

## **Marketing ‘Frenchness’**

### **The Paratextual Trajectory of Patrick Modiano’s Swedish Book Covers**

#### **Abstract**

This chapter follows the paratextual trajectory of the Nobel Prize in literature laureate Patrick Modiano in Swedish translation. The aim is to investigate how three publishing houses, Albert Bonniers, Norstedts, and Elisabeth Grate bok-förlag, have marketed their translations of the high prestige author Modiano using the book covers, focusing on aspects of ‘Frenchness’ and connotations of high prestige. Questions that have guided the analysis are: How have the three publishing houses designed Patrick Modiano’s Swedish book covers? What aspects have been highlighted by the different publishing houses in Patrick Modiano’s publishing trajectory? How have the covers changed over time? The main results are that expectancy norms for high prestige translations from French seem to be oriented towards vernacularizing strategies, highlighting ‘French’ aspects such as Parisian motifs, monochrome cover art, and titles that are kept close to the originals. All three publishing houses have to some degree adopted vernacularizing marketing strategies in their covers, and seem to be targeting a specific presumptive book buyer who appreciates and expects connotations of French literature and high prestige.

#### **1 Introduction**

When the Nobel Prize in literature laureate 2014, Patrick Modiano (1945–), was announced, the comments in Swedish newspapers were, as always, mixed.

The most disappointed one said that the choice was “as exciting as a bottle of flat Perrier” (Wiman).<sup>1</sup> Interestingly enough, the aspect that received the highest praise in connection to the prize was Modiano’s small independent Swedish publishing house, Elisabeth Grate bokförlag (Karlsson; Wiman). This publisher, which specializes in translations from French, had managed to make an impact on the Swedish book market, not least with its distinct book covers, usually featuring monochrome photographs with a white frame.

Book covers play an important part in presenting the contents of the text for a potential book buyer and, hopefully, book reader (see Batchelor 142; Matthews xi). From a research perspective, book covers may be investigated to show how they are designed by publishing houses for different marketing purposes. This chapter therefore examines the book covers of Patrick Modiano’s novels in Swedish translation, and the way the covers are related to different aspects of publishing house marketing.

The first Swedish translation of a Patrick Modiano novel was published in 1970 by Sweden’s largest publishing house, Albert Bonniers förlag. His publishing trajectory, that is, which different publishing houses have published his books in Swedish translation over time, has varied to some degree. The two largest publishing houses in Sweden, Bonniers and Norstedts, have both published novels by Modiano, but in 2012, he migrated to a small publishing house (Grate bokförlag). The reasons for this move will be presented further on, where the publishing trajectory is examined in detail, since it is of importance to the analysis of the book covers: the publishing houses have interpreted and presented the author’s work differently during his publishing trajectory.

Although there is no clear-cut divide between high prestige and popular literature, different marketing choices are made depending on how the publishing house wants to present the author in question. Books in different genres are marketed in completely different ways, which also affects the paratextual framing of books in different genres. Most book readers can probably make qualified guesses as to which genre a book belongs to by simply viewing the book covers, since genre affects the marketing strategy (see Berglund, *Mord-*

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1 In this chapter, all quotes from Swedish sources are rendered in the author’s English translation.

*förpackningar* 13; Squires, *Marketing Literature* 70–101). Patrick Modiano is defined in this study as a high prestige author. Publishing houses use tokens of high prestige to market literature as such, as a way of attracting book buyers who are interested in this kind of literature. This study adds to the knowledge on how translations of high prestige literature are marketed in Sweden through the book covers.

The aim is therefore to investigate how the three publishing houses, Bonniers, Norstedts, and Grate bokförlag, have marketed their translations of the high prestige author Patrick Modiano using the book covers, focusing on 'French' aspects (see the discussion in section 2.3), connotations of high prestige, and the Swedish book buyers' expectancy norms of the same. The aim is operationalized through the following research questions: How have the three publishing houses designed Patrick Modiano's Swedish book covers? What aspects have been highlighted by the different publishing houses in Patrick Modiano's publishing trajectory? How have the covers changed over time?

With these aspects in mind, I will examine the book covers of Modiano to show how his work has been marketed by his Swedish publishing houses.

## 2 Theory and Method

### 2.1 High Prestige Literature

High prestige literature is hard to define, since there is no distinct genre or labelling for it. In previous studies, I have defined high prestige literature as "that which has been assessed as prestigious by judges of the literary field (e.g., by distinguished literary critics, by literary scholars, or by members of influential juries of literary prizes)" (Rüegg, "Nobel Trajectories" 213). I would argue that Modiano is an author who can be labelled as high prestige; his main publishing house in France is the prestigious Gallimard and he is also a recipient of the Nobel Prize in literature. In Sweden, he has been published by prestigious publishing houses and has been translated by well-

known translators, such as Anne-Marie Edéus, Madeleine Gustafsson, and Anna Säflund-Orstadius.

## 2.2 Translated Book Covers as Paratexts

The influential terms “paratext,” “epitext,” and “peritext” were introduced by Gérard Genette in *Seuils* (1987) and they concern texts that work as thresholds between the literary text and the world surrounding it. While epitexts concern texts outside of the book (e.g., book reviews, interviews, advertisements), peritexts are parts of the actual book (i.e., covers, illustrations, titles, prefaces). Genette makes a distinction between authorial paratexts, that is, those “approved” by the author, and the publisher’s peritexts, which mostly function as advertising, and—as the name suggests—are outside the author’s control (Genette 1–5, 9–10, 16–21).

