

# Geographies in/of translation

This collective editorial calls for a deeper engagement with translation in geography, arguing that translation is not a peripheral concern or a practical textual question, but a constitutive element of geographical knowledge production. Geographical scholarship is inherently relational, shaped by movements across languages, places, and infrastructures — where, by whom and on which languages research is carried out makes a difference especially in human geography. Yet, translation practices and work often remain invisible, overshadowed by the dominance of English and the infrastructures that sustain linguistic asymmetries. We contend that translation operates in at least three interconnected senses: as a practice of moving between languages, as an embodied and ethical act of interpretation, and as a process embedded in uneven power relations that can both reproduce and challenge these hierarchies. Current publishing systems and citation practices reinforce Anglophone hegemony, marginalizing multilingual scholarship and local knowledges. However, many recent initiatives within and beyond the academy, as well as studies focusing explicitly on these systems and practices, reveal the potential for more inclusive scholarly communication. By foregrounding translation, geographers can reconfigure disciplinary practices, infrastructures, and ethics to foster epistemic justice and pluralism. This involves making visible the translational labor underpinning research, advocating for multilingual publishing, and rethinking citation politics. Building on this, we outline steps for developing further multilingual practices within *Fennia*, as part of our 'open practices' initiative. These include expanding the use of multiple languages in titles, abstracts, and keywords, and exploring technical solutions for publishing full articles under a single Digital Object Identifier (DOI) in multiple languages. These efforts aim to challenge monolingual norms and create infrastructures that support scholarly diversity and acknowledge knowledge production in different national and local contexts, thereby enabling transformative connections across linguistic and geographical boundaries.

Keywords: multilingual practices, linguistic asymmetries, Anglophone hegemony, geographies of translation, geographical knowledge production, local knowledges

## What and where is translation?

Geographical knowledge is geographical in two senses: First, it is knowledge produced *about* the world, helping us understand the specificity of diverse places, spaces, landscapes, and how they connect and disengage with each other through a myriad physical and human geographical phenomena. Second, geographical knowledge is constituted by movement *across* the world, linking

institutions and people through a range of technologies, infrastructures, practices, and discourses. Take the example of this editorial: considered a form of geographical knowledge, its production has relied on the ability of its authors to move across the world (meeting in person at conferences), their competence to reach over cultural and scholarly differences (we come from different countries and research areas), the capacity of scholarly journal articles to circulate as pdfs (largely dematerialized but still differentially mobile), and the possibilities furnished by writing platforms hosted 'in the cloud' (in our case, Google Docs). Even in our case of amiable, collegial collaboration, knowledge is produced through uneven geographical relations. Knowledge crossings are often fundamentally asymmetrical, structured by and helping to reproduce uneven power relations. However, the spatially relational geographies of knowing can also be transformative, even emancipatory, shaping the possibility for new social formations and alternative ways of knowing — which is our goal here.

Translation is inextricable from the production of geographical knowledge but is often placed on the margins of disciplinary debates. This has been stressed most forcefully by scholars working in languages other than English who call attention to the Anglophone hegemony of even the most 'international' scholarship (Minca 2000; Garcia-Ramon 2003; Fall 2014; Hancock 2016; Müller 2021). In *Fennia*, discussion about the unequal positioning of researchers from different language areas has been ongoing for more than ten years, beginning from Paasi's (2013) article focusing on the positioning of this very journal in the international publishing scene. Eight years back, we published a series of commentaries under the title of 'six sideways reflections on academic publishing', stemming from two panel sessions: one at the 2016 American Association of Geographers (AAG) conference and the other at the 2017 Nordic Geographers Meeting (NGM) (Batterbury 2017; Finn et al. 2017; Fregonese 2017; Jones 2017; Kallio & Riding 2017; Ruez 2017; Springer et al. 2017). The current editor-in-chief has also introduced ideas for non-commercial alternatives in journal publishing from different angles, with colleagues, in the past editorials (Kallio 2017; Kallio & Hyvärinen 2017; Kallio & Metzger 2018; Kallio & Riding 2019), including the one with *Versus* editor Anna Marjaana Heikkilä focusing explicitly on lingual plurality (Kallio et al. 2021). Many of these touch upon but do not directly address translation as a key process of geographical knowledge production.

Some geographers have reflected on the practices and politics of translation in fieldwork (Maclean 2007; Cameron et al. 2015; Harrowell et al. 2018). But here, again, translation often lives on the margins of geographical debates. Yet the disciplinary landscape for and of translation may be shifting. Efforts to 'world' geography (Müller 2021) and embrace a multilingual scholarly practice (Davies 2021; Husseini de Araújo & Germes 2016) may indicate not so much the centering of a marginal topic, but the forging of new webs of connection across linguistic, geographical, and disciplinary boundaries.

