

Foreign Literatures in National Media: Comparing the International Focus of Literary Coverage in Europe and the United States, 1955-2005

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ABSTRACT

This article examines key developments and cross-national variations in the coverage of foreign literatures in U.S., Dutch, French, and German elite newspapers between 1955 and 2005. Such coverage is indicative of the interest in foreign literatures among literary mediators and readers and the degree and direction of “globalization from within.” Using content analysis, the degree, direction, and diversity of the international orientation of literary journalism are charted for each country. The results indicate that the degree of international orientation is inversely related to the centrality of a country’s literary production. Results show a clear internationalization of literary coverage in the French newspapers, which coincides with the declining dominance of French literature in the late twentieth century literary world-system. German and Dutch papers’ literary coverage already showed a high level of internationalization in 1955 and remained fairly constant, with foreign literature taking up around half of the total coverage devoted to literature. The *NY Times*, by contrast, devoted roughly one quarter of its coverage to foreign literature throughout the research period. Although the global diversity of coverage in all four countries has increased, international coverage is largely confined to a select group of “core” countries and to countries belonging to the same language area or region, and domestic literature remains important.

Cultural globalization - the growing international diffusion, exchange, and intermingling of cultural goods and media products - is the most visible manifestation of globalization in everyday life (Crane et al. 2002). As a consequence of increasing cultural exports and the rise of cultural multinationals, the same music, movies, writers, pop stars and art styles are now known around the world. Cultural globalization is thus central to the everyday experience of a number of transformations that Beck (2002) describes as “globalization from within”. This implies an intensified reflexivity, or awareness of the world at large (Guillén 2001; Giddens 2000) as well as the emergence of a variety of “hybrid”, “creolized” or “glocal” phenomena (Hannerz 1996; Pieterse 1995). Growing global interdependence and awareness has proven a challenge for national states and institutions. In the face of increasing international competition, nation-states lose power to transnational institutions and networks (Meyer et al. 1997; Sassen 2001). Consequently, national institutions, in particular involved in literature and the arts, find that nationality is no longer the prime focus for identification or organization (Castells 1997).

The literary field is often conceptualized as a power struggle in which actors compete for recognition from the institutions and persons endowed with the capacity to grant recognition (Bourdieu 1993; Van Rees and Dorleijn 2001; Dorleijn and Van Rees 2007; Verboord and Van Rees 2009). From this perspective, cultural globalization means the opening of national literary fields to international competition and the emergence of a transnational literary field (Bourdieu 1990 and 1993) or literary “world system” (De Swaan 1995; Heilbron 1999; Wallerstein 1975-1989). Literary valorisation and recognition are then seen as emanating from power struggles not only within national literary fields, but also between literary fields in different countries. In this global constellation, some “core” countries and cities dominate literary production and set the standards for other “(semi)peripheral” areas.

Systematic comparative studies into the globalization of literature and the arts are still rare (Janssen and Peterson 2005; Dowd and Janssen, forthcoming). Most research on

international literary relations involves single-country studies or cross-national comparisons at a single point in time. These studies usually concentrate on individual authors and movements or bilateral literary relations (Sapiro and Heilbron 2002; Van Voorst 1997).

My research covers a fifty-year period, four countries, and various literary genres. I examine how the press coverage given to foreign literatures has evolved since 1955 in France, Germany, the Netherlands, and the United States. I also look at how the degree, direction, and diversity of international literary coverage are affected by each country's position within the literary world system. Such comparative research is a prerequisite for understanding the transnational exchange of culture across time and place (Gerhards and Rössel 2000; Moretti 2001). Some places, countries, and cultures seem more open to cultural import than others (Heilbron 1995), while the direction of that international orientation - in terms of countries and centres targeted - is not identical for all countries and genres, and changes over time.

I will explore the dynamics of international literary exchange by looking at the international orientation of a central, intermediary agency within national literary fields: the literary journalism in "elite" newspapers. Literary journalists and reviewers working for such papers are core agents in the symbolic production of literature. Through their selective and evaluative activities they publicly confirm, modify, or reject the ways in which literary producers position their products on the market. This channels and shapes subsequent perception and valuation by other actors in the literary field (Janssen 1994; Van Rees and Dorleijn 2001). The literary coverage in elite newspapers¹ therefore indicates which literary artefacts are deemed worthy of attention within different countries and periods and what value is placed on them. Developments in the editorial prominence of a genre or the critical approach to it can, for example, help identify changes in its prestige (Baumann 2001; Janssen 1999). Likewise, international literary coverage in elite newspapers does not merely signal the volume and nature of literary imports, but also indicates the level of interest in various foreign literatures among literary mediators and readers in a country. Such coverage, in other words, signals the degree and direction of globalization from within.

In the next section, I first present the theoretical insights and assumptions guiding my research. The third section provides an outline of the research methodology, while the concluding sections present and discuss the results.

INTERNATIONALIZATION IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

Cultural exchange transcending regions and nation-states is not a new phenomenon, but the volume, tempo, and extent of such exchange have increased enormously since World War II. This is largely due to improved dissemination possibilities and the rise of multinationals in the production and distribution of cultural goods, as well as an increase in migration, shared languages and multilingualism, travel and tourism (Held et al. 1999). The result has been a "cultural world system" (De Swaan 1995): national cultural fields have become embedded in transnational systems of exchange, influence, and competition.

The cultural world-system involves an implicit classification of places according to the perceived importance of their cultural production. Some countries and cities have emerged as the "core" of this cultural world-system, while others have more marginal positions in the "(semi)periphery". A place with a central position usually has a strong concentration of cultural producers and mediators (e.g. theatres, schools, studios, publishing houses). Moreover, these centres are home to the institutions and actors endowed with the power to

¹ Cf. the Data and Method section, for my operationalisation of "literary coverage" and "elite newspapers".

“consecrate” culture (Bourdieu 1993). As a result, centres of cultural production become places where key actors set standards for the evaluation and ranking of cultural artefacts and their makers. A country or city that is central in a particular cultural field thus functions as an exemplar: aspirants from the periphery look to the centre for guidance, inspiration, and confirmation, and dream of “making it” there.