Genette’s notion of paratexts, and furthermore the publisher’s peritexts, has inspired several studies of book covers in translation, of which one aspect is marketing.<sup>2</sup> Scholars have shown that there are advantages to examining these marketing aspects specifically, since they can tell us something about what the publisher wants to convey to the target audience (see Alvstad; Podlevskikh Carlström; Schwartz, “Images of Italy”). As Cecilia Alvstad argues in her examination of paratexts of books published by small Swedish publishing houses specializing in literature from Africa, Asia, and Latin America, with the creation of target-text paratexts, “the source is adapted so as to fit with what the publisher anticipates to be the needs and expectations of the target system” (79). Book covers are therefore a vital part of conveying the author and book in question to the new audience (see Squires, *Marketing Literature* 75). Alvstad also notes that there often are differences “between how a book is paratextually presented in the source and target context” (78). The unique circumstances of the target context can therefore be investigated through book covers, especially how the publishing house in question has interpreted the author’s book for the target audience.

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2 See Batchelor (25–45) for a discussion of and detailed presentation on various thematic studies in paratexts and translation.

If the Swedish Modiano covers are similar to each other, this can be a sign of expectancy norms from the Swedish book buying audience. The term “expectancy norms” was introduced by Andrew Chesterman and can be used to analyze norms that are established by the expectations of readers of translations. The norms are influenced by different things, amongst others the “prevalent translation tradition in the target culture,” and “by the form of parallel texts (of a similar text-type) in the target language” (Chesterman 62). Applied to book covers, the term can help display which expectancy norms are dominant for high prestige literature translated from French.

To be able to say something about the publishing decisions that have been made in the case of Patrick Modiano's books in Swedish translation, I will analyze a selection of paratextual elements—all part of the publisher's peritext—mainly the titles (since they are also part of the cover) and the cover art (i.e., the front cover art, and in some cases promotional texts). The analysis of the book covers has been inspired by multimodal analysis, where visual and textual elements are given the same importance (e.g., Kress and van Leeuwen 16–44). I have made a selection of book covers to analyze from each publishing house, with the intention of having approximately the same number of covers representing each (this has not been possible in the case of Bonniers, since it has published far fewer editions than the other two publishing houses).

The publishing houses' marketing choices for Modiano's works have to be understood in the light of larger patterns for translated literature in Sweden, and these can be explained by defining the position of the Swedish language in the world system of translations.

### **2.3 Cosmopolitanizing and Vernacularizing Flows in the Semi-Periphery**

The world system of translations is one way of explaining the flows of literature in a transnational space. Nicky van Es and Johan Heilbron have divided all the languages within the system into four groups depending on how dominant the language in question is. English stands out as “hypercentral,” while central languages are German and French. Swedish holds a semi-peripheral place,

along with Russian, Spanish, and Italian (297; Edfeldt et al. 1–12). This means that although the number of Swedish speakers in the world is relatively low, large number of books are being translated from Swedish. What the semi-peripheral position also means is that a fairly large number of books are being translated into Swedish. The more central a language is, the less is translated into it. Historically, French has been an important source language for Swedish translations (see Torgerson), but during the period when Modiano was published by Swedish publishing houses, the number of editions with French as a source language was decreasing in the Swedish book market (Svedjedal, “Svensk skönlitteratur i världen” 43).

To be able to investigate paratextual elements that connote ‘Frenchness’ and high prestige, I will be using the terms “cosmopolitanizing” and “vernacularizing,” as presented by Edfeldt et al. in *Northern Crossings* (2022). The authors of the monograph use these terms to examine the circulation of literature to and from the Swedish semi-peripheral language space. In my view, the terms can also be useful for paratextual analysis, which is actually mentioned as an example by the authors, since the processes can also occur in “publishing, framing and marketing of translated literature” (Edfeldt et al. 3). In the understanding of Edfeldt et al., cosmopolitanization is “adapting a text in a generalist way, playing down its source culture particularities.” Vernacularization “means highlighting these very particularities” (Edfeldt et al. 3). For obvious reasons, the two terms just discussed may make the reader think of Lawrence Venuti’s well-known terms “domesticating” and “foreignizing” translation practices (Venuti 13–20), but unlike these, the authors of *Northern Crossings* use cosmopolitanizing/vernacularizing to investigate the larger patterns of transnational cultural transfer, rather than for textual analysis.<sup>3</sup> Since this study focuses on marketing strategies of translated literature, it is appropriate to use the terminology suggested in *Northern Crossings*. An important aspect

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3 Cosmopolitanization and vernacularization in text analysis are investigated through three translation strategies, reduction, retention, and replacement, where reduction is a cosmopolitanizing strategy (as it makes a text less rooted in the source culture), and retention (the source culture vernacular is strengthened) and replacement are vernacularizing strategies (“adding distinct connections to the target vernacular”) (Edfeldt et al. 125).

is that cosmopolitanizing and vernacularizing strategies should be seen as a spectrum, not as dichotomies.

I will also be using the loosely defined term 'Frenchness' in my analysis of Modiano's book covers. What has been included in the term is to some degree defined by what other scholars and/or journalists have written about the subject (cf. Bergh; Nilsson), but also by recurring motifs which I have deemed to be more or less connected to *la nouvelle vague* in French 1960s cinema and *le nouveau roman français* (both coincide temporally with the fact that Modiano's first novel was published in 1968). The monochrome tone and dusky street views of Paris are two examples. Many of Modiano's covers, which will be presented later on, include distinct Parisian motifs, which I would argue convey 'Frenchness.'

With these aspects in mind, it is also vital to present the Swedish book market, to be able to portray the context in which the different book covers have been created.

