Translating *Mrs. Dalloway*: from German to Urdu, 1928-2024

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ABSTRACT

From the time *Mrs. Dalloway* was first published in 1925, it has been a global novel. Within three years of its publication, it was translated into German, and through the decades the number of different translations has grown. By the hundredth anniversary of its publication, it was translated into 42 languages, with the latest, Urdu, in 2024. One cannot overestimate the crucial role that translators have played in making *Mrs. Dalloway* such a global phenomenon. Along with further describing its global presence via translations, I explore the vital importance of translators and the many dimensions of translation, especially in the context of *Mrs. Dalloway* alone. Woolf was interested in these many dimensions and undertook translations herself, even during the writing of *Mrs. Dalloway*. She was aware of the protean receptions of translations. Next, I trace some of the ways that the translations of *Mrs. Dalloway* in multiple regions and through the decades have been received. Translation, of course, does not function alone; it is part of a larger process that includes variables like paratexts and facets of the publishing industry. Translation itself is, of course, a complicated endeavor involving myriad vectors; to examine *Mrs. Dalloway* within the discipline of Translation Studies is to show the complexity of these considerations. Finally, examining some of the translations of *Mrs. Dalloway* is to show that there are issues peculiar to this novel alone, as the rich field of criticism on the translations of this novel shows.

KEYWORDS: Virginia Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway*, translation, global literature

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Traduzindo *Mrs. Dalloway*: do alemão ao urdu, 1928-2024

RESUMO

Desde a sua primeira publicação em 1925, *Mrs. Dalloway* tornou-se um romance global. Em apenas três anos, foi traduzido para o alemão e, ao longo das décadas, o número de traduções só aumentou. No centenário da sua publicação, já havia sido traduzido para 42 idiomas, sendo o urdu a tradução mais recente, em 2024. Não se pode subestimar o papel crucial que os tradutores desempenharam na transformação de *Mrs. Dalloway* num fenômeno global. Além de descrever a sua presença mundial através das traduções, exploro a importância vital dos tradutores e as múltiplas dimensões da tradução, especialmente no contexto de *Mrs. Dalloway*. Woolf interessava-se por estas dimensões e realizou traduções ela própria, mesmo durante a escrita de *Mrs. Dalloway*. Estava ciente da mutabilidade das traduções na sua recepção. Em seguida, analiso algumas das formas como as traduções de *Mrs. Dalloway* foram recebidas em diversas regiões e ao longo das décadas. A tradução, naturalmente, não funciona isoladamente; faz parte de um processo mais amplo que inclui variáveis como paratextos e aspectos da indústria editorial. A tradução em si é, sem dúvida, uma tarefa complexa que envolve inúmeros fatores; examinar Mrs. Dalloway dentro da disciplina de Estudos da Tradução é demonstrar a complexidade dessas considerações. Por fim, examinar algumas das traduções de Mrs. Dalloway é mostrar que existem questões peculiares a este romance, como demonstra o vasto campo da crítica literária sobre as traduções desta obra.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Virginia Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway*, tradução, literatura global

"*Was für ein Spaß! Was für ein Sprung*!"
"کیا ایک لارک کیا ایک چھلانگ" ("*kiya ek laark kiya ek chhalang*")
("What a lark! What a plunge!")[1]

From the time *Mrs. Dalloway* was first published in 1925, it has been a global novel. Within three years of its publication, it was translated into German, and the number of different translations has grown in the century to follow. By the hundredth anniversary of its publication, it was translated in up to 42 languages, with the latest, Urdu, in 2024. The number 42 does not include the different translations within the same language. One cannot overestimate the crucial role that translators have played in making *Mrs. Dalloway* such a global phenomenon. Along with further describing its global presence via translations, I explore the vital importance of translators and the many dimensions of translation, especially in the context of *Mrs. Dalloway* alone. Woolf was deeply interested in these many dimensions and undertook translations herself, even during the writing of *Mrs. Dalloway*. She was aware of the protean receptions of translations. In the next section of this article, I trace some of the ways that the translations of *Mrs. Dalloway* in multiple regions and through the decades have been received. Translation, of course, does not function alone; it is part of the larger process that includes multiple variables like paratexts — the other apparatuses of a text such as book jackets — and facets of the

[1] Woolf, 1953, p. 1. The translations in German and Urdu are from Google translate.

publishing industry. Translation itself is, of course, a complicated endeavor involving myriad vectors; to examine *Mrs. Dalloway* within the discipline of Translation Studies is to show the complexity of these considerations. Finally, examining some of the translations of *Mrs. Dalloway* is to show that there are issues peculiar to this novel alone, as the rich field of criticism on the translations of this novel shows.

1. *Mrs. Dalloway*: global presence

Table 1 provides a history of the translation of *Mrs. Dalloway* from 1928 through 2024.[2]

TABLE 1

German	1928	Korean	1965	Farsi (Persian)	1983
French	1929	Slovenian	1965	Russian	1984
Catalan	1930	Bosnian	1966	Arabic (1994?)	1987
Spanish (Argentina; Spain: 1945)	1939	Greek	1967	Chinese	1988
Danish	1945	Macedonian	1967	Bulgarian	1989
Italian	1946	Romanian	1968	Lithuanian	1994
Portuguese (Brazil; Portugal: 1954)	1946	Hebrew (1975?)	1974	Estonian	1998
Dutch	1948	Czech	1975	Albanian	2004
Hungarian	1948	Slovak	1976	Thai	2005
Japanese	1954	Turkish	1977	Latvian	2006
Serbian	1955	Swedish	1977	Ukrainian	2016
Croatian	1955	Norwegian	1980	Armenian	2021
Finnish	1956	Serbo-Croatian	1981	Indonesian	2023
Polish	1961	Panjabi	1982	Urdu	2024