In this collective editorial, we argue that geography and geographers should engage in two linked projects: First, we need to *deepen and expand our discipline's engagement with translation*. Given the breadth of what 'translation' can denote, we highlight three linked senses: translation as a practice of moving between different languages; translation as an embodied and ethical act of interpretation; and translation as always implicated within uneven power relations, bearing the potential to both reproduce those relations and to transform them. Second, we need to *broaden our understanding of where translation takes place* so as to better appreciate why the geographies in and of translation matter.

Issues of translation are often imagined at the margins of the discipline, an illusion built from the minority world perspective and reproduced by the gaze of academic indexes such as Web of Science and Scopus. They make it seem that nearly all research — over 90% it is argued (Pradier et al. 2025) — is published in English. These numbers paint a different picture when we consider that major indexes only cover 3–8% of local-language journals, not to mention edited volumes and monographs that are not included even in this number. An eye-opener is a recent study by Khanna and colleagues (2022) that identified over 25,000 multilingual journals largely absent from mainstream international academia, mostly based beyond Europe and the Anglophonic world. Another observation is offered by the Helsinki Initiative on Multilingualism in Scholarly Communication that carried out a bibliometric study including eight European countries (Kulczycki et al. 2018). The results indicate that 53% of researchers in social sciences and humanities publish in more than one language. In natural sciences, English clearly dominates (83–99% of publications), while in the social sciences and humanities local-language outputs are far more common, with notable variation between research fields (from 20–

48%). Geography is among the disciplines in which research results are highly relevant to the empirical context of the study and, thus, are often reported in local languages as well, to ensure scientific and societal impact.

Advocates for multilingual academia have different views on the role and modes of translation, ranging from a preference on publishing in different languages and avoiding translations tout court, to encouraging translation between languages but with a critical approach towards machine translation, to those who see translation as a major solution for making all research accessible, which reduces the need to publish in different languages. We are pleased to see that interest in multilingual publishing is growing also beyond scholarly communities and in many institutions inherently connected with scholarly publishing (see Helsinki Initiative on Multilingualism 2025). To encourage discussion between these and other ways of thinking about translation, we begin this collective editorial by reflecting on our personal relationships with translation, something that makes visible the histories and experiences shaping our arguments and pointing to the often invisible forms of translation that underpin multilingual collaborations. From there, we turn to a more general consideration of the place of translation in geography today, offering provocations that seek to shift how we think of translation as a personal, institutional, and infrastructural issue in our discipline. Finally, we come to the developments aimed at in the journal, to better include translation in our publishing practices along with overall attention to multilingualism. The following sections are built partly through personal reflections by each of us forming a dialogue and partly through joint writing.

## Personal geographies of translation

**Timur:** Rooted in traditions of cultural and urban geography, much of my work has been based in Istanbul, Türkiye. Fluency in Turkish is fundamental to the work I do, but both 'fluency' and 'Turkish' are far messier categories than they might first appear. My connection to Turkish is a personal one, by way of my mother's parents. My grandmother was born in the city of Izmir before moving to the United States; although she spoke Turkish with my mother, my childhood engagement with the language was confined to a few words and phrases. It was only in my late 20s that I began to learn Turkish formally. When I moved to Istanbul for fieldwork in 2011, my accent was noticeable and often sparked conversations about who I was and how I had come to learn Turkish. Over time, my 'foreign' accent softened, and I sometimes began to pass as someone who had been born in Turkey but left, either in adolescence or as a young adult. Even so, my capacity to move back and forth between English and Turkish was mediated by place, my interlocutors, and our shared topic of conversation. My fluency is not a fixed thing but situational, held together by Google Translate, half-remembered vocabularies, an occasional practice of reading the news in Turkish, text messages with my doctoral advisee, and annual visits to Istanbul. The boundary between English and Turkish takes many forms, but I most often think about it when I try to move between the two languages on Google Scholar. Linguistic pluralism is a key part of my scholarly practice, although it is more aspirational than I care to admit. But I think about how our theories — and search terms — do or do not travel. Take as one example something that I have written about: the slippage between the English word 'story' and the Turkish word '*rivayet*' (Hammond 2023, 25–26). In Turkish, a *rivayet* designates something transmitted from one person to another, so it could be rendered commensurate with what we call, in English, a story. But the Turkish term also carries with it a sense of transmission, especially relating to the transmission of a hadith (a saying or act of the Prophet Muhammad) from a teacher to a student. Translating *rivayet* as story (or story as *rivayet*) is thus an interpretive choice, carrying with a desire to bring different communities (linguistic, religious, geographical) into alignment while taking neither for granted (see Sakai 1997). As I work between Turkish and English, I have become acutely aware that neither language represents a single, stable, and internally consistent field. Indeed, I find translation — as both a practice and a conceptual puzzle — valuable precisely because it is always unstable, provisional, and open to slippage. A geography of translation is a geography always in motion.