### 3 The Swedish Publishing Landscape

The Swedish publishing landscape has been through many changes during the past 50 years, and many of these changes still play a vital role today. In April 1970, fixed book prices were abolished and as a result, the Swedish state subsidy for "translated and literary valuable fiction" was introduced in 1975 as a measure to prevent commercial literature from completely dominating the Swedish book market (Svedjedal, "När bokpriserna blev fria" 459). Many small and independent publishing houses were able to start or expand their businesses due to the state subsidy and the improved financial possibilities that came with it (Steiner, *I litteraturens mittfåra* 64; Peurell 525–528). The state subsidy is to this day an important financial support system for small publishing houses in Sweden (Olsson). However, the subsidy is not reserved only for small publishing houses—all publishing houses can apply for it, no matter what their size. Some things have not changed during the past 50 years; Bonniers and Norstedts have remained the largest and most prestigious publishing houses until this day. Albert Bonniers förlag, founded in 1837, is part of Sweden's largest

publishing group, and is synonymous with vertical integration in the Swedish book market, owning newspapers, book clubs, the online bookstore Adlibris, the audiobook service BookBeat, etc. (“Organization”; Steiner, “En olönsam affär” 159; Svedjedal, *Bokens samhälle* 48). Norstedts förlag, founded in 1823, is Sweden’s oldest publishing house and is part of the second largest publishing group, owned by the audiobook provider Storytel (Peterson 9; Steiner, “En olönsam affär” 159). Both publishing houses have been important actors for a long time in the Swedish book market.

Elisabeth Grate bokförlag was founded in 2003 and specializes in translations from French (Hedberg 24; Nilsson). Grate bokförlag was one of many small publishing houses that were founded in a second large wave of new independent actors that entered the Swedish publishing landscape in the early 2000s. Due to digital innovations that helped simplify publishing, it became cheaper and easier to become a publisher (see Warnqvist 123–124; Berglund, *Deckarboomen under lupp* 24, 31, and 42–50). However, there had also been a shift in publishing trends, where a lot of translated literature from languages other than English was now being published by small rather than large publishing houses. This migration has shown to be especially extensive in the case of high prestige literature, such as that by Nobel Prize laureates (Rüegg, *Nobelbanor* 94–109). Elisabeth Grate herself has said that the large publishing houses lost interest in translated fiction (from languages other than English) during the 2000s, which made it possible for her to start her business (Hedberg 24–25). Technological advances and shifts in the Swedish book market are therefore the most important explanations for why small publishing houses, such as Elisabeth Grate’s, emerged in the early 2000s.

It has been stated that Sweden has an audience for French and other Romance language fiction, but that this segment is a small group of readers (Hedberg 25). It is crucial that books published by small publishing houses find their way to the presumptive buyers, which explains the importance of the book covers signaling the right message.



## 4 The Paratextual Trajectory of Patrick Modiano

### 4.1 Patrick Modiano's Swedish Publishing Trajectory

Patrick Modiano's first novel, *Place de l'Étoile*, was published by the prominent French publishing house Gallimard in 1968 ("Patrick Modiano"). This was also the first translation to appear in Sweden. Modiano was introduced in Swedish by the large publishing house Bonniers in 1970, and *Place de l'Étoile* (also the Swedish title) was published in the prestigious series for translated fiction, *Panache*. Within the series, at least 21 Nobel Prize laureates have been published, many of them before they were awarded the prize (Bergh). After this publication, it would take 22 years before Bonniers would publish anything by Modiano again.

Instead, Modiano migrated to the second largest publishing house in Sweden, Norstedts, which published six novels between 1974 and 1986, both in the paperback series *PAN* and within a series for modern translated fiction, *Panter*. In the 1990s, Modiano migrated back to Bonniers again, where two novels were published in 1992 and 1993. After this, nothing by Modiano was published for another 19 years, until the small publishing house Grate bokförlag took on the author in 2012 (Rüegg, *Nobelbanor* 130–133).

Grate bokförlag's first novel by Modiano, *Dora Bruder*, was published in 2012 and a second, *Nätternas gräs*, came in 2013; Grate had books in stock when the Nobel Prize was awarded to Modiano in 2014.

In the wake of the Nobel Prize in 2014, as table 1 shows, all publishers with backlist novels by Modiano published new editions of them, but just the following year, Grate bokförlag was the main publishing house of Modiano in Swedish translation again. As Grate said, small publishers have become increasingly important as the interest of the larger publishers has diminished (Hedberg 24–25). Modiano remains an important author for the publishing house; the latest novel Grate bokförlag published by him was in 2021. His migration from a large to a small and specialized publishing house has apparently helped in maintaining the number of translations into Swedish for Modiano.

In total, 30 different editions of Modiano's books have been published in Swedish translation up until 2021, and seven of his novels were published twice.