Within a year of its translation into German, it was translated into French and then, interestingly, into Catalan. With the fourth translation *Mrs. Dalloway* sailed across the ocean, to Argentina in 1939, and seven years after that, to Brazil in 1946. The first East Asian translation appeared in Japan, in 1954; Middle Eastern, in Israel, in 1974 or 1975; South Asian, in India, in 1982; and Southeast Asian, in Indonesia, in 2023. In the meantime, several dozen translations appeared throughout Western, Central, and Eastern Europe. In *Virginia Woolf icon*, Brenda Silver details the widespread popularity of Woolf, so much so that her image has attained iconic status by the end of the twentieth century (1999, p. xv-xvii). To cite one example: Guanglan Jin refers to "Woolf fever" in the "the field of foreign literary criticism in China" (2009, p. 3). In the collection *Recycling Virginia Woolf in contemporary art and culture*, the editors write that the "various literary and artistic recyclings of Woolf — both her oeuvre and iconic figure — […] constitute a sign of Woolf's contemporary relevance: eighty years after her death, she is still at the heart of topical aesthetic, cultural and political debates" (Latham; Marie; Rigeade, 2022, p. 16).

[2] This chart is based on the following sources: *Mrs. Dalloway*, 2001-2025; Kirkpatrick; Clarke, 1997; and Caws; Luckhurst, 2002, p. xxi-xxxvi.

The year 2025 has been marked by hundreds of newspaper articles and sites commemorating the hundredth anniversary of the publication of *Mrs. Dalloway*. What Figure 1 suggests, however, is that Woolf's global presence started even as her own writing career began to take off. Table 2, on the number of editions of *Mrs. Dalloway* in selected countries, provides more evidence of the ubiquity of the novel; the parentheses that follow each language indicate the number of editions.[3]

TABLE 2

English (152)	Hungarian (5)	Finnish (1)
Undetermined (28)	Norwegian (Bokmal) (4)	Galician (1)
German (23)	Portuguese (4)	Latvian (1)
Italian (23)	Catalan (3)	Lithuanian (1)
Spanish (21)	Danish (3)	Macedonian (1)
French (20)	Croatian (3)	Polish (1)
Russian (14)	Persian (3)	Slovak (1)
Chinese (13)	Romanian (3)	Thai (1)
Korean (13)	Serbian (3)	Ukrainian (1)
Swedish (13)	Bulgarian (2)	Bosnian (1)
Greek, Modern (7)	Norwegian (2)	Indonesian (1)
Japanese (7)	Slovenian (2)	Farsi (6)
Arabic (5)	Turkish (2)	Urdu (1)
Dutch (5)	Albanian (1)	Estonian (2)
Hebrew (5)	Basque (1)	Portuguese (6+)
	Czech (1)	

2. Translators and translations

To talk about the role of translators in the popularization of *Mrs. Dalloway* is, of course, to argue on behalf of their centrality in global literary production. Translations make novels like *Mrs. Dalloway* more available to Woolf's common readers; otherwise only people versed in the original language would read her.[4] Translations open up new worlds and new perspectives, such as feminism. Oriana Palusci writes, "when travelling across cultures, Woolf's opus in translation usually opened the door to new feminist outlooks" (2012, p. 10). Raili Marling considers how translation "creates new modes of reading" (2021, p. 155). Translators function as interpreters, or "shapers"; Daniel Göske and Christian Weiß count translators among those, including "literary agents, publishers, […] and reviewers, [all] elusive makers and mediators of world literature,"

[3] This table is based on *Mrs. Dalloway*, 2001-2025 in WorldCat. WorldCat omits many non-English publications. For example, WorldCat indicates that "Polish translations of *Mrs Dalloway* were published only once. In fact, according to data from Poland's National Library, there were at least […] five editions of *Mrs Dalloway* (1961, 1997, 2003, 2008 and 2016)" (Pająk; Dubino; Hollis, 2021, p. 15n.24).

[4] See Zohreh Gharaei and Hossein Vahid Dastjerdi, who write, "translation is an important step toward making Woolf's style known and her works of literature recognized in foreign languages" (2012, p. 2).

who shape her work and how it is received (2021, p. 26). In the preface to *The reception of Virginia Woolf in Europe*, Mary Ann Caws emphasizes that reception and translation style affect the ways Woolf is read (2002, xix). Translators themselves, writes Charlotte Bosseaux, provide the "feel" of a text; Bosseaux writes that queries about texts do "not have to stem from reading an original; [they] can also originate from reading a translation" (2007, p. 9). Palusci calls the translator an "interpreter," especially when "the act of re-writing is clearly creative writing, as in the case of famous authors wording and adapting Virginia's oeuvre in other linguistic and cultural contexts" (2012, p. 13). Two recent collections, *The Edinburgh companion to Virginia Woolf and contemporary global literature* (2021) and *The Edinburgh companion to Virginia Woolf and transnational perspectives* (2025), include many chapters on the way writers around the world are influenced by her.[5]

Indeed, translators are globalizers and connectors. Translation is a form of globalization; it enables texts to traverse the world. Palusci writes of the ways Woolf's own texts "increasingly travel around the world through translation according to different publishing projects and interests, often sowing in a new soil the seeds of the language of difference, of a feminist epistemology and aesthetics" (2012, p. 12). For Marling, "Translation creates […] new ways of coming together across the limiting national barriers" (2021, p. 155). And, as Zohreh Gharaei and Hossain Vahid Dastjerdi write, "Translation is one way of introducing the literature of one culture into another" (2012, p. 2). Translators are mediators (Kamal, 2021, p. 169), not just between cultures, but between writers and their audiences, and between cultures and disciplines. Emily Dalgarno notes how translation is a "cultural process", one that is connected "with literary criticism, philosophy, and other disciplines" (2012, p. 4). As part of globalization, translation makes cultural encounters possible: "With every translation of Woolf a new and particular cultural encounter is made" (Luckhurst, 2002, p. 17). In a postcolonial context, as Dalgarno writes, the kinds of encounters that are made through translation are "unsettling"; what are the readers' relationships with their mother tongue? (2012, p. 11).

