behind utterly disgusted, unlike Viktor Käppärä, the protagonist of *The Thirty Years' War*, who is forgotten and stays at his post at the outbreak of peace at the end of that war. Being somewhat naive and following his most important military order—to hold his post—he remains at his command, singlehandedly bringing about the deaths of more people in peace time than during the war. All missions to return Käppärä to civilization fail miserably, eventually resulting in his heroic death, as his official biographers claim. Tikkanen's narrative technique, which has been likened to Joseph Heller's and Kurt Vonnegut's black humor,¹⁴ is ironically matter-of-fact and manages to incriminate all modern-day military, political, and social institutions, epitomized by the official biographers whose publications ironically provide the most biting commentary on the perversions of war. Reviewers of the book concur that this work is a superior choice for translation and has the "advantage of universalism in being an ardent anti-war novel."¹⁵ The translation itself "is a masterpiece"¹⁶ and "true to the author's intentions, set firmly in context by George Schoolfield's footnotes and afterword."¹⁷

The Swedish writer P.C. Jersild (1935-), an apostate from the medical profession, contributes two volumes to MSLT. According to his 1981 *Professional Confessions*, Jersild intended to pursue both a medical and a writing career.¹⁸ Initially he held an eight-year position with the Swedish Social Welfare Board and then worked as an assistant professor of social and preventive medicine, but he renounced medicine in 1977 to devote his time to writing.¹⁹ His literary interest was stimulated by both the existentialists of the 1940s and James Joyce as well as a creative writing course with Swedish poet and critic Reidar Ekner.²⁰ While his first two novels, *To Warmer Lands* (1961) and *Sunday Off* (1963), were not regarded as critical successes, his 1965 *Cavinol's Voyage Around the World* garnered the desired fame.²¹ Ross Shideler attributes Jersild's success to his ability to weave together "social satire and literary style," a combination which won him many literary prizes and boosted sales of his books immensely.²² In his nearly thirty novels, plays, and musical reviews, this self-pronounced "humanistic socialist's"²³ favorite themes emerge as "the power of language to create and shape identity; the nature of identity, and the part played by human fantasy and imaginations; the failure of modern society to meet the needs of the individual."²⁴

In *Children's Island* (Swed. 1976; Eng. 1986), yet another translation by the prolific Joan Tate, and the third volume to appear in MSLT, Reine Larsson, an eleven-year-old boy, who, by staying in Stockholm, attempts to foil his mother's plan of sending him to summer camp, is portrayed as a picaresque hero. His search for a father figure and initiation into adulthood is silhouetted against his encounter with various groups of people, each of which strips him of something essential: an initially positive experience at a ribbon service goes awry when the shop

closes for the summer, depriving him of his job and income; his mother's bully boyfriend pockets his house key; a theater company he works for briefly requires him to get a haircut; a gang of dragsters he accidentally falls in with vandalize his bicycle; Nora, an attractive department store attendant whom Reine stays with for a few days, causes him to lose some of his nagging sexual fear; and three adolescent thieves first take his knapsack as collateral for the liquor they force him to smuggle and later steal his money. Through Reine, who is preoccupied with language, death, and growing up, Jersild "defines many aspects of urban life in the 1970s and shows the failure of modern society to meet human needs."²⁵

Jersild's fascination with language continues in *House of Babel* (Swed. 1978; Eng. 1987), again by Joan Tate. *Publisher's Weekly* labels it a "muckraking novel... a 'thesis novel,' in which the characters and their personal dilemmas are of secondary interest."²⁶ In an interview, however, Jersild asserts that the pensioner Primus Svensson is the "innocent center" of the novel,²⁷ as he passes through the Swedish health care system at fictional Enskede hospital and encounters representatives of the divers branches of medicine along his way. The title of the novel captures both the real linguistic confusion in the hospital and the thoughts of medical student Martina Bossen: "A common mode of thought through the whole field of medicine was lacking, an overall approach. There was no language common to all. The numerous medical dialects could at best only complement each other, but were just as often contradictory."²⁸ Additionally, Ulla Sweedler points out that "the title suggests language is the primary means used by such institutions to destroy individuals."²⁹ Relating to that, Jersild reveals that "[i]n my oeuvre *House of Babel* is the example of an attempt to create a realistic, community-oriented novel dealing with a controversial issue" and admits a self-portrait reflected in three characters in the novel, Martina Bossen, Gustaf Nyström, and Bernt Svensson.³⁰ In any event, the critic from *Kirkus Reviews* appropriately reiterates that "[a]ll in all, [it is] a gripping and effective novel, both as indictment and human tragedy."³¹