**Table 1.** All editions published by Patrick Modiano in Swedish translation 1970–2021

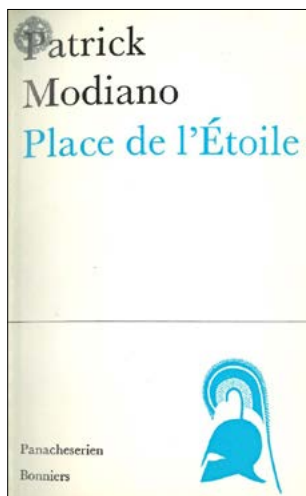
<b>Edition (Publishing year)</b>	<b>Publishing house</b>	<b>Translator</b>
<i>Place de l'Étoile</i> (1970)	Bonniers	Lena Melin, Cai Melin
<i>De yttre boulevarderna</i> (1974)	PAN/Norstedts	Anne-Marie Edéus
<i>Villa Triste</i> (1977)	PAN/Norstedts	Anne-Marie Edéus
<i>Familjebok</i> (1979)	Norstedts	Anne-Marie Edéus
<i>De dunkla butikernas gata</i> (1980)	Norstedts	Anne-Marie Edéus
<i>Ungdomsår</i> (1985)	Norstedts	Anne-Marie Edéus
<i>Minnets kvarter</i> (1986)	Norstedts	Anne-Marie Edéus
<i>Bröllopsresa</i> (1992)	Bonniers	Katja Waldén
<i>En cirkus drar förbi</i> (1993)	Bonniers	Katja Waldén
<i>Lilla Smycket</i> (2012)	Grate bokförlag	Pontus Grate
<i>Nätternas gräs</i> (2013)	Grate bokförlag	Anna Säflund-Orstadius
<i>Bröllopsresa</i> (2014)	Bonniers	Katja Waldén
<i>De dunkla butikernas gata</i> (2014)	Norstedts	Anne-Marie Edéus
<i>De yttre boulevarderna</i> (2014)	Norstedts	Anne-Marie Edéus
<i>Dora Bruder</i> (2014)	Grate bokförlag	Madeleine Gustafsson
<i>Lilla Smycket</i> (2014)	Grate bokförlag	Pontus Grate
<i>Nätternas gräs</i> (2014)	Grate bokförlag	Anna Säflund-Orstadius
<i>Place de l'Étoile</i> (2014)	Bonniers	Lena Melin, Cai Melin
<i>De yttre boulevarderna</i> (2015)	Norstedts	Anne-Marie Edéus
<i>En stamtavla</i> (2015)	Grate bokförlag	Kristoffer Leandoer
<i>Horisonten</i> (2015)	Grate bokförlag	Anna Säflund-Orstadius
<i>Nätternas gräs</i> (2015)	Grate bokförlag	Anna Säflund-Orstadius
<i>På den förlorade ungdomens café</i> (2015)	Grate bokförlag	Mathias Andersson, Mikael Furugärde
<i>För att du inte ska gå vilse i kvarteret</i> (2016)	Grate bokförlag	Anna Säflund-Orstadius
<i>Villa Triste</i> (2016)	Norstedts	Anne-Marie Edéus
<i>Straffeftergift</i> (2017)	Grate bokförlag	Anna Säflund-Orstadius
<i>Slumrande minnen</i> (2018)	Grate bokförlag	Anna Säflund-Orstadius
<i>Ur den djupaste glömskan</i> (2020)	Grate bokförlag	Anna Säflund-Orstadius
<i>Osynligt bläck</i> (2021)	Grate bokförlag	Anna Säflund-Orstadius

## 4.2 The Covers of Patrick Modiano before 2012

### 4.2.1 Bonniers

Book covers are situated in their publishing context, and are in addition culturally sensitive—today, a high prestige cover in Sweden differs quite a lot from the prestigious French Gallimard *Blanche* series, with its austere white covers with very little or no cover art (see Schwartz, “Semi-Peripheral Dynamics” 506). They also reflect the current taste and genre conventions at the time of their publication (see Phillips 30). As Genette has stated, the text can no longer be adapted, but the paratext is an instrument of adaptation: “Hence continuous modifications in the ‘presentation’ of the text” (408). To compare book covers that have been published over a 50-year period can seem misleading since the books have been published during very different circumstances, but I would argue that there has been a consistent tendency to highlight Modiano’s ‘Frenchness’ throughout his Swedish publishing trajectory.

As mentioned above, Patrick Modiano was introduced in Swedish in 1970 by the important publishing house Bonniers in the prestigious *Panache* series, where French authors such as Simone de Beauvoir, Albert Camus, André Gide, and Alain Robbe-Grillet have been published since the series first saw the light of day in the 1940s (Bergh). The modest off-white cover of *Place de l'Étoile* (1970) features the author’s name and title, with the title in the same light blue color as the trademark of the *Panache* series, thus clearly connecting them. The covers of the *Panache* series had been redesigned during the 1960s by the famous graphic designer Vidar Forsberg, with the aim of connoting the style of *le nouveau roman français* (Bergh 9). The whole packaging of the *Panache* series in the 1960s and up until the mid-1970s was therefore meant to evoke and connote the prestige of French literature, and therefore also to show clear vernacularizing elements. This indicates that presumptive buyers and readers of high prestige have an expectancy norm of it as being synonymous with French literature.

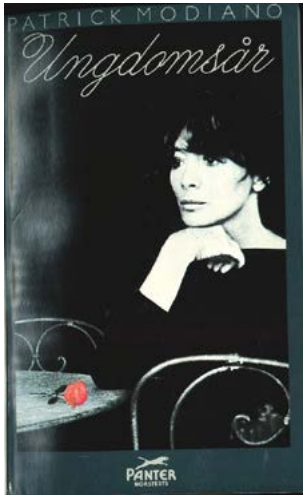


**Figure 1.** Patrick Modiano's first novel in Swedish translation, *Place de l'Étoile* (1970). Cover design by Vidar Forsberg.

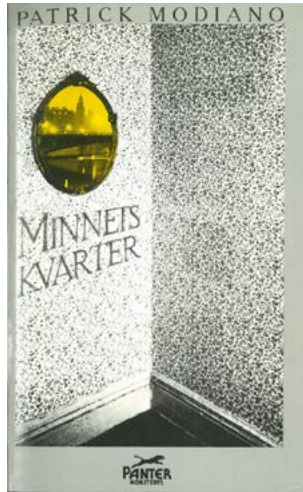
#### 4.2.2 Norstedts

The four novels published by Norstedts in the *Panter* series (published between 1979 and 1986) show some minor vernacularizing tendencies and elements, of which some can be seen as connotations of 'Frenchness' (see figures 2–5 below). Since they are a part of a series, they also seem to be designed in a similar fashion, to some extent, by the famous graphic designer and illustrator Leif Zetterling. They are all quite different from the first novel published by Bonniers; the *Panter* books all have figurative cover art and broader color schemes. *Ungdomsår* (1985) could be argued to evoke a French bistro, and *Minnets kvarter* (1986) has a framed picture of a foggy Parisian-looking city, both of which could be interpreted as vernacularizing elements (figures 2 and 3).