Translation can contribute "to the development of fluid identity processes" (Palusci, 2012, p. 9), both those of the reader and of the author. Silver famously writes about the many "versionings" of Woolf (1999, p. 1-31), and Maria Oliveria concurs. She notes that in her "search of a South American Woolf", she "found many possibilities for a writer who could not be labeled or categorized as in one literary movement. When her writing crosses the boundaries of Europe and America she assumes also a multidimensional aspect, kaleidoscopic as her writing is" (2018, p. 214). The contributors to *Recycling Virginia Woolf* speak to the multifaceted ways Woolf's writing and very being re-emerge — in the forms of art and music, dancing and drama, fiction and biofiction, and tattoos and virtual astrology, among others (Latham; Marie; Rigeade, 2022, p. v-vii).[6]

[5] Chapters on translation from *The Edinburgh companion to Virginia Woolf and contemporary global literature* will be referenced through my own chapter. For chapters devoted to translation from *The Edinburgh companion to Virginia Woolf and transnational perspectives*, see those by Anne-Laure Rigeade, Helen Southworth, Valérie Favre, Manuela Barral, Maria Rita Drumond Viana, Linara Bartkuvienė, Esra Almas and Alev Bulut.

[6] See Dojčinović-Nešić, who seeks to extend the definition of translation from "linguistic translation, cultural translation, transposition, import, imposition, transcription, even certain kinds of cultural pressure" to something "closer to inspiration" (2010, p. 1).

3. Woolf herself as translator

Woolf herself thought about the many dimensions of translation over the course of her life. Her very writing, as Palusci notes, was an act of translation: "Virginia Woolf moulds and plays with language: she treats it as if it were a form of translation." She adds that Woolf's moments of being — "flashes of awareness connecting past with present experiences — can be seen as attempts to translate the internal worlds of her characters" (2012, p. 9). Claire Davison makes the point, in *Translation as collaboration: Virginia Woolf, Katherine Mansfield and S. S. Koteliansky*, that, for Woolf, translation was a metaphor for reading. Davison writes about the ways "Woolf and Mansfield define the art of reading in terms of the translator's arts: possessing oneself of the whole, desiring to write it all over again as a sign of successful reading, tracking the authors down to their omissions and word usage, becoming the author's accomplice" (2014, p. 18-19).

When it comes to the actual act of moving from one language to another, Woolf did learn early, as Emily Dalgarno writes, that translation is not just about substituting one word for another (2012, p. 3). In translation, one needs to entertain larger questions, and, citing Woolf's diary, Dalgarno refers to her awareness of "'the immeasurable difference between the text & the translation'" (from D1: 184; quoted in Dalgarno, 2012, p. 3). Throughout her life Woolf read and wrote about translations. She knew other languages to varying degrees: Greek and Latin, French and German, some Italian, and enough Russian to be able to translate, along with her husband Leonard and the Ukrainian émigré and translator S.S. Koteliansky, "'Stavrogin's Confession,' a suppressed chapter of Dostoyevsky's *The Possessed*" (Dalgarno, 2012, p. 6). Thus, Woolf was a translator. But her translation work did not stop there. Through the Hogarth Press she and Leonard marketed and published Russian fiction (Dalgarno, 2012, p. 1). From 1917-1925, Woolf reviewed translations from the Russian, and, notes Dalgarno, "helped to create the British market for work by Dostoyevsky and Tolstoy" (2012, p. 6). Woolf, furthermore, thought about her own work in translation. Marling notes that there is evidence that Woolf took an interest in the translation of her own writing (2021, p. 154) — even, perhaps, when she was writing *Mrs. Dalloway*. At the time she was at work on it, she was translating Greek texts, notably *Agamemnon* (Dalgarno, 2012, p. 1), and reading, taking notes, and marking passages from C.K. Scott Moncrieff's translation of Proust (Dalgarno, 2012, p. 13). Woolf wondered "'whether this next lap [of *Mrs. Dalloway*] will be influenced by Proust'" (quoted in Dalgarno, 2012, p. 13).

4. *Mrs. Dalloway*: reception

Translation Studies bears out the idea that "translation is not just a linguistic endeavour but also a social phenomenon" (Marling, 2021, p. 155). Nóra Séllei argues that "both the source culture and the target culture […] are deeply involved in the process" and that one must strongly take into account the cultural context of the "'importing' country" (2012, p. 55). Jin would concur; she argues that the "[c]ontext and culture of the two languages are essential to translation, particularly literary translation" and adds that the translator needs to know about "the original culture [and] author" (2009, p. 5). The field of Woolf studies is rich with criticism on the

translations of Woolf's writing, especially *Mrs. Dalloway*, within social and historical contexts. This criticism attests to the ways the practice of translation is deeply affected by a host of factors, including cultural milieu, geography, politics and war, gender, academic climate, and the market. One of the most important cultural events that took place and helped to popularize the novel was the release of Stephen Daldry's film *The hours* (2002), based on Michael Cunningham's *The hours* (1998), itself a widely popular work. Sitem İnce (2017, p. 85-86), Séllei (2012, p. 69), Maria Oliveira (2018, p. 208) and Marta Ortega Sáez (2011, p. 176-185) write about the way the film especially prompted widespread interest in, respectively, Turkey, Hungary, Brazil, and Catalonia. Another significant cultural event that helped to popularize *Mrs. Dalloway* was when her work entered the public domain. İnce (2017, p. 77) and Elisa Bolchi are among those who remark on the way this expiration of copyright led to many more editions; Bolchi writes, "Three reprints in under a year for an eighty-seven-year-old novel, already available to the public in several other editions, is a considerable success in a country in which 59.5 per cent of the population have not read a book in one year" (2021, p. 186-187). (It is notable that much of my own article draws from publications that were written shortly after Woolf's works entered the public domain.)

