

”Marx belongs to us!” The history of the translation of Marx’s *Capital* into Finnish and the struggle over Marx’s legacy in the short 20th century

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The editorial history of Karl Marx’s (1818–1883) major work, *Das Kapital: Kritik der politischen Ökonomie* (1867/1885/1894), during the short 20th century marks the struggle over ”whose classic work” the book is. Does it belong to the social democrats, to Soviet Marxism, or to the radical, anti-Stalinist left? In this article I ask how this struggle is reflected in the history of the translation of Marx’s major work into Finnish. In particular, I enquire how this struggle appears in the paratexts that accompany these translations, such as the editors’ prefaces or indexes of names or subjects. The first Finnish translation (1913–1918) of Volume I of *Capital* is the result of collaboration between the old, Kautskyite social democratic workers’ movement and bourgeois intellectuals. After the Finnish Civil War (1918), the history of the translation of Marx’s major work depended on the massive Soviet infrastructure of translation and publication. In the paratexts attached to the various Finnish editions of *Capital*, Marx’s main work was portrayed as the classic of the official Soviet state ideology, Marxism-Leninism. The German original, however, was available throughout the short 20th century not only as adapted to Marxism-Leninism.