Like other parts of the cultural world system, the literary world system today has a “polycentric” structure (De Swaan 1995; Heilbron 1999), in which each linguistic territory has one or more centres that control and attract the literary productions dependent on it. According to Casanova (2004), London, New York, and to a lesser extent Toronto, are central for Australians, New Zealanders, Irish, Canadians, Indians, and English-speaking Africans; Barcelona, the intellectual and cultural capital of Spain, is as a major literary centre for Latin American writers, while Berlin is the leading literary centre for authors from the German-Speaking countries. Paris is central for writers from West- and North-Africa as well as for Francophone authors in Belgium, Switzerland, and Canada.

With the rise of a cultural word system, cultural supply has been fundamentally altered as well. In many places, people have much more to read, to see, or to hear than ever before. At the same time, cultural offerings have become more similar from place to place. Popular cultural forms as well as the “high” arts have witnessed the rise of worldwide transnational circuits, resulting in an increasing supply of foreign products. In the field of literature, numerous international festivals and prizes (English 2005) have emerged. The supply of foreign literature in translation has steadily risen since the 1950s in most non-English-speaking Western countries, including the ones studied here (Heilbron 2008; Gerhards and Rössel 2000). Consumer demand in these countries shows a corresponding growth of interest in foreign literature, particularly Anglo-American products, among younger generations (Sassoon 2006). In the 1990s, the share of translations in national literary book production for the four countries included in this study ranged from 6% for the U.S., to 35% for France and Germany, to 58% for the Netherlands (Table 1). In all four countries, the share of translations was substantially higher in literary book production than in total national book production (cf. Gannes and Minon 1992).

Table 1. Share of Translations in National Literary Book Production, 1995^a

	France	Germany	Netherlands	U.S.
Number of Literary Book Publications ^a	10,545	13,751	2,950	11,537
Share of Translations in Literary Book Production ^b	36%	35%	58%	6%
Share of Translations in National Book Production ^b	14%	18%	27%	3%

Notes:

^a) Including reprints. Source: Unesco Book Production Statistics 1995-1999.

^b) Source: Méltiz 1999. Data on the share of translations in national book production pertain to 1991.

The local implications of the increased presence of foreign products are subject to continued debate (Crane et al. 2002; Griswold and Wright 2004). Nonetheless, it seems safe to say that all over the world, national cultural production competes with foreign imports. Domestic literature - previously the prime subject of literary criticism and canon formation within western nation-states - is, in the contemporary era, just one possible option among many. In line with the internationalization of literary offerings, I thus expect journalistic coverage of foreign literatures to increase in all four countries included in this study.

CROSS-NATIONAL DIFFERENCES IN DEGREE OF INTERNATIONALIZATION

However, the degree of internationalization is likely to vary across countries. Whether we look at trade, telecommunication traffic, scientific cooperation or cultural exchange, actors in countries with smaller populations are, *ceteris paribus*, more internationally oriented than their counterparts in bigger countries (Heilbron 1995; Katzenstein 2003). While a country's political system (e.g. the Arabic countries) or level of prosperity (African countries) may mediate the effect of size, a country's demographic base generally constitutes an independent factor, promoting or hampering international cultural exchange (Heilbron 1995). First, smaller countries are more dependent on imports simply because they do not produce certain goods themselves or domestic production does not suffice to satisfy demand. Second, drawing from Blau's (1977) theorem of group size and interaction,² transnational exchanges have more impact on smaller countries because they involve a larger proportion of the population of these countries (Cowen 2002). Third, countries with large home markets profit from economic advantages of scale, particularly in capital-intensive sectors (Marvasti and Canterbury 2005). In the Netherlands, for example, imported films accounted for over 90 percent of all films distributed in the 1990s, as opposed to 42 percent in the United States, 56 percent in France, and 62 percent in Germany (UNESCO 2000: 306-307). Thus, small countries generally rely more extensively on international exchange and are more internationally oriented.

Size alone, however, does not determine the level of a country's international orientation. Another factor is centrality: the extent to which a country's cultural production or its production in a particular cultural field interests foreign producers, experts, and audiences (Heilbron 1995; Held et al. 1999). The more central a country's cultural position, the less it tends to be concerned with foreign products and producers. This is illustrated by the share of translations published in a country: translations are rare in English-speaking countries, but much more common in non-English-speaking Western countries (De Swaan 2001; Heilbron 1999).

Table 2. Some Indicators of the Position of France, Germany, Netherlands and the U.S. in the Literary World System, 1955-2005

PANEL A: Share of France, Germany, the Netherlands and the U.S. in International Literary Coverage, 1955-2005 ^a				
	% France	% Germany	% Netherlands	% U.S.
1955	21	10	<1	17
1975	12	4	<1	17
1995	7	5	<1	15
2005	8	2	2	19
PANEL B: Share of Translations from French, German, Dutch and English in Total Number of Literary Translations, 1979-1981 and 1999-2001 ^b				
	% French	% German	% Dutch	% English
1979-1981	14	7	1	53
1999-2001	11	6	1	62

Notes:

^a) Average proportion of attention devoted to the U.S., France, Germany and the Netherlands in the international literary coverage of the other three countries' newspapers. Cf. the data and method section for details on how we measured international literary coverage.

^b) Average share of translations from French, German, Dutch and English within the total number of literary translations in 25 Countries. Source: *Unesco: Index Translationem*. Only the 25 countries with an average annual production of at least 40 literary translations in both periods have been included in the calculation of the average share of each language per country.

² Blau examined the relation between group size and diverging in-group and out-group relations for majorities and minorities, showing that intergroup exchanges have more impact on the smaller group involved.

