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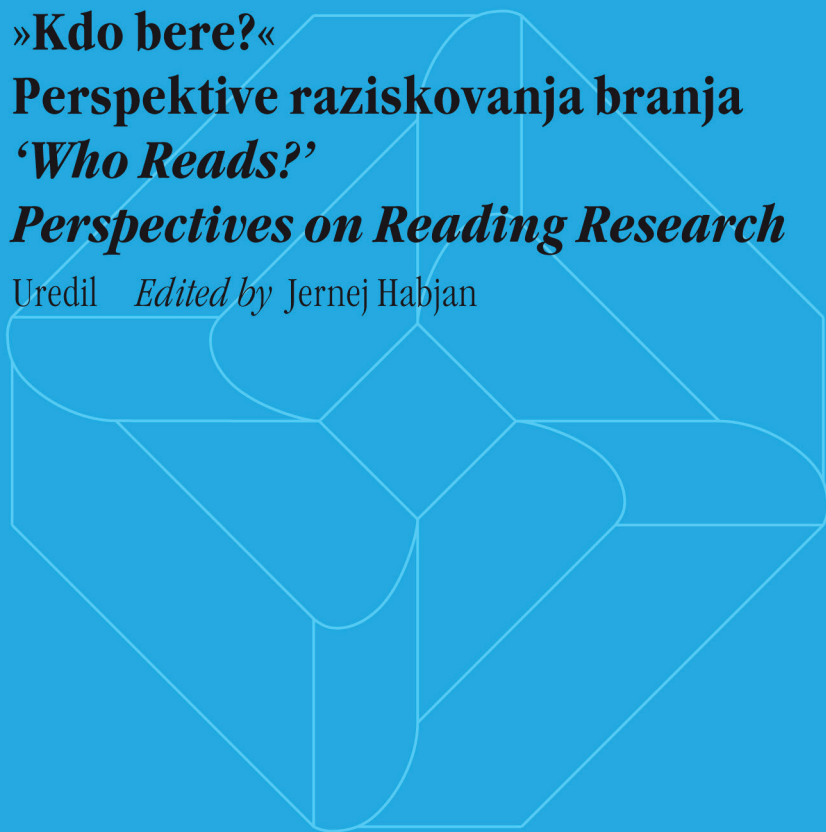
»Kdo bere?«

Perspektive raziskovanja branja

‘Who Reads?’

Perspectives on Reading Research

Uredil *Edited by* Jernej Habjan



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O AVTORJIH

»Kdo bere?«
Perspektive raziskovanja branja
Uredil Jernej Habjan



»Kdo bere?«: perspektive raziskovanja branja

Ana Č. Vogrinčič

UDK 028

8. mednarodni komparativistični kolokvij, ki je septembra 2010 potekal v okviru 25. mednarodnega literarnega festivala Vilenica, se je ukvarjal z bralstvom in branjem. Ponudil je tri tematsko samostojne, a obenem med seboj povezane pa tudi deloma prekrivajoče se sklope: prvi naj bi se osredotočil na historičnega bralca in družbeno-kulturno kontekstualizacijo bralnih praks, tudi najsodobnejših; drugi naj bi obravnaval različne bralne motive, kakršna sta motiva bralca ali knjižnice; tretji pa je bil posvečen teorijam branja in razmisleku o prihodnosti prakse. Namen razprav je bil tedaj vsebinsko dopolniti pretekla dva simpozija, ki sta se osredotočila na vlogo avtorja (*Avtor: Kdo ali kaj piše literaturo?*) in na pomen literarnih posrednikov (založnikov, urednikov in kritikov) v sodobni književni kulturi (*»Kdo izbere?« Literatura in literarno posredništvo*), in s tem zaokrožiti verigo avtor – založnik/knjigotržec – bralec.

Končni izid se je nekoliko odmaknil od načrtovanega, saj bi lahko prispevke razdelili v dve skupini: prva se je lotevala teoretskih in metodoloških vprašanj (Grosman, Bachleitner, Towheed, Habjan, Pezdirc-Bartol), druga pa zgodovinske perspektive oziroma posamičnih študij primera (Pintarič, Littau, Čepič Vogrinčič, Smolej, Santini, Schandl). Pri tem velja dodati, da so se historični in teoretski pristopi skupin seveda pogosto produktivno prepletali. Zbrani referati tako predstavljajo zanimivo kombinacijo teorije in prakse in posredno vabijo k razmisleku o možnostih, kako ju povezati.

* * *

Meta Grosman, redna profesorica za književnosti v angleščini na Filozofski fakulteti Univerze v Ljubljani, v prispevku »Bralci in branje kot interakcija z literarnimi besedili« poudarja pomen razumevanja branja kot komunikacije in enkratne literarne izkušnje. Čeprav je njen pogled razmeroma ahistoričen, nam, kot pravi, odgovor na vprašanje, kaj bralci počnejo med branjem in kako sami oblikujejo mentalno podobo teksta, olajša ra-

zumevanje sodobnih razmer, namreč bralčeve interakcije z elektronskimi besedili.

V nasprotju z Grosmanovo, ki obravnava posamično branje kot dejanje začasnega sobivanja s fikcijskimi liki, je Norbert Bachleitner, izredni profesor primerjalne književnosti na dunajski univerzi, v prispevku »Od bralstva in bralcev k sociologiji bralnih okolij« opozoril na pomen socioloških pristopov k zgodovini branja, ki omogočajo razumevanje bralnih navad različnih občinstev in družbenih razredov. V navezavi na številne raziskave družbenih razsežnosti branja, zlasti na nedavno študijo Josta Schneiderja o bralnih okoljih, tj. o bralnih občinstvih z gledišča družbenega miljeja, Bachleitner poziva k vključitvi zgodovine branja v zgodovino književnosti (ali kar tekstov nasploh) in s tem v zgodovino književnega sporočanja.

Svojevrstnim metodološkim vprašanjem se posveča tudi Jernej Habjan, raziskovalec na literarnem inštitutu ZRC SAZU. V prispevku »Raziskovanje kot branje: od natančnega branja razlike do oddaljenega branja razdalje« se osredinja na Morettijev koncept »oddaljenega branja«, ki je bil vpeljan kot alternativa prevladujoči metodi natančnega branja. Habjan epistemološko predstavi Morettijev pristop in z njegovega lastnega stališča odgovori na najglasnejše komparativistične kritike »oddaljenega branja«.

Prehod med metodološkimi in zgodovinskimi prispevki ponudi članek Rogerja Chartiera, profesorja zgodovine novoveške Evrope na Collège de France in enega najvidnejših zgodovinarjev knjige, ki sicer ni sodeloval na kolokviju, se pa zborniku pridružuje s člankom »Cervantes, Menard in Borges«. Chartier skicira šest različnih branj Borgesove zgodbe *Pierre Menard, avtor Kibota* kot teksta, avtopoetskega na biografski, avtobiografski, alegorični, kritiški, estetski in bibliografski ravni.

Niz študij primerov začenja razprava Karin Littau, predavateljice angleščine in primerjalne književnosti na univerzi v Essexu, naslovljena »Arheologija afekta: branje, zgodovina in spol«. Študija obravnava vlogo afekta oziroma čutnega odziva pri branju in pokaže, kako je bil afekt zgodovinsko marginaliziran in razvrednoten. Medtem ko je afekt veljal za merilo odličnosti nekega dela vse od antike do 18. stoletja, je povezava med vrhunskim literarnim dosežkom in užitkarskim afektiranim branjem do 20. stoletja postala tako rekoč nevzdržna. Z obravnavo fizičnega, telesnega odziva na literarno besedilo prispevek Karin Littau v razpravo o branju vpelje razvpito bralko, osrednjo temo (feminističnih) študij recepcije in spola.

Potem ko ta prispevek jasno pokaže na historično spremenljivo percepcijo branja oziroma vrednotenja moči literature, Shafquat Towheed,

predavatelj angleščine na Open University v Londonu, v članku »Lociranje bralca ali kaj naj storimo z možem s klobukom?« predstavi podatkovno bazo bralnih izkušenj (*The Reading Experience Database*), ki prispeva ravno k razumevanju zgodovinskih sprememb bralnih praks pa tudi posamičnih primerov bralnih dejavnosti. Towheed je vodja projekta *The Reading Experience Database, 1450–1945*, odprtokodne baze s trenutno več kot 30.000 vnosi, ki dokumentirajo zgodovino branja v Britaniji v obdobju 1450–1945. Pričevanja o branju najdemo v objavljenih in neobjavljenih virih, med katerimi so tako dnevniki kakor sociološke raziskave pa tudi denimo zabeleške s sodišč in pričevanja zapornikov. Baza vsebuje kvalitativne in kvantitativne podatke o tem, kaj, kje, kdaj in kaj so Britanci in Britanke brali ter kaj so pri tem razmišljali. Baza je zato neprecenljiv vir ne le za zgodovinopisje knjige in branja, pač pa tudi za vrsto drugih disciplin.

Ana Č. Vogrinčič, docentka na Filozofski fakulteti Univerze v Ljubljani, v prispevku »Materialnost branja: primer bralcev romanov v Angliji 18. stoletja in pogled v sodobnost« razmišlja o materialnih razsežnostih branja in o neliterarnem oziroma zunajbesedilnem področju literarne izkušnje. Pomembno vlogo pri popularizaciji prostočasnega branja je roman odigral tudi kot objekt, in sicer najprej v Angliji 18. stoletja. K vzponu žanra je pomembno prispevala materializacija literarnih likov v drugih prostočasnih dejavnostih. To in druge načine artikulacije prebranega v pogovorih avtorica definira kot »povnanjanje« sicer intimne bralne izkušnje. »Povnanjanje« avtorica prepozna tudi v sodobni bralni kulturi, ki jo namesto razprave »o« knjigah vse bolj opredeljuje govor »okrog« knjig.

Miha Pintarič, ki predava francosko srednjeveško in renesančno književnost na Filozofski fakulteti Univerze v Ljubljani, prispeva članek »Rabelais in knjižnica Opatije svetega Viktorja«, študijo literarnega motiva knjižnice, kakor jo Rabelais parodično opiše v renesančni klasiki *Gargantua in Pantagruel*. Rabelaisova knjižnica Opatije svetega Viktorja je na prvi pogled samo goli seznam naslovov, vendar Pintariču uspe razgrniti njihovo globljo sporočilnost.

Po drugi strani pa se Tone Smolej, izredni profesor na Oddelku za primerjalno književnost in literarno teorijo ljubljanske Filozofske fakultete, v študiji »Knjižnica in bralec na Kranjskem (1670–1870) in slovenska literarna veda« osredotoča na dokumentirane knjižnice, in sicer na tiste, ki jih je ustanavljala in vzdrževala aristokracija na Kranjskem med 17. in 19. stoletjem.

Monica Santini, podoktorska raziskovalka in predavateljica na Univerzi v Padovi, se v razpravi »Mladi bralci in stare zgodbe: priredbe zgodb o kralju Arturju za mlade (in) odrasle« posveča pisanju za otroke in mlade odrasle kot specifična bralna občinstva. Predstavi pregled sprememb, ki so

jih vnesli avtorji predelav tradicionalnih zgodb o kralju Arturju, da bi jih prilagodili sodobnemu mlademu bralstvu.

Veronika Schandl, docentka na Katoliški univerzi Pázmány Péter v Budimpešti, bralne prakse predstavi v kontekstu socialistične Madžarske in pokaže, kako je poskušal avtoritarni Kádárjev režim soustvarjati oziroma nadzorovati bralne navade državljanov in državljanek. Njena raziskava »Kjer je zasebno javno: bralne prakse v socialistični Madžarski« izhaja iz številnih poročil, ki so postala dostopna šele nedavno in ki omogočajo nova dognanja o vladnih prirejanjih književne ponudbe.

Zbornik prispevkov kolokvija sklene študija »Branje dramskega besedila: primer empirične raziskave«: Mateja Pezdirc Bartol, docentka za slovensko književnost na Oddelku za slovenistiko Filozofske fakultete Univerze v Ljubljani, pregleda tipe bralcev, kakor jih artikulirajo teorije bralčevega odziva, in predstavi izid empirične raziskave, ki proučuje stik bralcev z dramskim besedilom in primerja njihove odzive z zaznavami gledalcev uprizoritve besedila.

* * *

Zbrani prispevki nedvomno prinašajo zelo različne poglede, vendar ni težko prepoznati nekaj osrednjih ponavljajočih se tem. Najopaznejša med njimi je zagotovo problematično razmerje med raziskovanjem posamičnih bralcev in raziskovanjem bralnih občinstev, ki je najbolj tematiziran v prispevku N. Bachleitnerja, izstopa pa tudi v drugih razpravah, zlasti v referatih S. Towheeda in M. Pezdirc Bartol.

Če odštejemo primer Emme Bovary, ki ga obravnava Karin Littau, ni nihče od sodelujočih portretiral bralnih navad izbranega posameznika ali posameznice, saj jim je šlo predvsem za splošnejše ugotovitve in za osvetlitev podobe kolektivnega bralstva. Vendar če upoštevamo Fishev koncept interpretativnih skupnosti (gl. Fish), niti ne moremo ločiti posamičnega bralca ali bralke in kolektivnega bralstva, saj je v vsakem individualnem branju že navzoče širše občinstvo.

Podatkovna baza bralnih izkušenj RED se odnosa med bralcem in bralstvom dotakne posebej izrazito, saj omogoča uvid tako v individualne kakor v skupinske bralne prakse. Četudi temelji predvsem na razdrobljenih in pogosto anekdotičnih drobcih bralnih sledi, vnosi ob natančnem pregledu »sestavijo« tudi vednost o bralnih občinstvih. To jim uspe ne samo zato, ker baza predvideva tudi vpis podatkov o bralnih skupinah, pač pa tudi zato, ker s pomočjo primerjav celo anekdotična pričevanja presežejo raven naključnega. Pomisleke pa zbujajo vprašanje, ali vnesene podatke sploh obravnavamo kot reprezentativne. Ker iz lastnih izkušenj vemo, da večina bralcev ne pušča nikakršnih sledi, so redke realno obstoječe sledi

nujno netipične, tako da je vsakršno zapisovanje branja neogibno neobičajno. S tega gledišča je to, kar ponuja RED, prej izjemno kakor značilno in v določeni meri zagotovo omejuje siceršnji potencial baze. Kljub temu zbrani podatki že omogočajo preseganje spekulacij in odpirajo nove smeri v študijih branja, in sicer zlasti ker je delovna skupina RED nedavno internacionalizirala svoje delovanje in pričela sodelovati s partnerji v Avstraliji, Kanadi, na Nizozemskem in na Novi Zelandiji.

Še en ponavljajoči se »motiv« simpozija je razmerje med historičnim in ahistoričnim pogledom. Prvi prinaša pregled določene, zgodovinsko spremenljive problematike branja in/ali študije posamičnih primerov; drugi pogled pa prinaša metodološke in teoretske razprave.

Prispevki obravnavajo različne časovno-prostorske kontekste – Francijo 16. stoletja, deželo Kranjsko od 17. do 19. stoletja, Anglijo 18. stoletja in socialistično Madžarsko – in se lotevajo različnih tipov bralstva: mladega (Santini), cenzuriranega (Schandl), poklicnega (Habjan), ženskega (Littau).

Ženskega bralstva se dotakneta tudi razpravi K. Littau in A. Č. Vogrinčič o paničnem moralnem diskurzu proti romanu. Prispevka se dopolnjujeta tudi v nekaterih drugih elementih: če ju beremo skupaj, lahko sklenemo, da sodobna knjižno-bralna kultura z na novo nastajajočimi knjižnimi formati ponovno namenja večjo pozornost telesni razsežnosti branja in materialnim vidikom knjige ter čutnemu, fizičnemu izkustvu branja, saj nas primora k ponovnemu premisleku o tem, kako ravnamo, natančneje, »rokujemo« s knjigami.

Nemara bi lahko celo razbirali povezavo med Morettijevim oddaljenim branjem in pojavom razpravljanja »okrog« knjig, čeprav oddaljenega branja ne gre jemati kot nečesa, kar bi nadomestilo »pravo« branje, pač pa prej kot strategijo, ki ustvarja doslej neznano literarno zgodovino in nam omogoča prepoznavanje splošnih teženj v literarni evoluciji, tj. dolgega trajanja zgodovine literature. Prav za to pa si v polju zgodovine branja prizadeva tudi projekt RED.

Presenetljivo je, da udeleženke in udeleženci niso namenili veliko pozornosti t. i. izzivom e-dobe. Prej kot o nasprotnem to zagotovo priča o tem, da je e-doba postala razmeroma samoumevna in da ne potrebuje več posebne pozornosti. Kot taka pa je navzoča v prispevkih M. Grosman, A. Č. Vogrinčič in seveda S. Towheeda. Če naj bi kmalu resnično prešli na e-knjige in če projekt Google Books uspe, bo podatkovna baza RED (p)ostala dragocena e-shramba bralnih sledi, ki bo ohranjala marginalije iz tiskanih knjig, ki bi bile sicer za vedno izgubljene. Kljub temu se moramo zavedati, da takšne baze nujno zamolčijo oprijemljivo, materialno plat pričevanj o branju, kar nas dodatno zavezuje k natančnemu opazovanju pretekle in sodobne materializacije branja.

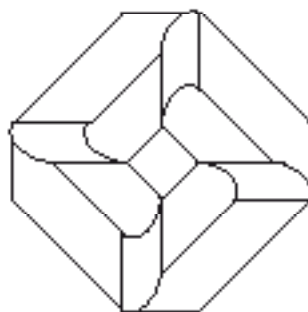
* * *

Osmi mednarodni komparativistični kolokvij sta organizirala Tone Smolej in Ana Č. Vogrinčič, pričujoči zbornik pa je uredil Jernej Habjan. Organizatorja in urednik bi se radi zahvalili vsem sodelujočim za poslane prispevke. Zahvala gre tudi vodstvu Festivala Vilenica, Društvu slovenskih pisateljev, Slovenskemu društvu za primerjalno književnost, Oddelku za primerjalno književnost in literarno teorijo UL in Inštitutu za slovensko literaturo in literarne vede ZRC SAZU. Hvaležni smo tudi doc. dr. Florence Gacoin-Marks in mag. Oliverju Currieju za jezikovni pregled francoskih oziroma angleških besedil in ge. Alenki Maček za postavitev besedila. Dr. Miroslavu Polzerju z Avstrijskega znanstvenega inštituta pa se zahvaljujemo, da je finančno podprl udeležbo avstrijskega referenta.

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Razprave



Od bralstva in bralcev k sociologiji bralnih okolij

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Kljub študijam o zunanji zgodovini branja in posameznih bralcih vemo o bralnih navadah skupin zelo malo. Model soodvisnosti med družbenim razredom in okusom je izdelal Bourdieu, vendar je ta precej primitiven v primerjavi s sodobnimi študijami, ki temeljijo na »okoljih Sinus«. Jost Schneider, denimo, je rekonstruiral okus nižjega srednjega razreda, za katerega je značilna stagnacija, liberalno tehnokratskega okolja, ki je usmerjeno k oblikovnim eksperimentom »klasične« avangarde, in hedonističnega okolja, ki išče nove sloge in trende. Schneiderjevi rezultati še vedno čakajo, da jih bodo potrdili empirični podatki.

Ključne besede: zgodovina branja / sociologija branja / bralci / družbeni razred / bralna kultura / bralne navade / okolja Sinus

UDK 028:316.7

Zgodovina književnosti, ki izključuje bralce, se ukvarja zgolj s *ponudbo* sporočanja, ne pa s književnim sporočanjem samim po sebi. Če literarno zgodovino pojmuje kot parado avtorjev in besedil, pokriva zgolj virtualne pomene – z interpretacijami, v katerih sintetiziramo branja maloštevilnih uglednih kritikov. Če pa vzamemo sporočilni vidik resno, je vpliv književnosti, način, kako bralci »uporabljajo« knjige, enako pomemben kot besedilna razčlemba. Le z upoštevanjem bralskega odziva se lahko nadejamo odgovorov na vprašanja o zgodovinski vlogi književnosti, o porazdelitvi idej, o oblikovanju mnenj in miselnosti ob književnih besedilih in o izgradnji skupinskih identitet. Če se osredotočimo na »potrošnjo« književnosti, bo nastali izbor del popolnoma drugačen od kanona v konvencionalnih literarnih zgodovinah.

Raziskovanje branja se je začelo s preučevanjem zunanje bralne zgodovine. Knjižni zgodovinarji so zbrali obsežne količinske podatke, ki jih lahko razdelimo v dva tipa: v makro- in mikrogradivo (prim. Darnton, »First Steps« 158). Na makroravni kažejo statistike, osnovane na nacionalnih bibliografijah (na primer katalogih Leipziškega knjižnega sejma, *Bibliographie de la France*, dokumentih ceha *Stationers' company*), kako sta

vzniknila sodobni knjižni trg in njemu ustrezno bralstvo. Okvirno predstavo o vplivu književnosti in o njenem bralstvu v danem trenutku nam omogočajo podatki o stopnji pismenosti, številu knjigarn, knjižnih cenah, nakladah in prodaji. Književno sporočanje nam pomaga rekonstruirati zgodovina tiskovne zakonodaje in cenzure, ker nam pokaže omejitve pri književni distribuciji. Rudolf Schenda je prišel do sklepa, da je velika večina nižjega in nižjega srednjega razreda vse do 20. stoletja ostala nepismena in praktično izločena iz književnega sporočanja. Branje je bilo (in je do neke mere še vedno) privilegij izobražene manjšine.

Na mikroravni nam nudijo vpogled v individualne knjižne zaloge katalogi iz zasebnih knjižnic plemičev, duhovnikov in drugih vidnih osebnosti. Pripombe v pismih, dnevnikih in drugih avtobiografskih virih pogosto prinašajo nadrobne podatke o bralnih praksah posameznikov. S stališča književnih študij, še zlasti primerjalne književnosti, pa so posebno zanimive bralne navade samih avtorjev, njihova književna izobrazba in znanje. Podobe bralcev iz tistega časa nam nudijo podatke o načinu branja, denimo o tem, kako se je razvilo iz družabne izkušnje v zasebno ali prešlo od glasnega branja k tihemu. Podobno lahko uporabimo prikaze branja v delih leposlovnih piscev, zlasti romanih, kot vir za bralne manire in navade. Od 18. stoletja naprej pa dodajajo katalogi bralnih klubov in izposojnih knjižnic tudi podatke o najpriljubljenejšem čtivu.

Drugi viri, primerni za rekonstrukcijo branja, so pedagoški spisi iz 18. in 19. stoletja, ki obsojajo velikopotezno branje romanov (nemško »Lesesucht«), še posebno romanov, kakršna sta *Werther* in *La nouvelle Héloïse*. Robert Darnton (»Bralci«) je analiziral pisma Rousseauju, v katerih se razkrivajo ti novi načini sentimentalnega branja in istovetenja z domišljjskimi liki. Podatke o kakovosti branja včasih prinašajo tudi avtobiografske pripovedi, kot so memoari in dnevniki, medtem ko robni zapisi v knjigah lahko pričajo o dejstvu, da branje pogosto vodi k neposrednemu virtualnemu dvogovoru. Nedavno tega je psiholog Norbert Groeben (prim. Christmann in Groeben) predlagal, da bi psihologijo bralnega procesa empirično preučili s pomočjo eksperimentov in vprašalnikov. Prav zdaj pripravlja Maria Handler na Dunajski univerzi disertacijo, v kateri s pomočjo tovrstne študije »preverja«, kakšen vtis napravijo angleški prevodi Rilkejevih pesmi in njihovi nemški izvirniki na vzorec bralcev.