The number of avenues through which *Mrs. Dalloway* entered countries is rife. Sometimes it took a circuitous route. For example, in Romania, Spain and Portugal, English literature, such as Woolf's work, entered the country first through French translations and because of their previous popularity in France. Adriana Varga writes of the way Woolf's work, in Romania, was often first read in French translation (2021, p. 45). Graça Abranches notes the primacy of French culture in Portugal up through the Second World War (2002, 312-313), and how the popularity of Woolf's contemporaries, such as Joseph Conrad, in France sparked Portuguese interest in these and other British writers (2002, p. 313). Alberto Lázaro writes of the way Woolf "received little attention among the Spanish critics of the time, partly because French rather than English culture still dominated the Spanish literary intelligentsia" (2002, p. 247); indeed, "French was the main foreign language at Spanish schools and universities" (2002, p. 247n1).

There are other reasons besides the dominance of the literary language that affect the entry of Woolf's work beyond the borders of her own country, and I will provide a brief survey of some of them here. In "Holland and Virginia Woolf: The reception of Virginia Woolf's translated work in the Netherlands" (2004, p. 131-48), AnneMarie Bantzinger writes of the way there was little interest in Woolf in the Netherlands before the Second World War — but then there was little interest in English literature in general (2004, p. 133). *Mrs. Dalloway* was the first of Woolf's novels to be translated into Dutch — fairly early on, in 1948 (133-34) — for no apparent reason at all: the choice may very well have been a "random" one (Bantzinger, 2004, p. 140). The publication of the translation was not a great success (2004, p. 134), and it took a long time, 33 years, before a second translation appeared in 1981 (Kirkpatrick; Clarke, 1997, p. 314). Now that more than 90 per cent of Dutch people speak English fluently (Huetter, 2024), there is not as great a need for English translations (Bantzinger, 2004, p. 140). That said, translations into Dutch do continue, as Meike Roosmarijn van de Wardt writes about her own translation of *Mrs. Dalloway*. Such a translation, van de Wardt notes, would enable her to "prove that the difference[s] between the English and Dutch language most certainly *are* bridgeable" (2010, p.

297; see discussion below). One can see, at work, the power of translators to create bridges, even in climates that do not seem conducive to them.

Bantzinger's recounting of the translation history in the Netherlands is one example of how the reception of an author's works is overdetermined by multiple factors. One can especially see evidence of that in former socialist countries. Urszula Terentowicz-Fotyga explains how Woolf's writing was overlooked in Poland not just because of its difficulty — a point that comes up again and again when one reads of the reception of her work — but because her fiction was considered to be too bourgeois (2002, p. 130). As such, it ran counter to social realism, which is measured by "its devotion to social and political issues," with its characters serving "as models personifying progressive socialist ideas" (Terentowicz-Fotyga, 2002, p. 130). Experimental fiction such as Woolf's was thought to hide a "coded" and subversive political message, one that could be "dangerous and harmful" to Soviet ideology (Terentowicz-Fotyga, 2002, p. 130). Through much of the second half of the twentieth century, Poland, like other Eastern European countries, was embracing social realism (Terentowicz-Fotyga, 2002, p. 130); thus it is that, in this first phase of Woolf in Poland, her work, emblematic of decadent, western modernism, was generally disregarded. In the second phase, Woolf's major works were translated, but she was "read mainly as a canonical writer, interesting from a historical perspective yet not truly significant for the contemporary literary scene" (2002, p. 127). In the third phase, after multiple translations of her writing appeared in the 1990s, Woolf has become so renowned that, as of 2001, she is the third most popular woman British novelist (after Jane Austen and Iris Murdoch) (Terentowicz-Fotyga, 2002, p. 146). Now she serves as an inspiration for many Polish women writers (Pająk, 2001, p. 332).

Marling and Séllei trace similar reception trajectories in, respectively Estonia and Hungary. Marling notes that Woolf's work could not be published in Soviet-era Estonia "because its modernism did not fit the socialist realist ideological framework" (2021, p. 156) but that later, when translations were subject to less Soviet scrutiny, her works could be published (2021, p. 156). Séllei writes of the way that Woolf's modernism was considered bourgeois in Hungary and so did not align with the social realism of the day (2012, p. 58). At the same time, her Englishness did not fit "when the country was submerged in anti-West, anti-capitalist, communist ideology" (Séllei, 2012, p. 71). By the 1990s, however, "her life and works seem to have taken root in Hungary" (Séllei, 2012, p. 72).

Dictatorships and war played important roles in the translation of Woolf in Portugal, Spain, and Romania. Before the 1974 Revolution that overthrew the fascist *Estado Novo* (New State) regime, only three Portuguese translations of Woolf's work appeared in Portugal, such as *Mrs. Dalloway* in 1954, the translation of which did not take place in Portugal, but rather in Brazil (Abranches, 2002, p. 317). A combination of the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939), the economic depression and cultural and political isolation that followed, and the censorship under Franco's fascistic and patriarchal rule — all made Spanish translations of English works difficult. That said, translations of Woolf's work did appear, including *Mrs. Dalloway* in 1945, which, like that of the novel into Portuguese, was undertaken in South America; in the case of the Spanish edition, the translation was first done in Argentina (Lázaro, 2002, p. 251). Romania's history is

different, but, like those of Portugal and Spain, was affected by a dictator — Nicolae Ceaușescu. Under communist rule and the Soviet regime, translations of Woolf and other authors came to a near halt (Varga, 2021, p. 42). Interestingly, it was under Ceaușescu's "two-faced policy" (Varga, 2021, p. 42) — one that seemed to support liberalization even as it became rabidly censorious — that translations of Woolf's works flourished. These "translations may be seen as co-opted by the new regime in an attempt to gain legitimacy at home and abroad" (Varga, 2021, p. 43).