August Strindberg (1849-1912), Sweden's dramatic giant, enters the series with some previously untranslated autobiographical fiction. *The Roofing Ceremony* (Swed. 1906; Eng. 1987) relates the thoughts of a sick curator about the fate of his marriage and family. The novel's technique was highly experimental when the book was published and "creates the illusion that we are capturing the very flow of consciousness, the fleeting thoughts and sensations registered by the human mind."³² The volume also contains interpolation into *The Roofing Ceremony* and the short story "The Silver Lake" (1898). Many critics praise the choice of Strindberg fiction and the translation itself; Niels Ingwersen lauds both the translation's careful rendering of Strindberg's diction and the importance of his narrative technique to the development of the modern novel.³³

The single Norwegian addition to the series to date is *Adam's Diary* (Nor. 1978; Eng. 1988) by Knut Faldbakken (1941-). Faldbakken was involved in a "belated wave of

European Modernism in Norway," whose "ideologues" monopolized literary production with their "local variant of socialist realism" in the 1970s.³⁴ Faldbakken's widely translated fiction exploits a "realistic aesthetic" mixed with psychoanalytic technique.³⁵ Although *Adam's Diary*, a Riksmål Prize winner, partially responds to the "literature of militant feminism," it actually lacks an ideology.³⁶ Critics admire the novel and praise the quality of the translation. *Publisher's Weekly* hailed *Adam's Diary* as a "dead-on dissection of the sexual stereotypes that sabotage companionship and social change" and wished that all of Faldbakken's fiction were translated into English.³⁷ *Adam's Diary* is a tripartite work, in which three different men—the thief, the dog, and the prisoner—narrate in turn their individual experiences with the same woman, who takes on the role of an object and is denied a report of her own. Because of its title, one critic likens *Adam's Diary* to its biblical parallel: "Adam takes his fall, socially, psychologically, sexually."³⁸ Sverre Lyngstad, on the other hand, does not perceive *Adam's Diary* as a biblical "allegory."³⁹ The lover/thief's account smacks of voyeuristic adventure, since he thrives in the exciting surroundings of strange apartments from which he gleans their inhabitants' habits, intimacies, and wallets. The student/dog section depicts her live-in boyfriend captive in a sexual stereotype. Obviously, the former husband/prisoner, too, suffers from both real physical and psychological imprisonment. Through these men's tales the author exposes objectionable sexual attitudes and ethics in contemporary Norway, parodying several genres: "the picaresque tale, the initiation story, the prison autobiography and the thriller."⁴⁰

Lastly, the Dane Villy Sørensen (1929-) is the most recent newcomer to MSLT. Sørensen, whose first short story collection was *Strange Stories*, is a member of the Danish Academy blessed with numerous prestigious awards, including the Danish Academy Literature Prize in 1962; the Nordic Council Literature Prize in 1974; an honorary doctorate from University of Copenhagen; and the first "Little Nobel Prize" awarded by the Swedish Academy in 1986.⁴¹ As one of the "most-well read and internationally oriented authors" of Scandinavia, his appeal is universal.⁴² Sven Rossel asserts that Sørensen, who laces his writing with world mythology and history but is also firmly rooted in native literature, "constantly search(ing) for the archetypal structures in life... discovered the concept of the 'breakdown of values': a system of values capable of bridging today's gap between the life of instincts and that of the intellect no longer exists."⁴³ His writings extend from literary criticism and commentaries on the contemporary political scene to philosophical essays and translations, with "schism vs. harmony" and "repression vs. liberation" assuming a central role in most of the stories.⁴⁴

Both Sørensen titles, *Tutelary Tales* (Dan. 1964; Eng. 1988) and *The Downfall of the Gods* (Dan. 1982; Eng. 1989), were translated by Paula Hostrup-Jessen. *Tutelary Tales* contains an assortment of situations in which personages, both fictional and historical, are deprived of the ability to decide their own fates. In this collection, tales of

historical past, seeming contemporaneity, and utopian future share a common ground: "The book is . . . a chapter in the history of the European psyche," Sørensen explains.⁴⁵ *The Downfall of the Gods*, MSLT's most recent publication, reiterates Sørensen's emphasis on mythological accounts as mirroring devices for the present. In this case, he tackles the Eddic account of Ragnarok, or the destruction of the Nordic gods. Sørensen embarked on this mythological journey for a Danish production of the *Ring* and discovered that both the Eddic poets and Wagner stressed the "conflict between power and love."⁴⁶ Sørensen clarifies that by not having Gimle, the creation of a new world, follow the destruction (Ragnarok) of the old, he "had called into question the distinction between the good (us) and the wicked (the others): evil is evil, even when exercised by 'us gods.'"⁴⁷ Thus for Sørensen, the unromantic apocalyptic message of *The Downfall of the Gods* aptly parallels the road humanity has taken in our day and age.