Skratka, zgodnje raziskave branja so se osredotočale na očrt količinskega razvoja bralstva in na mikroanalitične študije, ki so zbirale podatke o posameznih bralcih. Še vedno pa vemo zelo malo o bralnih navadah nekaterih bralskih skupin. V poznem 18. stoletju je začelo bralstvo občutno naraščati in se ločevati v skupine s svojimi okusi. Medtem se je bila že dokaj jasno izrisala hierarhija kulturnih dobrin, ki je ustrezala družbeni hi-

erarhiji. Kot prvi je sistematično raziskoval različne življenjske sloge Pierre Bourdieu v knjigi *La distinction*.¹ Po njegovih besedah nima zgolj vsaka družbena skupina lastnega okusa, ampak – kar je še pomembneje – deluje umetnost celo kot sredstvo družbenega razlikovanja.

Nagnjenje do intelektualne umetnosti in književnosti (Bourdieu govori o »legitimni umetnosti«) ni naravni dar, temveč predpostavlja izobrazbo, kulturno kompetenco in seveda dovolj prostega časa, da se na umetnino lahko ustrezno odzovemo. Če hočemo razumeti legitimno umetnost, moramo poznati njeno »kodo« in njeno zgodovino, razvoj slogov in tehnik, saj dobi posamično delo smisel le v razmerju do drugih del. (Mimogrede, s trošenjem umetnin, ki so s praktičnega gledišča po definiciji »neuporabne«, potrošnik dokazuje, da ni v ekonomski stiski in da si lahko privošči takšno »luksuzno« dejavnost.) Legitimna umetnost je avtonomna in neodvisna od vsakdanjika, kot tudi od slehernega konkretnega namena. Velja za čisto obliko in od bralca terja poleg »čistega« pogleda še odmaknjenost in ravnodušnost – na primer odmaknjenost od romaneskni likov in ravnodušnost do lastnosti, kakršne so srečen konec, napetost, zabavnost in podobno.

Nasprotno pa si popularna umetnost in okus ne lastita nikakršne neodvisne estetske vrednosti. Če nakazuje legitimna umetnost nekakšno agnostično držo, je popularna umetnost heteronomna in bo z večjo verjetnostjo prikazovala etične ali politične probleme. Zanjso so umetnine uporabni predmeti, komaj kaj drugačni od vsakdanjih. Medtem ko legitimna umetnost ne nudi nikakršnih »naravnih« užitkov, temveč od nas zahteva, naj zavrnemo vse »človeško« (ki je po definiciji banalno in prostaško), računa popularna na čutno dražljivost in vabi naslovnika, naj se udeleži igre, namreč drame ali romana.

Bourdieu razlikuje med tremi področji okusa:

- *le gout légitime* (legitimni okus), tj. nagnjenje do legitimnih del;
- *le gout »moyen«* (sredinski okus), ki obsega manj pomembna dela glavnih umetnosti, in
- *le gout »populaire«* (popularni okus) (*La distinction* 14–16).

Bourdieujev model razmerja med razredom in okusom je zelo prepričljiv, vendar je njegova metoda klasifikacije še vedno precej primitivna. V nedavni študiji *Sozialgeschichte des Lesens* (Družbena zgodovina branja) pa je Jost Schneider namesto sistema treh razredov uporabil deset »okolij Sinus«. Družba je postala kompleksnejša in bolj raznolika kot pred 35 leti, ko se je lotil raziskave Bourdieu. Dandanes imajo, vsaj teoretično, vsi razredi dostop do kulturne produkcije s književnostjo vred. Zato moramo pojem »razreda« nadomestiti s prožnejšim pojmom »okolja«, ki omogoča mnogo bolj pretanjen sistem razvrščanja. S sistemom »okolij Sinus«, prvot-

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Vir: http://www.google.at/images?hl=de&biw=1020&bih=614&rlz=1R2GGLL_de&q=sinus+milieus+2009&revid=1890806054&um=1&ie=UTF-8&source=univ&ei=hd8oTefeNYSI8QO_sbSFAw&sa=X&oi=image_result_group&ct=title&resnum=3&ved=0CDQQsAQwAg

V nadaljevanju si bomo podrobneje ogledali bralne navade treh okolij.

1. Pripadniki tradicionalnih okolij sestavljajo nižji srednji razred; njihov splošni cilj je ohraniti svoj razmeroma skromni življenjski standard, ker bi jih sleherna sprememba statusa quo lahko pahnila v družbeno nazadovanje. V tem okolju so pomembni zakonitost in red, moralni standardi, pozitivno mišljenje, tradicionalni kodeks vedenja in prijetna domačnost (*Gemütlichkeit*). Med nižjim srednjim razredom so najbolj priljubljeni popularni avtorji, kakršni so Heinz Konsalik, Johannes Mario Simmel in Utta Danella (ti zastopajo »nižji srednji razred« tudi po literarni vrednosti; pomenljivo je, da se njihove knjige distribuirajo predvsem po supermarketih in knjižnih klubih, ne po pravih knjigarnah). Mimogrede bi morda veljalo omeniti, da sta Konsalik in Simmel prevedena v ducate jezikov in da žanjeta malone svetovni uspeh. Kot smo že povedali, je pri popularni umetnosti verjetneje, da bo prikazovala moralne probleme. Tako Simmel v svojih pustolovskih in romantičnih zgodbah redno predstavlja sodobne družbene probleme in igra prijatelja malih ljudi, ki brani državljske pravice. Danella pa je ljubljenska tradicionalnih ženskih okolij; samo po sebi se razume, da v svojem modelu partnerstva med spoloma odobrava poroko in družinsko življenje. Njena kritika »bogatih« in njihove nemorale se do pičice ujema z držo in vrednotami nižjega srednjega razreda. Isto velja

za rabo narečij in stereotipnih motivov, sentimente in izražanje (*Kitsch*) v besedilih sodobnih popularnih pesmi, ki se zvečine navezujejo na umišljeno podeželsko okolje. V popularni komediji pa so izpostavljeni posmehu razredni sovražniki – pripadniki »neciviliziranega« delavskega razreda in bogate ter intelektualne elite.

2. Liberalno tehnokratsko okolje sestavljata dve skupini: nekdanji *Bildungsbürgertum* (tj. intelektualci, denimo odvetniki, zdravniki in arhitekti) in vodilni krogi v politiki in gospodarstvu (»eksperti« in »menedžerji«). Pripadniki tega okolja imajo najodgovornejše položaje v različnih sektorjih družbe; po njihovem mnenju naj umetnost ne bi bila zgolj formalistična igra brez cilja, temveč cenijo zavzet pristop, na primer moralno angažiranost avtorjev, kakršna sta Thomas Bernhard in Elfriede Jelinek. Kot na dlani je, da razumevanje tovrstne književnosti zahteva solidno podkovanost v zgodovini, filozofiji in številnih drugih vedah, zasebno knjižnico, v kateri lahko bralec preverja imena in vsakovrstne aluzije, ter zmožnost in pripravljenost, da se za nekaj časa osredotoči na besedilo.

Najbolj priljubljena v tem okolju je svetovna književnost, vključno z avantgardnimi deli, ki eksperimentirajo z obliko. Liberalni tehnokrati odobravajo individualno gledišče, ki ga ustvarjajo pripovedne tehnike kot notranji monolog in tok zavesti. Z rabo neobičajnih besed in skladnje se sodobna poezija pogosto približa zelo zasebnemu jeziku in izrazu. In na posled je tu še samoironija – tehnika za izražanje relativizma vrednot, ki je osrednja dogma liberalnega okolja.

3. Znaka hedonističnega okolja sta nekonformizem in naklonjenost avantgardi. Vanj sodijo predvsem mladi, ki se še niso uveljavili in imajo veliko prostega časa. Med hedonisti največ pomeni in prinaša največji ugled, da odkrivajo še neznana dela in sloge, ki bi utegnili sprožiti nov trend. Ni čudno, da kažejo tržne raziskave veliko zanimanje za okus in navade tega okolja. Inovacije, ki se primejo v njem, pogosto posname in posvoji tudi kulturni mainstream. Hedonisti ne sprejemajo ločnice med visoko in popularno književnostjo. Podobno kot v življenju tudi v umetnosti in književnosti cenijo močne dražljaje in takojšnji užitek. (Pop) glasba jim je v splošnem pomembnejša od branja. Med književnimi zvrstmi je njihovega okolju pisana na kožo t. i. pop literatura (eden njenih predstavnikov je Benjamin Stuckrad-Barre), ki obravnava probleme mladih v samopopustljivem, a tudi samoironičnem tonu. Format, ki združuje lahko prebavljiva besedila in glasbeni ritem, je pesniški slam. To okolje ima razdvojen odnos do potrošniške družbe, kajti hedonisti nihajo med potrošništvom in kritično odmaknjenostjo.

Sklep

Kot prvi poskus družboslovne zgodovine branja si Schneiderjeva knjiga zasluži spoštovanje, toda njegov pristop kliče po kritičnem pregledu.

1. Njegova razvrstitev bralcev je mestoma povsem prepričljiva, celo samoumevna, mestoma pa zelo problematična. Z vključitvijo tehnokratov in intelektualcev v isto okolje na primer zanemari tradicionalne napetosti med trgovskim in intelektualnim meščanstvom, med gospodarskim in kulturnim/simbolnim kapitalom (*Besitz* in *Bildungsbürgertum*). Po Bourdieuevi analizi se gospodarski in kulturni kapital navadno izključujeta, njuno razmerje je komplementarno in hiastično, se pravi, »les fractions les plus riches en capital économique relèguent les investissements culturels et éducatifs au profit des investissements économiques« (*La Distinction* 133). Z drugimi besedami, kakor hitro si človek pridobi nekaj gospodarskega kapitala, ga pridobivanje kulturnega ne zanima več. Razlog gre iskati v družbeni hierarhiji višjih razredov, v kateri ekonomski bogataši kotirajo više od intelektualcev.

2. Bralne navade, kot jih odčitava Schneider, predstavljajo le splošne usmeritve; »tipične« so za točno določeno okolje, opisujejo pa kulturne izbire in preference, ki so statistično prenapihnjene. Pri soodvisnosti med bralci iz tega ali onega okolja in posameznimi knjigami zgolj domnevamo, da so vrednote, nakazane v besedilih, istovetne vrednotam, ki jih pripisujemo danemu okolju. V prihodnjih družboslovnih raziskavah med bralci si bo treba prizadevati za empirične podatke o bralnih navadah in okusih. Najnatančneje merimo okus z intervjuji ali vprašalniki, toda to zahteva denarno podporo in raziskovalno ekipo. Druga možnost je, da podatke iz virov, na osnovi katerih preučujemo bralce v zgodovini – iz zapisov posameznikov, katalogov zasebnih knjižnic, omemb branja v avtobiografskih besedilih in pismih –, zbiramo z ozirom na družbeno skupino in okolje. Navsezadnje pa je treba preverjati tudi, kaj izbirajo bralci v javnih knjižnicah, četudi je ta tip raziskovanja včasih otežen zaradi varovanja zasebnosti.²

3. Kljub takim problemom lahko Schneiderjeva zgodovina branja rabi kot model za prihodnjo zgodovino književnosti, ki ne bo strukturirana po književnih zvrsteh, ampak po razredih bralcev in njihovih zanimanj. Pravzaprav je zgodovino branja nujno združiti z zgodovino besedil. Sociologijo književnega ustvarjanja in slogov je treba navezati na bralska pričakovanja ter na različne vloge in »načine uporabe«, ki jih imajo književna besedila v različnih bralskih okoljih. Če nam bo po zgoraj začrtanih smernicah uspelo razviti zgodovino branja, utegne iz nje nekoč nastati zgodovina književnega sporočanja, se pravi zgodovina ustvarjanja, distribucije in recepcije književnosti.

OPOMBE

¹ Pomembnega predhodnika je imel v Levinu L. Schückingu, ki je v delu *Soziologie der literarischen Geschmacksbildung* (Sociologija oblikovanja literarnega okusa) poudaril, da je nujno razločevati med bralci v različnih okoljih, v *obliki* umetnine pa je videl sredstvo družbenega razlikovanja.

² Oddelek za primerjalno književnost na Dunajski univerzi hrani dokumente poslednje zasebne izposojne knjižnice na Dunaju, Leihbibliothek Last & Co., ki se je zaprla leta 1962; prim. Bachleitnerjevo študijo (1986) na osnovi seznamov knjig, ki so si jih izposojali posamezni bralci.

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Bralci in branje kot interakcija z literarnimi besedili

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Koncept branja kot interakcije med bralcem in besedilom nam omogoča, da preučujemo nekatere manj znane razsežnosti procesov branja in literarnega izkustva. Pozornost usmerja na bralčeve dejavnosti pri branju in na bralčev lastni delež pri mentalni predstavi besedila. Takšen koncept branja pomaga tudi pri razumevanju branja elektronskih besedil.

Ključne besede: branje / bralci / recepcijska estetika / literarno izkustvo / interakcija / digitalna literatura

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Opis branja kot procesa bralčeve interakcije z besedilom je danes običajen tako v literarni teoriji, posebej v teoriji bralčevega odziva, kot tudi v psihologiji branja. Ker vključuje oba, bralca in besedilo oziroma literarno besedilo, nam takšna konceptualizacija branja omogoča, da se osredotočimo na različne razsežnosti te interakcije: na bralčevo vlogo pri tvorjenju pomena v procesu branja, ki ga razumemo bodisi kot besedilni svet ali pa kot mentalno predstavo besedila, na sam proces branja in na potencial besedila, da med branjem poraja različne pomene. Ko se posvetimo posameznim razsežnostim – od bralčeve dejavnosti med linearnim branjem tiskanega besedila do izzivov različnih oblik digitalnih besedil – lahko razumemo, zakaj branje velja za najkompleksnejšo obliko človeškega jezikovnega obnašanja. Na neki način lahko predvidevanjem o kompleksnosti procesa literarnega branja sledimo vse do prvih študij britanskih kritikov bralčevega odziva v zgodnjih dvajsetih letih 20. stoletja.¹

Zanimanje za bralca se je porodilo s prizadevanji za prepričljivejši zagovor pomembnosti literature kot nosilke posebne moči komunikacije. Da bi predstavili argument za takšno moč, so razvili koncept bralčeve interakcije z literarnim besedilom kot posebne oblike komunikacije med avtorjem in bralcem, pri kateri se pisateljevo umetniško izkustvo prenese na bralca. Takrat je bilo več avtorjev² prepričanih, da je sporazumevanje v samem temelju književnosti: »Kajti karkoli je že literatura, vsekakor je

komunikacija: brez komunikacije ni literature.« Dokler je kritike zanimalo le preprosto sporočanje literarnih izkustev v abstraktnih pogojih, najpogosteje ne da bi jih dodatno estetsko³ opredelili, se je tak prenos zdel neproblematičen. Ko pa so se lotili podrobne obravnave dejavnosti bralcev v interakciji z besedilom in lastnosti njihovih literarnih izkustev ter pogojev prenosa umetnikovih izkustev v bralčev um, so se pojavili številni problemi, in opisi zapletenosti procesa branja kot jezikovnega prenosa umetniških izkustev so postali težje predstavljeni.

Že leta 1921 je Percy Lubbock govoril o problemih literarnega izkustva kot o »senčni in fantazmagorični obliki« knjige, ki

se topi in premika v spominu; celo v trenutku, ko je obrnjen zadnji list, je velik del knjige, njene fine podrobnosti, že nejasen in dvomljiv. [...] Skupek vtisov, nekaj jasnih točk iz megle negotovosti, to je vse, kar lahko na splošno posedujemo v imenu knjige. Izkustvo branja je nekaj pustilo za sabo in te ostanke imenujemo z imenom knjige. (Lubbock 1)

Prav tako je opazil, da bralci med branjem knjigo pogosto obravnavajo kot del življenja, ki jih obkroža, saj izbirajo dele, ki jih najintenzivneje zadevajo. Ustvarjanje te vrste je po njegovem vsakdanja praksa:

[N]enehno sestavljamo skupaj svojo razdrobljeno izkustvo bližnjih ljudi in v mislih oblikujemo njihove podobe. Na ta način ustvarjamo svoj svet; delno, nepopolno in zelo naključno, a stalno vsakdo obravnava svoje izkustvo kot umetnik. (Lubbock 7)

Na podlagi vzporednosti med procesom branja in dnevno dejavnostjo nepopolne zaznave in razumevanja se je Lubbock začel spraševati, kako s pozornejšimi načini branja literarnega besedila premagati to splošno lastnost branja, ki bralcu ponuja tako nezanesljivo osnovo za pogovor o literaturi.

Bralčeva težnja k izbiranju posameznih besedilnih podatkov v skladu z njegovimi lastnimi zanimanji ni edini dejavnik, ki omejuje besedilni potencial. Vernon Lee obravnava v pogosto ponatisnjenem eseu *The Handling of Words* prenos literarnih izkustev od pisatelja k bralcu kot boj med pisateljevim mišljenjem in čustvovanjem ter bralčevim mišljenjem in čustvovanjem (Lee 65). Poskuša odkriti, zakaj je pisatelju tako težko prepričati bralca, da sprejme njegove besede. Odgovor odkrije v bralčevem drugačnem umu. Pisatelj naredi knjigo ne le iz vsebine svojega lastnega uma, ampak tudi iz vsebine bralčevega uma, zato vpliv literature temelji na večji ali manjši podobnosti med tema umoma. Pisatelj mora ugotoviti, kako manipulirati s »posameznimi vtisi, posameznimi idejami in čustvi v bralčevem umu, ki so tam shranjena brez pisateljevega delovanja« (Lee 1).

Vernon Lee pisateljem priporoča, naj ne nizajo svojih opisov po redu, ki je domač njim, ampak naj se raje potrudijo upoštevati bralca in možnost, da bodo bralčeve lastne misli in čustva motila tujost avtorjevih misli (64). Neogibno odvisnost rezultatov branja od bralčevega predhodnega izkustva in vednosti poudari s primerjavo bralčevih lastnih pomenov in razumevanja besedila z zvoki strun klavirja, na katerem lahko pisatelj/pianist igra le na tipke. Tako tudi zastavi vprašanje o neogibni razliki med tem, kar pisatelj ponuja v besedilu, in tem, kar bralec dobi iz besedila kot literarna izkustva. Poskusi opisov tega, o čem govorijo bralci, ko razpravljajo o literarnem besedilu, in vprašanja o pomembnosti njihovega lastnega prispevka pri branju vedno znova privlačijo kritiško pozornost.

Obrat k bralcu v sedemdesetih letih 20. stoletja

Vprašanja o pogojih in lastnostih bralčeve interakcije z literarnim besedilom v procesih sestavljanja besedilnega pomena so raziskovalci literature začeli ponovno zastavljati v sedemdesetih letih, ko je bralčeva interakcija z besedilom postala osrednja problematika. Zanimanje za bralčevo ustvarjalno vlogo pri nastajanju besedilnega pomena je spodbudilo nastanek številnih del o bralcih in branju, ki so priznavala pomembnost vloge bralcev. Poglejmo si nekaj na bralca usmerjenih opisov. Stanley Fish takole piše v predgovoru k študiji *Surprised by Sin: The Reader in Paradise Lost* (Presenečen nad grehom: bralec v zgubljenem raj): »Pomen je dogodek, nekaj, kar se ne zgodi na natisnjeni strani, kjer smo navajeni iskati, ampak v interakciji med tokom tiska (ali glasu) in bralčevo-poslušalčevo dejavno posredovalno zavestjo.« (Fish x)

Wolfgangu Iserju se v delu *Bralno dejanje* zdi najtežje pri obravnavi bralčeve interakcije z besedilom opisati prav »dogodek branja«:

Branje je dejavnost, ki jo usmerja besedilo in jo začne bralec, na katerega potem povratno učinkuje to, kar je obdeloval v tem procesu. To interakcijo težko opišemo že zato, ker literarna veda v tej točki ne ponuja kaj dosti trdnih smernic in ker je ta dva pola seveda veliko lažje analizirati kot pa dogajanje, ki se odvija med njima. (Iser 249)

Iser kakor že pred njim Vernon Lee poudarja vlogo predhodne vsebine in izkustva bralčevega uma pri opomenjanju besedila:

[T]ekstna struktura sproža niz predstav, na podlagi katerih se besedilo prevaja v bralčevo recepcijsko zavest. Vsebina takšnih predstav se obarva z zalogo izkustev vsakokratnega bralca, ki predstavlja referenčno ozadje, s pomočjo katerega lahko sprejemamo in obdelamo tudi tiste predstave, ki jih še nismo izkusili. (Iser 67)

Stein Haugom Olsen v delu *The Structure of Literary Understanding* (Struktura literarnega razumevanja) trdi, da morajo biti bralci, da bi lahko razumeli literarno besedilo, sposobni uporabiti svoje zunajbesedilno poznavanje življenja za prepoznavanje podobnih predstavitev situacij v literarnih besedilih:

Splošna lastnost literarnih del je, da prikličejo bralčevo poznavanje neliterarnih razsežnosti sveta. Da bi razumel literarno delo, mora biti bralec sposoben prenesti razločevanja in pojme iz običajnega življenja v literarna dela. (Olsen 96)

Videti je, da načinov, na katere bralci uporabljajo zunajliterarno vednost in izkustva v svoji interakciji z besedili, da okrog njih zgradijo »scenarij, besedilni svet, zbir stanj zadev, v katerem postane besedilo smiselno« (Enkvist 7), ni mogoče zajeti z odgovorom na vprašanje, »kaj so vsebine bralčevega uma« in kako prispevajo k razumevanju. Samoumevno se zdi, da si bralci lahko sebe predstavljajo v situacijah, zelo drugačnih od tistih, v katerih so, in da lahko ustvarijo vtise zaznav, ki bi jih lahko imeli, in se delno zavejo, kakšne pomene bi morali videti v njih, vendar si je očitno težko predstavljati, kako se vse to uresniči. Številne raziskave eksperimentalno preučujejo širok razpon različnih osebnostnih značilnosti in besedilnih lastnosti, ki jih lahko obravnavamo kot dejavnike vpliva na bralno interakcijo z besedilom. Tako empirična raziskava Randa Spira (Spiro 313) kaže vlogo bralčevega prejšnjega znanja pri več stopnjah branja: pri bralčevem sprejemanju posameznih delov zgodb, pri izboru tega, kaj si bo zapomnil, pri vpeljevanju tujih elementov in izkrivljanju obstoječih, pri končnem oblikovanju koherentne semantične predstave besedila. Poznejše raziskave poskušajo zajeti še več posebnih razsežnosti branja. Dva skupna projekta Douglasa Viponda in Russella Hunta (Vipond in Hunt; Hunt in Vipond) razpravljata o možnostih različnih načinov literarnega branja, ki jih povzročijo spremenjena bralna nagnjenja ali zanimanja. Opisujeta tudi neposreden vpliv tovrstnih spreminjajočih se odnosov na kakovost branja in vrednotenja. Te analize temeljijo na obsežnem raziskovalnem delu z dejanskimi bralci in so podprte z veljavnimi empiričnimi dokazi ter ponujajo nekatere nove vpoglede v proces branja. A čeprav prispevajo k bolj realistični sliki bralčeve interakcije z besedilom, še vedno ne morejo zadovoljivo odgovoriti na vprašanje o bralčevi dejanski idiosinkratični rabi znanja pri interakciji z besedilom.