**Claire and Myriam:** We are both French researchers, based at two different French universities and met through translation. Claire is a translation studies scholar whose research spans the history of Bible translations, the theoretical stakes of translating poetry, and of reading in translation. On social media, she shares her translations of German Romantic poet Heinrich Heine. Myriam, a critical geographer who spent many years studying South African cities, has loved Heine since childhood and reached out to Claire with her appreciation. We quickly became friends and had long discussions about (shared, radical, feminist) politics, teaching, pedagogy and caring in contemporary higher education, poetry, and epistemic justice. Our respective professional practices happen between languages, both in research (reading, doing fieldwork, translating, writing and generally talking with people) and in teaching. In both our disciplines, the French national tradition is very strong, institutionally, conceptually as well as pedagogically, and it often collides with global discussions happening in English. We both reacted against this situation that considers language and language issues as self-evident, reintroducing conscious choices, critique and reflexivity *vis-à-vis* language in our scholarship. In the classroom, we tried to bring the world in its multilingual glory, as we believe it empowers our students to go beyond their perceived linguistic inadequacy and work with material and concepts in varied languages.

**Sara:** I am a feminist political geographer interested in geographies of peace and ways solidarity can work to build it. I am from the U.S., as are my parents, but lived in Colombia as a small child and was then raised bilingually. Out of college I started as a professional Spanish interpreter, working my way up from Social Service to Medical to state Court to federal Court certification. I also got certified by the American Translators Association as a translator (written vs. oral). When I went back to school and retrained as a geographer, I was frequently surprised by how little discussion there was of language issues. Though I was in a critical department at the University of British Columbia, how to use interpreters and translators was not discussed in our classes. Sadly, it is still not discussed in our methods textbooks.<sup>1</sup> After many years of noticing how little geographers discuss if or how they have used language services, I presented at the 2025 Detroit AAG conference on ways we could be more transparent about and improve our use of both interpretation and translation as a discipline. Though there has been a long series of articles and interventions critiquing Anglo hegemony in the discipline over the years (Slater 1992; Smith 1996; and many others reviewed in Hancock 2016), until the mentioned meeting the only other conference space I had been in where these issues were discussed was a 2014 Tampa AAG session. I know they are taken up much more in Europe, and I am particularly grateful to Martin Müller (2021) and Virginie Mamadouh for their work promoting more and better use of multilingualism. Mamadouh and I worked to develop suggestions and guidelines for multilingual conferencing to give to participants at the International Geographical Union's special meeting on Geographies for Peace in La Paz, Bolivia in 2017. I am excited to keep working with others to change both the cultures and the infrastructures in our discipline around translation and interpretation. As an interpreter and translator myself, I am particularly passionate about offering concrete how-tos.

**Yimin:** I am an urban and political geographer focusing on the spatiality and politics of urbanisation in China and beyond. Translation was rarely a central focus in the research agendas of these sub-disciplines — or in my own work at the beginning. I conducted my doctoral project in the early to mid-2010s, passionate about exploring why and how Beijing's urban-rural juncture (城乡结合部) was undergoing an urban metamorphosis, with local landscapes and social dynamics completely rewritten. I came across a problem not long after the beginning of this project, however. It turned out that I cannot name this area/ frontier in 'proper' academic language. Situated within the English hegemony of geographical research, I found that the majority of the literature adopted the Anglophone perspective and called such frontiers the 'suburb'. But Beijing's urban-rural juncture is by no means the 'low-density and newly built' suburb that has been induced by and inscribed in the Anglophone urban experiences. Filled with socialist-utopian ideals of the green belt, high-density rural settlements, large-scale and informal accommodation for migrant workers from elsewhere, and newly emerging business opportunities for the state to run its land business by displacing peasants and migrants, this juncture embodies the socio-spatial and political arenas with which Chinese urbanism has been

unfolding. The urban-rural juncture hence deserves its own *name*, one that has yet to appear in the English-language academic literature. Summarising Walter Benjamin's writings on human languages, Chow (2014, 4) suggests that the *name* signifies a contact zone "where symbolic correspondence, meeting, symmetry, reciprocation, and integration can, ideally speaking, be established with the world". Inspired by this and other related discussions, I decided to adopt the Chinese spelling (结合部, or *jiehebu*) directly to analyse and theorise Beijing's urban frontier (Zhao 2020). This endeavour does not aim to essentialise China's urban experiences; instead, it is an invitation to juxtapose different names of the urban frontiers and reflect together on translation as an alternative urban-geographical epistemology. In so doing, we might first be able to get rid of the hypothetical yet problematic linguistic equivalence (such as the hegemonic use of 'suburb'), and then expose ourselves to alterity and strangeness through what Ricoeur (2006) coins "linguistic hospitality". In the collective project of facilitating decolonial praxis in Geography, this linguistic-translational endeavour should be taken as a critical dimension.