*Familjebok* (1979) (figure 4) has the most cosmopolitanizing cover art of the four publications, although the usage of monochrome photographs is clearly an aspect that can be found in other Modiano covers. It could be argued to evoke 'Frenchness,' but is not as typical as the two mentioned previously.



**Figure 2.** *Ungdomsår* ("Adolescent Years") (1985) published by Norstedts in the *Panther* series. Cover design by Leif Zetterling Produktion.



**Figure 3.** *Minnets kvarter* ("The Neighborhood of the Memory") (1986) published by Norstedts in the *Panther* series. Cover design by Leif Zetterling Produktion.



**Figure 4.** *Familjebok* ("Family Book") (1979) published by Norstedts in the *Panther* series. Cover design by Leif Zetterling Produktion.



**Figure 5.** *De dunkla butikernas gata* ("The Street of Dark Boutiques") (1980) published by Norstedts in the *Panther* series. Cover design by Leif Zetterling Produktion.

*De dunkla butikernas gata* (1980) is more complex to situate. The cover shows three people walking in a tropical climate, which clearly alludes to the content of the novel (the Parisian Dominican legation plays a part in the plot), and does not correspond to the title of the novel (“The Street of Dark Boutiques”). It can be argued to show vernacularizing elements of the novel’s setting, but at first glance, these are not connotations of ‘Frenchness.’

The four covers seem to align with the expectancy norms for French literature in Swedish translation, where ‘French’ motifs are used as connotations of high prestige.

The covers published by Bonniers and Norstedts before 2012 show different forms of vernacularizing strategies; Bonniers’ *Panache* series as a whole and the cover of *Place de l’Étoile* in particular were meant to connote the prestige of French literature through stringent off-white covers, while Norstedts’ figurative covers in the *Panter* series showed other tokens of ‘Frenchness’ with motifs such as monochrome photographs and the Eiffel Tower. Although the strategies differed, both houses use ‘French’ aspects and connotations of high prestige in marketing Modiano in Sweden.

### **4.3 The Covers of Patrick Modiano after 2012**

#### **4.3.1 Grate Bokförlag**

Since its very beginnings, Grate bokförlag has had the ambition to publish primarily French literature in Swedish translation. Elisabeth Grate’s connection to France is strong—she lived in Paris for many years when her husband Pontus Grate was leading the Institut suédois (Nilsson). This connection to French literature, not to mention her access to high prestige literary environments, is an interesting starting point for the study of the covers of this publishing house.

Small publishing houses in Sweden are often specialized to some degree; their backlists can be influenced by the publishers’ language knowledge, a special interest in a type of literature (e.g., poetry), or an interest in a specific geographical region (Gunder 67; Hedberg). This specialization is frequently shown in the branding of the publishing house in question and might even play an important part in their business model. Grate bokförlag therefore differs

quite a lot from the large publishing houses Bonniers and Norstedts, both of which have much broader lists in comparison with Grate bokförlag.

As mentioned earlier, book covers present the content of the book in question to the prospective buyer, but they can also act as a presentation of the publishing house, where the clear example of a famous brand is the paperback imprint Penguin Books, introduced by Allen Lane in 1935 (McCleery 10, 14–17). When Elisabeth Grate was interviewed by the Swedish publishing trade magazine *Svensk Bokhandel*, the journalist described the publishing house's book covers as having an "elegant, stringent style (think French classics!)" (Nilsson). Grate mentioned in the interview that she had been very influenced by the covers of French books during her time in Paris. What is made clear is the strong connection between the publishing house and its translations from French—even the book covers highlight the connection.

Grate bokförlag is known today for its book covers—usually a monochrome photograph within a white frame. The famous graphic designer Leif Thollander offered to design the book covers for Grate, and they have remained more or less consistent since the company started in 2003 ("Leif Thollander har avlidit"). Grate has also said that readers buy her books "because they are Grate books," which is possible thanks to the consistency in the book covers. As Hedberg has noted, this tactic is not as necessary for the major publishing houses (25–26), but can help small publishing houses in their overall marketing of their lists.

Modiano's covers from Grate bokförlag show a distinct vernacularizing practice—all of them are modelled after the design by Leif Thollander and have a monochrome photograph in the center, signaling serious and sober literature. The photographs show typical French or Parisian motifs, such as the classic Metro sign, a street view, or a young woman mirrored in the window of a bistro. These novels are unmistakably marketed as 'French,' designed so as to fit the expectancy norms of and attract presumptive buyers who are interested in French high prestige literature.

It is quite rare for a publishing house to choose to keep the original cover art when publishing a translation, since the purpose of the book cover is to present the text to the buyers and readers of the target culture and it thus often needs to be adapted to the new market circumstances (see Alvstad 78). Grate

bokförlag has actually used the same photograph as the one on the French paperback issue for *Dora Bruder* (2014). This shows that Grate's connection to the French book market is unmistakably strong, and can be interpreted as a vernacularizing tendency on the part of the publishing house, since the cover is almost identical to the French version, even if this might not be apparent to the Swedish book buyer. Of more importance is the same sober style found on all Grate covers, which one could argue shows the expectancy norms of Swedish book buyers for covers of translations from French (see Chesterman 64; Edfeldt et al. 187).