Preučevanje posameznih besedilnih lastnosti, tj. besedilnih elementov, ki spodbudijo bralčevo izgrajevanje sveta okrog besedila in podrobnosti tega sveta v bralčevi domišljiji, na prvi pogled obljublja boljše rezultate, kadar sledi linearnosti bralčevih interakcij. Napredek na področju lingvistične in analize diskurza odpira nove poglede in omogoča lingvistično anali-

zo tistih lastnosti besedila, ki sprožajo različne odzive, in struktur, ki organizirajo bralčevo zaznavo posameznih elementov besedila (gl. Fowler), ter ponuja zanimive odgovore na vprašanje, kako literarno besedilo deluje kot posebna oblika družbeno sprejetega govornega dejanja (gl. Pratt; Ong). Tovrstne študije razkrivajo tudi pomembne razsežnosti družbene ukoreninjenosti bralnih interakcij z besedilom, različne vplive na interakcije in uvajajo novo smer analitičnih raziskav, ki podpira intenzivno samorefleksivnost branja. Precejšna kritiška skrb velja preučevanju posameznih lastnosti literarnih besedil, ki pri bralcih povzročajo razne oblike doživljanja.

Marisa Bortolussi in Peter Dixon poskušata podrobneje analizirati bralčevo procesiranje pripovedi v svoji empirični raziskavi *Psychonarratology: Foundations for the Empirical Study of Literary Response* (Psihonaratologija: Izhodišča za empirični študij literarnega odziva) (gl. Bortolussi in Dixon). Njuna analiza bralčeve interakcije s pripovedjo temelji na interdisciplinarni uporabi gledišč naratologije, literarne vede, lingvistike, epistemologije in odkritij, ki jih prinašata kognitivna psihologija in raziskovanje procesiranja diskurza, ki je osnovano na obširnem eksperimentalnem delu s prirejenimi besedili in poskuša ugotoviti vpliv posameznih besedilnih lastnosti na poskusne bralce. Njuna raziskava, ki preučuje posamezne besedilne učinke na bralce, dosledno razlikovanje med terminom »lastnost besedila«, ki se nanaša na vse, kar je mogoče v besedilu objektivno identificirati, in terminom »bralska konstrukcija«, ki označuje bralsko izkustvo kot dogodke in predstave, ki nastajajo v umu bralcev, vključno z različnimi vrstami subjektivno konstruiranih mentalnih predstav. Zavračata pogosto predpostavko, da je avtorjevo nameravano sporočilo nedvoumno kodirano v besedilu in da je bralčeva naloga v tem, da preprosto dekodira to sporočilo; besedilo, nasprotno, pojmujeta kot spodbudo, na katero se bralci odzovejo.

Bralni odzivi so lahko predmet poljubnega števila vplivov bralčevega mentalnega profila ali bralnega konteksta. V devetih letih svojih raziskav sta se Marisa Bortolussi in Peter Dixon prizadevala sistematično preučiti te vplive z opazovanjem dejanskih bralcev med branjem. Pri tem se zavedata dejstva, da se interakcija bralcev z besedilom spreminja z značilnostmi posameznih bralcev, z naravo besedila in s kontekstom branja. Zato sta prepričana, da zahteva odgovor na osrednje vprašanje, kaj bralci dejansko naredijo z besedilom, obsežne empirične dokaze o tem, kako te spremenljivke delujejo, kakšna je interakcija med njimi in kako se sestavljajo, da določajo interakcijo bralcev z besedili. Njuno obsežno eksperimentalno delo prinaša mnoge zanimive odgovore na vprašanja o različnih podrobnostih bralne interakcije z besedilom, recimo na vprašanje, kako bralci uporabijo svoje predhodno znanje, pričakovanja in prepričanja pri interakciji z besedilnimi lastnostmi karakterizacije, kako pripisujejo različ-

ne poteze literarnim osebam, kako oblikujejo koncepte pripovedovalcev, pripovedne perspektive in prostorske percepcije pripovednih prizorišč. Ne zanemarjata dejstva, da uma ni mogoče neposredno opazovati, tako da kompleksnosti mentalna bralna izkustva ne morejo biti predmet empiričnega opazovanja, pač pa jih lahko spoznavamo samo z določeno mero abstrakcije. Da bi dosegla takšno abstrakcijo, si zamislita skrbno skonstruiranega statističnega bralca.

V tej zvezi velja omeniti, da tudi kognitivna lingvistika uporablja rezultate bralčeve interakcije z besedilom, ki jih psihologija koncipira kot »mentalno predstavo besedila«, ki navadno zadeva zadnjo fazo razumevanja, na kateri se iz besedila pridobljeno znanje integrira s prejšnjimi shemami in postane uporabno za bralca. Lingvisti sicer poudarjajo, da morajo bralci opraviti kompleksno sklepanje o besedilu in sestaviti dodelane modele situacij, ki združujejo podatke iz besedila z znanjem bralcev iz resničnega sveta in omogočajo zanimive vpoglede v semantične procese dejavnega konstruiranja pomena; vendar se v obravnavah branja le bežno dotaknejo narave in oblike takšne mentalne predstave besedil (gl. Kintsch in van Dijk).

V zadnjih desetletjih poskušajo različne raziskave procesa branja na nove načine razrešiti staro vprašanje o čustveni udeleženiosti bralcev pri branju. Na to vprašanje odgovarjajo z novimi analizami različnih čustev, ki lahko spremljajo branje. Razpon teh raziskav sega od motivacije bralcev za branje in ohranjanja zanimanja med branjem do različnih poskusov opisovanja in analiziranja posameznih posebnih čustev, ki spremljajo branje ali so njegov rezultat. Odzivi bralcev na literarno besedilo navadno vsebujejo nekaj čustev, ki jih spodbudi njihovo izkustvo besedila: »Smejal sem se«, »Jokal sem«, ali celo »Strah me je bilo« (Gerrig 179), čeprav gre za čustvene odzive na situacije, o katerih bralci vedo, da niso resnične. Opisi tovrstnih spontanov odzivov lahko vključujejo tudi druga pozitivna čustva, kakršna so občudovanje, navdušenje nad formo besedila in užitek v njegovi lepoti, pa tudi različne negativne odzive. Sposobnost literarnega besedila, da izzove (nekaj) čustvenih odzivov, se zdi samoumevna, in čustveni odziv velja za naravni del razumevanja. Vsi se strinjajo, da morajo bralci uporabiti svoj obstoječi psihološki profil, nagnjenja, zanimanja, vrednote in denimo predsodke, vendar so načini, na katere literarno besedilo nagovori čustva bralcev, in narava tako povzročenih čustev manj jasni. Čustva še vedno veljajo za premalo definirana in ne dovolj preučena. Noël Carroll (»Art« 191) misli, da je čustvena udeležba bralcev pri pripovednem besedilu praviloma rezultat osnovnih čustev, kakršna so strah, jeza, groza, čaščenje, napetost, usmiljenje, občudovanje, ogorčenje, strahospoštovanje, odpor, žalost, sočustvovanje, navdušenje, zaljubljenost ali veselje. Verjame, da čustva ne le držijo bralca »prilepljenega na zgodbo«,

ampak imajo tudi pomembno funkcijo osredotočanja bralčeve pozornosti. Organizirajo tako njegovo pozornost na dogajanje kakor način, kako dojema posamezne dele besedila. Drugi avtorji opozarjajo na pomembno soodvisnost bralnih čustev in spoznavanja ter na vsenavzoče kognitivne podtone čustev (gl. van Peer 218).

Med čustvi, ki se porajajo med branjem, največ pozornosti pritegne ta napetost in empatija. Napetost običajno opisujejo kot čustveno stanje. Več avtorjev vidi v njej odziv bralcev na pripovedne situacije, v katerih je izid, ki bralce intenzivno zanima, negotov, saj tok dogodkov kaže dva logično nasprotujoča si možna rezultata. Eden je moralno pravilen, a neverjeten, drugi pa je moralno napačen ali slab, a zelo verjeten. Besedilo mora spodbuditi bralca k oblikovanju (moralnih) preferenc glede alternativnih izidov; na drugi strani se od bralcev pričakuje, da oblikujejo pričakovanja na osnovi svojega zunajbesedilnega znanja, vrednot, posebnih moralnih sodb in pravil literarnega žanra (gl. Carroll, »The Paradox« 84; Brewer 107; Vorderer 248). Zaradi pogoste uporabe posameznih moralnih premislekov je bralna interakcija z besedili zelo raznolika. To velja tudi za empatijo. Sposobnost vživljanja v položaj druge osebe je prva empirično analizirala razvojna psihologija. Pri branju je ta sposobnost odvisna od individualnega nagnjenja bralcev, da se čustveno odzovejo na druge ljudi, to pa je vzrok za velike razlike med bralci, saj so nekateri ljudje bolj empatični kakor ostali. Suzanne Keen (4) opisuje empatijo kot nadomestno spontano sočustvovanje, ko nekdo opazuje čustveno stanje drugega ali bere o takšnih stanjih. Sposobnost občutiti empatijo pripisuje možganskemu sistemu, ki v zrcalnih nevronih zazna čustva in tako avtomatično sproži občutek skupnih čustev. Ko občutijo empatijo, bralci čutijo, o čemer verjamejo, da so čustva drugih ljudi. Po Keenovi empatija vključuje čustvo in spoznavanje in je istočasno vir bralčevega ugodja. Različna čustva, ki izhajajo iz ugodja med bralno interakcijo z besedilom so bila predmet številnih raziskav, ki so precej različno opisovala ugodja branja (Nell; Gerrig). Razlike v čustvovanju so še večje zaradi uporabe bralčevega lastnega zunajbesedilne vednosti in izkustva. Te razlike imajo pomembno vlogo pri zaznavanju besedila in ubesedovanju literarnega izkustva kot zasebnega mnenja ali kritiške ocene.

Četudi je bila interakcija bralcev z besedilom predmet stotin raziskav in knjig ter obsežno eksperimentalno opazovana, ne moremo trditi, da jo zadovoljivo razumemo. Očitno je, da morajo bralci okoli besedila zgraditi besedilni svet (ali primeren mentalni model), v katerem je besedilo smiselno in ga je mogoče interpretirati. Vendar so načini, kako to poteka, precej idiosinkratični in manj znani. Podobno tudi ne vemo zagotovo, katera razlikovanja in pojme mora biti bralec sposoben prenesti iz običajnega

življenja v branje in kakšna so v resnici čustva, ki spremljajo branje posameznih bralcev. Ko pripovedi niso več obravnavali zgolj kot vir zabave, so jo začeli preučevati interdisciplinarno. Psihologe zanimajo kratkotrajni in vseživljenjski spoznavni, družbeni in čustveni učinki bralčeve »izpostavljenosti«¹ pripovedi. Preučujejo različne razsežnosti čustev, ki se porajajo bralcem pri interakciji s fiktivno pripovedjo pred in med branjem ter po njem (gl. prvo stran v Mar idr.).

Vpliv različnih stilističnih lastnosti besedila na bralce preučujejo tudi eksperimentalno, vendar se ugotovitev individualnih analiz ni mogoče posplošiti na vse oblike interakcije bralcev z besedilom. Vprašanje, kakšni procesi redukcije podatkov so potrebni, da bi dosegli razumevanje pri linearnem branju, je še vedno predmet spora med kognitivnimi lingvisti. Prav tako se kritiki še zmerom soočajo s problemom, kako razložiti razlike med natisnjenim besedilom in »besedilom«² v bralčevi glavi. Čeprav je proces linearnega branja pogosto predmet fMRI preiskav, rezultati tovrstnih slikanj niso mogli sprejemljivo razložiti razlik med bralci.

Raziskovalci vse bolj spoznavajo, da je bralčeva interakcija z besedilom vselej asociativen proces, ki je kot tak obogaten s spominom. Ta obogatitev izvira precej bolj iz avtobiografskega, epizodnega spomina, kakor iz preverljivega, semantičnega spomina, povezanega z besedilnimi podatki. Posamezno razumevanje je torej odvisno od tega, koliko časa je bralec pozoren na posamezen opis in kako učinkovito so taki opisi povezani z bralčevimi lastnimi spominskimi strukturami. To, kakšno vrsto znanja uporabljajo bralci pri branju, je odvisno od specifičnosti njihove lastne situacije in izkustva. Ko se soočajo z literarnim besedilom, očitno najdejo bolj ali manj ustrezne odgovore na vsa tovrstna vprašanja, vendar se načini, na katere uporabljajo svojo vednost in izkustva ter na katere čustvujejo, izmikajo posplošitvam. Psihološke raziskave branja omogočajo vsaj delne odgovore na ta vprašanja. Nedvomno je bilo dokazano (Brooke 361), da so v bralčevi mentalni predstavi besedil (oziroma v besedilnem svetu) podatki, ki jih vsebuje besedilo, in bralčev lastni prispevek iz individualnega znanja, spomina in izkustva tako kompleksno prepleteni, da vira posameznih sestavin mentalne predstave niti strokovnjaki za branje ne morejo z gotovostjo ugotoviti. Tako nas iskanje gotovosti glede bralčeve interakcije očitno vodi do neskončne subjektivnosti branja, ki je odvisna od preveč kompleksnih dejavnikov, da bi jih mogli posplošiti. Eksperimentalne raziskave (*Reader Response*; Miall in Kuiken) lahko osvetlijo nekatere razsežnosti literarnega branja, ne gre pa pričakovati, da lahko razložijo vse razsežnosti interakcije živih bralcev z literarnim besedilom ali njihovo takojšnje in neposredno literarno izkustvo, tj. izkustvo pred poskusi njegove ubeseditve z različnimi interpretacijami.

Izzivi elektronskih besedil

Tehnološki napredek zadnjih dveh desetletij omogoča nastajanje novih form besedil in novih zvrsti literature na elektronskih nosilcih, ki zaradi vse pogostejšega vključevanja vizualnih predstav prinašajo temeljite spremembe pri bralčevi interakciji z elektronskim besedilom. Sprememba od medija strani in knjige, utemeljenega na tisku, do ekrana kot prevladujočega medija komunikacije v novi informacijski tehnologiji povzroča velike premike v logiki predstave sporočil. Tradicionalno organizacijo pisanja, ki ji vlada logika časa, sosledja elementov v času in njihovih časovnih razporeditev, je nadomestila organiziranost podobe, ki ji vlada nasprotna logika prostora, tj. sočasnost vizualnih elementov prostora v prostorsko organizirani razporeditvi (Kress 2). S preprostim vključevanjem vizualnih predstav novi mediji – medmrežje, svetovni splet, CD-ROM-i in računalniški RAM-i – oblikujejo novo področje za pisanje, organizacijo in predstavo besedila. To radikalno preoblikuje tiskano knjigo in od bralca zahteva zelo drugačno interakcijo. Bolter (12) opisuje te medije kot nov, sodoben prostor pisanja, ki uvaja možnost t. i. hipertekstov. V šestdesetih letih, še preden je hipertekst dejansko vzniknil, je Theodor H. Nelson (nav. po Landow 4) opredelil hipertekst kot »nesosledno pisanje«, kot razvejano besedilo, ki bralcu dovoljuje izbire in ga je najbolje brati na interaktivnem zaslonu. Danes nam hipertekst pomeni informacijski medij, ki kombinira besedne in nebesedne podatke: besedila, sestavljena iz kosov besedila, t. i. vozlišč (*nodes*, *lexia*), in iz vizualnih informacij, zvoka, animacij, videa in drugih oblik podatkov, ki so v binarnem kodu in povezani z elektronskimi povezavami. Hipertekst vabi bralca k nelinearni, natančneje, večlinearni/večsosledni interakciji. Vse predstavljene sestavine takega besedila nosijo pomen in so del sporočila, ki naj bi bilo razumljeno istočasno. S svojo digitalno tehnologijo in spremenjenimi razmerji med uporabo jezika, figuralne predstavitve in zvoka novi elektronski teksti/hiperteksti ustvarjajo nove pogoje za doživljanje pomena in podatkov ter omogočajo nove načine bralčeve interakcije z digitalnim besedilom. Enosmernost nadomeščajo z večsmernostjo in zahtevajo interaktivnost.

Hipertekst prinaša tudi stalno nedokončano in nestabilno besedilnost, omejevanje avtoritete besedila in globoke spremembe v razmerju med avtorji in njihovimi bralci. Sestavlja diskretne enote besedila in različne vizualne predstavitve in poleg tega uporablja povezave za opredelitev razmerij med posameznimi elementi besedila. Povezave lahko opravljajo različne funkcije: strukturo naredijo pregledno, omogočajo opombe, vrnejo uporabnika/bralca besedila na osnovni dokument ali ga predstavijo na druge spletne strani. Uporaba povezav spreminja bralčevo interakcijo s hipertekstom: bralno dejanje postane dejanje izbiranja različnih sestavin hiperteksta.

ksta, njihovih posameznih kombinacij in dolžine ter kakovosti pozornosti do vseh teh elementov. Tako morajo bralci ustvariti svoje lastne individualne poti skozi hipertekst in se soočiti z nešteti možnostmi izbire poti, ki jim pravimo tudi verige (*chains*) ali sledi (*trails*). V tem smislu je bralna interakcija zelo drugačna od linearnega branja. Pri branju linearnega romana se pričakuje, da bralec pozabi na proces branja in si predstavlja dogodke in junake, medtem ko mora biti pri interakciji s hipertekstom pozoren na proces, s katerim je besedilo predstavljeno in obnavljano na zaslonu, da lahko nadaljuje z odločanjem in izbiranjem naslednjega zaslona. Bralec je vabljen, da z izbiranjem različnih povezav »krmili« skozi besedilo. Tako je osnovna operacija avtorstva dobesedno prenesena z avtorja na bralca, ki postane sekundarni avtor: »Pri branju hipertekstne fikcije bralec ne le poustvari pripovedi, ampak ustvari in iznajde nove pripovedi, ki si jih primarni avtor ni niti predstavljal.« (Liestol 98)

Uporaba digitalne tehnologije je tudi globoko spremenila načine ustvarjanja in branja literarnih besedil, kar je pripeljalo do pojava novega žanra elektronske književnosti. Ta se razvija v različnih smereh in že obsega različne vrste hibridnih pripovedi in interaktivnih besedil, na primer kombinacijo pripovedi z videom (*vook* in *nook*), ki jih lahko beremo le na e-bralnikih. Čeprav je količina elektronske literature še omejena, so ustanove za podporo njenega razvoja že dejavne. Organizacija za elektronsko literaturo (*The Electronic Literature Organization*) ima poslanstvo, da »spodbuja pisanje, založništvo in branje literature v elektronskih medijih« (Hayles 3). Elektronska literatura po definiciji izključuje tiskano literaturo, ki je bila digitalizirana, in vztraja na »digitalno rojenem«, tj. digitalnem objektu prve generacije, ki je bil ustvarjen z računalnikom in (navadno) namenjen branju na računalniku ali e-bralniku. Kljub temu je odbor za elektronsko literaturo predlagal bolj odprto definicijo, saj govori o »delu s pomembno literarno razsežnostjo, ki s pridom uporablja zmogljivosti in kontekste, kakršne omogočata samostojni ali z medmrežjem povezan računalnik« (prav tam). Prvi zvezek zbirke elektronske književnosti *Electronic Literature Collection* ponuja brezplačno uporabo približno šestdesetih besedil za izobraževalne namene in jasno kaže hibridno naravo e-literature: tretjina besedil nima prepoznavnih besed, skoraj vsa imajo pomembne vizualne komponente in mnoga imajo zvočne efekte (Hayles 4). E-literatura se širi in razvija v več oblik interaktivne fikcije, med katerimi so hipertekstni romani ali kratke zgodbe, hipermedijske pripovedne oblike, ki preoblikujejo filme ali televizijo, hipermedijski digitalni performansi, interaktivna ali kinetična poezija. V Evropi organizira promocijo in raziskave elektronske literature program ELMCIP (Electronic Literature as a Model of Creativity and Innovation in Practice: <http://elmcip.net/>) pod okriljem organizacije

HERA (Humanities in the European Research Area). Raziskovalni projekti ELMCIP želijo razširiti definicijo e-literature, da bi poleg hiperfikcije in hiperpoezije vključevala različne prakse, osnovane na besedilu, programirane in omrežne medije, na novih medijih osnovane pripovedi, interaktivne instalacije in druge oblike umetnosti, zavestno proizvedene kot e-literatura in oblikovane s pomočjo instalacije, osnovane na besedilu, performanse in druge medije. Različne oblike e-besedil se razvijajo in spreminjajo: tako so *e-mail* romane, priljubljene v devetdesetih, nedavno nadomestile različne oblike e-besedil, izhajajočih iz mobilnih tehnologij, denimo kratka fikcija za mobilne telefone (Hayles 11). Vsa ta besedila so odvisna od bralčeve dejavne interakcije, saj bralec z uporabo povezav priključuje nove segmente besedila, natančneje, nove zaslone; zato bralce pogosto imenujejo kar »uporabniki«, »zaslonarji« (ang. *screeners*) ali celo »interaktorji«.