**Kirsi:** I am an interdisciplinary scholar from Finland, my native language being Finnish. My parents come from dialect regions that differ significantly from each other, so I learned to speak two types of Finnish as my home language: the Northern Ostrobothnian dialect and the Tornio Valley dialect, the latter of which is close to Meänkieli, a minority language spoken in Sweden. I still use these dialects in family occasions while the dialect areas where I have lived as an adult are again quite different from the other two. Like nearly all Finns in the 1980-1990s, I have studied English (from primary school) and Swedish (from secondary school) in accordance with the curriculum. With the official minority languages (three variants of Sámi, Romani, Karelian, and Finnish and Finland-Swedish Sign Languages) I had no contact before adulthood — these days you can engage with them through the National Broadcasting Company that offers both news and popular media content in minority languages, which I enjoy as a small-scale language immersion. In addition to the compulsory languages, I chose to study French as a third foreign language in secondary and upper secondary school. When I spent a year as an exchange student in New Zealand, I took Spanish classes at school (my first experience of remote teaching, not the most inspiring way to engage with a new language all alone!) and attended a community-organized Maori language course. In addition to these, I have learned Italian through my sister's family with whom we share a multilingual community involving people in many generational positions, many of whom can understand each other in different languages but do not necessarily share a language that they can properly speak. Over the years I have also ended up spending time in Catalonia and have gradually learned the language a little, recently boosted by a mobile phone app that allows me to study Catalan as a speaker of Spanish. With this personal history, it is clear to me that research must be multilingual. One could think that with such versatile language training and the presence of multiple languages in everyday life it would have been easy for me to start working in the academy using several languages. But it was not. I realized, already during the PhD studies, that I need to do all the work twice if I want to become an international scholar in the Finnish academy. (Later, I have encountered situations where it would be desirable to be able to follow Swedish or Scandinavian academic discussions and participate in the name of social courtesy — but I am not getting deeper into this issue here as it is of much lesser importance and can usually be solved with a few clumsy attempts and chuckles.) Beginning from the first concepts I encountered and started to develop further, it was clear that they need to be communicated differently in Finnish and English. Take 'participation', for instance, a key concept in political geographies of childhood and youth.<sup>2</sup> In English, participation can be used to refer both to belonging (*osallisuus*) and action (*osallistuminen*), often also to impactful influencing (*vaikuttaminen*). Being one of the 'three Ps' of children's rights, it is used very flexibly in English. This means that people working on children's rights in Finnish, making use of Anglophonic research and policy texts, often end up using their own translations of the concept. When we enquired from children's advocates in municipal administration how they understand the above translations (identified by myself), they offered various combinations (Bäcklund & Kallio 2012). One person could mean belonging with the word that another person would use for action; and the word that one professional would use to indicate impactful influencing was adopted by another local authority to describe action that has mainly value to those performing it. A couple of weeks ago, I had

a similar discussion with my grad students, one of whom studies early childhood education professionals' conceptions of participation - little has changed in fifteen years. The confusion between Finnish and English concepts persists because a consensus on equivalents has not been reached in the research literature, not to mention professional discourse or public discussion. This is one example that underlines the challenges and importance of translation in academic research, including its societal impact.

**Henrik:** As a human geographer I have mainly been focusing on borders and boundaries; yet border studies are very comprehensive and include geopolitics, migration, minorities, perception and language, just to name a few. My own gateway into border studies came via languages. When I came to Finland the first time I was instantly fascinated by the simultaneous use of Finnish and Swedish in public transportation in the capital area, but what was even more interesting was the lack of Swedish in certain (most) areas of Finland. This led me to write my master's thesis on Swedish-speaking Finns in Joensuu, a unilingual Finnish speaking city close to the Eastern border with the Republic of Karelia/Russia. Not being understood when speaking your native tongue, in your native country, despite it being one of two national languages, remains a constant source of intrigue ever since. Language can open doors and make us mobile, but it can also create boundaries and make us immobile. It can reveal our culture but also create misunderstandings. Hearing your native language being spoken in unexpected areas can create a sense of comfort and community, while hearing foreign languages at home can create discomfort, even fear. As a kid in Denmark I remember thinking, "No reason to learn other foreign languages than English because everyone will be able to speak it in the future". Today I wish I had paid more attention in the German class so I could speak more fluently. I wish I had stuck with French in elementary school or chosen Spanish in high school so I could use it in my research. Having lived the last 20 years abroad in different countries has given me a deeper understanding of the importance of language in research as well as in private. At home with my wife and kids we speak three languages, switching between them often without noticing. Some things are just easier to express in one language (not always your native) than in another, a situation I have also come across while working as a translator; often having to translate idioms and sayings rooted in culture, and in all aspects of research, such as fieldwork, interviews, and writing.