Table 2 presents some longitudinal data on the literary centrality of the four countries in this study. Panel A gives the average share of each country in the international literary coverage of the other three countries' newspapers between 1955 and 2005. Panel B gives for, 1979-1981 and 1999-2001, the average share of translations from English, French, German, and Dutch within the total number of literary translations in twenty-five countries.³ It should be noted that this second indicator concerns the centrality of *languages* in the literary world system and therefore can only serve as a proxy for the centrality of each country's *literature*.

In 1955, the United States already had a prominent international position, particularly due to its prominence in the domain of popular literature, but it shared the lead with France, which played a highly central role in most cultural fields, including literature (cf. Casanova 2004, Janssen, Kuipers and Verboord. 2008). Since then, the United States has acquired an increasingly central position in the production of both "popular" and "serious" literature, concomitantly with the growing supremacy of the English language (De Swaan 2001), whereas French literature has become less prominent than before (Casanova 2004; Heilbron 2008; Sapiro 2008). Germany has been unable to (re)gain a central literary position after World War II outside the German-speaking region (Casanova 2004; Sassoon 2006), while the increasing hegemony of English has also eroded the centrality of German within Europe (Clyne 1995). Dutch language and literature traditionally occupy a (semi)peripheral position (Heilbron 1999 and 2008).

My choice of countries thus provides the necessary variability to sort out the independent effects of size and centrality on the degree of international orientation: The U.S. has always been big and has become more central, while France used to be central but became less so in the timeframe under study; Germany is larger but less central than France; Germany and Netherlands are both not central, but Germany is much larger (Cf. Janssen et al. 2008, Appendix A).

Like countries, languages can be ranked according to centrality (De Swaan 2001; Heilbron 1999). Although the prominence of languages and literatures is closely related, language constitutes a distinct factor, which may weaken or strengthen the effects of the size and centrality of a country's literary production. If a central language is spoken in a relatively small country, this will probably increase its centrality in various cultural fields. This holds *a fortiori* for (partly) language-dependent cultural forms such as literature, theatre, film and television. For instance, the strong international position of the British television industry is at least to some extent a result of the worldwide importance of the English language. However, regardless of the centrality of a country's language, if this language is spoken in more than one country, this will generally boost cultural and literary export. This, in turn, may lead to a lower level of international orientation than in otherwise comparable countries. Moreover, sharing a language with other countries is likely to lead to a more specific form of internationalization, oriented more towards other countries in which the same language is spoken.

This brings me to another important way in which the international orientation of countries can vary. Not only do I anticipate that the four countries differ in the degree of international orientation, I also expect to find changes and differences in the direction and composition of cultural flows towards the various countries.

DIRECTION AND DIVERSITY OF INTERNATIONAL ORIENTATION

Studies of cultural globalization generally find geographical and cultural proximity, as well as language kinship, to be important predictors of cultural exchange (La Palestina and

³ The overall picture emerging from Table 2 accords with existing studies on the topic. See, among others, Casanova 2004; Heilbron 2008; Sapiro 2008; Sassoon 2006.

Straubhaar 2005), Research on news production also shows proximity to be a core news value (Clausen 2003; Gans 1979). The few studies into the cultural coverage of foreign countries suggest that such bias is even stronger in the realm of literature and the arts than in other domains (Wilke 1998). I thus expect literary coverage to show a certain bias towards neighbouring countries and/or countries in which the same language is spoken (for instance: Germany and Austria; France and Quebec but also francophone Africa; US and the UK, Australia, Ireland; Netherlands, Flanders, South Africa).

However, the importance of geographical proximity in the coverage of foreign literatures has likely diminished since the 1970s. First, the past three decades have witnessed the rise of non-western literary centres, notably in Asia and Latin America, resulting in a diversification of the global literary marketplace. Second, the growth of sizeable non-western minorities in many Western countries has stimulated “multiculturalism” in those countries, enabling a growing “contra-flow” of literary content from the Global South to the North (Berkers 2009; Berkers, Janssen and Verboord 2009; Huggan 2001). Furthermore, the cultural power balance between the United States and Europe has shifted significantly since World War II. The United States now plays a prominent role in various art fields formerly centred in Europe, including literature. The investigated period is characterized by increasing domination of the English language and a rising share of translated, English-language literature in the national, literary production of most European countries. Next to books in the country’s own language, in 1995 book translations out of English constitute the largest category in local book production practically everywhere.

THEORETICAL ASSUMPTIONS

To summarize, the following assumptions may be formulated that can serve as an interpretative framework for my empirical findings:

- A1. Between 1955 and 2005, newspapers in France, Germany, the Netherlands and the United States have devoted an increasing portion of their literary coverage to foreign literature.
- A2. The degree of international coverage varies across countries according to their size and the centrality of their literary production: In 1955, French and U.S. newspapers had a similar, relatively low degree of international orientation. Dutch newspapers were the most internationally oriented, while the German newspapers held an in-between position. After 1975, U.S. newspapers became the least internationally oriented, followed by newspapers in France, Germany, and the Netherlands, respectively.
- A3. Newspapers in all four countries have paid more attention to literature originating in neighbouring countries and/or countries belonging to the same language area, than to literature originating elsewhere.
- A4. International literary coverage in all four countries has become more diverse, covering an increasingly wider range of countries and regions.
- A5. The share of English-language literature in the international literary coverage of Dutch, French, and German newspapers has been growing.

DATA AND METHOD

To assess how journalistic attention to foreign literature has developed since 1955, I performed a content analysis (Neuendorf 2002) of literary coverage in seven European and U.S. newspapers for four sample years: 1955, 1975, 1995 and 2005. Data collection was not

restricted to literature sections or book supplements, but covered the whole newspaper.⁴ Coders analyzed all types of articles, including news stories, reviews, background articles, interviews, and columns in the field of literature. Literature was also defined broadly in the analysis, including literary prose and poetry as well as popular genres such as thrillers and science fiction. In what follows, the term “literature” refers to all of these genres, unless expressly stated otherwise.