Bralčeva interakcija z e-literaturo ima eno skupno lastnost z linearnim branjem: temelji na pripravljenosti in sposobnosti bralcev, da izberejo tiste razsežnosti svojih življenj, ki jih lahko relevantno povežejo z besedilom. Pri branju besed znotraj posameznih blokov pripovednega besedila oziroma vozlišča lahko bralec uporablja konvencionalne, linearne bralne navade. Zaradi interakcije s povezavami pa je branje zelo drugačno, proces dejavnega izbora in oblikovanja poti povzroča razvoj drugačnih bralnih zanimanj in precej drugačnih čustev. Ko bralec zapusti okvir posameznega besedilnega bloka ali vozlišča, mora začeti upoštevati nova pravila in spremenjeno izkustvo, saj mora določiti svojo individualno pot skozi besedilo z izbiranjem med razpoložljivimi povezavami. Izkustvo elektronske literature je vsekakor drugačno od linearnega branja, saj se mora bralec stalno odločati, katere povezave naj izbere, da bi priklical naslednji zaslon, naslednji odsek zgodbe ali podobe; vrstni red teh sestavin v celoti besedil, shranjenih v računalniku, ni vnaprej določen kakor pri linearnem besedilu. Shranjena gradiva hiperteksta omogočajo nešteto poti; z izbiranjem in kombiniranjem elementov, ki obstajajo v prostorskih in nelinearnih aranžmajih vozlišč in povezav, bralci hipertekstov z interakcijo ustvarjajo svoje lastne poti. Z bralčevega stališča je vsako branje hiperteksta v obliki posebne poti linearno, saj se mora bralec premikati od prizora do prizora, se z aktiviranjem povezav sosledno ravnati po poti izbranih elementov besedila. Skoraj nemogoče pa je, da bi dva bralca ustvarila enaki poti skozi isti hipertekst. Ker z izbiranjem individualne poti vsako branje določa zgodbo hiperteksta, je mogoče reči, da hipertekst nima zgodbe in da obstajajo samo različna branja (gl. Bolter 125). Ikonični primer elektronske literature, pripoved Michaela Joycea *afternoon, a story* (popoldne, zgodba) (gl. Joyce) s 539 pripovednimi segmenti in 950 povezavami, je bil predmet mnogih branj znanstvenikov (Bolter 124 isl.; Hayles 59 isl.),

ki so dokazali neizčrpne možnosti branj; vsako branje je z izbiro različnih možnih poti proizvedlo drugačno zgodbo. Spreminjajoče se besede in podobe ustvarjajo neomejene možnosti sestavljanja: literarno delo postane podobno glasbenemu inštrumentu (Hayles 121) ali dogodku posebnega bralčevega sodelovanja. E-besedila vabijo k različnim ravnam sodelovanja med bralcem in besedilom. Ali bo to povzročilo nove predstave o književnosti? Vprašanje, kakšna naj bi bila interakcija neznanstvenih bralcev z elektronsko literaturo, še ni postalo predmet razprav, četudi je že več ameriških univerz uvedlo predmet »Elektronska literatura«.

Žanr e-literature bo z rastjo bo nedvomno zastavljal mnoga nova vprašanja: najpomembnejše bo verjetno zadevalo vlogo jezika, kadar je ta podrejen logiki prostorske organizacije zaslona in ima le delno vlogo v multimodalnem sporočilu. Razprava o mogočih vplivih digitalnega branja na človeške možgane odpira bolj zaskrbljujoča vprašanja: ali bo čedalje krajši razpon pozornosti, ki se pojavlja z e-branjem, onemogočil mlajšim generacijam bralcev, da bi razvili globino misli in sposobnost empatije, kakor ju spodbuja linearno branje (Carr 220); ali bo imel prehod od beročih možganov na vse bolj digitalne (Wolf 14) trajen vpliv na povezave v človeških možganih? Med vsemi temi in podobnimi vprašanji je nekaj gotovo: interakcija bralcev z literarnimi besedili in e-literaturo bo ostala v središču kritiškega preučevanja opomenjanja med literarnim branjem. Ko se bodo bralci družbeno spremenili in postali digitalno gibljivi ter medsebojno povezani, bodo načini interakcije med njimi in besedili zastavila nova vprašanja o tem, kako in zakaj se odzivajo na različne oblike e-besedil.

OPOMBE

¹ Na področju bralčevega odziva je bilo objavljenih toliko raziskav, da bo moj pregled literarnega branja kot interakcije s tekstom zelo selektivna predstavitev tistih, ki omogočajo orisati smernice te razprave.

² Gl. npr. Abercrombie, *An Essay*; Drinkwater; Cruse. I. A. Richards je v knjigi *Principles of Literary Criticism* razvil sofisticirano teorijo o »znanstveno usmerjeni« psihološki vrednosti literarnega izkustva, pozneje pa jo je opustil v študiji *Practical Criticism*, ki je temeljila na poskusih in je kmalu postala najvplivnejše besedilo v poznejšem razvoju raziskav bralčevega odziva.

³ Tedaj so bili mnogi avtorji, ki so izhajali iz teorije »kontinuiranosti literarnega izkustva«, prepričani, da so literarna izkustva tesno povezana z vsem drugim izkustvom in da ne tvorijo ločene kategorije izkustev.

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Raziskovanje kot branje: od natančnega branja razlike do oddaljenega branja razdalje

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Kolikor branje umetnostnih literarnih tekstov poteka le še v literarni vedi, je vsaka študija branja tovrstnih tekstov študija literarnovednega, tj. t. i. natančnega branja. To celo v sami literarni vedi zavrača t. i. oddaljeno branje, ki pa s tem omogoča tako branje natančnemu branju nedostopnih nekanoniziranih tekstov kakor novo branje samega kanona.

Ključne besede: primerjalna literarna veda / dekonstrukcija / oddaljeno branje / natančno branje / Moretti, Franco

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Dandanes nam raziskovalci in raziskovalke literature sporočajo, da ostajajo edini bralci in bralke umetnostnih literarnih tekstov. To običajno navajajo kot argument za sklep, da je treba literarno vedo rekonstruirati.¹ V tem članku nam gre za veliko skromnejši sklep, ki zadeva zgolj problematiko branja (in ki se utegne kot takšen kljub temu dotakniti velike teme rekonstrukcije): če so raziskovalci in raziskovalke literature res edini bralci in bralke literature – in zakaj bi nam to sporočali, če ne bi držalo? –, tedaj je sleherna raziskava branja raziskava raziskovalnega branja. S tega gledišča postane očitno, da je to sporočilo raziskovalk in raziskovalcev, naj bo videti še tako mračno, celo optimistično. Kajti Franco Moretti, dandanes eden najvplivnejših raziskovalcev literature, odkrito spodbuja svoje lastne kolege in kolegice, domnevne edine bralce in bralke, da opustijo branje literarnih tekstov. Moretti tu resda zavrača specifično prakso raziskovalnega branja, tj. t. i. natančno branje kanoničnih tekstov; ker pa se je po njegovem mnenju natančno branje »iz veselega mesteca New Haven razširilo po vsej literarni vedi« (Moretti, »The Slaughterhouse« 208), ima z natančnim branjem v resnici v mislih branje.

S to absolutno negacijo branja marginalizacija tega doseže vrhunec – in s tem dialektični obrat. Nasproti natančnemu branju zahodnega kanona Moretti ne postavlja nebranje, pač pa t. i. oddaljeno branje zgodovine formalne diferenciacije svetovne literature. S pomočjo grafov kvantitativnega zgodovinskega, geografskih zemljevidov in dreves evolucijske biologije konceptualizira čas, prostor in kronotope nekaterih izmed ključnih formalnih elementov, ki naddoločajo tiste žanre, ki naddoločajo zgodovino svetovne literature. Ti t. i. »abstraktni modeli« (Moretti, *Grafi* 44, 51), ki natančno branje nadomestijo z oddaljenim branjem, postanejo konkretne strategije, brž ko jih opazujemo z gledišča, ki obrne spontano pojmovanje razmerja med abstraktnim in konkretnim. Gre za gledišče Heglove logike, ki ga je za zgodovinsko raziskovanje, kakršno zagovarja Moretti, elaboriral Marxov »Uvod« v *Grundrisse*.

Sam Moretti pravi o grafih takole: »[T]ekst *reduciramo* na nekaj elementov in te *abstrahiramo* iz pripovednega toka ter konstruiramo nov, *umetni* predmet, recimo grafe, ki sem jih obravnaval. Z malo sreče bodo ti grafi *več kakor vsota svojih delov*: imeli bodo 'vznikle' kvalitete, ki niso bile vidne na nižji ravni.« (*Grafi* 98). Ko torej pravi, da »se moramo naučiti izmenjevati pomenljiva dejstva o literarni zgodovini prek meja svojih specializiranih niš«, »preden se prepustimo spekulacijam na abstraktnejši ravni« (*Grafi* 31), gre to razumeti kot poziv k premiku od akademsko, institucionalno zamejenih natančnih branj realnih predmetov h konkretizaciji s pomočjo konstituiranja predmeta spoznanja, ki bi premagalo institucionalizirane epistemološke ovire; po takšnem premiku bi namreč »prepuščanje spekulacijam« dejansko ostalo »na abstraktnejši ravni«.

Od tod dialektika oddaljenega branja in naddoločujoča vloga analiziranih elementov, manjših ali večjih kakor tekst. Oglejmo si Morettijevo sklepno, najkompleksnejšo študijo v petletnem nizu poskusov zajetja svetovne literature. Morettijevo evolucijsko drevo rabe postopka polpremega govora (*Grafi* 126–138) lahko beremo kot konkretizacijo Bahtinovega natančnega branja Dostojevskega. Po Bahtinu Dostojevski s pomočjo polpremega govora uprizarja polifonijo gledišč v romanu. Dostojevski naj bi zato bil: dedič sokratskega dialoga in drugih karnevaliziranih žanrov; alternativa sodobniku Tolstoju; in predhodnik romaneskne in družbene polifonije, ki prihaja. Danes bi materialistična analiza tega dolgega trajanja mogla, nasprotno, pokazati: da je ta polifonija že prišla v podobi reakcionarne multikulture mešanice karnevala in monofonije (Breznik 81–85); da je med skromnimi predhodniki te združitve ravno monološkost sokratskega dialoga (Barthes 21–22, 45);² in da je eden predhodnikov same tovrstne materialistične analize prav Tolstojeva historiografija infinitezimalnega (Lotman 317; Rancière 50–51).

K takšni analizi lahko pripomore tudi Morettijevo drevo, v senci katerega se zdi Bahtinov Dostojevski precej abstrakten. Moretti zgrabi polpremi govor kot narativizacijo ideološke interpelacije individuov v modernih, buržoaznih družbah. Dostojevski tako postane del zgodovine moderne in ne točka prešitja med domnevno pred-ideološko, karnevalsko preteklostjo in post-ideološko polifonično prihodnostjo.

Sodeč po drevesu, postopek polpremega govora med Jane Austen in Flaubertom ter Zolajem vse bolj odpravi razkorak med likom in pripovedovalcem, med individuum in družbo. Po tej saturaciji oblik razkoraka ta ponovno vznikne, brž ko se postopek preseli v Rusijo Dostojevskega. Ponovno odpravo razkoraka, a tokrat ne brez antagonizma, prinese vrnitev postopka v Evropo, a to pot v Vergov sicilski, politično nekonsolidirani del Evrope. Naposled se lik in pripovedovalec znova ločita vzdolž osi center/periferija, ko evropski visoki modernizem potuji objektivnost buržoazne ideologije, Vargas Llosovi in drugi latinskoameriški »diktatorski romani« pa subjektivnost kompradorskega vodje.

Namesto nepovezanih dekonstrukcionističnih natančnih branj – ki bi se jim povrh vsega Verga ali celo Vargas Llosa bržkone niti ne zdel vreden dekonstrukcije – tako vzremo proces, katerega dialektika se materialno artikulira v geografiji. Postopek polpremega govora je namreč kot moderna ideološka kompromisna tvorba prepoznan in postvarjen v centru svetovnega-sistema 19. stoletja; problematiziran kot tak v modernizirajoči se Rusiji; zgolj delno obnovljen na evropski južni polperiferiji; in nato ponovno relativiziran v izhodiščnem zahodnoevropskem centru in na dotlej inertni latinskoameriški periferiji, pri čemer sta obe področji tedaj, v ameriškem stoletju, že polperiferni. Vendar je oddaljeno branje namenjeno premagovanju razdalj ne le med Jane Austen in Vargas Lloso, temveč tudi med Jane Austen in Amelio Opie, med Vargas Lloso in Davidom Viñasom. Oddaljeno branje ne poskuša (de)konstruirati kanona, pač pa obravnava kanon kot zgolj eno izmed potencialnih zgodovin literature, in sicer kot tisto, ki je zaradi vzrokov, ki tvorijo zakone literarne zgodovine, postala dejanska zgodovina. Kanonizirani teksti so tako prebrani na ozadju neaktualiziranih potencialov, »dolgočasne« inercije form (Moretti, *Atlas* 150). Tako seveda postane zanimiv ne samo »dolgčas«, pač pa – to je nemara še težje doseči – sam kanon, ki nenadoma začne zastavljati nelagodna vprašanja, med katerimi je na primer tole: »Kako se pripovedna forma izkristalizira iz zbirke naključnih, nezrelih in pogosto groznih poskusov?« (Prav tam.)

To je jasno razvidno iz Morettijeve druge osrednje študije, ki uporablja evolucijsko drevo, namreč iz njegove arheologije podžanrov detektivske zgodbe, ki so zaradi Conan Doyleve zmagovite uporabe postopka ključev, *clues*, ostali zgolj potencialni, nekanonizirani podžanri (*Grafi* 116–122;

»The Slaughterhouse« 212–223). Ključi, ki jih je Conan Doyle vpeljal kot znake resnice – ne pa kot znamenja detektivove genialnosti, storilčeve nemoralnosti, tehnološkega napredka, korespondenc s transcendentnim ali pač ničesar inteligibilnega (»The Slaughterhouse« 223 op. 17, 216 op. 10) – so dogodek. Moderno znanost vpeljejo v situacijo žanra, ki je poznala zgolj buržoazni individualizem, moralizem, determinizem, mračnjaštvo ali pač redundantnost. Zato jih kot revolucionaren »skok« (225) prezre Conan Doyleva konkurenca – in celo sam Conan Doyle: služijo sižeju, ne pa Conan Doylevemu »mitu o Sherlocku Holmesu« (215). V nasprotju z drogo ali violino ključi niso Holmesov »atribut« (prav tam), fetiški objekt, temveč subjekt predpostavljene vednosti, ki napravi »buržoaznega« (212 op. 7) detektiva za subjekt resnice. Kot takšne jih razberejo zgolj »slepi ustvarjalci in ustvarjalke kanona« (210, 211), Conan Doyle sodobni bralci in bralke, katerih izbira Conan Doyle in ne njegove konkurence je dejanje subjektivacije, zvestoba dogodku. Ta bralska izbira »forme« (211), sižeja, in ne »dolgočasnega« mita lahko tudi pojasni, zakaj lahko Moretti reče, da Conan Doyle »delo redke napake na začetku, ko so problemi enostavni, in pogostejše pozneje, ko so problemi kompleksnejši« (215). Ti bralci in bralke tako igrajo vlogo subjekta predpostavljene vednosti za naslednje bralske generacije, ki berejo (in postopoma kanonizirajo) Conan Doyle zgolj zato, ker naj bi ga brala že prejšnja generacija. V nasprotju s »slepim« bralstvom naslednje generacije izberejo izbiro, ki jo opravi trg, ki ga oblikujejo govorice, »informacijska kaskada« (210–211), sam simbolni Drugi – tj. ne izberejo prvotne izbire, ki jo je opravil formalni »premik paradigme« (215), ki je zaprečil simbolnega Drugega.

Vendar dogodek imenovanja resnice situacije – dogodek uprizoritve »ključne razsežnosti neke zgodovinske preobrazbe«, in sicer »vpliva racionalizacije na pustolovščine« (*Grafi* 167 op. 11) – izdata ne le njegova lastna situacija in postopna kanonizacija, ampak celo znanost. Moretti vztraja, da je motivacija izbire, ki jo je opravilo to »slepo« bralstvo, »slepa pega« (»The Slaughterhouse« 211, 218) ekonomske analize trga kulturnih dobrin in »črna škatla« (*Grafi* 168) samega literarnega zgodovinopisja. »[D]ogodka, ki sproži 'informacijsko kaskado', ni mogoče spoznati.« (»The Slaughterhouse« 211) Neki komentator mu hitro svetuje, naj se opre na kognitivno znanost; Moretti kognitivizma ne izključi (*Grafi* 168), a se sam ne loti tovrstne analize. Zdi se, da Morettijeva praksa ostaja ovrgljiva in s tem znanstvena, prav kolikor ne odgovarja na vprašanje o motivaciji izbire prvega bralstva in se vzdrži kognitivistične ali katere druge racionalizacije dogodka.

Dialektiko enosti in asimetričnosti, zaradi katere je svetovna literatura »ena in neenaka«, (*Grafi* 9), tedaj najučinkoviteje formalizira evolucijsko drevo. Drevesa lahko odkrijejo tako razmerja med na videz nepovezani-

mi aktualnostmi kakor potencialnosti, ki so jih zasenčile aktualnosti. Se pravi, na novo lahko osvetlijo ne samo razmerja med elementi kanona, pač pa tudi periferne literarne forme, ki jih je marginaliziral kanon kot celota. V prvem primeru drevesa rekonstruirajo razvejevanje enot (kakršna je postopek polpremega govora), v drugem pa nasprotni proces (kakršen je poenotenje žanra detektivske zgodbe pod znamenjem postopka ključev). V izhodiščnem predlogu oddaljenega branja sta bila ta procesa resda razdeljena med razvejajočimi se, nacijam podobnimi drevesi in poenotujočimi, trgom podobnimi valovi (22–25); zdi se, da se sredi desetletja ta razlika že reflektira v samo drevo, ki lahko kot takšno formalizira obe vrsti procesov. Toda tega ne gre razumeti kot revizijo pod pritiskom številnih kritik izhodiščnega predloga. Nasprotno, nova drevesa še konkretnije – se pravi, heglovski in marxovski kompleksneje – prikažejo dialektiko centra in periferije, ki je pri delu med aktualnostmi, kakršni sta Jane Austen in Vargas Llosa, ali denimo tržni mehanizem, ki obsodi pred-doylovske ključne na zgolj potencialnost. Ta drevesa je še lažje mobilizirati v Morettijevem (25) izhodiščnem boju zoper proučevanje literatur kot samozadostnih nacionalnih in celo lokalnih identitet.

Ta dialektika in iz nje izhajajoča kritika identitetne politike sta glavni tarči omenjenih kritik oddaljenega branja (zgodnjim Moretti odgovarja v *Grafi* 27–40). Z gledišča samih tarč bi lahko kritikam odvrnili, da reproducirajo identitetno politiko priznanja, utemeljeno na nedialektični prisvojitvi Heglove dialektike pripoznanja, *Anerkennung* (Močnik 298–302). Po Heglu je identitetna izjava ($A = A$) nujno pripoznana kot protislovna, saj ukinja razliko med subjektom in predikatom. Predikat, pod katerega se sodobne postpolitične identitetne skupine vpisujejo kot subjekti, se sicer razlikuje od njih, a je postavljen abstraktno, v terminih, ki so sposojeni pri vladajoči ideologiji, ne pa teoretsko proizvedeni. Se pravi, te skupine se identificirajo kot subjekti človekovih pravic in kulturnih življenjskih slogov, ne pa kot pripadniki enega od dveh razredov ali/in spolov. Identificirajo se kot (kulturne, spolne, etnične, verske) identitete, ne pa kot subjekti (razrednega boja in/ali nezavednega). Zato je konstitucija njihove identitete odvisna od priznanja, ki ji ga podeli ideologija, pri kateri si sposojajo svoj predikat.

To ideologijo zastopajo očitki oddaljenemu branju, da jezik obravnava zgolj abstraktno, tj. da zanemarja partikularnost slehernega jezika in se zanaša le na filološke študije iz druge roke (napisane v angleškem jeziku: Arac 40). V tem primeru bi dialektičen in ne-identiteten odgovor mogel biti v tem, da se oddaljeno branje zateka k že opravljenim študijam prav zato, da bi moglo njihov predmet, dano lokalno literaturo, artikulirati na ravni predmeta analize svetovne literature in mu tako podeliti dostojanstvo novega spoznavnega predmeta. Oddaljeno branje tvega z branjem

zunajbesedilnih postopkov in žanrov (ter sekundarne literature v angleščini) ravno zato, da ne bi bilo – kakor natančno branje – omejeno na branje (primarne) literature v angleščini.

Strategiji oddaljenega branja mnogi očitajo, da zvjaja posebnost sleherne literature oziroma kulture na njeno mesto v binarnem dispozitivu centra in periferije. A kljub silni navezanosti na sodobno kritično teorijo te kritike ne poskušajo denimo dekonstruirati tega binoma in tako ali drugače pokazati, da to razlikovanje manifestno daje prednost centrom, latentno pa se naslanja na periferije. Nasprotno, te kritike poskušajo zgolj dokazati, da literature in kulture, s katerimi se identificirajo, niso periferne; namesto za dekonstrukcijo kanona se potegujejo za priznanje svojih lokalnih literatur kot vrednih kanonizacije. Se pravi, izraza *center* in *periferija* uporabljajo kot (politično nekorektni) besedi vsakdanje govorice, ne pa kot termina analize svetovnega-sistema, tj. teorije centralnega izkoriščanja periferij. To pa je prav z vidika dekonstrukcionizma nezaslišana napaka, zlasti kolikor vsakdanja govorica reproducira vladajočo ideologijo, v tem primeru politiko (centralnega) priznanja (periferij).

Dekonstrukcionizem je tedaj ne samo to, kar kritike oddaljenega branja zahtevajo, ampak tudi to, pred čimer so ranljive. Pa še to je, kar te kritike zanemarjajo, saj prezrejo Morettijevo lastno dekonstrukcionistično uporabo para center/periferija. Moretti resda začne s trditvijo, da je pohod romana na način prilagajanja zunanjemu vplivu značilen za periferije, spontan pohod pa za centre. Toda to stori le zato, da bi lahko pokazal, da je pravilo prvi primer, ne drugi (*Grafi* 15–16). V resnici Moretti vpelje opozicijo pravilo/izjema in, potem ko jo projicira na binom center/periferija, dobi veliko konkretnjše razmerje med periferijo-kot-pravilom in centrom-kot-izjemo. V končni izpeljavi (36–37) pa celo pokaže, da je spontanost ne le izjemna, pač pa neobstoječa, saj je pohod romana zmerom, tudi v centrih, izid kompromisa. S tem implicira, da je specifika centra zgolj v tem, da je ne le izid kompromisa z ekspanzivno formo, ampak tudi sam vir nove ekspanzije. Zaprečenje spontanosti torej ne pelje k relativizmu – razlika med centrom in periferijo ostaja, a ni v genezi elementa (kakršen je pohod romana), temveč v njegovem mestu v sistemu: bistveno ni to, ali je neki element nastal samoniklo, ampak njegov položaj glede na center.

Videti je, da na podobno napačno branje naletimo v primeru Morettijevega izhajanja iz ideje Fredrica Jamesona, da pohod neke forme vselej zahteva kompromis med tujo formo in lokalnim gradivom. Moretti dejansko obravnava to opozicijo kot enega izmed zakonov literarne zgodovine, vendar kritike prezrejo, da opoziciji doda lokalno formo (20). S tem ko trdi, da to formo destabilizira tuja forma, nakaže, da je naddoločena, dvojno vpisana. Kajti lokalno formo kot lokalno določa gradivo, kot formo pa

tuja forma, ta druga določenost pa je naddoločenost, saj tuja forma poleg lokalne forme določa tudi lokalno gradivo, ki tudi samo določa lokalno formo. Lokalna forma je torej zgostitev, simptom asimetričnosti kompromisa: nestabilnost lokalne forme (kakršna je pripovedovalec) uprizarja podrejenost lokalnega in gradiva tujemu in formi (denimo lokalnega lika tujemu sižeju /17 op. 23/).