At the same time, as Varga writes, Woolf's influence on Romanian literature and culture was "subdued," and rarely felt outside of academic circles (2021, p. 46). At least, one could argue, Woolf was accepted into academia. That is not the case in other countries. Ida Klitgård notes that, in Denmark, the cultural climate in and outside of the academy was inseparable until the 1990s. In Denmark, Woolf, unlike Joyce and Eliot, was not considered worthy of serious scholarship (2002, p. 165). That is true in Hungary as well. Séllei writes of the way the first Hungarian translation of *Mrs. Dalloway* in 1947 — with the title "*Clarissa*" — "went completely unnoticed in critical terms" (2012, p. 58). Myunhgee Chung writes of "some hesitancy" in the Korean academic world toward Woolf. Her characters were perceived to be "trapped and limited in some esoteric English social class and circle of life" (2012, p. 99); she was not worthy of a "lifelong object of study" (2012, p. 99). In South Korea, the "bright" students "turned to presumably more solid and substantial male novelists such as Joseph Conrad, D. H. Lawrence, and especially, Joyce" (2012, p. 99).

This last quotation shows the impact of both the academic climate and patriarchy on the reception of translations of Woolf's works. Chung reports that, because she wrote her dissertation on Woolf, her colleagues "usually make a joke out of her name that is synonymous with the pronunciation of 'wolf'" (2012, p. 99). But by the end of the twentieth century, Korean attitudes toward Woolf underwent a sea change. According to Chung, Woolf has become "a star, a celebrity, and a cultural icon in Korea" (2012, p. 100); "[a]ny Korean housewife can use the phrase, a room of one's own, for their own advantage" (2012, p. 103). The problem, though, Chung writes, is that though Woolf may be a feminist icon, few read her novels nor do they care for the "authentic Woolf" (2012, p. 101).

That said, it is Woolf's status as a feminist icon that has led to her popularization in many countries. Marling writes of the way feminism is attractive to the young generation in Estonia. Because Estonia currently lacks a context of feminist theorizing, Woolf "as a classic modernist," Marling writes, "may act as a gateway to a deeper engagement with feminist thought" (2021, p. 153). In the course of her discussion, Marling refers as well to the work of Biljana Dojčinović-Nešić, who suggests "that the translation of Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* [in Serbia] can be viewed as an Eastern European country opening itself to feminist theory" (quoted in Marling, 2021, p. 153). Hala Kamal writes that Woolf was introduced as a modernist writer in Egypt in the 1960s and, with the third wave of feminism, as the author of *A Room of One's Own* in the 1990s (2021, p. 167). Bolchi explains that Italy's fascist regime, "exalting manliness and patriarchal ideals, would not have welcomed the publication of novels such as *Mrs Dalloway*, which explores a woman's psyche and portrays a distraught shell-shocked veteran who commits suicide" (2021, p. 185). Following the Second World War, however, "a resurgence of

popular interest in her work took place in concomitance with the rise of feminism in Italy" (Bolchi, 2021, p. 184).

These examples indicate how the rise of feminism led to increasing interest in Woolf and also how Woolf herself served as an inspiration. Marling observes that the "core of this vision of translation is not linguistic transposition but inspiration" (2021, p. 153). These examples furthermore show how deeply translation is imbricated in Woolf's changing reputation. Oliveira demarcates four stages in the reception of Woolf's works in Brazil. At the time of the first translation in 1944, she was read only by a small number of well-educated people. With the introduction of English studies in Brazilian universities in the 1960s, Woolf's work was integrated into the curriculum, and so the number of readers grew. As happened in other countries, the second wave of feminism in the 1970s increased her popularity. Finally, as noted above, the film *The hours* resulted in *Mrs. Dalloway* attaining bestseller status in Brazil (Oliveira, 2018, p. 208).

The hours also led to another translation of *Mrs. Dalloway* in Catalan. Sáez compares this second translation with the first one, which was published early in the history of the novel's translations, in 1930. The first translation appeared during the *Noucentisme*, a movement that "rebuked the romanticism and the realism of the nineteenth century and [was] inspired by the features of classicism" (2011, p. 174). Sáez writes of the way "anti-novels," novels that deconstruct narrative, like *Mrs. Dalloway*, were important to the movement (2011, p. 174). Now, though, with the 2003 translation of the novel, Sáez writes, translation is "privileging commercial interests over the truth" (2011, p. 185). Once publishing houses such as Proa were at the forefront in their "defense and support of the Catalan language" but now, it seems, they may undermine their former work which had supported "the lingua-cultural system of Catalonia" (Sáez, 2011, p. 185).

5. Marketing

As this last example indicates, marketing, marketability, and economics, as Woolf herself knew well, are a crucial part of what makes a work translatable. In their chapter on the translation history of Woolf in Germany, Göske and Weiß write that publishers want books that will sell (2021, p. 26); translated books, in the marketplace, are commodities. Even Woolf seemed to recognize that goal in the first German translation of *Mrs. Dalloway*. Katharina Kippenberg, one of the owners of the publishing company Insel Verlag, wanted to change the title to *Eine Frau von fünfzig Jahren* (A Lady of Fifty Years) because "the original title was 'not advantageous to the German public who will find it difficult to pronounce and remember'" (Göske; Weiß, 2021, p. 29). Kippenberg also believed that "German readers would catch the allusion in the main title to Goethe's 'celebrated novel *Der Mann von fünfzig Jahren* (The Man of Fifty)'" (Göske; Weiß, 2021, p. 29). While Woolf, write Göske and Weiß, was probably unfamiliar with Goethe's work, she agreed, writing back to Kippenberg, "'I am quite ready to agree to this and hope that you will find the edition successful'" (2021, p. 29). Woolf, that is, saw the value of marketing.