## Professional geographies of translation

The 2025 AAG conference in Detroit, Michigan was the place where many of us met in person for the first time. There were, of course, antecedents to our collaboration. Yimin's paper on the gap between *suburb* and *jiehebu* had inspired many of us (Zhao 2020). Timur's paper on translation (Hammond & Cook 2023, co-written with Brittany Cook) had recently been published and immeasurably improved by reviewer comments; Myriam turned out to be one of the reviewers. Miriam and Claire had met Kirsi at the 2016 AAG session where 'alternative' geography journals discussed open access issues, and Sara joined the Space and Political Agency Research Group (SPARG research community) in Tampere, Finland later that year. At the 2025 AAG conference, Yimin and Timur jointly participated in a panel on 'Other' geographies, after which they both met Myriam and Claire. Meanwhile, Claire and Myriam presented a fascinating paper in another session, on a critique of the 'untranslatable.' Sara was part of an equally fascinating panel thinking especially about the (embodied) practices and politics of translation, where Kirsi was one of the first people to ask a question, first in Finnish and then interpreting it into English. The vivid discussions following from these encounters at the event were continued over email and during Sara's subsequent tour in Europe where the idea of doing something together started to arise.

Since our first encounter in March 2025, our group has met twice on Zoom and used a shared Google Doc to collect ideas and writing. Our geographically dispersed relationship poses its challenges, as we learned when trying to schedule a single meeting across four different time zones. At the same time, there are also sparks of inspiration, as our meetings and joint writing afford the opportunity to bring in stories and perspectives from ostensibly far-flung locations. Here, our thinking about

translation emerges through these digital connections, less a coherent project of centering a single vision and more an attempt to sustain a conversation at a distance. It thus provides an opportunity to reflect on how we might engage in a collective practice that is always translating (across languages, time zones, disciplines, countries) and also about translation (as a practice, politics, metaphor, discourse, or ethic).

As these professional encounters reveal, Anglophonic geography has offered us a meeting space, most importantly at the AAG, which has served as the largest geography meeting by the number of attendees for decades. Quite conveniently, when we held the panel at the Boston meeting in 2016 — with editors from non-commercial geography journals (*Journal of Political Ecology*, *Human Geography*, *ACME* and *Fennia*) — the association had just changed its name from the Association of *American Geographers* to the *American Association of Geographers*, to highlight its international membership. After the Covid-19 pandemic, travelling to the meeting from different parts of the world has decreased notably, and with the current state leadership in the U.S., many of us in Detroit were considering it as our last meeting. There also appear to be indications that the Trump Administration's visa enforcement policies will further reduce the number of international academics who attend major professional conferences in the U.S. (Langin 2025). This may have the result of both decentering (American) Anglophone geography and opening the discipline up to new forms of multilingual and more worldly relations.

We hope to continue these conversations in the future, but for the moment, we want first to offer a set of reflections and perhaps provocations about new ways to expand how we think about translation in geographical publishing.

### **Translation: infrastructures, institutions, and scholars**

We begin by thinking about the role of infrastructures in shaping the production of geographical knowledge. Recent scholarship points out that anywhere from 60% to 90% of academic journal articles are published in English (Montgomery & Crystal 2013; Amano *et al.* 2016; Di Bitetti & Ferreras 2017; Kulczycki *et al.* 2018; Pradier 2025). This asymmetry is produced and maintained through a variety of mechanisms, ranging from mandates at non-Anglophone institutions that privilege publication in English-language journals to sedimented geographies of linguistic privilege (Müller 2021), to the way that English can also function as a common denominator between academics who may otherwise not share a single language.

But this asymmetry is also reproduced through other means. Consider, for example, the search engines that serve as a point of entry for much of our scholarship. Let us consider an example: We are writing an article, perhaps, about the dialectics of translation. We turn to the website of the *Annals of the American Association of Geographers* and use the keyword 'dialectic' to look for articles that might be relevant to our project. If we use the English term, the search returns 415 hits; searching in Chinese or Spanish, however, returns only 17 or 14; French returns only 2; Turkish, Finnish, and Danish, none at all. What helps to explain this? The *Annals*, to its great credit, requires authors to submit abstracts and keywords in three languages (English, Spanish, and Chinese). The Spanish and Chinese results were thus artifacts of 'dialectic' being found in either those articles' abstracts or keywords. In contrast, the English term enabled full-text searching, producing a richer archive. As for French, Turkish, Finnish, and Danish, the publisher's infrastructure placed them outside of the field of inquiry.

In effect, this produces an asymmetrical landscape of translation. Anglophone readers can use the *Annals* confident that they are searching 'everything.' In contrast, those who work primarily in languages other than English might find themselves having to do the labor (again) of bringing their 'own' languages into conversation with English and positioning those languages in ways that Anglophone readers might understand. The work of translation is at once fundamental to the production of geographical knowledge and positioned as the constitutive outside for (Anglophone) knowledge.