Kritikam oddaljenega branja torej že njihova tarča ponudi dekonstrukcijo dvojice center/periferija. Še več, ta dekonstrukcija brani lokalne literature, v imenu katerih so te kritike kritične, bolje kakor one same. Ker namreč obravnava te literature kot izkoriščane po centru, vsekakor doseže več kakor preproste zahteve po sprejetju teh literatur v kanon, zahteve, ki ne uvidijo, da kanon sestavljajo natančno teksti, katerih kanonični status se zdi zdravorazumski in je kot tak odvisen od ideološkega in ne znanstvenega priznanja. In sicer gre po Morettiju za ideologijo povprečnega bralca in bralke, tj. – kot prikaže drevo detektivskih ključev – za ideologijo trga: »Kanone ustvarjajo bralci in bralke, ne profesorji in profesorice: akademske izbire so zgolj odmevi procesa, ki poteka povsem zunaj šole, nič drugega niso kakor nejevoljno etiketiranje.« (»The Slaughterhouse« 209)

Ta napad na oddaljeno branje potemtakem še zdaleč ni obramba natančnega branja. In sicer ni obramba ne dekonstrukcionistične ne filološke različice natančnega branja. Desetletje po Morettijevem predlogu oddaljenega branja svetovne literature številni drugi radikalni misleci odvrčajo od natančnega branja v prid historičnemu materializmu, medtem pa komparativistične kritike Morettija kulminirajo denimo v Holquistovi (81) samozadostno jedrnati odklonitvi oddaljenega branja v imenu jakobsonovske filologije.³ Oddaljeno branje resda zavrača natančno branje, ne pa tudi Jakobsonove poetike. Nasprotno, formalni skoki, ki jih Moretti rekonstruira s pomočjo kvantitativnih analiz »dolgočasnega« dolgega trajanja formalne evolucije, aktivirajo ravno to, čemur bi Roman Jakobson rekel »naravnost na izraz« (Jakobson, »Novejšaja« 305) in pozneje »poetska funkcija jezika«, ki »projicira načelo ekvivalence s selekcijske osi na kombinacijsko os« (Jakobson, »Lingvistika« 160). Spomnimo se dreves: geografsko premeščanje polpremega govora je obravnavano kot sredstvo naravnosti tega postopka na izraz; in ključ so uzrta kot tisto, kar sproži poetsko funkcijo jezika detektivskih zgodb. Jakobsona ne zanemarlja oddaljeno branje, pač pa sama komparativistična politika priznanja lokalnih kultur, ki kritizira oddaljeno branje.⁴ Moretti (»Style« 154) celo v nedavni izrazito kvantitativni študiji vztraja, da je »formalna analiza [...] tisto, ob čemer se mora izkazati sleherni nov pristop, naj bo kvantitativen, digitalen, evolucionističen ali kakršen koli že«.

Prav to pa je poanta Jakobsonove (ne)slavne šale, da je raziskovanje literature brez formalne analize prav tako naključno kakor aretacija brez

ključev: »[P]redmet literarne znanosti ni literatura, temveč literarnost, tj. tisto, kar napravi neko delo literarno. Literarni zgodovinarji pa so bili doslej predvsem podobni policistom, ki takrat, ko imajo nalogo, da aretirajo določeno osebo, za vsak primer zaprejo še vse tiste, ki so bili v stanovanju, pa tudi vse one, ki gredo po naključju mimo hiše.« (Jakobson, »Novejšaja« 305) Ravno od te primere se praviloma ograjuje tisti – večinski – del sodobne literarne vede, ki kritizira tudi oddaljeno branje. Ta dvojna zavrnitev postane razumljiva, brž ko se zavemo, da formalna analiza, kakršno prakticirata Jakobson in Moretti, le stežka potrди trenutno literarnovedno zagotavljanje, da je ta ali ona lokalna literatura oziroma kultura (običajno tista, ki ji pripada izjavljavec tega zagotavljanja) edinstvena identiteta, neodvisna od sleherne svetovno-sistemske naddoločenosti, in samostojna članica kluba svetovnega kanona. V večini primerov teh literarnovednih pozivov po priznanju perifernih tekstov kot pripadajočih svetovnemu kanonu pač ni mogoče podkrepiti s formalno analizo teh tekstov.

Lokalna literarna dejstva, ki naj bi ovrгла Morettijev model s centrom in (pol)periferijo ali/in Jakobsonovo definicijo poetske funkcije jezika, nas pripeljejo do sklepne poante: identitetna politika priznanja je epistemološka ovira pri razumevanju procesa ovrženja določene teorije. V Althusserjevi (84–87) materialistični epistemologiji je ideologija tista, ki je večna, in ne teorija, in celo v Popperjevi (120, 95–96) liberalni epistemologiji je trditev teoretska prav toliko, kolikor jo je mogoče ovreči, po Feyerabendu (23–26, 68–70, 344–345) pa ni teorija nič manj kakor imuna proti ovrženju z dejstvi in ovrgljiva zgolj z močnejšo teorijo. Tako je ovrgljivost dobra novica za vsako teorijo posebej, ovrženje posamezne teorije pa dobra novica za teorijo nasploh, saj se lahko ovrženje neke teorije zgodi samo kot nastop močnejše, konkretnješe teoretizacije »dejev«. Moč določene teorije narašča sorazmerno z ovrgljivostjo te teorije in doseže ničlo v hipu, ko neka močnejša teorija aktualizira ovrgljivost kot ovrženje. Prav to dialektiko ima v mislih Moretti, ko se strinja s Popperjem, da je »vrednost neke teorije sorazmerna z njeno neverjetnostjo« (Moretti, *Signs* 23). Ravno to zanemarjajo kritike oddaljenega branja, ko poskušajo to strategijo ovreči s sklicevanjem na dejstva o (domnevno singularnih) partikularnih literarnih in kulturnih identitetah, ne pa na teoretske koncepte.

Negacija centra-kot-spontanosti je odličen primer. Jale Parla (117, 120–121) in Jonathan Arac (38) resda opomnita Morettija, da je celo centralni avtor, kakršen je bil Fielding, priznal Cervantesov vpliv. Toda razlog za to, da Moretti sprejme to kritiko pripisovanja spontanosti literarni evoluciji v centru sistema, je v tem, da ga spomni na mogočo teoretsko – in ne empirično – kritiko, in sicer na materialistične teorije forme kot kompromisa (*Grafi* 36, 166).

Če se vrnemo k Althusserju, lahko dodamo, da se verovanje v falsifikacijsko moč dejstev zateka k utajitvi razlike med realnim in spoznavnim predmetom. Že več kot desetletje Moretti opozarja svoje (potencialne) kritike, da je oddaljeno branje namenjeno konceptualizaciji novega spoznavnega predmeta, svetovnega literarnega sistema, in ne preprostu zanikanju partikularnih lokalnih književnosti. In četudi se tako rekoč vsaka kritika oddaljenega branja začne z navedkom Morettijeve izhodiščne teze, da »svetovna literatura ni predmet, ampak *problem*« (Graf 9), se prav vsaka nadaljuje z odvrnitvijo od njegove teorije v imenu domnevnih dejstev o singularnosti lokalnih identitet. Zato ne preseneča, da je moral Moretti to poanto ponoviti celo v nedavni kvantitativni analizi *Hamleta* (»Network«), ki, mimogrede rečeno, razvija – ne pa ovrže – njegovo vse prej kot kvantitativno interpretacijo elizabetinske tragedije (*Signs* 42–82), razvito pred več kot tremi desetletji.

Nekako sredi tega desetletja (kritik) oddaljenega branja pa je Moretti (Graf 163–164, 183) opustil metodološko debato o oddaljenem branju v prid samemu oddaljenemu branju. To je smiselno, kolikor teoretske konstrukcije spoznavnega predmeta ni mogoče naturalizirati, popredmetiti v statično metodo. Zaradi neizbežne konstruiranosti spoznavnega predmeta je sleherna popolnoma metodološka debata pred-teoretska. A zaradi istega razloga je za teorijo konstitutivna debata o teoriji, saj se teoretizacija spoznavnega predmeta ne more verificirati zgolj s pred-teoretskim sklicevanjem na dani realni predmet (razprava o teoretski strategiji je torej že teoretska razprava: Močnik 265–266). Moretti pripiše moč ovrženja zgolj teoriji (in je zato deležen mnogih literarnovednih kritik); zato gre njegovo odklonitev elegantne metodološke debate v imenu prozaične empirične analize (Graf 183) brati kot odklonitev abstraktne ideološke prakse v prid konkretni teoretski praksi konstruiranja spoznavnega predmeta iz realnega predmeta.

Tako lahko naposled reflektiramo svojo lastno prakso komentiranja teorije literarnega svetovnega-sistema. Kolikor nam je uspelo prispevati k teoretski legitimaciji te teorije, smo tudi legitimirali svoje branje teoretskih (ne pa denimo praktičnih) razsežnosti oddaljenega branja literarnega svetovnega-sistema – ta refleksija pa je naši praksi dala status teoretske prakse, prakse, ki se more reflektirati prav v svoji praktični razsežnosti. Poskušali smo pokazati, da se kritike strategije oddaljenega branja še zdaleč ne vračajo k natančnemu branju, pač pa so povsem sodobne, interpelirane v politiko priznanja, ki je vladajoča ideologija sodobnih (pol)perifernih družb. Te kritike ne analizirajo te ideologije, pač pa jo reproducirajo. Kot takšne te kritike Morettijeve analize centrov in (pol)periferij vselej že potencialno analizira njihov naslovljenec: brž ko so izjavljene, retroaktivno postanejo

predmet te analize (centralnih in) (pol)perifernih ideologij. V tem utegne biti naša kritika teh kritik oddaljenega branja tudi že minimalen pozitiven prispevek h kritizirani analizi kulturnih centrov in (pol)periferij.

OPOMBE

¹ Marko Juvan (209; prim. 14, 43–44) pravi v nedavnem poskusu rekonstrukcije literarne vede: »[O] umetnikih nacionalnega jezika so se izobraženci od zadnje tretjine 19. stoletja morali sistematično učiti v šolah, da bi tako akumulirali kulturni kapital in krepili narodno zavest. Toda le redki med njimi [...] so po obdobju, ko so gulili šolske klopi, ostali dejavni svečeniki in častilci literature. [...] Danes pa literatura očitno izgublja ta čar, vedno bolj se zlija v javni diskurz, ki ga zapolnjujejo tiskana in elektronska občila«. Rekonstrukcijo ima v mislih tudi Marjorie Perloff (182), ko v odzivu na poročilo ACLA za leto 1993 govori o dodiplomskih študentih in študentkah, »ki so v osnovni in srednji šoli prebrali bore malo 'visoke' literature«, in o »ukinjanju in zmanjševanju podiplomskih programov«.

² Tudi sam Bahtin (»K pererabotke« 309–310) v nekem trenutku zavzame stališče, da je sokratski dialog monološki.

³ V samozavesti Holquistove kritike lahko razberemo saturacijo starejših kritik oddaljenega branja, ki so jih med drugimi prispevali Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Emily Apter in Jonathan Arac. Tako Gayatri Spivak (107–109 op. 1) degradira oddaljeno branje v vir učbenikov, iz katerih naj bi črpalo (in ki naj bi jih naposled dekonstruiralo) natančno branje; Emily Apter (256, 280–281) kljubuje oddaljenemu branju s pomočjo spitzerjevske nadnacionalne filologije; Arac (35) pa ne vidi v oddaljenem branju nič manj kakor primer do globalizacije prijazne teorije, ki zanemarja singularnost jezika in s tem literarne vede.

⁴ To identitetno politiko reproducira celo Holquistova (85, 94) obramba Jakobsona zoper Morettija, ko prikazuje Jakobsona kot zagovornika manjšinskih kultur in demistifikatorja univerzalnih resnic kot zgolj jezikovnih konstrukcij.

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Cervantes, Menard in Borges

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Razprava obravnava Borgesovo zgodbo »Pierre Menard, avtor Kihota« z biografskega, avtobiografskega, alegoričnega, kritičnega, estetskega in bibliografskega gledišča. V vseh teh kontekstih se zgodba izkaže za bodisi eksplisitno ali pa implicitno samonanašalno, saj v vsej primerih bere sebe v razmerju do svojega avtorja, izdaje in bralstva.

Ključne besede: Borges, Jorge Luis / *Don Kihot* / Cervantes / branje / fikcija / pastiš

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Moja namera, da bi povedal kaj novega o zgodbi, ki je nedvomno eno najbolj komentiranih, analiziranih in interpretiranih besedil 20. stoletja, je precej brezupna.

Vseeno moram poskusiti. Tega se bom lotil s pristopom, ki ga je uporabljala sholastika, namreč z odkrivanjem sedimentiranih smislov v »Pierru Menardu, avtorju Kihota«, zgodbi, ki jo je Borges označil za »halfway house between the essay and the true tale«, »vmesni korak med esejem in pravo zgodbo« (Borges in di Giovanni, 'An Autobiographical' 171). Razlika bo v tem, da v nasprotju s sholastiki svojega branja ne bom utemeljil na štirih svetopisemskih smislih (zgodovinskem, analogičnem, moralnem in anagogičnem), temveč bom iz »Pierra Menarda« izluščil šest drugih smislov: biografskega, refleksivnega, alegoričnega, kritičnega, estetskega in bibliografskega.

1. Prvi smisel je biografski. Zgodba je bila objavljena v maja 1939 reviji *Sur*, nato pa leta 1941 vključena v knjigo z metaforično botaničnim naslovom à la Antonio de Torquemada: *El jardín de senderos que se bifurcan* (*Vrt razcepljenih stež*). V spisu »An Autobiographical Essay« (»Avtobiografski esej«), ki ga je narekoval Normanu Thomasu di Giovanniju, je Borges zgodbo povezal z nezgodo z dne 24. decembra 1938, po kateri je obležal brez zavesti in sposobnosti govora:

It was on Christmas Eve of 1938 – the same year my father died – that I had a severe accident. I was running up a stairway and suddenly felt something brush my scalp. I had grazed a freshly painted open casement window. In spite of first-aid treatment, the wound became poisoned, and for a period of a week or so I lay

sleepless every night and had hallucinations and high fever. One evening, I lost the power of speech and had to be rushed to the hospital for an immediate operation. Septicemia had set in, and for a month I hovered, all unknowingly, between life and death. (Much later, I was to write about this in my story "The South.") When I began to recover, I feared for my mental integrity. [...] A bit later, I wondered whether I could ever write again. I had previously written quite a few poems and dozens of short reviews. I thought that if I tried to write a review now and failed, I'd be all through intellectually but that if I tried something I have never really done before and failed at that it wouldn't be so bad and might even prepare me for the final revelation. I decided I would try to write a story. The result was "Pierre Menard, Author of *Don Quixote*." (Borges in di Giovanni, 'An Autobiographical' 170–171)

(Na božični večer leta 1938 – tega leta mi je umrl oče – sem doživel hudo nesrečo. Drvel sem dol po stopnicah in nenadoma začutil, da me je nekaj podrgnilo po glavi. Udaril sem ob pred kratkim prebarvano okensko krilo. Kljub prvi pomoči se je rana inficirala in ves teden sem s halucinacijami in visoko vročino bedel v postelji. Neke noči pa niti govoriti nisem več mogel in morali so me odpeljati v bolnico na nujno operacijo. Imel sem sepso in ves mesec sem se bori med življenjem in smrtjo. Precej pozneje sem to izkušnjo opisal v zgodbi »Jug«. Ko sem začel počasi okrevati, sem se zbal, da sem izgubil vse umske sposobnosti. [...] Čez čas sem se začel spraševati, ali bom še lahko kdaj pisal. Dotlej sem napisal že precej pesmi in desetine kratkih recenzij. Zdelo se mi je, da bo, če v tistem trenutku poskusim napisati recenzijo in pri tem pogorim, to moj umski konec, če pa poskusim napisati nekaj, česar doslej še nisem, in pri tem pogorim, ne bo tako hudo in me bo to celo utrdilo ter pripravilo na končno razkritje. Odločil sem se torej napisati zgodbo. Nastal je »Pierre Menard, avtor Kihota«.)

Fikcija o pisatelju, ki izvirno ustvarjanje zamenja za ponovno izmišljanje že napisanega dela, je torej nekakšno obrnjeno ogledalo usode Borgesa, ki se je lotil preskušanja svojih zmožnosti pisanja tako, da je žanre, v katerih se je že poskusil (poezijo, recenzije, članke), zamenjal za literarni žanr, v katerem ni še nikoli pisal: za nekaj, kar ni ne esej ne zgodba – ali pa je oboje hkrati.

2. Ob tem se odpira možnost drugega, avtobiografskega branja. V tem oziru je zgovoren katalog devetnajstih knjig, ki sestavljajo »[v]idno delo« (»[l]a obra visible«) (Borges, »Pierre Menard, avtor« 23; »Pierre Menard, autor« 444) Pierra Menarda – kakor sholastika Bogu pripisuje devetnajst atributov. Katalog namreč na ludističen način povzema Borgesovo bibliografsko izkušnjo iz časa, ko je bil zaposlen kot glavni pomočnik v knjižnici revnega predela Buenos Airesa, zadolžen predvsem za razvrščanje in katalogizacijo dotlej knjižnično neobdelanih knjig. Vsa dela, ki jih je napisal Pierre Menard, so besedila, ki bi jih lahko napisal tudi Borges, in so pastiši njegovih lastnih del. Tako v bibliografiji Pierra Menarda naletimo na avtorje, dela in teme, ki so Borgesa spremljali pred letom 1939 in po

njem: *Ars magna generalis* Ramóna Llulla, univerzalno govorico Leibniza ali Wilkinsa, problem Ahila in želve, francoska pesnika Paul-Jeana Touleta in Valéryja. Tudi zapiski Pierra Menarda so podobni Borgesovim: »Recuerdo sus cadernos cuadriculados, sus negras tachaduras, sus peculiares símbolos tipográficos y su letra de insecto.« (Borges, »Pierre Menard, autor« 450 op. 1), »Spominjam se njegovih karirastih zvezkov, črnih prečrtavanj, posebnih tipografskih znamenj in drobčkane pisave.« (Borges, »Pierre Menard, avtor« 30 op. *)

Ta refleksivna razsežnost »Pierra Menarda« pa sega onkraj pastiša. V pogovorih z Jamesom Irbyjem iz leta 1962 (pogovori so bili objavljeni leta 1964 v zborniku *Cahier de l'Herne*, posvečenem Borgesu) Borges poudari, da so njegove zgodbe »le robni zapisi k drugim knjigam (Borges, *J. Luis Borges* 398). Tudi številna besedila, leta 1944 zbrana v *Namišljenostih*, so zato ponovno napisana obstoječa dela: *Martín Fierro* Joséja Hernándezza v »Koncu«, De Quincyjev *Juda Iščarjot* v »Treh razlagah Jude«, Kafkov »Prometej«, Kafkovo »Preobrazbo« je Borges prevedel leta 1938, tik za prevodi dveh knjig Virginie Woolf.

Toda Borges ni pisec zgodbe »Pierre Menard, avtor Kihota«. Besedilo je leta 1939 napisal Menardov prijatelj, ki je imel enake antiprotestantske, antisemitske in antiprostoziarske nazore kakor Menard. Borges namreč za bivališče Pierra Menarda ni po naključju izbral Nîmesa, mesta, ki so ga od druge polovice 16. stoletja naprej pestili konflikti med protestanti in katoliki. Prav tako ni naključje, da je besedilo izpod peresa Menardovega prijatelja opremljeno z letnico nastanka 1939, ko je bila zgodba tudi objavljena. Borges je prav dobro vedel, da je bilo politično gibanje Charlesa Maurrasa *Francoska akcija*, ki je s svojimi antisemitskimi in antirepublikanskimi prepričanji srdito napadalo vlado Ljudske fronte, ki jo je od leta 1936 naprej vodil Léon Blum, v Provansi zelo uspešno.

3. Mogoče je predlagati tudi alegorično branje »Pierra Menarda«. Na to je namignil tudi sam Borges, ko je leta 1967 v pogovoru z Georgesom Charbonnierjem rekel o Pierru Menardu tole:

Il y a chez lui un excès d'intelligence, un sens de l'inutilité de la littérature ; l'idée qu'il y a déjà trop de livres, que c'est un manque de politesse ou de culture que d'encombrer les bibliothèques avec des livres nouveaux ; une sorte de résignation enfin. (Charbonnier 111)

(V njem najdemo čezmerno bistrournost, občutek o neuporabnosti književnosti, misel, da obstaja preveč knjig in da trpanje knjižnic z novimi knjigami priča o pomanjkanju olike ali omike, navsezadnje pa v zgodbi srečamo tudi vdanost v usodo.)

Ponovno ustvarjanje *Don Kibota* – se pravi, že napisane knjige – lahko razumemo tudi kot alegorično podobo sveta, zasičenega s knjigami, sveta, ki se utaplja v knjigah. V tem smislu je »Pierre Menard« obrnjena podoba »Babilonske knjižnice« ali, bolje povedano: »Pierre Menard« je »pretirana potrtošt« (»depresión excesiva«), ki je prišla za navidezno »neizmerno srečo« (»extravagante felicidad«), »[k]o so razglasili, da hrani Knjižnica vse knjige« (»[c]uando se proclamó que la Biblioteca abarcaba todos los libros«) (Borges, »Babilonska« 52–53; »La Biblioteca« 468).

4. Kritično branje bi izpostavilo eksperimentalno razsežnost obravnavane zgodbe, ki se podobno kakor zgodba »Zrcalo in maska« sprašuje o variacijah smisla teksta, ki je v svoji dobesednosti sicer stalen. »Pierre Menard« spada skupaj s predgovoroma *Celestine* in *Don Kibota* v tisto družino besedil, ki razglablja o raznovrstnih prvinah, ki ustvarjajo različne smisle istega dela: denimo starost, življenjske okoliščine, razpoloženje bralstva in poslušalstva. Borges pa kot bistveno spremenljivko vpelje časovno razdaljo. V tem smislu je najslikovitejša izjava o »zgodovini, materi resnice« (»la historia, madre de la verdad«), katere smisel je od Nietzscheja ali Williama Jamesa naprej popolnoma drugačen:

Es una revelación cotejar el *Don Quijote* de Menard con el de Cervantes. Éste, por ejemplo, escribió (*Don Quijote*, primera parte, noveno capítulo):

... la verdad, cuya madre es la historia, émula del tiempo, depósito de las acciones, testigo de lo pasado, ejemplo y aviso de lo presente, advertencia de lo por venir.

Redactada en el siglo diecisiete, redactada por el »ingenio lego« Cervantes, esa enumeración es un mero elogio retórico de la historia. Menard, en cambio, escribe:

... la verdad, cuya madre es la historia, émula del tiempo, depósito de las acciones, testigo de lo pasado, ejemplo y aviso de lo presente, advertencia de lo por venir.

La historia, madre de la verdad; la idea es asombrosa. Menard, contemporáneo de William James, no define la historia como una indagación de la realidad sino como su origen. La verdad histórica, para él, no es lo que sucedió; es lo que juzgamos que sucedió. Las cláusulas finales – *ejemplo y aviso de lo presente, advertencia de lo por venir* – son descaradamente pragmáticas. (Borges, »Pierre Menard, autor« 449)

(Pravo odkritje doživimo, če primerjamo Menardovega in Cervantesovega *Don Kibota*. Cervantes je, na primer, napisal /*Don Kibot*, I. knjiga, 9. poglavje/:

... resnice, ki ji je mati zgodovina, ta tekmovanka časa, shramba dejanj, priča preteklosti, zgled in svet sedanjosti, nauk za prihodnost.