### 4.3.2 The Covers of the Nobel Prize Year Editions

By the time the Nobel Prize was announced in 2014, Grate was the only publishing house actively publishing Modiano in Swedish translation. As is normally the case, the publishing houses with something in their backlist by the laureate in question try to republish it as quickly as possible in time for the important sales period before Christmas. This was also the case for Modiano.

Bonniers reissued a facsimile version of the very first Modiano edition in Swedish translation, *Place de l'Étoile* (figure 1), that is, with the cover that was meant to evoke *le nouveau roman français*, which has already been suggested to show vernacularizing tendencies. Bonniers also reissued *Bröllopsresa*, which it had originally published in 1992. The cover shows a large monochrome photograph of Patrick Modiano in a black turtleneck looking sternly towards the camera. At the bottom of the cover, it is mentioned that Modiano was awarded the Nobel Prize in literature 2014. This can be interpreted as a marketing device which connects Modiano with the prestige of the Nobel Prize, thus branding him as being of high prestige (see Squires, "Book Marketing and the Booker Prize" 74–75). I would argue that the cover illustration shows vernacularizing tendencies, highlighting the author in question in a way that evokes high prestige literature and 'Frenchness,' just like Bonniers' other Nobel Prize year edition. The covers of *Place de l'Étoile* and *Bröllopsresa* clearly interplay with each other and strengthen the 'Frenchness' depicted on them.





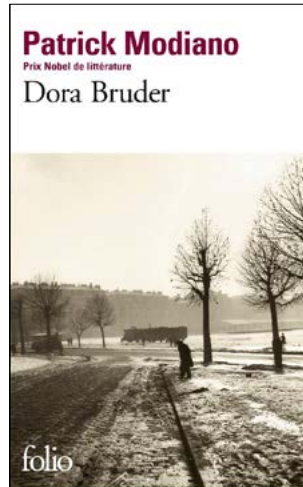
**Figure 6.** *På den förlorade ungdomens café* ("In the Café of Lost Youth") (2015), published by Grate bokförlag. Original cover design by Leif Thollander.



**Figure 7.** *För att du inte ska gå vilse i kvarteret* ("So You Don't Get Lost in the Neighborhood") (2016), published by Grate bokförlag. Original cover design by Leif Thollander.



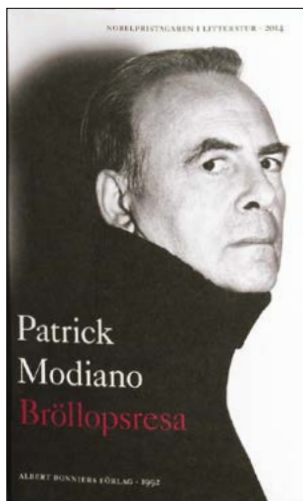
**Figure 8.** *Lilla Smycket* ("The Small Jewelry") (2012), published by Grate bokförlag. Original cover design by Leif Thollander.



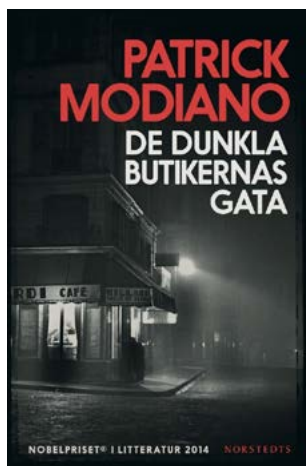
**Figure 9.** The French paperback cover of *Dora Bruder* (1999), published by Folio (Gallimard). Cover photo by René-Jacques Roger-Viollet. Unknown cover designer.



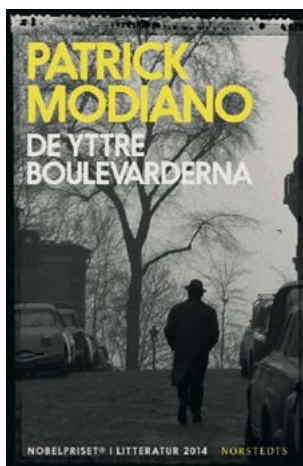
**Figure 10.** The Swedish cover of *Dora Bruder* (2014), published by Grate bokförlag. Cover photo by René-Jacques Roger-Viollet. Original cover design by Leif Thollander.



**Figure 11.** The reissued cover of *Bröllopsresa* ("Honeymoon") (2014), published by Bonnier. Unknown cover designer.



**Figure 12.** The reissued cover of *De dunkla butikernas gata* ("The Street of Dark Boutiques") (2014), published by Norstedts. Cover design by Sara R. Acedo.



**Figure 13.** The reissued cover of *De yttre boulevarderna* ("The Outer Boulevards") (2014), published by Norstedts. Cover design by Sara R. Acedo.

Norstedts only reissued two editions, although the publishing house had six to choose from in its backlist. One of them had previously been published in the *Panter* series (*De dunkla butikernas gata*) (figure 12) and the other one was published as early as 1974 (*De yttre boulevarderna*) (figure 13). Although they had not been published together originally (not in the same series, nor during the same decade), the Nobel Prize year covers were designed in a similar fashion by the famous graphic designer Sara R. Acedo. *De dunkla butikernas gata* shows a photograph of a French café (with a sign that says “Billard”) and a dark silhouette of a person in a long coat and hat. A very similar silhouette of what seems to be a man in a long coat and hat is seen on the cover of *De yttre boulevarderna*. The man is walking along a cobbled street between parked cars and you can see leafless trees and streetlights ahead of him. Both cover photographs are monochrome and look quite foggy. Since the books were reissued together with very similar designs, it looks as though they are a part of a series, which they are not. Clearly, the ‘Frenchness’ is highlighted, with the French café, the small Parisian-looking road, and the sinister looking monochrome photographs, even more so than in the original cover art of *De dunkla butikernas gata*. The dark covers also connote suspense fiction to a much greater degree than the original *Panter* series cover. In addition, as in the case of Bonniers’ reissues, it is mentioned on both covers that Modiano was awarded the Nobel Prize in literature 2014.

