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Libraries as Sites of Transnational Multilingual Reception of Women's Writing and the Virtual Research Environment

In this paper, I would like to share and discuss some results from my recent research on “literary reception in libraries” in CRPs *Travelling Texts 1790–1914: Transnational Reception of Women's Writing at the Fringes of Europe (Finland, The Netherlands, Norway, Slovenia, Spain)*, *Women's Centres and Peripheries* and *Texts on the Move: Reception of Women's Writing in Finland and Russia 1840–2020*. In these projects, focusing on women's literary exchange and reception of women's work (in my own research, I concentrate on the period of the long 19th century), the starting point has been a broad understanding of the concept of literary reception as well as an objective to map the transnational European literary field from the margins in various senses of the word. In the projects, we began at the ‘reception end’ of the literary exchange and the way texts authored by women have travelled in Europe. The rationale of these projects has been questioning the relations between centre and periphery from a gendered point of view, exploring, in terms of gender, cultural encounters through reading and writing, with the aim of offering new, transnational models of writing the history of European literary culture.

The broad understanding of the term ‘literary reception’ means that reception is not understood only in the usual ways, i. e. as translations from one language into another and/or the book reviews in the periodical press. Apart from mapping translations and reviews, the projects have been also studying the presence of authors and texts in the periodical press in a broader sense (apart from reviews, also articles about authors lives, obituaries, book advertisements, etc.) and, among other sources, in library collections, both private and public. Library catalogues and collections have shown that reception of women's writing has been much richer than what we can see from national bibliographies, from data on translated works or from periodical press.

The digital tool these transnational and multilingual receptions, including the library receptions, have been stored in is the Virtual Research Environment (VRE) *NEWW* (<http://test.resources.huygens.knaw.nl/womenwriters>), which shows the reception field in a broad European perspective. With the help of several brief case studies, I am going to show how the research in library collections and the introduction of the library reception data into the VRE can contribute to formulate new research questions in transnational literary history from the point of view of multilingual reception of (women's) writing in both “bigger” and “smaller” languages and literatures.