To naštevaje, napisano v sedemnajstem stoletju s peresom »ničvrednega genija« Cervantesa, je preprosta retorična hvalnica zgodovine. Menard pa, obratno, zapiše:

... resnice, ki ji je mati zgodovina, ta tekmovalka časa, shramba dejanj, priča preteklosti, zgled in svet sedanjosti, nauk za prihodnost.

Zgodovina, mati resnice; misel je osupljiva. Menard, sodobnik Williama Jamesa, opredeljuje zgodovino ne kot iskanje resnice, temveč kot njen izvor. Zgodovinska resničnost zanj ni tisto, kar se je zgodilo; tisto je, za kar domnevamo, da se je zgodilo. Sklepni del – *zgled in svet sedanjosti, nauk za prihodnost* – je nesramno pragmatičen. /Borges, »Pierre Menard, avtor« 29–30/)

Pierre Bourdieu je nekoč izjavil: »Knjiga se spreminja, čeprav se ne spreminja, saj se spreminja svet.« (Bourdieu in Chartier 236) Borgesova zgodba je povsem prežeta s to idejo. Produkcijo smisla pripiše bralcu, branju, recepciji: »El texto de Cervantes y el de Menard son verbalmente idénticos, pero el segundo es casi infinitamente más rico.«; »Cervantesovo in Menardovo delo sta na besedni ravni istovetni, a slednje je skorajda neskončno bogatejše.« (Borges, »Pierre Menard, autor« 449; »Pierre Menard, avtor« 29) In tako vpeljuje temo o vnzajšnjem konstruiranju predhodnika:

Componer el Quijote a principios del siglo diecisiete era una empresa razonable, necesaria, acaso fatal; a principios del veinte, es casi imposible. No en vano han transcurrido trescientos años, cargados de complejísimos hechos. Entre ellos, para mencionar uno solo: el mismo Quijote. (»Pierre Menard, autor« 448)

(Napisati *Don Kihota* v začetku sedemnajstega stoletja je bil razumen, potreben, nemara usodnoten podvig; na začetku dvajsetega je skorajda nemogoč. Niso zaman pretekla tri stoletja, polna zelo zamotanih dogodkov. Če med njimi navedemo le eno: sam *Don Kihot*. /»Pierre Menard, avtor« 28/)

Fikcija vabi k urjenju v anahronističnem branju:

Menard (acaso sin quererlo) ha enriquecido mediante una técnica nueva el arte detenido y rudimentario de la lectura: la técnica del anacronismo deliberado y de las atribuciones erróneas. Esa técnica de aplicación infinita nos insta a recorrer la *Odisea* como si fuera posterior a la *Eneida* y el libro *Le jardin du Centaure* de madame Henri Bachelier como si fuera de madame Henri Bachelier. Esa técnica puebla de aventura los libros más calmosos. Atribuir a Louis Ferdinand Céline o a James Joyce la *Imitación de Cristo* ¿no es una suficiente renovación de esos tenues avisos espirituales? (»Pierre Menard, autor« 450)

(Menard je /nemara nehote/ z novo tehniko obogatil zakrnelo in nepopolno umeznost branja: s tehniko premišljenega anahronizma in napačnega prisojanja. Ta tehnika, katere aplikacij je brez konca, nas napeljuje, da prelistamo *Odisejo*, kot da je kasnejša od *Eneide*, in knjigo *Kentavrov vrt* Madame Henri Bachelier, kot da bi jo napisala Madame Henri Bachelier. Ta tehnika siplje prigode v najbolj spokojne knjige. Mar ne obnovimo dovolj njenih pretanjenih duhovnih svaril, če pripišemo *Hojjo za Kristusom* Louisu Ferdinandu Célinu ali Jamesu Joyceu? /»Pierre Menard, avtor« 31/)

Alberto Manguel se spominja, kako zelo je Borges užival v tehniki anahronističnega branja:

Tovrstne subverzije so ga na moč zabavale. »Predstavljajmo si,« je govoril, »da je *Don Kibota* mogoče brati kot detektivski roman. *En un lugar de la Mancha, de cuyo nombre no quiero acordarme* ... [(Cervantes Saavedra, *Don Quijote* 27) *V nekem kraju v Manči, ki se njegovega imena ne maram spominjati* ... (Cervantes Saavedra, *Veleummi* 23.) – Prev. op.] Avtor trdi, da se ne želi spomniti imena vasi. Zakaj? Kateri ključ poskuša s tem zabrisati? Kot bralci detektivskega romana bi že morali nekaj posumiti, kajne?« In prasnili je v smeh. (Manguel 84)

5. Estetsko branje »Pierra Menarda« opredeljuje sleherno pisanje kot vselej že prepis(ov)anje. Pierre Menard se ne loti transkripcije *Don Kibota*, ne modernizira ga, ne istoveti se z njegovim avtorjem. Hkrati zavrača tako mehanično kopiranje dela kakor ustvarjanje sodobnega *Don Kibota* in jalov poskus biti Cervantes. Prizadeva si, da bi »v tujem jeziku ponovi[l] knjigo, ki že obstaja«, »en una idioma ajeno un libro preexistente« (Borges, »Pierre Menard, avtor« 30; »Pierre Menard, autor« 450). Od tod izhaja tudi skrajna in absurдна vrsta estetike literarnega ustvarjanja kot ponavljanja – estetike, za katero se zavzema Borges. V pogovoru z Georgesom Charbonnierjem Borges pove, da si ta zgodba prizadeva pokazati, »da ničesar ne iznajdemo, da delamo s spominom ali, ustrežneje rečeno, da delamo v pozabi«, »qu'on n'invente rien, qu'on travaille avec la mémoire ou, pour parler d'une façon plus précise, qu'on travaille dans l'oubli« (Charbonnier 113).

6. Estetika pisanja kot prepis(ov)anja odpira novo vprašanje in predlaga zadnje – bibliografsko branje. Pierre Menard ponovno ustvari *Don Kibota*. Toda katerega *Don Kibota*? *Don Kibota* iz kastiljske izdaje s konca 19. in z začetka 20. stoletja, ki jo je Menard bral v Nîmesu? *Don Kibota* Garnierjeve izdaje, ki jo je Borges v Buenos Airesu bral kot otrok? *Don Kibota* izdaje *princeps*, ki jo je objavil Francisco de Robles in ki so jo tiskali v madridski tiskarni Juana de la Cueste ob koncu leta 1604 in v kateri manjka epizoda, kjer Sanču Pansi ukradejo osla in ga nato dobi nazaj? Ali pa poznejšo različico s Cervantesovimi dodatki za madridsko ponovno izdajo v letih 1605 in 1608? V teh različnih izdajah in številnih drugih pa Cervantesovo besedilo nikoli ni stalno. Včasih se spreminja celo njegov dobesedni pomen, v vseh primerih pa se spreminja njegova materialnost – namreč raba ločil, zapis besed, razdelki knjige, zapis na straneh, prisotnost ali odsotnost ilustracij. Na podlagi predpostavke, da je *Don Kibot* bil in bo vedno isti vse od Cervantesovega prvega zapisa naprej, Borges popolnoma odpravlja te neskončne variacije. Skok iz resničnosti v nemogoče sanje o delu, ki je vedno istovetno s seboj.

Prevedla Varja Balžalorsky

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Arheologija afekta: branje, zgodovina in spol

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Literarna zgodovina je polna zgodb o branju kot o globoko afektivnem izkustvu. Zakaj veljajo v naši dobi taki odzivi za trivialne? In zakaj dandanes povezujemo afektivno branje skoraj samo z bralkami?

Ključne besede: zgodovina branja / bralne navade / ženske / literarno izkustvo / afektivno branje / Emma Bovary

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»Splošni pojav naše narave je, da nas žalostno, grozno in strašno privlači z nepremagljivim čarom, da nas prizori jadu, zgroženosti prav toliko privlačijo kot odbijajo.« (109) Te besede Friedricha Schillerja o silnih učinkih umetnosti lahko enako uspešno navežemo na antični pojem katarze kot na »vzvišeno« 18. stoletja; prav toliko veljajo za nežna čustva, ki jih obljublja sentimentalni roman, kot za ledeni srh ob gotski ali za ščemenje živčnih končičev ob senzacionalni pripovedi; za taktiko šoka avantgarde iz 20. stoletja so še vedno enako umestne kot za razburljivost današnjih hollywoodskih uspešnic, podale pa se bodo tudi multisenzoričnim dražljajem virtualne resničnosti.

Seveda, eno je priznati, da se nam ob umetniškem delu lahko od sočutja orosijo oči, od strahu naježijo lasje ali – pri erotičnem delu – od vzdraženosti razvnamejo strasti, drugo pa je, sploh v našem času, ukvarjati se z mislijo, da umetnost vzbuja ugodje in si prav zato zasluži spoštovanje, ker ima moč, da aficira – vzgiblje – svoje občinstvo. Pa vendar so izrazi za afektivna ugodja ob književnosti, denimo »ganljivo«, »razburljivo«, »zabavno«, »pretresljivo«, ki jih je »nova kritika« razglasila za »nekritiške« (Ransom 343), opredeljevali srečanja bralcev z »literarnostjo« skoraj dve tisočletji. Dejstvo, da je bilo čustvo nekoč merilo za odličnost dela, so najjasneje ubesedili retorična tradicija s pisci, kot so bili Gorgias, Aristotel ali Horacij, in novolonginovska načela vzvišenega, kot jih je na novo odkrilo 18. stoletje. Afekt kot pomembno literarno-estetsko kategorijo pa sta najjasneje zavrnila W. K. Wimsatt in Monroe C. Beardsley v eseju »The

Affective Fallacy» (»Afektivna zmota«), kjer trdita, da so katarza, empatija, prevzetost, sinestezija in prostovoljna odpoved nejeveri očitni znaki kritiške zablode – neločevanja med »pesmijo in njenimi učinki« (22), med tem, kar literatura *je* in kar *počne*. Celo sodobnejši opisi afektivnega bralskega odziva, ki afektivno zmoto zavračajo, denimo *A Feeling for Books* (Občutek za knjige) Janice Radway, ugodje ob branju pogosto enačijo s praksami »povprečnega« bralca in ga vzporejajo z branjem popularne fikcije. Po vsem videzu se branje za ugodje in vrhunski literarni dosežek, ki so ju povezovali že v antiki, dandanes medsebojno izključujeta.

V tem besedilu nameravam orisati nekaj razlogov za to medsebojno izključevanje in predlagati alternativno možnost. Pokazati želim, kako so se branje književnih besedil in – kar je bistveno – naše predstave, kaj sodi k takšnemu branju, v zgodovini spreminjali, nenazadnje tudi zaradi iznajdbe tiska, brez katerega si romana kot zvrsti sploh ni mogoče zamisliti (Feather 96–97, 150). Pri tem želim spremljati zaton afektov kot pomembne kritiške kategorije v književni recepciji. Ta zaton najprej zaznamo v razumskih debatah 18. stoletja in v njihovem razvrednotenju afektov, a tudi v istočasnem sumu, pogosto izraženem v spisih proti leposlovju in romanih o branju romanov, da nova zvrst premočno aficira bralce, zlasti ženske. Romana in posebno njegovih podzvrsti, sentimentalnega, gotskega in senzacionalnega romana, ki so načrtno izkoriščali afektivne odzive, se je oprijela povezava s plehkim, prvinskim okusom novega tipa potrošnika – bralca romanov, ki je, kot so se bali šolniki, raje stregel svojim čutom kot iskal duhovne omike. Z drugimi besedami, aficirani bralec ni več poznavalec prefinjenih občutenj, temveč pohlepen potrošnik nečesa, kar sta Adorno in Horkheimer pozneje krstila za kulturno industrijo.

Trdim, da je bil prav vzpon romana med bistvenimi razlogi, zakaj je afektivno ugodje prenehalo veljati za cenjeno estetsko kategorijo literarnega kritištvā. Čeprav so afekti vse od antike naprej sodili k vladajoči estetiki okusa kot vatel za ločevanje med učinkovitimi in neučinkovitimi pesniškimi in dramskimi tehnikami, so se z vzponom romana sprevrgli iz hvalevrednega občutenja v nekaj, čemur se je treba upirati, medtem ko je ugodja afektivnega branja, kot bomo videli, namesto podpore doletela patologizacija. V tem pogledu je roman kot zvrst odločilno pripomogel k povezovanju afektov s »popularno estetiko«, kot jo imenuje Pierre Bourdieu, osnovano na »vulgarnem« užitku« (4). Ta ločnica v okusu, ki v bistvu ustvarja polarnost med »nizkimi« in »intelektualnimi« bralnimi ugodji, med »povprečnim« in »akademske« bralcem, še vedno zaznamuje celo tiste kritike, ki hočejo mobilizirati afekt kot enega ključnih vidikov bralnega izkustva. To nam dokazuje, kako prepričljive so razprave, ki že od Kanta naprej poudarjajo neprizadeto in ravnodušno srečevanje s književnostjo.

Naposled želim osvetliti, zakaj mora afekt, četudi je težavna kategorija za feministke, zlasti za privrženke Mary Wollstonecraft in razumske spolne politike v njeni različici, kljub temu tvoriti bistveno plat raziskav v zgodovini branja s stališča spolov. Namesto da afekt razvrednotimo, češ da gre za solzav pristop k domišljjskim delom, primeren – in v glavnem uporaben – zgolj za kuharsko umetnost, si moramo priklicati v spomin, kako dolgo zgodovino ima za seboj ta pojem kot ugledna kategorija estetskega izkustva.

Afektivni odzivi

V retorični kritiški tradiciji kritiki niso dvomili, da namen pesništva in dramatike ni le ugajati (*delectare*) in poučevati (*docere*), ampak tudi čustveno vzgibavati (*movere*) občinstvo. Ta nauk je »upravičeval vso estetsko prakso od antike do razvitega novega veka« (Jaus 53). Vzemimo Gorgija, zgolj enega v množici antičnih mislecev, ki so poudarjali afektivno moč pesništva. »V tiste, ki jo [tj. poezijo] poslušajo,« pojasnjuje Gorgias, »prodrejo s strahom prežet drget, solzá prepolno sočutje in bridkosti željno hrepenenje, tako da duša zaradi besed o srečnih in nesrečnih usodah in življenjih tujih ljudi tudi sama doživi nekakšno lastno srečo ali trpljenje« (Gorgias 31). Naprej Gorgias razmišlja, da lahko govor na poslušalce učinkuje tako dobro kot slabo: lahko jih prepriča ali preslepi, čute lahko vzdraži ali otopi, lahko nam »vlije[...] pogum« za plemenita dejanja ali pa nam »začara[...] dušo« za hudodelstva. V tem smislu lahko razumemo pesništvo (ki je »govor [*lógos*] v metrični shemi«) kot *phármakon* [»*zdravilo*/»*strup*«], torej kot sredstvo, ki zna učinkovati dobrodejno, a tudi škodljivo (32). Podobno Aristotel v svoji razlagi katarze opozarja na vznemirljive in terapevtske učinke, ki jih ima lahko na občinstvo »sočutje in strah, pa tudi navdušenje«. Paleta občutkov, ki jih gledalcem vzbuja tragedija, jih ponese do vrhunca, ko sočustvujejo s tujim trpljenjem. Zatem pa najdejo njihova odrinjena čustva »olajšanje, ki ga spremlja ugodje«, olajšanje, sorazmerno s prestanim strahom in sočutjem. Vendar čustev ne vzbudi le sočustvovanje z nesrečo kakega dramskega lika; melodija nima nič manjše zmožnosti, da »v duši zbudi[...] orgiastični zanos«, ki mu sledita »zdravljenje in očiščenje« (Aristotel 1342a 4–15).

V tem pogledu afekt ni zgolj posledica poistovetenja; v to zmoto pogosto zabredejo kritiki, ki v klasičnem realističnem romanu, drami ali filmu – ker pač spodbuja afektivno vez med bralci/gledalci in liki – vidijo poglavitno sredstvo, s katerim lahko občinstvo najde pozabo v izmišljiji. Nasprotno, afekt lahko izkusimo tudi pri povsem neupodablajoči umetni-

ški obliki, kakršna je glasba, ali pri jezikovni ritmičnosti. Zakaj? Ker glasbo in besede občutimo s telesom. Zato je spretna kompozicija, pa naj gre za glasbo ali besede, po Longinovem mnenju vir vzvišenega. V razpravi *O vzvišenem* opozarja na slogovne in strukturne značilnosti kot na sredstva, s katerimi je moč v občinstvu vzbuditi vznesenost, tako da »nas uročijo« in »pridobijo popolno oblast nad našim umom« (159). Kot takega afekta ne sproži zgolj sočutno poistovetenje, ampak že sama moč pesniške zgradbe in izraza – ali, v sodobnem besedišču, ne le vsebina, temveč tudi oblika. To je morda najjasneje ubesedila Hélène Cixous v razpravi o somatiki branja:

glasba, kar je ostane v pisanju in ki prav tako biva v glasbi v pravem pomenu besede, je v resnici tisto skandiranje, ki deluje tudi na bralčevo telo. Najmočnejše – tako močno, da me pripravijo do drgeta ali smeha – se me dotaknejo tista besedila, ki ne zadušijo svoje glasbene zgradbe [...]. (Cixous and Calle-Gruber 64)

Če lahko abstrakcija brez upodablajoče vsebine bralko afektivno vzgiblje – jo pripravi do drgeta, kot tu zatrdi Hélène Cixous –, afekt ni odvisen od pomena ali spoznanja, temveč prej obratno. Prav tako afekt ni odvisen od prepoznanja, izkustvenega stika, ki ga tako pogosto povezujemo z upodablajočim realizmom, temveč ga lahko spodbudijo tudi oblikovno eksperimentalne avantgardne umetnine, pri katerih je razumevanje pomena precej nepomembno. Po Hélène Cixous nas afekt preobrazi, vendar ne v smislu, da bi nam pomagal opredeliti naš jaz, se najti v drugem, kakor meni humanistično usmerjen kritik. Ne: jaz je ponešen v ek-stazo – dobesedno izven sebe. Kot tak utrpí strast in se ne odzove spoznavno, temveč čutno – se pravi, še preden lahko prevzame nadzor um. Ta somatizem se zrcali tudi v avtoričinem pojmovanju pisanja. O svoji lastni praksi pravi: »Jaz pisanje utrpevam! [...] Nekaj se me je polastilo. Od kod? [...] Od nekod v telesu. Ne vem, od kod. 'Pisanje' se me je polastilo, me zgrabilo okoli prepone, med želodcem in prsnim košem [...]« (Cixous, »*Coming to Writing*« 9). Za Hélène Cixous je torej afektivna radost, ki nas navda ob vznesenosti, povezana z vzvišenim in tako tudi z longinovsko tradicijo, v kateri nas sam medij izraza – denimo jezik – lahko zgrabi, prime ter oba, pisca in bralca, ponese v nove višave strasti.

(Zgodnji) odporiški bralci

V Longinovem scenariju o odzivu občinstva je očitno, da je bralec/posllušalec ob soočenju z vzvišenim kot z vrhunskim pesniškim dosežkom nemočen proti njegovim »neubranljivim« učinkom. Iz tega teče razmišljanje v več smereh. Kot je obelodanil že Platon, je umetnost potencialno

nevarna zaradi strasti, ki jih v nas »hrani tako, da jih zaliva« (»Država« 606d). Nič drugače pa ni z afektom in ekstazo, saj prinašata s sabo izgubo jaza. Ko Sokrat vpraša, ali je človek, ki ga ob kaki povesti posilijo solze ali navda groza, še vedno »pri pameti« (»Ion« 535d–e), v svoji kritiki pesništva resda prizna moč afekta, vendar se mu zdi nevarno iracionalna – tako nevarna, da jo je po Platonovem mnenju treba pregnati iz države. Izguba kritične sposobnosti je tudi razlog, zakaj je afekt patologiziran v racionalističnih razpravah 18. stoletja, med njimi v Kantovi *Kritiki razsodne moči*. Afekt grozi, da bo spodkopaval avtonomijo jaza in z njo vred delovanje. Zato se je treba afektu upirati, da se lahko subjekt s tem, ko deluje v skladu z zakonom, določi kot subjekt. Če namreč subjekt podleže afektu, se mu pusti zanesti, trpno prevzeti, namesto da bi dejavno zaposlil svojo kritično zmožnost. Um bi v bistvu popustil telesu. S svojimi besedami, da se moramo tako v odnosu do narave kot do umetnosti varovati pred močjo afekta in se ji upirati, se Kant (43–51) zavzema za to, da bi sami obvladali tisto, kar grozi, da bo obvladalo nas. Podobno misel izrazi Schiller v eseju »O patetičnem« za tragedijo. Kolikor silovitejša je trpljenje in kolikor večji patos zato občutimo, boljši preizkus je to za nas, da dokažemo svoje obvladovanje afektov. Z drugimi besedami, patos mora biti prisoten, ker lahko zgolj z odporom proti njegovi silni privlačnosti dokažemo svojo svobodo in neodvisnost kot razumni subjekti (Schiller 55). Po mnenju racionalistov občutki in čustva – ker pač niso podvrženi racionalnemu nadzoru uma – ne ogrožajo zgolj primerne ureditve posameznikovih zmožnosti, temveč kar vse tkivo družbe. Zato se moramo, če si izposodim besede, s katerimi je ponovila te misli Mary Wollstonecraft, povzpeli iz »čutnih bitij« v »razumna bitja« (Wollstonecraft 70, 13).

Čutni bralec

Splošno razširjena domneva, po kateri je »[r]azum [...] v moškem, čustvo pa v ženski« (Novalis 382), je podpihovala bojazen, da se bo ženska zaradi svoje domnevne čustvenosti pretirano odzivala na svoje čtivo. Zato je donkihotski bralec, ki pogosto nastopi v romanih osemnajstega in 19. stoletja, po stereotipu bralka. Vzemimo protagonistko Flaubertove *Gospe Bovaryjeve*. V nasprotju z Arabello avtorice Charlotte Lennox ali s Catherine Morland izpod peresa Jane Austen, junakinjama, ki se naučita brati razumno, ostane Emma Bovary vse do bridkega konca čutna bralka. Nenehno na lovu za dražljaji in razburljivimi dogodki, da bi si olajšala zdolgočasnost bivanja, hiti od ene strani – ali knjige – k drugi; leposlovje uporablja »kot dražilo za strasti« (Flaubert 77) in kot netivo za svoje »nečiste skušnja-

ve« (225). Hrepeni po življenju, kakršno »razveseljuje čute« (81). Naj se ob knjigi zamakne ali vzkríkne od groze (285), naj drhti v vsem svojem bitju, kot se ji primeri v operi, »kakor da begajo loki goslačev po njenih lastnih živcih« (229), naj v gledališču praska »z nohti [...] po žametnem naslonu svoje lože« (230) ali pa skoraj omedli od pritiska »burnega utripanja srca«, od katerega ji zastaja dih (232) – v vseh teh primerih občuti telesni užitek. Zato je njeno zanimanje za leposlovje »vkoreninjeno prej v čutnih kot v spoznavnih zanimanjih« (Felski, *Gender* 84). Celo svoje ukvarjanje z religijo in dozdevno poučnimi nabožnimi besedili preobrne v podaljšek lastnih romantičnih in čutnih fantazij (*Flaubert* 74).