Book jackets matter in marketing. To promote translations, publishers, through the years, packaged Woolf's in new wrappings — in, literally, new covers, one form of a paratext, or, more specifically, in the instance of a book jacket, a "peritext," or that which physically accompanies a text. Cansu Canseven emphasizes that the "study of paratexts is highly important as they offer valuable insights into the presentation and reception of translated texts within the target literary system" (no date, p. 1). Canseven and İnce write about the specific connections between book jackets and translation. Canseven explains the Turkish translator E. Meriç Selvi's decision to title the novel *Bayan Dalloway* in an effort to domesticate it (no date, p. 4). In her case study of *Mrs. Dalloway*, İnce analyzes the book covers of *Mrs. Dalloway* that have appeared since the novel was first translated in Turkey. She discusses, for example, how the translator Tomris Uyar, unlike Selvi, does not domesticate the title of the novel; instead, Uyar maintains its original title so that, presumably, readers do not assume that are reading about a Turkish woman; "Mrs." conveys the main character's social and cultural identity (2017, p. 88). İnce also includes illustrations of the many book covers of *Mrs. Dalloway* that make it seem as if it were a work of popular fiction; she suggests that publishers may have sought to "reach out to new readers and increase the sales figures of the book" (2017, p. 93).[7]

In terms of marketing, as we have seen in the case of the 2003 translation of *Mrs. Dalloway* into Catalan, retranslations affect sales as well. In her article, Canseven offers an analysis of the translation of the novel by Tomris Uyar (1977), İlknur Özdemir (2012) and E. Meriç Selvi (2013) (no date, p. 2). Canseven explains that Uyar's translation was at first praised by critics and accepted as the "ideal" — that is, until "another translation was offered by İlknur Özdemir" 35 years later (no date, p. 1); Özdemir's retranslation received positive reviews while the formerly highly-regarded one by Uyar was criticized (no date, p. 1). Canseven asks an important question: were the retranslations published for only literary concerns? (no date, p. 6). Given the publication dates of Özdemir's and Selvi's translations, within one year of each other, one might infer that the entry of Woolf's works into the public domain allowed for more translations. In any event, Canseven concludes, previously translated books that were praised are then questioned when retranslated versions of them appear (no date, p. 9).

Another dimension of retranslations is the length of time between them. Working with Anthony Pym's *Method in translation history* (1998), İnce examines passive and active retranslations. A passive retranslation is undertaken after a long span or time or in another site, one far away from the previous translation — such as the length of time, 35 years, between Uyar's and Özdemir's translations. An active retranslation shares the same location and takes place within the same generation (İnce, 2017, p. 56) — such as the one-year gap between Özdemir's and Selvi's translations. By studying active retranslations, writes İnce, one can more effectively understand the nature and workings of translation itself (2017, p. 56), and that is what Canseven does in her own study on retranslations. She concludes, overall, that critics value the translations that are closer to the source text on the "lexical, structural and linguistic" levels (Canseven, no date, p. 9).

[7] See also Falcetta, who writes about some of the versions of book covers of *Mrs. Dalloway* (2010, p. 239-241).

6. Some translation strategies

The field of critical studies on the translations of Woolf's works is vast. Even a cursory overview of this criticism reveals the many techniques and strategies that translators have used in their approaches to Woolf. For example, in *Hermeneutic lacunae and ways of dealing with them in translating* Mrs. Dalloway, Galina Yanovskaya focuses on "lacunae," or the gaps between the levels of, first, narrative — "the surface of the textual space of a work" — and, second, meta-narrative — the author's intended meaning (2004, p. 121). Yanovskaya addresses the lacunae in a translation of *Mrs. Dalloway* (2004, p. 121-130). For example, the passage "'life, London, this moment in June'" can be perceived, at the narrative level, as "linked by subject-cum-location-cum-temporal characteristics" and, at the meta-narrative level, as containing the following intentions: expressing life, showing London, and fixing this moment (2004, p. 129). Paola Faini addresses lacunae as well; she introduces her chapter by writing, "[t]ranslating Virginia Woolf, in addition to appropriating impressions and techniques, inevitably entails bridging the gap between the perception of feelings and the way they are worded" (2012, p. 39).

In *Translating allusions as complex cultural resources for translators: The case of Virginia Woolf's* Mrs. Dalloway, Hamidreza Abdi homes in on two of the strategies translators use for *Mrs. Dalloway* — "proper-name allusions (PN) and key-phrase (KP) allusions" (2023, p. 85) — and concludes that translators tend to retain proper names for PN and minimize the change for KP (2023, p. 85). Unfortunately, Abdi observes, these practices seem to thwart a "deep understanding for the target audience" (2023, p. 85). A more effective approach would be to use "translation strategies that make the meanings of allusions explicit and easily understandable to the target readers" (2023, p. 99).

In her chapter on the translation of *Mrs. Dalloway* in Catalonia, Sáez addresses the field of Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS), or descriptivism. DTS requires translators to have some knowledge of the "target culture"; as such, translators are crucial to "the decision-making process in translation" (2011, p. 172). With their focus on the target culture, translators shift their focus away from the source text (ST) and place it on the target text (TT), read by the receiving culture (2011, p. 172). As a form of Translation Studies, descriptivism's focus is on translation output (2011, p. 173); its interest is on the decisions made by translators (2011, p. 173). Sáez notes the way Catalan translators of the 1930 edition of *Mrs. Dalloway* chose to translate references to English culture in Catalan, so that, for example, Big Ben is "Gros [big] Ben" and the Broad Walk becomes "Passeig Ample" (2011, p. 179). However, the translators of the 2003 edition left these names in English. One can see here a connection between Abdi's focus on allusions and Descriptive Translation Studies. Abdi's article and Sáez's chapter connect as well to Szabina Stercli's examination of "realia" in *Mrs. Dalloway*. In the field of translation studies, realia are the "signs and words or more purely terms denoting items of a material culture, particularly with relation to a regional culture" (Stercli, 2024, p. 6). Realia are "a set of lexical items of the source language which denote objects and phenomena characteristic of the source language community and which have no direct lexical counterparts in the target language" (Stercli, 2024, p. 6). Stercli considers realia such as Peter Walsh's "bandanna handkerchief," English tea-shops,

and English manor houses and their translations into Hungarian and Ukrainian. She observes that translators typically use "functional analogues" (2024, p. 57) to more effectively reach their readers.