Besides the nine books already in print in MSLT, eight more are in production and will appear in the next three years. Bjork's translation of Fridegård's Viking trilogy, *Land of Wooden Gods* (1940), *People of the Dawn* (1944), and *Sacrificial Smoke* (1949), is scheduled for publication between October 1989 and Fall 1990. Fridegård (1897-68), whose Lars Hård trilogy gave rise to the MSLT series, is a proletarian author who grew up in the farm laborer system that plagued Sweden until 1945 and figures prominently in his mostly autobiographical fiction.⁴⁸ Looking for the roots of this system of repression in the past, Fridegård creates the fascinating story of the thrall Holme in ninth-century Viking Sweden, a country torn apart by religious strife. He bases his story on historical and archaeological evidence, adjusting certain facts to suit his purpose of creating a history and identity for the oppressed masses in Scandinavia.⁴⁹

Pål Espolin Johnson's *For Love of Norway* (Nor. 1975), translated by Conrad Ryskund, will appear in December 1989. It is Johnson's first book in translation and presents the true story of the tiny fishing village Mostad, set on a narrow rocky shoreline in northern Norway. The book is a "memorable modern Nordic saga,"⁵⁰ but the struggles of Mostad's people reflect countless centuries striving against the beloved and remorseless sea. Ryskund calls the books a "tribute to both ordinary people and perseverance in the face of adversity."⁵¹

For 1990 MSLT has scheduled a Finland-Swedish and a Danish novel. The energetic Joan Tate translated Christer Kihlman's *The Blue Mother* (Fin.-Swed. 1963). Kihlman (1930-) is a modern Finland-Swedish writer of some distinction, and *The Blue Mother*, an excellent example of the Scandinavian Bildungsroman genre, is his most important work. The stream-of-consciousness novel of considerable depth, which had great influence on Finland-Swedish literature, deals with two upper-class brothers, Raf and Benno, and their attempts to live up to their father's image of their brother, Robby, who was killed in the war in 1943. Almost as important in Denmark as *The Blue Mother* in Finland is a work by the prize-winning Peter Seeberg (1925-), one of Denmark's major

post-1945 literary figures. *The Imposter* (Dan. 1957), his central work, deals with complex and disturbing existential and psychological issues. This inspired *Künstlerroman* relates the story of the writer Tom, whose inability to create symbolizes the barrenness of the cultural wasteland in post-World War II Europe.

Finally, MSLT's last two volumes in production for 1991 feature the major twentieth-century Swedish proletarian author Ivar Lo-Johansson (1901-), whom some consider Sweden's greatest writer since Strindberg. Rochelle Wright translated *The Turning Point* (Swed. 1933) and *Bjork Only A Mother* (Swed. 1939). Insistently realistic in technique, Lo-Johansson helped eradicate the oppressive farm laborer system that both he and Fridegård grew up in. *The Turning Point* depicts the fates of about seventy different farm laborer characters, highlighting the autobiographical Mikael Bister and his friend Ture; at the end of the novel, Mikael manages to turn his back on this repressive system. *Only a Mother*, on the other hand, allows its protagonist, Rya-Rya, no escape but only a lonely, premature death. This Steinbeck-like novel, charting the life of a farm laborer woman, whose chance for a brighter future is destroyed by her innocent act of swimming in the nude in a lake, has been regarded as an early feminist novel, since it concentrates on the woman's perspective, especially on child-rearing. Both Lo-Johansson novels appropriately harken back to Fridegård's Lars Hård trilogy, which raised the flag for MSLT in the first place.

The series flag will not be lowered for some time to come and, in fact, MSLT has given rise to other series at the University of Nebraska Press, which use MSLT as their model: a French Modernist Library and a European Women Writers series started up in MSLT's wake, both more successful than their precursor. A Latin American Women Writers series will be launched next year; and a series of literary histories for the five Scandinavian languages has been approved by the Press and funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities. Those books should be ready for publication in the next five years. In the meantime, MSLT moves on, conscious of its successful past and determined to continue bringing the best of Scandinavian literature to an English-speaking audience. Its goals remain essentially unchanged except that two languages so far unrepresented in it—Finnish and Icelandic—will in the future have priority over the other three. Those two languages present special problems to the translator and will now receive special attention from the Press. Nonetheless, MSLT demonstrates that a Scandinavian translation venture is not doomed to fail, as did the Nordic Translation Series, as long as it maintains the crucial balance between first-rate literature and translation and sensible editorial and marketing policies. Fulfilling those requirements perfectly, MSLT provides an excellent model for other literature translation series, helps to alleviate the unfortunate lack of translated Scandinavian works, and greatly enriches the American literary market with its superb selection.⁵²