The study considers newspapers that target the governing, intellectual, and cultural elite because these papers largely determine whether and how other media and the wider community (Ferree et al. 2002) discuss subjects. They thus fulfil a key role in processes of cultural valorisation. I selected daily newspapers with a national or supra-regional distribution, rather than regional and local newspapers that by definition pay more attention to local news and information. A third criterion was that the chosen newspapers were in existence during the entire time frame under study. For each European country, I chose the two with the largest paid circulation, on average, in the research period (cf. Janssen et al 2008): *Le Monde* and *Le Figaro* for France; the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* and the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* for Germany; *NRC Handelsblad* and *de Volkskrant* for the Netherlands. For the United States, I only looked at the *New York Times*, because it carries many more articles than the European newspapers. Located in the U.S.’s main literary centre, it is also one of the few U.S. newspapers with a nationwide readership.

Literary coverage is generally concentrated around the weekends and is subject to seasonal influences. I therefore applied a multistage stratified sampling procedure in combination with a “constructed week” method: for each day of the week I selected a random edition from each quarter, resulting in four constructed weeks (Riffe et al. 1993). The sample for the content analysis thus contains 692 editions: 24 editions (28 including Sunday editions) per sample year for each newspaper title.⁵

The newspapers were coded in original format by 14 coders in 2004 to 2006. If articles contained more than one item (e.g. an article reviewing literary novels by various authors), coders filled out a separate registration form for each item. These items are the research units of the current analysis (N=2,660).

For each item, the name of the *principal actor* reviewed was noted, that is the actor receiving the most attention. Inter-coder reliability for coding the principal actor proved to be of a high level (Cohen’s kappa of .81). “Principal” actors were mostly writers (87%). About 6% of items featured *producers or mediators*, e.g. publishers, while *literary experts* and *literary policy* actors were the main actors in respectively 4% and 1.5% of all items.

For all principal actors, the coders registered several variables, including their *national origins* (national identity), and their *country of location* (i.e., the country where the actors had their professional base at the time of the newspaper publication).

The primary measure of the *degree of international orientation* in this article is the share of international- or foreign-actor items within the total number of items.⁶ I classify all items as either a *foreign* or a *domestic actor* item based on the *country of location* of the principal actor reviewed in the item. In addition, I code each item as foreign or domestic according to the principal actor’s *national origin*. For items containing no principal actor, I use the dominant country location and nationality among the total group of discussed actors.

⁴ With the exception of newspaper magazines, since these were not always available.

⁵ This sample procedure minimizes the risk that the sampled years are outliers. If specific (literary) events took place in the sampled years, it is unlikely that these events would affect the literary coverage of the entire year.

⁶ In addition to the percentage of foreign actor *items*, I also calculated the percentage of editorial *space* devoted to these items, i.e. the share of international literary coverage within the total editorial space (in cm²) for literature. Both measures yielded highly similar results.

Inter-coder reliability of the main actor's country location and national origin is .93.

The data on the location of principal actors allow us to specify the *direction of international orientation* by considering the representation of specific countries and regions in literary coverage.

Finally, foreign coverage may concentrate on a few specific countries and regions or involve a wider range. Besides counting the number of countries represented in international literary coverage for each sample year and sample country, a Gibbs-Martin index (Gibbs and Martin 1962) is computed to measure the global diversity of international literary coverage. This index is calculated by squaring the share of various world regions in the total number of international items and subtracting the sum of those squares from 1. The index ranges from zero to one, with zero indicating a concentration of international coverage on a single region, and 1 indicating that the coverage is distributed evenly across all regions.⁷

RESULTS

THE INTERNATIONALIZATION OF LITERARY COVERAGE

In view of the growth of international cultural exchange in general, and the increasing supply of foreign literature in particular, I anticipated an increase in international literary coverage for each of the four countries included in this study (A1). However, only the French newspapers show a clear trend toward internationalization since the 1950s (Table 3). For the other three countries, no significant growth of the share of foreign literature occurred between 1955 and 2005. After 1995, coverage of foreign actors appears to decline in the *NY Times* and the Dutch newspapers, while it slightly increases in the German papers.

Table 3. Percentage of Newspaper Items Devoted to Foreign Literary Actors by Country and Year

A	1955	1975	1995	2005	N
<hr/>					
All Countries					
France	19.4	36.2	38.3	48.1	699
Germany	52.2	47.3	49.1	57.8	695
Netherlands	50.6	53.0	53.1	48.6	645
U.S.	29.2	25.0	33.8	24.3	621
N	445	539	854	822	2,660
<hr/>					
B: Differences Across Time	FR	GE	NL	US	
All Years	***	ns	ns	ns	
1975-1955	*	ns	ns	ns	
1995-1975	ns	ns	ns	ns	
2005-1995	*	*	ns	ns	
<hr/>					
C: Cross-national Differences	1955	1975	1995	2005	
All Countries	***	***	***	***	
FR – GE	***	*	***	*	
FR – NL	***	**	**	ns	
FR – US	ns	*	ns	***	
GE – NL	ns	ns	ns	*	
GE – US	**	***	***	***	
NL – US	***	***	***	***	

Note: FR = France; GE = Germany; NL=Netherlands; US=United States.

*p <.05; **p<.01; ***p < .001; ns: not significant (two-tailed chi-square tests).

⁷ The formula for the Gibbs-Martin index is as follows: Diversity = $1 - \sum_1^n (\text{region share}_i)^2$

For example, if all foreign actor items pertained to 2 regions having an equal share each, the value of the diversity index would be $1 - (0,5^2 + 0,5^2) = 1 - (0,25 + 0,25) = 0,5$.

DEGREE OF INTERNATIONAL ORIENTATION BY COUNTRY

For each sample year, Table 3 shows marked differences between countries in degree of international orientation. In 1955, the French newspapers and the *NY Times* show similar degrees of internationalization, but whereas the share of foreign actors remains modest in the *NY Times*, in the French newspapers it rises to almost 50% in 2005: on a par with the Dutch papers, but lower than the German papers' 60%.