In her discussion of translating Woolf, Jin writes about the transition from Itamar Even-Zohar's polysystem theory to Mary Snell-Hornby's cultural studies model (2009, p. 13-14).[8] Polysystem theory, in short, considers literature as part of a network of systems that interact with one another; like Descriptive Translation Studies, polysystem theory considers the target culture and focuses on linguistic equivalence (Jin, 2009, p. 13). The cultural studies model, on the other hand, embraces multiple disciplines such as psychology, sociology, ethnology, and philosophy, among others, and addresses "the creative side of translation as well" (Jin, 2009, p. 14). In her discussion of these approaches to Woolf, Jin does not address *Mrs. Dalloway*; rather, she critiques Chinese translators' lack of knowledge about the source culture in their 2001 translation of *Three Guineas*. Jin writes that "the translators' lack of understanding of Woolf's life experience, as well as the historical, political, cultural, and literary context in which Woolf wrote, and their failure to grasp the essence of the original text poses many problems, of which the most severe is the mistranslation of Woolf s most important argument in *Three Guineas*" (2009, p. 5-6). Jin's call is, clearly, for the cultural studies model propounded by Snell-Hornby.

7. *Mrs. Dalloway* and specific translation issues

A cursory review of the criticism on the strategies used to translate *Mrs. Dalloway* reveals the many kinds of approaches available to translators and the choices they make. It is also noteworthy to consider the translation issues specific to *Mrs. Dalloway*. One of the biggest challenges for translators is Woolf's use of free indirect speech or discourse, as Paola Faini indicates by the title of her chapter, "The challenge of Free Indirect Speech in *Mrs Dalloway*." Translators, Faini argues, must resist the temptation to simplify in order to produce a "smooth and easy text" (2012, p. 41). If the text, she writes, "is deprived of the stylistic subtleties of Free Indirect Speech and of its intonation pattern, it will also be deprived of some of its evocative power and of the shade of life this speech is likely to offer" (2012, p. 41). Faini's argument on behalf of rendering Woolf's style is passionate: "Why should one trivialize her varied melodic patterns?" Her questions continue: "If Woolf's objective was a densely polyphonic and evocative discord, can we allow Free Indirect Speech to get lost in translation? And, if in the unfortunate case that it does, what are the consequences of this loss?" (2012, p. 41). Gharaei and Dastjerdi also address free indirect speech in their article, *Free indirect discourse in Farsi translations of Woolf's* Mrs. Dalloway. They counter those who claim that the structural differences between Farsi and English are too great to overcome so that translators are forced to "domesticate" Woolf's language. Rather, they argue, free indirect discourse has been used in Farsi novels; thus, it is not alien to Farsi (2012, p. 8).

[8] Snell-Hornby elaborates upon the multiple forms of translation studies, such as postcolonial translation, gender-based Translation Studies, the "globalization turn," and technology and the translator, in her monograph *The turns of Translation Studies* (2006, p. vii-viii).

Free indirect discourse is not a translation issue limited to *Mrs. Dalloway*, of course, and that is true as well of the notion of gender. Referring to Jane Marcus's *Virginia Woolf and the language of patriarchy*, Eleonora Federici comments on Woolf's struggles with patriarchal language and her uses of "her use of absences, ellipses, unfinished sentences and uncompleted thoughts" (p. 218-219). Is this feminist language? Are there feminist translations? If so, Palusci asks in her introduction to *Translating Virginia Woolf*, "which strategies are adopted?" (2012, p. 12). Palusci comments on the way several contributors to the collection "investigate the problematic issues of translating gender, where the passage from English, a neutral language, to a gendered one (Spanish, German, Croatian and Italian) nourishes a vivacious debate on translation choices" (2012, 12-13). Van de Wardt (not one of the contributors to Palusci's volume) describes the challenges she faced in translating *Mrs. Dalloway* into Dutch. Citing the translator James Brockway[9] (who is himself quoted in Andringa 214), van de Wardt writes of the supposedly "unbridgeable difference between the English and the Dutch language." Woolf's writing is "highly refined," it seems, in contrast to the Dutch language, which "has a tendency to clumsiness." Thus, the translator of Woolf's writing into Dutch, Brockway claims, must have a "highly *woman-like*" ability to handle her English (Van de Wardt, 2010, p. 6). In her translation of *Mrs. Dalloway* — an example of which is addressed at the end of this article — van de Wardt shows that she is woman enough to rise to the task.

Faini brings up the consideration of translating the quality of orality — of conveying the spoken. She asserts, "If it is orality Woolf aims at, then orality it should be, and what is seemingly lost in translation can be made up for by adapting the translated sentence to give it the sound of oral speech" (2012, p. 43). To provide orality means including markers in the target language and not translating word-for-word. Faini provides several examples "such as the use of the article before the surname (la Perry, la Rosseter), thus stressing the difference between the narrator's role (dicevano Benson e la signorina Rosseter) [they said Benson and Miss Rosseter] and the role of the Free Indirect Speech" (2012, p. 43). Along with orality, translators must contend, as Göske and Weiß write, with the dense texture of Woolf's writing: "the meticulous musicality and imagistic density of her prose provided peculiar problems, and her early translators — who could of course not yet resort to helpful criticism, annotated editions, computers or digitised texts — also had to keep the complex web of her dense textures in mind" (2021, p. 26). About Theresia Mutzenbecher's translation of *Mrs. Dalloway*, Göske and Weiß note that "Woolf's lyrical prose, her metaphorically dense texture, feels more laboured in Mutzenbecher's version" (2021, p. 28). "However," they add, "this is not so much owing to the translator's lack of time and talent, or her attempts to fill in some details, but to the structures of the German language: its polysyllabic morphology, penchant for compounds and complex, highly subordinated syntax" (2021, p. 28).