What can also be mentioned, in relation to Norstedts, is the fact that only two out of six backlist titles were reissued during the Nobel Prize year of 2014. Considering the laureates of 1970–2016, it is quite common for almost all backlist titles available to be reprinted during the peak interest period of the Nobel Prize (from October to December) (see Rüegg, *Nobelbanor* 171–188). A possible explanation for this publishing choice could be that there were three publishing houses competing for the book buyers’ attention, which limited the sales possibilities for the individual publishing houses. This strategy meant that Norstedts could reap the benefits of the attention that was directed towards Modiano, without making a large investment in the reprinting of his work and by extension taking a big risk with the author. Norstedts also reissued *De yttre boulevarderna* in 2015 and *Villa Triste* in 2016; these publishing choices can be

directly linked to the Nobel Prize, since Norstedts had not published anything by Modiano since the 1980s.

As the covers of Grate bokförlag remained unchanged during the Nobel Prize year, I will not analyze them again. Instead, it can be noted that, prior to Modiano, Grate bokförlag had already published a Nobel Prize laureate just in time for the announcement: J.M.G. Le Clézio. Just like Modiano, Le Clézio had been published by Norstedts up until 1995 and had migrated to Grate bokförlag in 2005, three years before he was awarded the Nobel Prize. The Nobel Prize of course means cultural and economic capital for a publisher, no matter the size. For a small publisher like Grate bokförlag, the Nobel Prize can also play an important part in establishing the publishing house in the book market.

#### 4.4 Patrick Modiano's Swedish Titles

As Genette has noted, the title of a book is directed to more people than the text itself, since it is circulated to a much greater degree—where the text is meant to be read, the title is meant to be circulated, as a sort of “subject of conversation” (75). Furthermore, the addressee of the text is the reader, while the addressee of the title is the public, which “extends well and often actively beyond the sum total of readers” (Genette 75). The title shows how the book is meant to be received and, indeed, perceived.

The previous analysis of book cover art has shown strong vernacularizing tendencies from all three publishing houses, and the same thing can be said of the titles of Modiano's novels in Swedish translation, where in most cases the translation has been kept close to the original title. It seems that there has been a tradition of doing so during Modiano's publishing trajectory, which is clear when looking at the first translation that was published in the *Panache* series, *Place de l'Étoile*. By keeping the French title, it quite literally evokes the place that is a vital part of the novel. The ‘Frenchness’ is highlighted to a large degree in all important aspects of the high prestige book cover, which therefore shows strong vernacularizing tendencies.

Some titles are even kept identical, as in the cases of the previously mentioned *Place de l'Étoile*, *Villa Triste*, and *Dora Bruder*. This suggests that the publisher wanted to highlight the French qualities of these books. Interestingly

enough, these three novels, having been published by three different publishing houses, exemplify a strong tendency to highlight the 'Frenchness' of the novels and in turn clearly show how the publishing houses use the titles to signal high prestige.

The fact that the translated titles are kept the same to this high degree is an aspect that can be related to the expectancy norms for high prestige literature translated from French. The Swedish reading public, as the authors of *North-ern Crossings* state, is "a tolerant readership when it comes to foreign cultural phenomena" (Edfeldt et al. 186), and it seems that presumptive book buyers are especially accepting of vernacularizing tendencies in translations from French. On the other hand, this can be interpreted as an important marketing strategy on the part of the Swedish publishers: there is no need for cosmopolitanizing strategies in order to sell translations from French, since these attract buyers who want the high prestige qualities of French literature. The marketing trend that started with the first novel in Swedish translation is carried on throughout Modiano's entire publishing trajectory and is still visible in the most recent translations.

**Table 2.** The titles of all novels published in Swedish translation of Modiano, compared with original counterparts

Original Title	Swedish Title
<i>Place de l'Étoile</i>	<i>Place de l'Étoile</i>
<i>Les boulevards de ceinture</i>	<i>De yttre boulevarderna</i> ("The Outer Boulevards")
<i>Villa Triste</i>	<i>Villa Triste</i>
<i>Livret de famille</i>	<i>Familjebok</i> ("Family Book")
<i>Rue des boutiques obscures</i>	<i>De dunkla butikernas gata</i> ("The Street of Dark Boutiques")
<i>Une jeunesse</i>	<i>Ungdomsår</i> ("Adolescent Years")
<i>Quartier perdu</i>	<i>Minnets kvarter</i> ("The Neighborhood of the Memory")
<i>Voyage de noces</i>	<i>Bröllopsresa</i> ("Honeymoon")
<i>Un cirque passe</i>	<i>En cirkus drar förbi</i> ("A Circus Passes By")

Original Title	Swedish Title
<i>La petite bijou</i>	<i>Lilla Smycket</i> ("The Small Jewelry")
<i>L'herbe des nuits</i>	<i>Nätternas gräs</i> ("The Grass of the Nights")
<i>Dora Bruder</i>	<i>Dora Bruder</i>
<i>Un pedigree</i>	<i>En stamtavla</i> ("A Pedigree")
<i>L'horizon</i>	<i>Horisonten</i> ("The Horizon")
<i>Dans le café de la jeunesse perdue</i>	<i>På den förlorade ungdomens café</i> ("In the Café of Lost Youth")
<i>Pour que tu ne te perdes pas dans le quartier</i>	<i>För att du inte ska gå vilse i kvarteret</i> ("So You Don't Get Lost in the Neighborhood")
<i>Remise de peine</i>	<i>Straffeftergift</i> ("Penalty remission")
<i>Souvenirs dormants</i>	<i>Slumrande minnen</i> ("Slumbering Memories")
<i>Du plus loin de l'oubli</i>	<i>Ur den djupaste glömskan</i> ("From the Deepest Forgetfulness")
<i>Encre sympathique</i>	<i>Osynligt bläck</i> ("Invisible Ink")