There are alternatives to this state of affairs! Imagine a world where journals provided not just three languages but ten or more, even only in the metadata. How might that provide for the possibility of bringing new scholarly conversations and connections into being? What if publishers also prompted

researchers to search for terms in languages other than English? For example, our imaginary author might look for 'dialectic' but then be prompted to search using other languages; instead of the familiar sidebars pointing to 'People Also Read' or 'Recommended Articles', we might find tabs that prompt readers to 'Step Beyond English'. Here is a way to rethink the infrastructures of search engines and journal articles as a way to broaden the linguistic fields within which we operate.

These questions of translation are also fundamental to our practice of citation. While there are no firm statistics on the multilingualism of geographers' citations, a quick survey of flagship journals like the *Annals*, the *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, or *Progress in Human Geography* suggests that the overwhelming majority of citations are Anglophone. Where 'foreign' citations exist, they may be relegated to mere empirical footnotes. As with the linguistic infrastructure of academic journals, translation ends up being relegated to the margins of our citations.

These are big questions about disciplinary practice, the politics of citation, and the uneven production of knowledge, but we think that translation can and should be one central element in the discipline's ongoing evolution. Take the case of machine translation, something that has greatly increased in capacity and quality over the past decade. What would it look like if journal websites didn't simply provide links to scholarship in other languages but also made it quick and easy to get the rough gist one can get from machine translation? While we caution against uncritical celebrations of machine translations (because they can render invisible the embodied labor of translation and interpretation; risk sidestepping the ethical responsibility for a polished 'outgoing' translation; might paradoxically further entrench the hegemony of English; and the energy costs of machine translations are opaque), we remain curious about their potential to build new forms of interlingual relations. Here it is also worth highlighting journals that have a long-standing practice of multilingual publishing, *Fennia* included.

Our conversations are ongoing, but we see several possible places that geographers might engage with translation in more explicit and deliberate terms: First, making visible the practices of translation that underpin their own scholarship: Who translates? How do they translate? What are the gaps in the project? Second, pushing publishers to be more multilingual and supporting journals that have a track record of multilingual publishing. And finally, encouraging editors and reviewers to be more multilingual, and to require citations in many languages.

## Fennia's next steps

In the spring of 2025, the Federation of Learned Societies (TSV) granted extra resources for small diamond open access journals published by its members, for developing their open agenda and activities. *Fennia* decided to use this funding to search for opportunities for multilingualizing the journal. The collaborative work resulting in this collective editorial is part of the project. In addition to discussing translation and the significance of different languages, we will transform some of our publishing practices, with the hope that other journals using the Open Journal System (OJS) will follow our groundbreaking activities. The TSV's technical support team has been tremendously helpful and interested in doing this work with us, which we greatly appreciate. TSV has also launched a new project on multilingualism, as part of a European consortium and in connection with the Helsinki Initiative on Multilingualism in Scholarly Communication, which involves potential for collaboration. *Fennia's* managing editor Henrik is key actor in many of these practices and will conclude our editorial by telling where we are headed.

**Henrik:** At the beginning of 2025, I was tasked with making the first twenty issues of *Fennia* available online via the journal's website. The journal was first published around 135 years ago. What struck me first was how multilingual it had been. The first issue contains articles written in Swedish, German, French, and Finnish, and many of the following issues are fully on one of these languages while the first English publication did not appear until the 20<sup>th</sup> issue. Somewhere along the way, however, academia lost that multilingualism — along with readers, writers, and perhaps most importantly, knowledge. During my two years as managing editor of *Fennia*, I have seen the journal strive to make

science accessible to as many people as possible by offering free publication and open access to different formats (see Jones 2024, and [versuslehti.fi](https://versuslehti.fi)). Although we have addressed monolingual publishing and encourage our authors to publish accessible versions of their work in *Versus*, we continue to publish solely in English. Internationally oriented geographers write in English not because it is our native language — it is not for most of us — but because we fear that our work will not be found and will not have a scientific impact on other languages. This creates a monolingual mindset that limits our vision and understanding (Piller 2015). Today, even citing works that written in other languages than English can be a problem, and that inevitably will lead to loss of local knowledge which is so important in geographical research (Kallio *et al.* 2021).