In 1955, 1975 and 1995, Dutch and German newspapers are clearly more internationally oriented than their French and American counterparts, both devoting about half of their literary coverage to foreign actors. In 2005, the German newspapers are the most internationally focused, while the Dutch and French papers have similar levels of international orientation.

I assumed the degree of international orientation to be affected by a country's size as well as the centrality of its literary production. My findings point to the effect of centrality rather than size: although France is much smaller than the U.S., it occupies a highly central position in the early years of this study. The strong internationalization of French literary journalism accords with the decline of France's central position, thus supporting the centrality hypothesis. I expected the Dutch papers, being situated in the smallest and least central country, to be the most internationally oriented. However, Dutch and German newspapers show no significant differences in international coverage in 1955, 1975 and 1995, whereas in 2005, international coverage is higher for the German papers (Table 3).

DIRECTION AND DIVERSITY OF INTERNATIONAL ORIENTATION

My second set of assumptions concerns the origin of the actors featuring in newspaper coverage of literature, anticipating a relatively high level of attention to actors from neighbouring countries or the same language area (A3); increasing global diversification (A4); and, for the European papers, increasing attention to Anglophone literature (A5), at the expense of the above mentioned regional/linguistic preferences.

The Appendix shows, for each reference year, which countries are represented in French, German, Dutch and American literary coverage. The specific regional and linguistic orientations I expected show up most clearly in the central place of Austrian and Swiss actors in the German newspapers. It is also apparent from the prominence of British and Canadian actors in the otherwise very nationally oriented *NY Times* and the comparatively sizeable Dutch coverage of Belgium and German actors who receive less attention in the other's countries' literary coverage. In the French case, the rankings hardly point to an effect of shared language or regional proximity. Belgium, which shares language as well as boundary with France, is hardly visible in the French newspapers, except in 1975, while the position of France's southern neighbours (Spain and Italy) resembles their place in the more distant German papers.

My data thus provide some support for the geographic/linguistic proximity hypothesis, in particular the German papers' orientation to a transnational German-speaking region, which also may partly explain the comparatively high degree of internationalization of these papers in 2005. All in all, the effect of language kinship seems more important than geographical proximity.

I also find evidence of increasing global diversification in literary coverage (A4). First, in 2005, the newspaper sample features literary actors from 44 different countries as opposed to 22 countries in 1955 (cf. Table 5). In each of the European countries, the number of countries represented in literary coverage increases; only in the *NY Times* does it remain fairly low, with a peak in 1995, but a drop below the levels of 1955 and 1975 in 2005 (cf. the Appendix).

Table 4. Representation of World Regions in International Literary Coverage 1955-2005: Mean Percentage of Items per Region in Dutch, French, German, and U.S. Newspapers*

Region	1955	1975	1995	2005
Europe (Western)	69.9	62.0	60.3	58.5
Europe (other)	10.2	13.1	8.7	9.2
North-America	17.6	20.3	17.0	18.5
Latin-America	0.7	2.4	4.6	3.2
Asia	-	3.4	5.1	2.7
Africa	-	0.8	3.2	6.2
Oceania	1.5	1.2	1.0	1.7
<i>Global Diversity (Gibbs-Martin)</i>	<i>0.47</i>	<i>0.57</i>	<i>0.59</i>	<i>0.61</i>
6b France	1955	1975	1995	2005
Europe (Western)	42.9	52.8	43.3	44.6
Europe (other)	21.4	15.1	7.2	14.9
North-America	35.7	26.4	28.9	19.8
Latin-America	-	1.9	8.2	5.9
Asia	-	3.8	7.2	6.9
Africa	-	-	4.1	7.9
Oceania	-	-	1.0	-
<i>Global Diversity (Gibbs-Martin)</i>	<i>0.64</i>	<i>0.63</i>	<i>0.71</i>	<i>0.73</i>
6c Germany	1955	1975	1995	2005
Europe (Western)	71.4	62.7	62.6	63.3
Europe (other)	2.9	19.4	8.1	8.6
North-America	20.0	13.4	17.1	22.7
Latin-America	2.9	3.0	4.1	2.3
Asia	-	-	5.7	2.3
Africa	-	-	1.6	0.8
Oceania	2.9	1.5	0.8	-
<i>Global Diversity (Gibbs-Martin)</i>	<i>0.45</i>	<i>0.55</i>	<i>0.57</i>	<i>0.54</i>
6d Netherlands	1955	1975	1995	2005
Europe (Western)	81.8	61.7	66.3	56.3
Europe (other)	6.8	5.0	13.9	10.1
North-America	11.4	21.7	11.9	19.3
Latin-America	-	5.0	4	1.7
Asia	-	3.3	1	1.7
Africa	-	3.3	3	10.1
Oceania	-	-	-	0.9
<i>Global Diversity (Gibbs-Martin)</i>	<i>0.31</i>	<i>0.57</i>	<i>0.52</i>	<i>0.65</i>
6e United States	1955	1975	1995	2005
Europe (Western)	82.3	71.0	68.7	69.7
Europe (other)	9.7	12.9	6.3	3.0
North-America	3.2	6.5	10.3	12.1
Latin-America	-	-	2.1	3.0
Asia	-	6.4	6.3	-
Africa	1.6	-	4.2	6.1
Oceania	3.2	3.2	2.1	6.1
<i>Global Diversity (Gibbs-Martin)</i>	<i>0.31</i>	<i>0.47</i>	<i>0.51</i>	<i>0.49</i>

*Note: Domestic coverage is not included in this table

Second, within the coverage given to international literature, the share of foreign actors located outside Europe, North America, or Oceania (Australia) increases, at the expense of (Western) European actors (Table 4). As of 1975, international literary coverage also features Asian and Latin-American actors, while from 1995 onward African actors gain in prominence. In 2005, African actors surpass both Latin-American and the Asian actors in the French and Dutch papers and the *NY Times*.