## 5 Conclusion

Although there are three different publishing houses in Patrick Modiano's publishing trajectory, there are some recurring elements to be seen on the book covers. The book covers published by the two large and prestigious publishing houses, Bonniers and Norstedts, differ quite a lot, but both highlight elements of 'Frenchness,' thereby showing vernacularizing tendencies. Bonniers' *Panache* series was designed to evoke the prestige of French literature, while Norstedts' *Panther* series, on the other hand, pictures symbols of Paris and classic French motifs in their cover art. In Bonniers' case, the same symbols of 'Frenchness' appear throughout the publishing trajectory, not least in the facsimile cover of *Place de l'Étoile* after Modiano was awarded the Nobel Prize.

Norstedts has, in my opinion, strengthened the motifs of 'Frenchness' in the wake of the Nobel Prize in comparison to the cover art used in the *Panther* series. Another feature of the covers from the Nobel Prize period is that they seem to be designed, to a much higher degree than in the earlier period, to evoke connotations of suspense literature. This can also be interpreted as a

marketing strategy, since suspense literature and crime fiction are popular genres in the Swedish book market with commercial potentials (cf. Berglund, *Deckarboomen under lupp*). Grate bokförlag is an especially strong example of a case where a publishing profile is manifested in the design of book covers. It has a homogeneous design for its books, with all books by the publishing house being promoted as Grate books; the covers actually present the publishing house to the book buyer first and the author and novel second. By highlighting tokens of high prestige through the book cover art (e.g., the somber monochrome photographs and motifs of 'Frenchness'), these aspects are not only connected to the book in question, but to all Grate books. The prestige of French literature is therefore deeply intertwined with the marketing of the publishing house. Almost all Grate books, not only the ones by Modiano, therefore signal the prestige of French literature, which strengthens and emphasizes the prestige of both Grate bokförlag for publishing high prestige translations by Nobel laureates such as Modiano, and for Modiano for being included in Grate's prestigious list. This strategy resembles that of Bonniers' *Panache* series, where the prestige of French literature is also evoked through the cover design. The difference between these two examples is that the *Panache* series published more than just translations from French, whereas Grate bokförlag has French language literature as its main focus and specialty. I would go so far as to argue that the vernacularizing strategy of highlighting 'Frenchness' is the core identity of Grate bokförlag.

Alvstad has discussed a possible problematic aspect of this homogeneous strategy in book cover design. It is the question of how the translated book is connected to the publisher's list, since books on the same list "tend to be marketed with similar strategies [...] and promoted as part of a larger whole" (78–79). As stated, this is the case for Grate bokförlag, where all covers resemble each other. The strategy of homogeneous covers can also be interpreted as a "survivalist technique" from a small publishing house in a market where it is important for small actors to build brand recognition. Avid book buyers will recognize the covers and see them as a stamp of approval if they have faith in the publishing house to begin with. The covers can therefore also be used as a marketing method for creating interest in translated literature as a whole through paratexts.

Why has Modiano been marketed in this vernacularizing way in the Swedish book market? One general observation that can be made is that since Sweden is a semi-peripheral language space, the amount of translated literature each year is higher than in the central language spaces (Svedjedal, “Svensk litteratur i världen” 38–47; van Es and Heilbron 297). It could be argued that this means that the Swedish book buying audience has a high acceptance for vernacularizing translation practices, where the highlighting of the cultural specifics is welcomed (see Edfeldt et al. 186). The expectancy norms for translations from French seem to be the highlighting of ‘French’ aspects. The long history of publishing translations from French in Sweden could be interpreted as a specific interest in French literature, although the decreasing number of translations from French in the period 1965–2009 suggests otherwise (see Torgerson; Svedjedal, “Svensk litteratur i världen” 43).

One thing that is consistent when comparing the book covers from all three publishing houses is the usage of monochrome photographs. This is evidently a popular way to depict ‘Frenchness’ in these cases. It also poses the question as to whether these tendencies can be found in other translated books from French. The answer for Grate bokförlag is clear, but it would be interesting to see if this is a trend that can be followed in more French language authors’ Swedish publishing trajectories. Further research on this matter is clearly needed and encouraged, where one aspect could be to compare Modiano’s covers in a transnational publishing context. Apparently, the monochrome cover art is featured on many translations into different languages, which could imply a transnational marketing tendency for high prestige literature translated from French (“Modiano in Monochrome”).

What can be concluded is that ‘Frenchness’ in the cases presented is actually synonymous with high prestige. This is something all three publishing houses aspire to connote with their book covers, and as I have demonstrated to be the case with Bonniers and Grate bokförlag, not only in the publishing of Modiano, since both the *Panache* series as a whole (during the time of the publishing of Modiano) and Grate bokförlag’s covers all were designed to connote ‘Frenchness.’ Another important aspect is the book buyer; apparently, book buyers expect prestigious literature translated from French to show these types of motifs, since they reoccur over time and at different publishing houses. But if



we play the devil's advocate for a short while, is it actually a cosmopolitanizing tendency if motifs that are to some degree stereotypical or clichéd are being used to market the specifics of a language in translation? To be able to answer this question, there is an undisputable need for larger comparative studies on how French literature has been marketed through book covers.

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