Emma ni iz takega testa, da bi brala med vrsticami; kot nam da vedeti roman, bere podobno, kakor bi »sanjarila [...] med vrsticami« (94). Resnično življenje primerja z namišljenimi ljubimci (92), v knjige pa se zataplja tako globoko, da postane »ljubimka vseh romanov, junakinja vseh dram, neopredeljena ona vseh pesmi na svetu« (265). V leposlovju ne razbira zgolj lastnega življenja, temveč hoče tudi, da bi bilo to podobno življenju v knjigah. Pomembno ji je, da branje med drugim vnaša v njen obstoj dramo, kar osvetljuje njeno pripravljenost, da bi živela kot v izmišljiji. Rita Felski trdi, da Emma bere preveč »dobesedno« in s tem zabriše razliko med »življenjem in umetnostjo« (Felski, *Gender* 87), ker ne prepozna »posredniške avtoritete književne forme« (83). Tako po njenih besedah Emmine »nekritično požiranje leposlovja« postane »zaskrbljujoč in grozeč pojav, ker zanika avtonomijo književnega artefakta« (86). Že res, da se Emma neha zavedati forme, ki oblikuje vsebino zgodbe, ker je ta forma zanjo prosojna, vendar se neha zavedati tudi same sebe. Če to prezremo, zgrešimo enega osrednjih vidikov njenega ugodja v branju pa tudi razlog, zakaj velja to branje za nevarno. Emmine vase zatopljeni način branja ni zaskrbljujoč in grozeč iz razloga, ki ga navaja Rita Felski – ker zanika avtonomijo književnega artefakta –, ampak ker v prid strastem zanika avtonomijo subjekta, torej subjektovo – oziroma v tem primeru bralkino – delovanje. Emma ni več »pri pameti«, kot bi dejal Platon. Njeno bralno izkustvo ni niti spoznavno niti razumsko, temveč afektivno, se pravi globoko telesno.

Po eni strani je torej Emma intenzivna in zatopljena bralka, ki v knjigi najde pozabo. Po drugi strani pa bere tako na široko, da se v svoji bralni praksi ne more izogniti neenotnosti. Tako je bilo »z branjem [...] enako kakor z vezeninami, ki jih je ležalo v omari vse polno začetih; vzela je knjigo v roko, jo pustila in se lotila druge« (*Flaubert* 147–148). Emma je pravo utelešenje svaril, ki so se pojavljala v sočasnem periodičnem tisku: bere raztreseno in bežno. V svoji nemirnosti je vzorčni primer živčne moderne bralke, ki komaj dokonča en roman, ko že seže po naslednjem. Emmine

bralne navade pa niti niso omejene na romane, temveč so tako pohlepne in nenadzorovane, da menda bere vse, kar pride v tisk, od Biblije, oglasov, poročil o večernih zabavah in »prenapet[ih] knjig[...], poln[ih] razbrzdanih slik« pa do »krvavih prizorov« (92, 285). V tem smislu je Emma pristen proizvod kulture tiska, a tudi njegova prototipna množična potrošnica. Do kakovosti ji je manj kot do količine, do sloga manj kot do zgodbe; bere samo za takojšnje ugodje zadovoljitve: »[o]d vseh stvari je terjala zase osebni dobiček in zametavala kot nepotrebno vse, kar ni prispevalo k neposrednemu nasičenju njenega srca« (74).

Bralec kot potrošnik

Bralec kot potrošnik – ki knjige dobesedno konsumira, se pravi požira – je najbolj demonizirani lik te dobe. Obtožujoči prst je dosledno uperjen v Gutenbergovo iznajdbo tiska. Kot učinkovita tehnologija za proizvajanje pisane besede je tisk deležen očitkov, da jo komercializira in demokratizira; da številnim bralcem ne prinaša zgolj številnih knjig, ampak po splošnem mnenju preveč knjig in še prehitro, s tem pa poraja nekritične bralne prakse, v kakršne zapade Emma. Usoda romana je, kot rečeno, tesno povezana s spremembami v moderni knjižni proizvodnji, nenazadnje zato, ker – v nasprotju s pesništvom (ki ga je glede na drobni obseg lahko razpečevati) in z dramatiko (ki je mišljena za gledališko predstavo) – roman lahko obstaja v javnosti samo, če je natisnjen, vezan in izdelan v množični proizvodnji (Lodge 156). Že od vsega začetka je bil roman potrošniški izdelek; prav zato je imel tudi vprašljiv status v primerjavi s starejšimi književnimi oblikami, kakršno je pesništvo, ki so nagovarjale izbrano peščico. Pravzaprav so invective proti romanu pogosto prihajale od pesnikov, ki so ga v najboljšem primeru imeli za tekmeča pesniške umetnosti, v najslabšem pa za ceneno obliko zabave (gl. Coleridge 463). Že iz množičnosti svaril pred (čezmernim) prebiranjem romanov razberemo globoko nezaupanje do zvrsti, ki je tako očarala pisanja in branja večše ljudi. Publicističnim svarilom pred romani in tiskom nasploh so lahko botrovali tematika, neprimerna za uglašeno družbo, liki, naslikani s preveliko simpatijo, misel, da tisk ovira razmišljanje, da slabi um in celó življenjsko silo narodov, ali da leposlovje vodi k delomrznosti, brezdelju in visokoletečim romantičnim predstavam, ter bolezni, povezane z branjem, katerih simptomi so segali od zapeke, mlahavega trebuha, očesnih in možganskih obolenj do težav z živci in duševnih bolezni. V letu 1879 A. Innes Shand (238–239) takole ocenjuje vpliv Gutenbergove iznajdbe:

S tiskom in z nekritičnim razpečevanjem knjig se je nadloga, ki je izbruhnila v Nemčiji, vsepovsod širila z zahrbtno okužbo, podobno kot črna smrt 14. stoletja. V nasprotju z nekdanjo prikrito in smrtonosno kugo pa zdajšnja še vedno ubira svojo pot in polagoma pronica v vse sloje skupnosti. Tako dolgo je spodbujala vrenje misli, nemirno hlepenje po takem ali drugačnem intelektualnem dražljaju, da nas zdaj, v zadnji četrtini 19. stoletja, žene tempo pod visokim pritiskom, ki ne dovoli postanka nobenemu uporniku.

Kot je jasno iz tega opisa, se je bralni tempo (podobno kot življenjski) tako pospešil, da se je spremenila sama struktura izkustva: postala je »nemirna« in »gnana«, pa tudi razdrobljena in nepovezana. Um gre le stežka v korak s tempom modernega časa. Ko Nietzsche slabih deset let zatem govori o nemiru svoje dobe, v svoji opredelitvi modernosti izrazi občutenje moderne senzibilnosti, ki je zaradi »obilj[a] disparatnih vtisov« postala »neizrečeno dražljivejša«. Intenzivnost telesnih in umskih dražljajev, ki jo je prineslo urbano, vse bolj tehnologizirano okolje, je preobrazila »kritika«, »interpreta«, »opazovalca« in – kar je ključnega pomena – tudi »bralca« v »reaktivne talente« (Nietzsche 50). Na dražljaje se odzivamo nekako refleksno; nemogoče nam je vzeti kaj vase drugače kot v drobcih.

Prekomerno vzdraženi bralci

Po iznajdbi tiska sredi 15. stoletja so se bralne prakse predrugačile, spremenile pa so se tudi, ko se je spremenil način izdelovanja knjig in je proizvodnja porasla. K razmahu knjigotrštva je pripomogla papirna masa, izumljena okoli leta 1860, ker posledaj izdelava knjig ni bila več odvisna od cunj, temveč je lahko črpala iz obilnih zalog lesa (Martin 402) in zagotavljala izdelke za kar najširšo porabo. Papirna masa je tako nudila surovi material za poceni romane v množični proizvodnji; ti niso bili več artefakti, ki jih je treba shraniti, ampak proizvodi, ki si jih lahko privoščimo in po uporabi zavržemo (*Practice and Representation* 8–9). Količinski porast pa je imel za kulturo kvalitativno posledico: preobremenjenost v snovnem in čutnem smislu. Kolikor je tempo potrošnje poganjala hitrost proizvodnje, je torej v našem primeru za tegobe modernih bralcev kriva tehnologija. Skratka, vpliv tehnologije na fiziologijo je naraščal.

V času Nietzschejevega ustvarjanja je afektivni odziv, nekoč utelešen v Odisejevih solzah (gl. Littau 65–69, 84), že veljal za stvar živcev. Zgodovinskost afektov potrjuje Shandova primerjava med »neobremenjeno spokojnostjo« minule dobe, ki jo je »nepremišljeno skalilo odkritje tiska«, in njegovim lastnim časom, v katerem »urni prsti« »mehanično prevajajo misel v kovino« (Shand 240). Pred Gutenbergom po njegovih

trditvah »[n]i bilo cefranja umskih vlaken, zato pa tudi nobenih mučnih možganskih in živčnih bolezni, ki dandanes polnijo umobolnice« (236). Ni naključje, da je Emma pohlepna bralka in nevrotičarka obenem. Podobno kot Shand nam tudi Flaubert pokaže, kako so se z višjo ravnijsko proizvodnje spremenile bralne razmere. Če je bilo branje nekoč vročica (kot denimo znamenita obsedenost z Wertherjem), ki si jo staknil z enako lahkoto kot katero koli nalezljivo bolezen, so ga sredi 19. stoletja doživljali kot pretres za živčevje, povezan z informacijsko prenasičenostjo, napadom na čutila in »umsko preobremenjenostjo« (Richardson 162) – skratka, z doživljanjem modernosti.

Obenem je afektivni odziv v teorijah branja zadelo kritičsko razvrednotenje. Iz prestižnega deskriptorja strukture čustvovanja pri novolon- ginovski vzvišenosti se je sprevrgel v razvrednoten deskriptor določenih poženščenih odzivov na sentimentalni roman, gotiko, melodramo in sen- zacionalno leposlovje. Četudi afektivno branje ni nikoli izginilo iz bralne prakse, kot pričajo knjižni klubi (gl. Radway, *Feeling*), je zaradi asociaci- je na vulgarno ugodje čutov (Bourdieujev »okus čuta«) v teorijah branja naposled povsem zatonilo. Afektivnim, telesnim odzivom, ki so v antiki veljali za hvalevredne in v zlati dobi romana za nevarne, posvečajo so- dobne recepcijske teorije le malo pozornosti. Vladajoča paradigma še na- prej temelji na »okusu refleksije«, ki ga Pierre Bourdieu (6) imenuje »čisto ugodje, ugodje, očiščeno ugodja«, se pravi branje brez strasti: odmaknjeno, neprizadeto, ravnodušno. Ta hierarhična delitev je zapustila trajno dedi- ščino, saj je afekt zdaj prepuščen tistim, ki berejo zgolj po žensko (in ne znanstveno: gl. Berggren 167), ali tistim, ki berejo zgolj žanrsko leposlovje (in ne visokomodernističnih besedil: gl. Radway, *Reading*).

Pod novokantovsko paradigmo afektivno branje ni le predmet razvre- dnotenja, ampak tudi dejavnega odpora. To dediščino izpričuje že samo število odporniških bralcev v sodobnih kritičskih razpravah (za povzetek gl. Littau 127–142), kot tudi praktična odsotnost neodporniških. Za odporni- škega bralca ugodje ob branju ni afektivno, temveč spoznavno: negativno ugodje, kolikor se uresničuje v odmaknjenosti od besedila, ki jo potrebu- jemo za prepoznavo njegovih ideoloških pasti, ne da bi se ujeli vanje. Z branjem tu uveljavljamo svoj jaz in potrjujemo delovanje. Toda čeprav je bilo takšno delo v zgodnjem feminizmu pomembno in je pomembno še zdaj, je morda napočil čas, da se vrnemo k afektivnim bralnim ugodjem, ki so jih okušale razne Emme Bovary – ugodjem, ki jih je po mnenju Janice Radway in Anne Berggren akademski svet izgnal iz njih.

Ena možnost bi bila v tem, da znova preučimo zgodovino bralnih praks z gledišča tradicije afektov. Druga možnost pa bi bila v tem, da se posve- timo teorijam afektivnega branja, jih izropamo in si jih prilastimo v imenu

feminizma; tako v marsikaterem pogledu ravna Hélène Cixous v svoji somatiki branja, kjer predlaga »neodporniško razmerje« med besedilom in bralcem (Cixous, *Reading* 3). Arheologija afekta bi nam nemara omogočila, da ne bi samo premagali »strahu pred čutenjem«, ki se mu je posvetila Rita Felski v svojem prispevku o čutnem ugodju ob branju (Felski, *Literature* 23–56, 56), ampak tudi prestavili koordinate med afektom, spolom in zgodovino. Nobene potrebe ni, da bi bilo afektivno branje deskriptor prakse, ki nosi negativno oznako »branje po žensko«; lahko ga na novo kodiramo kot spolno opredeljen način branja v interesu ženskosti. Konec koncev je afektivno branje strastno branje, medtem ko pri branju brez strasti beremo skladno z omejitvami razuma, odmaknjenosti, uma – torej kategorij, ki so jih zgodovinsko pojmovali »kot preseganje ženskosti« (Lloyd 104) in zato povezovali z moškostjo. Od tod izhaja, da pri afektivnem branju dejansko ne beremo niti kot ženske niti kot povprečni bralci, temveč na način, ki nasprotuje čisti razumskosti, strogi opredeljivosti, edini spoznatnosti.

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Lociranje bralca ali kaj naj storimo z možem s klobukom? Metodološki pogledi in zapisi v podatkovni zbirki *United Kingdom Reading Experience Database, 1450–1945 (UK RED)*

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Namen razprave je s slikami bralcev in besedilnimi viri razložiti metodološko podlago podatkovne zbirke Reading Experience Database in prikazati, kako ta projekt združuje kvantitativne in kvalitativne podatke pri lociranju in obnavljanju izkušenj bralcev skozi zgodovino

Ključne besede: zgodovina branja / bralna kultura / Velika Britanija / 19. stol. / 20. stol. / likovne upodobitve / Browning, Elizabeth Barrett / Lee, Vernon / Gladstone, W. E. / empirične raziskave

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To razpravo bom začel z obravnavo treh med seboj povezanih slik. Takšne slike dobro poznajo mnogi strokovnjaki za britansko, ameriško ali francosko literaturo in kulturo 19. stoletja; veljajo za nekakšne kulturne artefakte tega obdobja. A moje zanimanje zanje je bolj specifično. Kot zgodovinar branja posredno poznam materialne razmere različnih zgodovinskih obdobj in upodabljanje branja v njih. Tu so tri upodobitve tega vsenavzočega in povsem vsakdanjega pojava iz urbanih središč Evrope in Severne Amerike poznega 19. stoletja: branje na omnibusu.



Slika 1: Maurice Delondre (n. d.), Na omnibusu (ok. 1880), olje na platnu.



Slika 2: George William Joy (1844–1925), Omnibus Bayswater (1895), olje na platnu.



Slika 3: Nedeljsko jutro na omnibusu proti Peti aveniji, ameriška šola (19. stoletje), barvna litografija.

Prvo sliko je naslikal francoski slikar Maurice Delondre okrog leta 1880. Parižan, morda pol bankir pol gizdalin, s cilindrom na glavi in oblečen v plašč, je naslikan z razgrnjenim časnikom v rokah. Ga bere zatopljeno ali pa, kot nakazuje njegov pogled, ki bega po kupeju, ga le sem pa tja bežno ošvrkne in uporablja kot pripomoček za spogledovanje? Je poglobljen in zbran bralec časnika ali pa odsoten? Bere časnik zato, da bi dobil strokovne informacije, ali zgolj iz kratkočasje? Druga slika je iz Velike Britanije: Londončan, spet s cilindrom, je tokrat zatopljen bralec, ki se zbrano posveča svojemu časniku. Sliko *Omnibus Bayswater* je leta 1895 naslikal George William Joy. Tretja slika je ameriška litografija in je očiten posnetek: Newyorčan nekega nedeljskega jutra bere časnik na omnibusu proti Peti aveniji – morda pred sveto mašo? Slika je delo neznanega litografa, datum nastanka ni znan, očitna pa je imitacija Joyjeve slike iz leta 1895.

Na teh treh slikah je presenetljivo lahko locirati bralca: v vsaki upodobitvi je to spoštovanja vreden belec srednjih let s cilindrom in razgrnjenim časnikom. Toda lociranje bralca v resničnosti, bodisi v sodobnem raziskovanju ali na arhivih temelječem zgodovinskem raziskovanju, je precej težje. Bralci so mobilni, težko opredeljivi in zelo številčni; večina bralcev redko, če sploh kdaj, beleži svoje odzive na branje. Včasih berejo, ne da bi izrazili mnenje o tem, kar so prebrali; včasih berejo v skupinah, včasih na glas, drugič jim bere kdo drug. Tiskovine, ki so jih pravkar prebrali (knjige,

časnike, revije, pamflete, priložnostna gradiva), včasih obdržijo, drugič pač ne, lahko si jih neformalno podajajo naprej, tako da je nemogoče obnoviti verigo ali zaporedje bralcev in njihovih odzivov. Pomislimo recimo na najnadležnejši preddigitalni pojav, verižno pismo – proces ponavljanja in cirkulacije, ki ga v teku ohranja zgolj branje. Velika večina bralcev v resnici ni na voljo za takšno raziskovanje in obnavljanje in tega od njih niti ne moremo pričakovati. Bralci ne berejo zato, da bi bili predmet raziskovalnih projektov; resnični bralci, sedanji ali pretekli, niso kot mož s cilindrom v omnibusu na treh upodobitvah, ki smo jih obravnavali: ni jih mogoče zlahka locirati na sedežu v omnibusu, ohranjene za naslednje generacije med samim bralnim dejanjem. Četudi bi lahko naše bralce odkrili med branjem kakor moža s cilindrom, še vedno ne bi mogli zagotovo trditi, kaj berejo in kako se na prebrano odzivajo.

Morda sem naslikal precej črnogledo sliko o lociranju in interpretiranju bralcev skozi zgodovino, a resnica je precej prozaična in manj strah vzbujajoča. Medtem ko večina bralcev pusti le malo sledi o svojih bralnih navadah in ne pušča nobenih zapisov o svojih odzivih, majhna, a pomembna skupina bralcev načrtno ali naključno beleži svoje bralne izkušnje. Takšna pričevanja o branju so pogosto zapisana v osebni dopisovanju, ki včasih izide v zbirki pisem. Raziskovalni projekti, kakršen je *UK Reading Experience Database* (Britanska podatkovna baza bralnih izkušenj) (<http://www.open.ac.uk/Arts/RED/>), s pomočjo takšnih objavljenih ali neobjavljenih virov sistematično zbirajo sledi, ki jih puščajo bralci skozi zgodovino.¹ Navajam odličen primer takšne bralke – otroškega genija, ki se je pozneje razvil v eno najplodnejših pesnic viktorijanske Anglije. V tem primeru ta bralka v pismu stricu zapiše izkušnje ob branju zelo različne literature:

Prebrala sem Douglasove »Moderne Grke«. Kako zabavna knjiga ... Biglandovega »Značaja narodov« še nisem končala. Zares odlično delo ... »Pisma« Madame de Sevigne mi niso všeč; francoščina je sicer čudovita [...], a občutja so neizvirna in rapsodija stila je tako izumetničena, tako zoprna, tako povsem FRANCOSKA, da vsakokrat odprem knjigo bolj z muko kakor z veseljem – zadnji spev »Grofiča Harolda« (zagotovo najboljši od vseh) me je tako navdušil, da tega ne morem izraziti. Opis slapa je najbolj prefinjena poezija, kar sem jih kdaj brala [...]. Vsa energija, vsa sublimnost modernih verzov je zgoščena v teh vrsticah. (Elizabeth Barrett Samuelu Moulton-Barrettu, november 1818: *UK RED*, ID: 15975)

Bralka je v tem primeru deklica, ki je postala slavna angleška pesnica 19. stoletja Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1806–1861). Njeno pismo stricu dokazuje zgodnjo zrelost njenega uma (v času branja in pisanja je bila stara 12 let) in kaže, v kolikšni meri lahko zapis mnenja o pravkar prebranih knjigah pomaga oblikovati občutek identitete in lastne vrednosti.

Prebrala je ne le primerjalno analizo Grčije z naslovom *An Essay on Certain Points of Resemblance between the Ancient and Modern Greeks* (Esej o nekaterih podobnostih med antičnimi in modernimi Grki), ki jo je spisal Frederick Sylvester North Douglas (gl. Douglas), temveč je začela brati tudi polemično zgodovino Johna Biglanda z naslovom *An Historical Display of the Effects of Physical and Moral Causes on the Character and Circumstances of Nations* (Zgodovinski prikaz fizičnih in moralnih vzrokov za značaje in razmere narodov) (gl. Bigland). Ne ena ne druga knjiga nista bili napisani za otroke; bili sta moderni izdaji, dragi za takratni čas. Elizabeth Barrett se zdijo pisma Madame de Sévigné (gl. Sévigné), sicer uveljavljen model leposlovja, osladno konvencionalna, Byronove verze – zadnji spev ravno tedaj izdanega in visoko čislane *Romanja grofiča Harolda* – pa občuduje kot izvirne in čarobne. Barrettova razlikuje med francosko izumetničenostjo in britansko izvirnostjo ter med razsvetljskim stilom in romantično sublimnostjo. Te literarne sodbe napiše članu širše družine (svojemu stricu Samuelu Moulton-Barrettu), kar daje slutiti, da je kot ambiciozna pisateljica in dovršena bralka že čutila željo po potrditvi.

Medtem ko se njeno otroško branje blešči od zgodnje nadarjenosti, so številni dostopni zapisi bralnih pričevanj precej bolj prozaični; Elizabeth Barret navsezadnje ni bila običajna bralka. Povsem drugače in več kot stoletje kasneje je nastal zapis bralnih izkušenj petindvajsetletne Britanke Pamele Slater. V sklopu sociološkega projekta raziskovalne organizacije Mass Observation je odgovarjala na vprašalnik o branju, ki je bil maja 1940 poslan široki in raznoliki skupini običajnih bralcev. Naštela je časnike in revije, ki jih je brala (*The New Statesman* in *The Picture Post*), in priznala: »Večino svojih mnenj si ustvarim na podlagi novic iz *New Statesmana*, nobenega pa iz dnevnega časopisja ... uvodniki tako pogosto izražajo moja občutja, da mnenja urednikov izredno cenim!« (*Mass Observation Online*, odgovori na vprašalnike 1939–1942, anketiranec 1009). Njeno presojanje bralnega gradiva je precej manj samozavestno in izpopolnjeno kakor sodbe Elizabeth Barrett; bere zato, da bi si izoblikovala in okrepila mnenje s pomočjo uvodnika v svoji najljubši reviji. Pričevanje o branju je tudi zapisano v drugačnem kontekstu – tokrat ne v družinskem dopisovanju, ampak v arhivih raziskovalnega projekta –, spodbudi pa ga vodeni vprašalnik, ki je del vladnega procesa zbiranja informacij med vojno. Dejstvo, da gre za odziv na formalno prošnjo, prav lahko vpliva na bolj uklonljiv ton zapisanega pričevanja.