Foreign Literatures in National Media

Table 5. Representation of Countries in Literary Coverage 1955-2005:
Mean Percentage of Items per Country in Dutch, French, German and U.S. Newspapers

1955	%	1975	%	1995	%	2005	%
<i>Home Country</i>	66.2	<i>Home Country</i>	59.6	<i>Home Country</i>	56.4	<i>Home Country</i>	55.3
France	10.1	U.K.	9.1	U.K.	10.1	U.S.	10.0
U.K.	7.9	U.S.	7.8	U.S.	7.0	U.K.	10.0
U.S	7.2	France	5.4	France	3.6	France	3.9
West-Germany	3.5	USSR/Russia	3.8	Italy	2.7	Form.	
Denmark	2.7	Italy	1.6	Germany	2.6	USSR/Russia	2.7
USSR/Russia	2.1	Switzerland	1.6	Austria	2.4	Austria	2.2
Italy	2.0	West-Germany	1.6	Canada	1.7	Italy	1.9
Switzerland	1.8	Belgium	1.4	former USSR/Russia	1.7	Switzerland	1.6
Spain	1.1	Denmark	1.4	Spain	1.1	Belgium	1.5
Austria	0.7	Austria	1.1	Ireland	1.0	South-Africa	1.5
Australia	0.6	Canada	1.0	Japan	0.9	Germany	1.4
Canada	0.6	Spain	1.0	Poland	0.9	Spain	1.2
Belgium	0.5	Ireland	0.6	Switzerland	0.9	Canada	1.1
Netherlands	0.4	Israel	0.6	Belgium	0.8	Japan	0.7
Ireland	0.2	Poland	0.6	Denmark	0.7	Poland	0.7
Poland	0.2	Chile	0.4	South-Africa	0.7	Sweden	0.7
East-Germany	0.1	Czechoslovakia	0.4	former Yugoslavia	0.7	Algeria	0.6
Finland	0.1	Argentina	0.4	Israel	0.5	Portugal	0.6
Hungary	0.1	South-Africa	0.4	India	0.5	Denmark	0.5
South-Africa	0.1	Sweden	0.4	Australia	0.4	Egypt	0.5
Sweden	0.1	Japan	0.2	Brazil	0.4	Argentina	0.4
		Neth. Antilles	0.2	Colombia	0.4	Australia	0.4
		East-Germany	0.2	Argentina	0.3	Turkey	0.3
		Hungary	0.2	Hungary	0.3	Greece	0.3
		Iceland	0.2	Romania	0.3	Hungary	0.3
		New Zealand	0.2	Sweden	0.3	Colombia	0.2
		Palestine	0.2	Algeria	0.2	Ireland	0.2
		Portugal	0.2	Greece	0.2	Israel	0.2
		Yugoslavia	0.2	Mexico	0.2	Netherlands	0.2
		New Zealand	0.2	Nigeria	0.2	Surinam	0.2
				Norway	0.2	Bahamas	0.1
				Portugal	0.2	Chile	0.1
				Turkey	0.2	Congo	0.1
				Bangladesh	0.1	former Czechosl.	0.1
				Congo	0.1	French Guyana	0.1
				Czechoslovakia	0.1	Guatemala	0.1
				Guadeloupe	0.1	Haiti	0.1
				Guatemala	0.1	Iran	0.1
				Iran	0.1	Mexico	0.1
				Lebanon	0.1	New Zealand	0.1
				Martinique	0.1	Norway	0.1
				Netherlands	0.1	South Korea	0.1
				Paraguay	0.1	Vietnam	0.1
				Polynesia	0.1	former Yugoslavia	0.1
				Tunisia	0.1		
Number of Countries: 22		Number of Countries: 30		Number of Countries: 46		Number of Countries: 44	
N Items: 445		N Items: 539		N Items: 854		N Items: 822	

The Gibbs-Martin index of global diversity in coverage (see Method section) shows an increase in global diversity for all four countries (Table 4), but the timing of this development varies. In the German papers and the *NY Times*, global diversity mainly increases between 1955 and 1975, with little growth after that. The Netherlands also witnesses the strongest diversification in the above time frame, although the degree of diversity rises again between 1995 and 2005. The French papers, which show the highest diversity level throughout the period of research, further diversify their international coverage between 1975 and 1995.

Table 5 shows the ranking of the country locations of the main actor for the entire dataset, enabling us to identify the “winners” and the “losers” in the literary world-system in the second half of the twentieth century. France suffers the most marked decline. In 2005, French actors feature on average in only 3.9% of Dutch, German, and American newspaper items devoted to literature as opposed to 10.1% in 1955. Germany and Denmark, which in 1955 are among the five highest ranking foreign countries, also lose ground, taking up a modest 10th and 18th position in the 2005 rankings. As expected (A5), the share of English-language literature in the European newspapers increases, although this growth is less spectacular than in other cultural fields (cf. Janssen et al 2008): in 2005, U.S. and U.K. actors together account for 20% of literary items as opposed to 15% in 1955.

DISCUSSION

In this article I examined trends in the degree, direction and diversity of the newspaper coverage given to foreign literatures in four countries: France, Germany, the Netherlands and the United States, for the period 1955-2005.

My results indicate that the centrality of a country’s literary production and language offers a better explanation for cross-national differences in the degree of international orientation than country size. Between 1955 and 2005, I find a clear internationalization of literary coverage in the French newspapers, which used to be strongly focused on national literature. This increasing international orientation coincides with the declining dominance of French literature in the late twentieth century literary world-system.

German and Dutch papers’ literary coverage already shows a high level of international orientation in 1955; it remains more or less constant, with foreign literature taking up around half of the total coverage devoted to literature. The degree of foreign literature coverage in the Dutch and German papers lags behind the increasing international orientation for other forms of culture, which is probably due to the strong language-dependency of literature (Janssen et al 2008; Gerhardt and Rössel 2000). The comparatively high degree of internationalization in the 2005 editions of the German papers results to a large extent from these papers’ growing focus on literature originating in neighbouring, German-speaking countries.