What opportunities have we come across thus far? The OJS software provides tools that can help us become more multilingual. Titles, abstracts, and keywords can be published in multiple languages, which is useful especially regarding search engines (metadata). Different language versions of full articles can, also, be published all under the same DOI, which allows us to encourage scholars to offer translations of their contributions upon the acceptance of the piece, or even to develop low-cost (machine) translation practices within the journal. Both opportunities mean that we do not need to prioritize English over a language that may be more relevant for the dissemination of the research results, in scholarly communities and the society at large, or hide from the view conceptual development in different languages and locally relevant knowledge production. There are still some unclear issues regarding technical solutions and translational aspects that we need to look into, for example: how to display languages on the webpage and not only in the metadata; which languages to make available; the cost of translation; ensuring that the paper does not lose or change meaning during translation. However, we trust that these can be solved steps by step, and we appreciate all collegial support from other journals and publishers who have encountered these issues. How we see it is that the opportunities are there, but we need to become better at utilizing them, which of course requires more work from those involved in publication process — primarily editors, authors and translators, but perhaps also peer reviewers and publishers who can support our work through various kinds of contributions. Finally, in addition to technical development, multilingual publishing requires a different attitude from publishers, authors, reviewers, readers, and the general scientific community, in order to break the status quo. Together, we need to unlearn Anglophonic hegemony for creating more diverse and equitable scholarly communities.

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## Content of the issue

This issue of *Fennia* includes four Research Papers, two Essays and one Review Article, and two Reflection pieces. The essay from Tine Béneker is based on her Fennia 2024 lecture at the Finnish Geography Days in Turku.

The first original research article is by Emma Landby and Kristin Godtman Kling. It offers a nature-based perspective on ageing and spatial planning in the Swedish context. *Living close to nature: how older adults in Sweden navigate relocation in later life* investigates what proximity to nature means for older people and how it influences their residential choices. Drawing on a mixed-methods design combining survey data and interviews in two Swedish municipalities, the authors reveal that relationships with nature are often lifelong and deeply tied to identity, shaping both decisions to age in place and to relocate. Using a time-geographical framework, the study shows how capability, coupling, and authority constraints interact with personal preferences, highlighting that while nature remains highly valued, structural and individual limitations can also override these preferences. The paper calls for housing and planning policies to better integrate access to nature as a key component of healthy, active ageing.

In our second paper, Stine Lien and Ulla Higdem critically examine the applicability of place-based policies in rural contexts. Their article *The double disadvantage of rural place-based policies* presents a scoping review of 75 peer-reviewed articles published between 2008 and 2022, drawing on cases from Europe, the United States, and China. These studies reveal how dominant models – such as smart specialization (S3) – often fail in rural regions due to weak institutional capacity and the absence of agglomeration effects. Empirical examples include challenges with entrepreneurial discovery processes in Estonia and Wales, limited innovation outcomes in Chinese regional programs, and uneven implementation of S3 strategies across European peripheries. The authors argue for transformative approaches that move beyond growth-centric paradigms, proposing genuinely tailored strategies that strengthen institutional contexts, embrace diversity, and prioritize sustainable and inclusive development.

The third article in this issue comes from the Croatian context, titled *From leisure retreat to working heaven: factors influencing remote work from second homes*. Here, Geran-Marko Miletić, Marica Marinović Golubić and Krešimir Peračković explore how second homes in Croatia are increasingly used as sites for remote work – a topic taken up in *Fennia* in the Finnish context more than ten years ago (Hiltunen & Rehunen 2014) and drawing increasing attention during the Covid-19 Pandemic in various geographical contexts (Barbosa 2020; Valizadeh & Iranmanesh 2021). Drawing on survey data from 709 employed second-home users collected in 2024, the study finds that more than half of them had worked remotely via information and communications technology from their second home in the past year. Logistic regression analysis reveals that technical feasibility – such as reliable internet speed – alongside housing quality and job type are decisive factors. Remote work was most prevalent among those in producer services occupations, while gender and household affluence also played significant roles. Remote work appears linked to more frequent use of even distant second homes, signaling a shift toward multilocal living and hybrid spaces that blur boundaries between work and leisure.

The fourth article takes us to the Finnish agricultural landscape. Oswald Sydd's paper *Towards zero-loss agriculture: addressing strawberry food loss in North Karelia, Finland* investigates the complexities of food loss in the Finnish strawberry value chain through a qualitative, multi-scalar case study. Based on 12 in-depth interviews conducted between 2023 and 2025 with farmers, pickers, processors, policymakers, and institutional actors, the study uncovers how infrastructural gaps, labor shortages,

and regulatory burdens intersect with climatic variability to shape food loss outcomes. Empirical findings reveal that mitigation strategies — such as tunnel cultivation, cold storage, self-picking schemes, and side-flow processing into jams and juices — are unevenly adopted, benefiting well-equipped farms while marginalizing smaller producers. The research highlights systemic challenges, including visa restrictions reducing migrant labor supply, organic certification conflicts with technological adoption, and the lack of standardized food-loss metrics. By framing food loss as a relational and institutional issue rather than a farm-level inefficiency, the paper argues that progress toward 'zero-loss agriculture' depends on harmonizing governance, infrastructure, and labor regimes with place-specific realities, rather than imposing uniform technical fixes.

