

Diversity Report 2009

From a general map of diversity towards a road map of books traveling in translation.

Exposé (*First draft*)

When in fall 2008 we presented the “Diversity Report 2008” at the “On Translation” conference at Buch Wien, our goal was to generate a first overview of how the flows of translation have evolved across Europe over the past ca. 25 years, and to come up with a preliminary methodology to compare empirical data from a wide range of different sources.

It was obvious that the result was, at best, a very first and general map of cultural diversity and some of its inherent dynamics as expressed through books and publishing.

The goal

With the Diversity Report 2009, our ambition is to drill down our analysis to the level of individual authors, and how their work is spread (or not) through translation in a rather broad set of countries, languages and markets. Hence the goal is to move on from the general map to a much more detailed road map and from general statistical data to a more precise and detailed perspective.

Such a break down is certainly not only of academic interest as it allows to better understand how books (and therefore ideas and stories) travel, how to identify cultural linkages and gaps, and ideally it will also be valuable to track opportunities for new translations and thereby be fruitful in fostering cultural diversity and exchange.

Again, this report will explore some uncharted waters, and while we will do our best to work with a transparent methodology and encourage advice and critical feedback, the resulting survey can only be a first set of – hopefully relevant – insights, encouraging further research and debate.

At the **2009 conference “On Translation”** on November 13, 2009, at Buch Wien 09 in Vienna, Austria, we will present a “preliminary version” of the report and invite to critically discuss the findings. A final version is supposed to be released by the end of 2009.

The methodology

Analyzing book bestseller lists already in a number of markets in Western Europe, the US and the PR China for a number of years, we will expand this survey to a number of countries in Central and Southeast Europe in order to assess and compare individual authors and their work as well as overarching patterns.

This ‘top down’ view will be complemented by a ‘bottom up’ approach tracking a fair number of current writers of fiction across all the markets and languages to see what has been translated and published recently, and what not.

In this report, we plan to include data from the following countries (by alphabetical order): Austria, Croatia, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, UK.

We work together with a number of experts, book professionals and organizations from across Europe to check and balance our approach.

The report will include a critical analysis of the data and their sources as well as the used methodology.

Organisational

The “Diversity Report” is an initiative of Rüdiger Wischenbart Content and Consulting and of CulturalTransfers.org

It will be presented at the “On Translation” conference on November 13, 2009, at Buch Wien 09 (www.buchwien.at) in Vienna, Austria.

Report and conference details: www.wischenbart.com/translation

Contact: Please use the contact form at the website.

The Diversity Report is supported by ERSTE Stiftung and BMUKK Kunst. It is a collaborative effort of a wide network of professional colleagues and friends who will be identified more properly in the report and the website.

We strongly encourage the dissemination of this document as well as critical feedback.

Rüdiger Wischenbart and team

Wien, August 2009