The *NY Times* devoted roughly one quarter of its coverage to foreign literary actors throughout the research period, notably to actors from other English-speaking countries. The relatively limited coverage of foreign actors in the *NY Times* probably does not mean that the U.S. has been immune to cultural globalization. Rather, it provides additional support for the centrality hypothesis. The U.S. cultural field’s growing international embeddedness may have promoted openness to foreign culture, but this effect may have been neutralized by America’s increasingly central position in the cultural-world system of the late twentieth century.

My examination of the direction of international orientation – i.e. where do the literary actors discussed in newspapers come from - shows the other side of centrality’s importance in the literary world-system: a select group of countries – what may be called the “core” and the “semi-periphery” of the literary world-system – receive the most attention: United States, the

United Kingdom, France, and, to a lesser extent, the (former) USSR, Italy and Germany. Again, we see France's waning influence in these rankings, more or less balanced by the rise of English-language literature to such heights that one could perhaps speak of Anglo-American "colonization".

In contrast to the contra-flow argument, newspaper attention to literature has not become much more global (cf. Berkers et al. 2009). The global diversity of literary coverage has increased, but newspaper coverage of foreign literature remains largely confined to a handful of "core" countries and to countries belonging to the same language area or region, while domestic literature remains important in all four countries. I expected geographical and linguistic proximity to become a less salient factor in literary coverage, but my data suggest that such specific linguistic and regional preferences may have actually gained in significance.

The enduring journalistic focus on domestic literature is inherent to processes of news selection, in which domestic locale is a key value. Reviewers and other literary experts tend to be preoccupied with the valuation and ranking of the work of indigenous writers because it is primarily at the national level that their judgments "count" in processes of literary valorisation and canon formation. Newspaper coverage of literature is therefore likely to have a local bias.

This study leaves a number of underexposed issues for future research to explore. First, I did not look at the role of newspaper journalism in the wider political and socio-cultural context of the four sample countries (Ferree et al. 2002), nor did I examine the ways in which variations in national media systems may affect the form and content of international literary coverage (Benson 2009).

Second, this study has focused on specific manifestations of globalization. I conceptualised globalization primarily as the exchange of literary artefacts, as well as the growing awareness of literature originating in other countries or regions. As noted in the introduction, however, globalization may manifest itself in various other ways, including the emergence of hybrid literary forms and genres. Literary hybridization has not been considered here, mainly because the present methods cannot adequately trace this manifestation of globalization.

Third, I ignored the *content* of literary coverage, treating any coverage – positive or negative – as interchangeable. It is a distinct possibility, though, that while European newspapers frequently review U.S. writers, the reviews might be quite critical, drawing symbolic boundaries between domestic or European literary works and U.S. literature. Surely, this would qualify the Anglo-American "colonization" of literary journalism in continental Europe. Still, such a finding would underscore the increased centrality of the U.S. in the literary world-system: not only does it set the standards, but it also a favourite whipping board and counter-example in discourse about national identities (Kroes 1996).

Another unexamined effect of globalization is the possibly declining influence of nationally-based institutions and distribution networks (including, perhaps, national newspapers). Transnational media and distribution networks provide new opportunities for small groups, from transnational diasporas to global fan communities, to access literary products outside of their countries of residence. National newspapers, while probably quite representative of the literary mainstream, clearly are not the right source for research on such developments.

Acknowledgement

This research was supported by the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO, project 277-45-001).

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Foreign Literatures in National Media

APPENDIX

France: Representation of Countries in Literary Coverage 1955-2005:
Percentage of Items per Country and Total Number of Countries Represented

1955	%	1975	%	1995	%	2005	%
<i>France</i>	80.9	<i>France</i>	63.8	<i>France</i>	61.7	<i>France</i>	51.9
U.S.	7.0	U.S.	7.9	U.S.	8.0	U.K.	10.3
USSR/Russia	4.2	U.K.	5.3	U.K.	5.0	U.S.	8.4
West-Germany	2.8	USSR/Russia	3.9	Canada	2.7	former USSR/Russia	6.1
Italy	1.4	Italy	3.3	Italy	2.7	Algeria	2.3
Spain	1.4	Belgium	2.6	Spain	2.7	Japan	2.3
Switzerland	1.4	West-Germany	1.3	former USSR/Russia	1.9	Spain	2.3
		Spain	1.3	Germany	1.5	Austria	1.9
		Canada	1.3	Ireland	1.1	Italy	1.9
		Denmark	1.3	Japan	1.1	Belgium	1.4
		Argentina	0.7	Switzerland	1.1	Egypt	1.4
		Hungary	0.7	Belgium	0.8	Canada	0.9
		Poland	0.7	Brazil	0.8	Netherlands	0.9
		Portugal	0.7	Israel	0.8	Portugal	0.9
		Switzerland	0.7	Algeria	0.4	Switzerland	0.9
		Sweden	0.7	Argentina	0.4	Argentina	0.5
		Palestine	0.7	Colombia	0.4	Bahamas	0.5
				Congo	0.4	Denmark	0.5
				Denmark	0.4	French Guyana	0.5
				Guadeloupe	0.4	Germany	0.5
				Iran	0.4	Guatemala	0.5
				Lebanon	0.4	Haiti	0.5
				Martinique	0.4	Iran	0.5
				Nigeria	0.4	Mexico	0.5
				Paraguay	0.4	Poland	0.5
				Poland	0.4	Turkey	0.5
				Polynesia	0.4	Vietnam	0.5
				Portugal	0.4		
				South-Africa	0.4		
				Turkey	0.4		
Number of Countries: 7		Number of Countries: 17		Number of Countries: 30		Number of Countries: 27	
N = 72		N = 152		N = 261		N = 214	

Foreign Literatures in National Media

Germany: Representation of Countries in Literary Coverage 1955-2005: Percentage of Items per Country and Total Number of Countries Represented