Cultural, linguistic, and dictionary differences come into play in translation, and one can see how that is evident in Korean translations of English texts. Hee Jin Park describes how hierarchy

[9] James Brockway is renowned for his translations of English novels into Dutch and Dutch poetry into English (James Brockway).

is of utmost importance in South Korea so that "the order of seniority is overemphasized."[10] In English, on the other hand, "gender difference is stressed." One can see that in the words for siblings; in English there is only one word each for "brother" and "sister" whereas, in Korean, there are four words for brother and sister which are based on seniority. In Korean there is one word for both niece and nephew; that word is equivalent to nephew. Korean uses only commas and periods — no colons and semi-colons. Given Woolf's love of the semi-colon, one can see what a challenge it would be to translate her writing into Korean. Korean has no passive voice. In "pure Korean," there is only one word for both blue and green; how then, one wonders, does one translate Woolf's short story, "Blue and Green"?

8. Frustrations with translations of Woolf

Many critics express frustrations with translations of *Mrs. Dalloway*. Ida Klitgård remarks that the first translation of *Mrs. Dalloway* by Aage Brusendorff into Danish may sound "old-fashioned and grandiose" to the ears of contemporary readers (2002, p. 169). Klitgård writes that the critic Jens Kruuse acknowledges, however, that Brusendorff "has a magnificent feel for poetry and the novel as a whole," even if, adds Klitgård, Kruuse "deplores [Brusendorff's] painfully deficient knowledge of English language and customs" (2002, p. 170). Klitgård compares Jørgen Christian Hansen's 1984 translation of *Mrs. Dalloway* to Brusendorff's; Hansen's is, Klitgård believes, "a little too relaxed" at times (2002, p. 179). Klitgård points to Hansen's translation of the end of the novel, when "Peter Walsh asks what it is that fills him with 'extraordinary excitement.'" Hansen "translates 'excitement' into 'ophidselse'" which, in Danish, "can relate only to agitation or to sexual excitement." Brusendorff's "'bevægelse,' which is the equivalent of 'movement' *and* affection, something that touches the heart, is thus more adequate and attentive to Peter Walsh's emotions" (2002, p. 179).

A major criticism of translations is of the way, in the past, they regularized Woolf's prose. Sergio Perosa's critique of the early translations of Woolf's work centers on their "regularization" (2002, p. 201). Translators made her Free Indirect Speech and interior monologue explicit by inserting inverted commas or turning both into straight third-person narratives. Woolf was thus "appreciated as, and turned into, an example of normalized *bello scrivere* (fine writing) […]; the revolutionary nature of her writing remained hidden" (2002, p. 200-201). Recent translations, such as those by Nadia Fusini, accommodate Woolf's free indirect speech and do not provide the inverted commas. Perosa writes that, for Fusini, "poetry lay not in cream-like sequences, but in an adherence to facts; her new version kept this very much in the foreground" (2002, p. 205). Like Perosa, Oliveira comments on the way Woolf's early translators in Brazil "normalize[d] her innovative language" (2018, p. 213). Now, as is the case with retranslations around the world, translators in Brazil are trying "to capture Woolf's revolutionary language . . . which involves a constant dialogue with the contemporary reader" (2018, p. 213).

[10] This entire discussion is drawn from p. 116.

In her review of translations of Woolf in Sweden, Catherine Sandbach-Dahlström reports on the way they "vary in quality needless to say" (2002, p. 154). It would seem that, with time, they improve in quality, but as Sáez writes about the 2003 translation of *Mrs. Dalloway* in Catalan, and Klitgård about the 1984 version in Danish, that is not always entirely the case. Moreover, as Séllei observes, errors appear in Woolf criticism alone; how, then, can one trust the translation? Séllei writes, for example, that "[e]ven decades later there are factual errors in Hungarian Woolf-criticism, when e.g. Marcell Benedek misspells Woolf's name ("Woolff'), and thinks that *Mrs Dalloway* takes place in one hour" (2012, p. 56). Jacqueline A. Hurtley critiques Cèsar-August Jordana's translation into Catalan of the following passage from *Mrs. Dalloway*: "Clarissa muses on Peter Walsh's return from India: 'He would be back one of *these days*.'" Hurtley comments on the way Jordana turns Woolf's Free Indirect Speech of "He would be back one of *these days*" to indirect speech: 'Tornaria un d'*aquells* [those] dies'" (He would be back one of *those* days). Then, later in his translation, Hurtley writes, Jordana turns "'*this* moment of June'" to "'*aquell* [that] moment de juny'" (*that* moment in June) (2002, p. 299). Hurtley writes, "This would seem to illustrate Jordana's obliviousness to what Woolf is attempting to do, that is, to reproduce the intimacy and immediacy of the character's thought process" (2002, p. 299).

And yet — to study the careful work that translators typically conduct is to see how much they do, in fact, get right — as right as they can make it. Van de Wardt justifies her insertion of one word — "*dat*," or that — in her translation of the first line of *Mrs. Dalloway*, "Mrs. Dalloway said she would buy the flowers herself." Van de Wardt translates it as "Mrs. Dalloway zei **dat** ze zelf de bloemen zou kopen" (2014, p. 74; boldfaced added) or, literally, ""Mrs. Dalloway said **that** she would buy the flowers herself" (boldfaced added). Van de Wardt writes, "The insertion of the subordinating conjunction 'dat' in the translation is inevitable even if English allows for its absence." She notes that if the conjunction "*dat*" were left out, the translation would be "Ze zou de bloemen zelf wel kopen, zei Mrs. Dalloway," or, in English, "She would buy the flowers herself, Mrs. Dalloway." However, van de Wardt rightly concludes, a novel titled "*Mrs. Dalloway*" should start with the lead character's name (2010, p. 74n.14).

9. Conclusion

To offer an overview of even a fraction of the prodigious amount of scholarship on the translation of *Mrs. Dalloway* in the past century is to get a glimpse into the many dimensions of Translation Studies and to see how global the novel has been, ever since the first translation appeared in 1928. It is to explore worlds of languages and cultures and to experience the joys of difference. The many dimensions of Woolf's translatability are part of what makes all her work, especially *Mrs. Dalloway*, so wide in its reach.

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