Tine Béneker's invited lecture-based essay *Powerful geography for Dutch schools: the perspectives of academic geographers* resonates strongly with ongoing debates about curriculum renewal in many European countries and beyond. She examines how 22 Dutch academic geographers envision the future of school geography in light of the upcoming overhaul of the national curriculum. Using Maude's typology of powerful geographical knowledge, Béneker analyzes essays that advocate for an integrated approach to human and physical geography, attention to societal issues such as climate change and inequality, and a critical stance toward knowledge production. The study highlights the call for a 'Future 3 curriculum' that reconnects students with disciplinary thinking, fosters inquiry-based learning, and bridges everyday experiences with conceptual knowledge. Ultimately, the paper underscores the complexity of selecting curriculum content and the need for pedagogical strategies that make geographical knowledge truly powerful, which is greatly needed in the current world of climate-changed geographies and geopolitical tensions.

The essay *Antipodal paradoxes: reading power through the eye of the needle* by Patatri Baidya grounds and localizes such material and bodily entanglements. From a rickshaw in Kolkata, Baidya posits 'antipodal paradoxes' to describe situations where power operates through spatial contradictions rather than confirmations of our hierarchical expectations, noting that the language of authority is often saturated with verticality. These theoretical insights are enhanced through fieldwork in the Sundarbans, and in this creatively presented piece Baidya utilizes photography to read space anew, developing novel methods to account for power's contradictory spatial operations.

The review article *Growth and diffusion of the planetary boundaries concept* by Ola Johansson provides a comprehensive look at the evolution of one of the key sustainability concepts, planetary boundaries. Going through Anglophonic interdisciplinary scholarly literature, he traces how this Earth system science framework – introduced in 2009 to define a 'safe operating space' for humanity — has spread across disciplines and regions. Using citation analysis and database searches, Johansson compares its trajectory to related concepts such as the Anthropocene and ecological footprint, finding that planetary boundaries have gained wide interdisciplinary adoption, particularly in Europe, while remaining less prominent in North America and the Global South. The study also categorizes research engagement levels, revealing that most scholars use planetary boundaries as a framing device rather than as a core analytical tool. By situating this diffusion within classic and spatial theories of knowledge spread, the paper underscores planetary boundaries' growing influence on scientific discourse and its potential role in shaping policy and governance. Moreover, Johansson acknowledges the limitations of the result based on Anglophonic literature only, stemming from the indices used, which resonates interestingly with the above editorial on multilingualism and translation.

This issue of the journal concludes with two Reflections pieces. The first, *Realm of freedom and realm of necessity in definitions of the 'planetary': Cold War, Great Acceleration and the impediments of human-Earth entanglements — commentary to Pikner* by Siarhei Liubimau, reflects upon Pickner's (2024) *Resonances of planetarity and commons within evolving urbanisms* published in Fennia, thus adding to the dialogue stemming from the Fennia 2023 panel at the Finnish Geography Days in Joensuu. Liubimau revisits Marx's notions of 'realm of freedom' and 'realm of necessity' and reads current interest in the 'planetary' as an attempt to start deliberating upon the underlying, initially non-deliberated, foundations of societies produced by the Great Acceleration and the infrastructural unleashing of human/Earth interactions starting from the 1940s and 1950s. Planetarity, according to Liubimau, is also a historically determined moment of the impediments produced by unleashed

interactions between humans and the Earth, a historically determined mode of human-Earth entanglements that produces impediments rather than open-ended futures.

A second Reflections piece is a lectio, *Gentrification in a welfare state: the case of Helsinki*, in which Kevin Drain describes the journey to writing a doctoral monograph, including the challenges of studying a complex phenomenon like gentrification. Drain's research reveals a paradox of welfare and planning in the context of Helsinki, in which some forms of gentrification are held at bay while others flourish. In Finland, according to Drain, gentrification remains absent from public policy and planning discourses. Ultimately, the finding of Drain's work is a paradox of the welfare state and urban planning, as one works to prevent classic gentrification and the other promotes general gentrification. Drain ends with a call to continue dialogical conversation which we have pioneered in this journal, asking Professor Philip Hubbard (Drain's opponent) to present critical comments on this research in a future *Fennia* issue.

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FENNIA REFLECTIONS AND REVIEWS SECTION EDITOR

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Although see Smith (2016) for one exception which was sadly not maintained in the fourth editionOn the other hand, the SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Geography (DeLyser *et al.* 2010) — arguably another key reference for geographic qualitative methods — has neither a standalone chapter on translation nor an index heading for 'translation.'

<sup>2</sup> This sub-field that we established with international colleagues in the early 2000s had to be translated into Finnish by me, where I realized that the plural cannot be used in Finnish. The singular lapsuuden ja nuoruuden maantiede unavoidably carries a different tone, which is another example of how translation is part of geographical knowledge production.

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