1955	%	1975	%	1995	%	2005	%
<i>West-Germany</i>	47.8	<i>West-Germany</i>	52.7	<i>Germany</i>	50.9	<i>Germany</i>	42.2
France	10.4	France	9.6	Austria	7.8	U.S.	12.9
U.K.	9.0	U.K.	6.2	U.S.	7.8	U.K.	7.1
U.S.	9.0	U.S.	6.2	U.K.	5.4	Austria	6.2
Denmark	6.0	USSR/Russia	6.2	France	4.7	France	5.3
Switzerland	4.5	Switzerland	4.1	Italy	3.9	Switzerland	5.3
Italy	3.0	Austria	3.4	Spain	2.7	Italy	3.6
Spain	3.0	Ireland	1.4	Switzerland	2.3	former USSR/Russia	2.2
Austria	1.5	Spain	1.4	former USSR/Russia	1.6	Spain	2.2
Australia	1.5	Argentina	0.7	Denmark	1.2	Denmark	1.3
Canada	1.5	Czechoslovakia	0.7	Hungary	1.2	Argentina	0.9
Netherlands	1.5	Denmark	0.7	Israel	0.8	Greece	0.9
		East-Germany	0.7	Japan	0.8	Norway	0.9
		Iceland	0.7	Norway	0.8	Sweden	0.9
		Italy	0.7	Poland	0.8	Belgium	0.4
		New Zealand	0.7	Argentina	0.4	Chile	0.4
		Poland	0.7	Australia	0.4	former Czechoslovakia	0.4
		Sweden	0.7	Bangladesh	0.4	Egypt	0.4
		Yugoslavia	0.7	Belgium	0.4	Hungary	0.4
				Brazil	0.4	Israel	0.4
				Canada	0.4	Japan	0.4
				Colombia	0.4	Poland	0.4
				Guatemala	0.4	Portugal	0.4
				India	0.4	South-Korea	0.4
				Ireland	0.4	Turkey	0.4
				Mexico	0.4	former Yugoslavia	0.4
				Netherlands	0.4		
				Nigeria	0.4		
				Romania	0.4		
				South-Africa	0.4		
				Turkey	0.4		
Number of Countries: 12		Number of Countries: 19		Number of Countries: 31		Number of Countries: 26	
N = 67		N = 146		N = 257		N = 225	

Foreign Literatures in National Media

Netherlands: Representation of Countries in Literary Coverage 1955-2005:
Percentage of Items per Country and Total Number of Countries Represented

1955	%	1975	%	1995	%	2005	%
<i>Netherlands</i>	49.4	<i>Netherlands</i>	47.0	<i>Netherlands</i>	46.9	<i>Netherlands</i>	51.4
France	16.1	U.K.	14.5	U.K.	13.9	U.K.	9.3
West-Germany	6.9	U.S.	9.4	Germany	5.6	U.S.	8.9
U.K.	5.7	France	4.3	U.S.	5.2	France	4.9
U.S.	5.7	Belgium	2.6	France	4.6	South-Africa	4.5
Denmark	4.6	Denmark	2.6	Italy	3.6	Belgium	4.0
Italy	3.4	West-Germany	2.6	former Yugoslavia	2.6	Germany	2.4
USSR/Russia	3.4	USSR/Russia	1.8	Belgium	2.1	Italy	2.0
Austria	1.1	Canada	1.7	Poland	1.5	Poland	2.0
Switzerland	1.1	Chile	1.7	Austria	1.0	Sweden	2.0
		Italy	1.7	Canada	1.0	for.	
		South-Africa	1.7	Denmark	1.0	USSR/Russia	1.6
		Austria	0.9	former USSR/Russia	1.0	Austria	0.8
		Israel	0.9	Sweden	1.0	Hungary	0.8
		Japan	0.9	Algeria	0.5	Turkey	0.8
		Neth. Antilles	0.9	Argentina	0.5	Surinam	0.8
		Poland	0.9	Brazil	0.5	Canada	0.4
		Switzerland	0.9	Czechoslovakia	0.5	Congo	0.4
				Ireland	0.5	Greece	0.4
				Israel	0.5	Israel	0.4
				Mexico	0.5	New Zealand	0.4
				Neth. Antilles	0.5	Norway	0.4
				Portugal	0.5	Portugal	0.4
				South-Africa	0.5	Spain	0.4
				Spain	0.5	Surinam	0.8
				Tunisia	0.5		
Number of Countries: 10		Number of Countries: 18		Number of Countries: 26		Number of Countries: 24	
N = 87		N = 117		N = 194		N = 247	

Foreign Literatures in National Media

U.S.: Representation of Countries in Literary Coverage 1955-2005:
Percentage of Items per Country and Total Number of Countries Represented

1955	%	1975	%	1995	%	2005	%
<i>U.S.</i>	70.8	<i>U.S.</i>	75.0	<i>U.S.</i>	66.2	<i>U.S.</i>	75.7
U.K.	16.9	U.K.	10.5	U.K.	16.2	U.K.	13.3
France	3.7	France	2.4	Canada	2.8	Canada	2.9
Australia	0.9	USSR/Russia	2.4	Ireland	2.1	Australia	1.5
Canada	0.9	Israel	1.6	France	1.4	France	1.5
Ireland	0.9	Australia	0.8	India	1.4	South-Africa	1.5
Poland	0.9	Canada	0.8	South-Africa	1.4	Colombia	0.7
USSR/Russia	0.9	Czechoslovakia	0.8	Australia	0.7	Ireland	0.7
West-Germany	0.9	Denmark	0.8	Austria	0.7	Netherlands	0.7
East-Germany	0.5	Ireland	0.8	Colombia	0.7	Portugal	0.7
Finland	0.5	Italy	0.8	Germany	0.7	form.USSR/Russia	0.7
Hungary	0.5	Switzerland	0.8	Greece	0.7		
South-Africa	0.5	West-Germany	0.8	Italy	0.7		
Sweden	0.5			Japan	0.7		
				Poland	0.7		
				Romania	0.7		
				for. USSR/Russia	0.7		
				Spain	0.7		
Number of Countries: 14 N= 219		Number of Countries: 13 N= 124		Number of Countries: 18 N= 142		Number of Countries: 11 N= 136	