- ¹ Quoted in Steve Paul, "Bibliofiles," *Kansas City Star* 17 April 1988.
- ² Quoted in William Goldstein, "U. of Nebraska Press Extols the Joys of Series Publishing," *Publisher's Weekly* 26 June 1987: 35.
- ³ Verne Moberg, afterword, *Winter's Child*, by Dea Trier Mørch, trans. Joan Tate (1986) 269.
- ⁴ Moberg 269.
- ⁵ Moberg 269.
- ⁶ "Dea Mørch," *Woman's Journal Advocate* October 1986.
- ⁷ *Special Delivery* Fall 1986.
- ⁸ *Winter's Child* 101.
- ⁹ *Winter's Child* 236, 156.
- ¹⁰ *Winter's Child* 235.
- ¹¹ Dea Trier Mørch, *Evening Star*, trans. Joan Tate (1988) 211.
- ¹² George Schoolfield, afterword, *The Thirty Years' War*, by Henrik Tikkanen, trans. George and Lone Thygesen Blecher (1987) 135.
- ¹³ Schoolfield 137, 142.
- ¹⁴ Thom Palmer, *Southern Humanities Review* 23 (1989): 78.
- ¹⁵ W. Glyn Jones, *Scandinavica* November 1988.
- ¹⁶ Ulla Sweedler, *Library Journal* 15 April 1987: 102.
- ¹⁷ Kathleen Osgood Dana, forthcoming in *Scandinavian Studies*.
- ¹⁸ Ross Shideler, afterword, *Children's Island*, by P. C. Jersild, trans. Joan Tate (1986) 277.
- ¹⁹ Shideler 277, 278.
- ²⁰ Shideler 278.
- ²¹ Shideler 278.
- ²² Shideler 279.
- ²³ Leif Sjöberg, "A Conversation with P. C. Jersild," *House of Babel*, by P. C. Jersild, trans. Joan Tate (1987) 317.
- ²⁴ Shideler 280-81.
- ²⁵ Ulla Sweedler, *Library Journal* December 1986: 136.
- ²⁶ 27 November: 69.
- ²⁷ Sjöberg 315.
- ²⁸ *House of Babel* 233.
- ²⁹ *Library Journal* 1 February 1988: 76.
- ³⁰ Sjöberg 312, 314.
- ³¹ 15 November 1987: 1597.
- ³² Eric O. Johannesson quoted in Robert E. Bjork, Series Editor's Foreword, *The Roofing Ceremony*, by August Strindberg, trans. David Mel and Margareta Paul (1987) viii.
- ³³ *Choice* April 1988: 1250.
- ³⁴ Sverre Lyngstad, afterword, *Adam's Diary*, by Knut Faldbakken, trans. Sverre Lyngstad (1988) 231.
- ³⁵ Lyngstad 232.
- ³⁶ Lyngstad 232.
- ³⁷ 4 December 1987: 65.
- ³⁸ M. D. Elevitch, *American Book Review* January 1989: 22.
- ³⁹ 232.
- ⁴⁰ *Newsday* (NY) 10 January 1988.
- ⁴¹ Sven H. Rossel, afterword, *Tutelary Tales*, by Villy Sørensen, trans. Paula Hostrup-Jessen (1988) 233-34.
- ⁴² Rossel 234.
- ⁴³ Rossel, 235, 236.
- ⁴⁴ Rossel 236, 237-38.
- ⁴⁵ Quoted in Rossel 243.
- ⁴⁶ Villy Sørensen, afterword, *The Downfall of the Gods*, by Villy Sørensen, trans. Paula Hostrup-Jessen (1989) 121.
- ⁴⁷ Sørensen 123.
- ⁴⁸ Robert E. Bjork, afterword, *Land of Wooden Gods*, by Jan Fridegård, trans. Robert E. Bjork (October 1989).
- ⁴⁹ Bjork, afterword.

⁵⁰ *University of Nebraska Press Catalogue* (Fall/Winter 1989) 9.

⁵¹ Carl Ryskund, afterword, *For Love of Norway*, by Pål Espolin Johnson, trans. Carl Ryskund (December 1989).

⁵² I am deeply grateful to Professor Bjork, who gave me access to all of his materials, kindly answered all my queries, and read early drafts of this paper.

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