Medtem ko je bil zapis Pamele Slater odziv na vodeni vprašalnik, je kmetijski delavec Ronald Frank sprejel vlogo enega piscev dnevnika za projekt raziskovalne organizacije Mass Observation. V zapisih svojih dnevnih dejavnosti (tudi branja) februarja leta 1940 (*Mass Observation Online*, januar

1940–marec 1941, pisec dnevnika 5071) Frank kot svoje trenutno branje navede novo literarno revijo *Horizon*, biografsko študijo E. M. Forsterja o Goldsworthyju Lowesu Dickinsonu (gl. Forster) in avtobiografijo Beatrice Webb *My Apprenticeship* (Moje vajeništvo) (gl. Webb). Frankovo branje je očitno politično; vse tri publikacije so bile na splošno socialistične in povezane z vzponom britanskih laburistov. V nasprotju z družinskim pismom Elizabeth Barret ali naprošenim in strukturiranim odzivom Pamele Slater na vprašalnik ima Frankov zapis obliko enega najbogatejših in najbolj neposrednih virov za obnavljanje dokazov o branju: dnevnika.

Medtem ko je v dnevnikih branje vključeno v poročilo (ali razmišljanje) o drugih področjih vsakdanjega življenja, se bralni dnevniki za zapisovanje odlomkov in citatov iz knjig in zapisniki bralnih krožkov osredotočajo le na branje. Angleško-beneška pisateljica, kritičarka in umetnostna zgodovinarica Vernon Lee (1865–1935) je hranila presenetljivo podrobne bralne dnevnike, v katerih je beležila svoja branja v letih 1887–1900; ohranjenih je 12 zvezkov, skupaj okoli 1300 strani, in vsakemu je na začetku priložen seznam naslovov knjig, ki jih je prebrala v tistem obdobju.² Vernon Lee je bila pomembna intelektualka, ki je brala različne knjige z mnogih področij in v štirih evropskih jezikih (angleščini, francoščini, nemščini in italijanščini). Hranila je tudi izjemno podrobne zapise o svojem branju. Njeni zvezki popisujejo podrobno in premišljeno ukvarjanje z določenim tekstom, ne beležijo pa neposrednega prvega vtisa branja – zapisi o vtisih pri prvih sočlenjih s tekstom so pogosto zapisani v tekstih samih, v obliki pripisov ali obrobni opomb. Vernon Lee je bila ne le skrbna hranilka bralnih dnevnikov, pač pa je vselej tudi označevala svoje knjige s številnimi obrobni opombami.³ Značilen primer je njen izvod knjige *A Theory of Knowledge* (Teorija znanja) Charlesa Augustusa Stronga (gl. Strong), ki jo je prebrala v treh obdobjih med julijem 1928 in januarjem 1932; obsežne obrobne opombe v tem zvezku so več kot le pomoč spominu, ki osvetljujejo njene prvotne odzive na glavne Strongove ideje, saj oblikujejo tudi prihodnje branje teksta. Obrobne opombe in bralni dnevniki lahko orišejo bralčeve razvijajoče se odzive na tekst vse od prvega vtisa do sklepnega pogleda in presoje. Branje in odziv nista enkratna dogodka, temveč plod izpeljanega negotovega procesa.

Kot kažejo ti primeri, so viri zapisov o odzivih bralcev lahko zelo različna gradiva: osebno dopisovanje, spomini, dnevniki, bralni dnevniki in knjige s časopisnimi izrezki, posamezne in zbrane obrobne opomba v bralčevih lastnih ali sposojenih knjigah, knjige komentarjev v knjižnicah, znanstvenih društvih in javnih zavodih, pisma uredništvom časnikov in revij, zapisniki bralnih krožkov in društev, poročila o nakupu knjig učiteljskih zborov, zapiski cenzurnih komisij, odgovori na vprašalnike in ankete,

pisma oboževalcev avtorjem in še kaj. Obstajajo tudi drugi viri obnavljanja vtisov bralcev, in sicer celo tedaj, ko ti ne zapustijo svojih zapisov – v prepisih sodnih obravnav, v uradnih registrih zaporniških uprav, v zapisnikih misijonarskih društev, v regimentnih zapisih vojaških enot in v zapisnikih nadzornih dejavnosti državnih obveščevalnih služb pogosto najdemo naključne in dragocene podrobnosti o branju in odzivih nanj. Arhivi Rdečega križa in taborišč za vojaške zapornike hranijo veliko zapisov o branju, prav tako ladijski dnevniki kapitanov in zapisi medicinskih in psihiatričnih zavodov. V takšnih zapisih najdemo veliko informacij o branju v preteklosti.

V 21. stoletju je zapisov o branju, ki nastanejo neprostoovoljno, še precej več, a jih preredko uporabimo v humanističnih raziskavah. Televizijski posnetki zaprtega kroga nenehno in sistematično dokumentirajo branja v javnih prostorih, avtomatično zbrani podatki GPS in drugi uporabniški podatki pa prek mobilnih digitalnih omrežij beležijo nalaganje in uporabo elektronskih knjig in drugih tekstov. Zbrani omrežni podatki Amazonevega Kindla ali Sonyjevih e-bralnikov bi dali podrobno sliko o trenutnih bralnih navadah. Množična digitalizacija knjig, izdanih pred 20. stoletjem, ki jo opravljata Google prek projekta Google books in Archive.org, nas opozarja na nakopičen tovor obrobni opomb bralcev v izposojenih knjigah. Najočitnejši primer pa je v zadnjem času izredna rast digitalnih družabnih omrežij (Facebook, Twitter, blogosfera ipd.), ki raziskovalcem ponujajo bogate in vse številčnejše podatke o ukvarjanju bralcev s teksti.

V resnici je v zgodovini nastajalo ogromno podatkov o branju in odzivih nanj, a ti podatki so razdrobljeni in jih je včasih težko obnoviti. Pri spoprijemanju z razdrobljenimi zapisi posameznih bralcev in bralnih skupin skozi stoletja so zgodovinarji branja pogosto pozorni bodisi na obširne študije, ki temeljijo na tekstu ali obdobju, bodisi na usmerjene študije, osredotočene na posameznega bralca in odvisne od njega. Na obdobjih temelječe študije, med katerimi so *Provincial Readers in Eighteenth-Century England* (Provincialni bralci v Angliji v 18. stoletju) Jana Fergusa (gl. Fergus), študija viktorijanskih bralk z naslovom *The Woman Reader, 1837–1914* (Bralka v letih 1837–1914) Kate Flint (gl. Flint), študija Ronalda J. Zborayja in Mary Saracino Zboray o prebivalcih Nove Anglije pred osamosvojitvijo in po njej z naslovom *Everyday Ideas* (Vsakdanje ideje) (gl. Zboray in Saracino Zboray) in politična ekonomija branja *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period* (Bralni narod v obdobju romantike) spod peresa Williama St Claira (gl. St Clair) vsebujejo veliko podatkov o določenem zgodovinskem obdobju in geografskem okolju, saj črpajo iz obsežne zbirke virov. In obratno, na bralca osredotočene študije so usmerjene na pojasnjevanje imaginativnega sveta posameznega bralca, pri

tem pa omogočajo podroben pogled v kulturno zgodovino obdobja, navedno skozi izčrpno študijo posameznega arhiva. Takšni primeri so *Sir in črvi* Carla Ginzurga (gl. Ginzburg), *Samuel Johnson and the Life of Reading* (Samuel Johnson in življenje branja) Roberta DeMarie (gl. DeMaria), *Hitler's Private Library* (Hitlerjeva zasebna knjižnica) Timothyja Rybacka (gl. Ryback), *The Road to Monticello: The Life and Mind of Thomas Jefferson* (Pot v Monticello: življenje in um Thomasa Jeffersona) Kevina Hayesa (gl. Hayes) in *Reading Gladstone* (Brati Gladstona) Ruth Clayton Windscheffel (gl. Windscheffel). Tradicija raziskovanja zgodovine branja ima dva nasprotujoča si pristopa: makro- in mikroanalitičnega. Nemožnost, da bi posameznik prebral vsaj majhen del kumulativne produkcije knjig, nas posredno sili k ukvarjanju s širšo problematiko zbiranja kvantitativnih statističnih zapisov branja, tj. k metodologiji, s katero lahko preučujemo splošne trende v bralnih praksah in osmislimo osupljiv obseg obstoječih naslovov in njihovih morebitnih bralcev. Medtem ko nam ukvarjanje z individualnim bralcem pove bore malo o splošnih trendih in vzorcih recepcije določenega teksta, lahko zbiranje različnih merljivih podatkov – na primer o nakladah, knjižnih cirkulacijah, pismenosti, cenah knjig, povprečnih dohodkih, distribucijskih mrežah in oglaševanju – natančno obnovi okolje, v katerem so brali v določenem obdobju in prostoru.

Morda je najboljši način za spopadanje s preobilico podatkov in virov v zgodovini branja oblikovanje raziskovalne inkluzivne, a jasno definirane podatkovne zbirke, ki bi omogočala hitro iskanje podatkov in enakovredno tehtanje posameznih informacij, hkrati pa tudi kvalitativno in evalvacijsko analizo. Projekt *United Kingdom Reading Experience Database (UK RED)*, ki načrtno upošteva različne metodologije, je bil ustanovljen leta 1996, leta 2007 pa je začel delovati kot spletni digitalni vir. Pri zbiranju potrebnih podatkov je enakovredno upošteval tako makro- kakor mikroanalitični pristop. *UK RED*, ki ima center na Open University, zbira zapise o branju britanskih bralcev doma in v tujini pa tudi tujcev v Veliki Britaniji med letoma 1450 in 1945, obenem pa natančno določa vrsto in natančnost zabeleženih podatkov (deli jih na okrog 150 področij) in skrbi za to, da je pri iskanju zapisov o branju upoštevano in pregledano veliko različnih virov. V projektu *UK RED* je »bralna izkušnja« opredeljena kot »zabeleženo ukvarjanje s pisanim ali natisnjenim tekstom, ki presega posedovanje teksta« (<http://www.open.ac.uk/Arts/RED/experience.htm> [ogled 23. marca 2011]). *UK RED* ima danes več kot 30.000 vnosov, in sicer predvsem iz obdobja med letoma 1800 in 1900, ko se je v Britaniji uveljavila množična pismenost. Podrobna in združljiva merila iskanja uporabnikom omogočajo, da na celovito in iznajdljivo pregledajo zbrane podatke in jih filtrirajo glede na spol, starost, kraj, socialno skupino, žanr itn. *UK RED* je

prostodostopen vir, namenjen družbenemu konstruiranju vednosti; vsakdo lahko dostopa do podatkov ali prispeva k raziskovalnemu projektu. Z zadostnimi podatki bo *UK RED* sčasoma lahko začel mapirati splošne trende britanskih bralnih navad skozi stoletja.

Medtem ko bomo s projektom *UK RED* dobili dragocene podatke o britanskih bralnih navadah v različnih obdobjih, knjige in njihovi bralci postajajo vse bolj razširjeni po prostoru. Da bi si *UK RED* olajšal preučevanje nekaterih perečih vprašanj o branju po svetu in internacionaliziral svoja prizadevanja za obnavljanje zapisov bralcev, sodeluje z raziskovalnimi partnerji iz štirih različnih držav. Partnerski projekti že potekajo v Avstraliji, Kanadi, na Nizozemskem in v Novi Zelandiji, njihov namen pa je obogatiti skupen trud, zagotavljati povezljivost podatkovnih zbirk in raziskovati prihodnje usmeritve in možnosti nadaljnjih raziskovalnih sodelovanj na področju zgodovine branja. *UK RED* bo s štirimi partnerskimi podatkovnimi zbirkami povezan z novo spletno infrastrukturo *The Reading Experience Database* (RED), ki bo služila kot integriran iskalni vmesnik (<http://www.open.ac.uk/Arts/reading/>). Nove partnerske zbirke bralnih izkušenj bodo zbirale drugačne podatke kakor *UK RED*, izkoriščale vsaka svoje prednosti virov, zadovoljevale potrebe vsake posamezne družbe in uveljavljale najboljše prakse digitalne humanistike.

Avstralski projekt bo obravnaval precej krajše obdobje, zato bo v podatkovno zbirko vključil tudi vizualne (fotografske) zapise branja in ustne zgodovinske vire (avdio gradivo) o spominih na branje, ki so nastali do leta 2000. Projekt *Australian Reading Experience Database* (*AusRED*) gosti Griffith University v Brisbanu v okviru vodilnega avstralskega digitalnega vira za raziskovanje na področju humanistike AustLit (<http://www.austlit.edu.au/>). *AusRED* je že zbral obsežno podatkovno zbirko, ki bo kmalu javno dostopna. Pri vključevanju avdio-vizualnega gradiva in ustne zgodovine se projektna skupina *AusRED* očitno naslanja na pionirsko delo Martyna Lyonsa in Lucy Taksa, tj. na njuno prelomno študijo o avstralskem popularno-kulturnem spominu z naslovom *Australian Readers Remember* (Avstralski bralci se spominjajo) (gl. Lyons in Taksa). Kanadski projekt, *Canadian Reading Experience Database / Banque de données sur le pratique de lecture* (*CanRED-LEC*), domuje na Dalhousie University v Halifaxu na Novem Škotskem in bo nekakšno dvojezično stičišče za francosko in angleško govoreče uporabnike. *CanRED-LEC* se bo osredotočil na zgodovino branja priseljencev. Z geografskimi informacijskimi sistemi bo grafično prikazal širjenje bralcev po širokih prostranstvih Kanade, hkrati pa bo na spletnih straneh družabnih omrežij iskal zapise o branju v Kanadi. Nizozemski projekt, *Netherlands Reading Experience Database* (*NL-RED*), bo potekal na Univerzi v Utrechtu v sodelovanju z inštitutom Huygens

Instituut KNAW v Haagu (<http://www.red-nl.huygens.knaw.nl>). NL-RED bo zajemal najdaljše obdobje (okvirno zamejeno z letoma 1000 in 2000) in se bo naslonil na obilico informacij, ki so že dostopne v rokopisih in zgodnjih natisih iz Nizozemske, vključil pa bo tudi leposlovne primerke branja. Novozelandski projekt, *New Zealand Reading Experience Database* (NZ-RED), katerega sedež je na Victoria University v Wellingtonu (<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/wtapress/NZ-RED/>) bo zastavljen bikulturalno in bo združeval anglofonske in maorske koncepte branja in odzivanja nanj, hkrati pa bo zgodovinsko bolj specifičen, saj se bo prva faza zbiranja podatkov osredotočila le na obdobje prve svetovne vojne. NZ-RED bo še posebej inovativen pri pridobivanju in vpisovanju podatkov, saj bo aktiviral množično zunanje izvajanje (crowdsourcing). Ščasoma bo omogočeno zaporedno iskanje po podatkih vseh petih projektov prek enotnega portala in s tem preverjanje pravilnosti hipotez o branju v veliko širšem kontekstu. Takšen tesno povezan, večdisciplinaren in nadnacionalen pristop bo spodbujal nova raziskovalna vprašanja in odkrival nove kontekste.

Če kvantitativna analiza zahteva, da se v podatkovnih zbirkah, preden lahko te ustvarijo pomenljive podatke o trendih, nabere kritična masa podatkov, potem je jasno, kaj to pomeni za omenjene projekte: preden se lahko lotimo velikih vprašanj o zgodovini branja skozi stoletja, moramo večkratno razširiti obseg shranjenih podatkov. Toda koliko podatkov je zares dovolj za vzorčen prerez dolgega zgodovinskega obdobja? Kako dolgo moramo čakati, da bomo lahko poskusili odgovoriti (četudi še tako spekulativno) na osrednja vprašanja zgodovine branja, denimo ali se je *Leserevolution* res zgodila v poznem 18. stoletju? In ali je reprezentativnost, kakor mož s cilindrom v omnibusu, res zgolj priročna fikcija? Podrobna kvalitativna analiza zapisov poglobljenega branja, ki jih najdemo v dnevnikih, obrobni opombah, rokopisnih gradivih in dopisovanju, nam pogosto ponudi najbolj zgoščene podatke o zgodovini branja, pa naj bo bralec še tako neobičajen. Kljub številnim vzornim, izjemnim, nenavadnim ali genialno samozadostnim bralcem si zgodovinarji branja še naprej pomagajo s tistimi redkimi posamezniki, ki so svoje branje podrobno zabeležili. Morda je edini zadovoljiv odgovor, ki se nam ponuja iz vseh podatkovnih zbirk bralnih izkušenj, v tem, da storimo oboje: se zakopljemo globoko v arhive in hkrati prečesemo veliko število različnih vrst gradiv in informacijskih virov skozi stoletja.

Naj končam še z dvema slikama, za kateri se mi zdi, da ilustrirata oba problema obnavljanja zapisov in interpretiranja branja, o katerih sem pisal v tej razpravi: prvič, arbitrarno naravo tega, *kako*, *zakaj* in *kje* se beležijo zapisi o branju, in, drugič, problematiko reprezentativnosti obnavljanja takih zapisov. Podnaslov moje razprave je »Kaj storiti z možem s klobukom?«, a

odgovor na to vprašanje se včasih glasi »Ne prav dosti«, saj je mož s klobukom emblematičen prikaz bralca, ki morda sploh ne predstavlja različnosti dejanskih bralcev v katerem koli zgodovinskem obdobju. Prva od zadnjih dveh slik je morda najslavnejša vizualna upodobitev branja v omnibusu iz 19. stoletja, *Londonsko življenje v omnibusu* (1859).



Slika 4: William Eglej (1826–1916), *Londonsko življenje v omnibusu* (1859), olje na platnu.



Slika 5: Alfred Morgan (fl. 1862–1904), *Vožnja z omnibusom do Piccadilly Circusa: g. Gladstone potuje z običajnimi potniki* (1885).

Perspektiva Egleyjeve slike namenoma poudarja prenaseljeno veleme-
stno okolje z ljudmi, blagom in različnimi potniki, natrpanimi v zelo majh-
nem prostoru. V prostor kukajo še drugi obrazi in iščejo proste sedeže.
Na sliki sta vsaj dva bralca: prva je mlada ženska, zadnja sedeča oseba na
desni strani omnibusa, ki je namenoma zatopljena v branje svoje knjige (ki
je najbrž knjiga s trdimi platnicami, morda iz knjižnice) in se tako verjetno
ogiba nepotrebnemu očesnemu stiku z moškimi sopotniki. Drugi verjetni
bralec je rdečelasi moški, ki gleda v omnibus, njegov pogled pa je vide-
ti usmerjen v knjigo mlade ženske. V omnibusu so še drugi potencialni
bralci, saj je notranjost polepljena z oglasi pa tudi s teksti, ki jih potniki
ne morejo prezreti; pogled ženske z rdečim šalom je usmerjen na tekst na
reklamni deski nasproti. Na Egleyjevi sliki možje s klobuki (takšni so štirje)
v omnibusu ne berejo, vsaj dve ženski pač; razlogi za to, da so se ženske
v javnih prevoznih sredstvih v 19. stoletju z branjem ogibale pogledom
moških sopotnikov, so jasni, prav tako razlogi, zakaj takšne bežne bralne
izkušnje večinoma niso zabeležene in jih tako ne moremo zlahka obnoviti
s pomočjo arhivov (ljudje ne zapisujejo rutinsko, kaj so prebrali na ogla-
snih deskah ali v izposojenih knjigah).

Slika Alfreda Morgana iz leta 1885 ima naslov *Vožnja z omnibusom do
Piccadilly Circusa: g. Gladstone potuje z običajnimi potniki*. Tudi na njej moški s
klobukom (tokrat ne s cilindrom) drži časnik, britanski premier William
Ewart Glaston, kot vedno oblečen v črno, pa med vožnjo namerno ne

bere, ampak odločno strmi v daljavo. Velika ironija je, da je bil Gladstone eden najbolj vnetih bralcev 19. stoletja. V svoji zasebni knjižnici je imel več kot 32.000 knjig, med katerimi so mnoge popisane z obrobniimi opombami, pogosto je prebral tri knjige v enem samem dnevu in v pismih je redno omenjal svoje branje. Gladstonovo branje je sistematično obnovil projekt Gladstone Catalogue (<http://www.st-deiniols.com/library-collection/glad-cat/>), z njim pa so se ukvarjali tudi različni strokovnjaki, na primer Ruth Windscheffel v študiji *Reading Gladstone*; mož s klobukom, ki stiska biološko razgradljiv časnik za enkratno uporabo, pa je povsem zginil iz zgodovinskih zapisov.

Prevedel Peter Lamovec

OPOMBE

¹ Več informacij o projektu *UK RED*, njegovi zgodovini, metodološki utemeljitvi in prihodnjih usmeritvah je na spletni strani »About UK RED« (<http://www.open.ac.uk/Arts/reading/UK/about.php>) in v članku Simona Eliota »The Reading Experience Database« (ogled obeh 23. marca 2011).

² Raziskovalni dnevniki Vernon Lee so shranjeni v posebnem arhivu Vernon Lee (Colby College Special Collections, Colby College, Waterville, Maine, ZDA). Zapisi iz tega vira se vpisujejo v *UK RED*.

³ Knjige Vernon Lee hranijo v posebnih zbirkah knjižnice Harold Acton na The British Institute of Florence. Od 425 obstoječih knjig jih ima 299 obrobne opombe, večina je jasno označenih. Zapisi iz tega vira se vpisujejo v *UK RED*.

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Materialnost branja: primer bralcev romanov v Angliji 18. stoletja in pogled v sodobnost

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Čeprav je fizična materialnost knjig in branja v študijih literature praviloma zapostavljena, nas zgodovina knjižnih praks vedno znova opozarja na pomen zunajbesedilnega v literarnem doživetju. Predstavila bom različne dimenzije materialnosti branja, ki so izrazite že v času, ko branje romana postane priljubljena in razmeroma razširjena prostočasna praksa, tj. v Angliji 18. stoletja. S primeri, predvsem s slovito uspešnico Samuela Richardsons Pamela, bom poskusila pokazati, kako pomembno vlogo so v uveljavljanju branja romana odigrali na eni strani specifična predmetnost romana in specifične branje romana, na drugi pa načini, kako se je prebrano artikuliralo oziroma »povnanjilo« v pogovorih, uprizoritvah odlomkov, prek razprav v bralnih klubih, društvih in knjižnicah, predvsem pa z oživljanjem junakov skozi druge prostočasne aktivnosti in družabne dejavnosti. Sklenila bom s premislekom o sodobnih različicah »povnanjanja« branja in o opazno povečanjem zanimanju za predmetno plat knjig, ki očitno spremlja aktualne metamorfoze knjižnih nosilcev

Ključne besede: zgodovina branja / angleška književnost / roman / 18. stol. / Richardson, Samuel

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Uvod

Tema tega članka so materialne oziroma predmetne razsežnosti branja: tisto, kar je pri branju konkretno, oprijemljivo ali popredmeteno, pri čemer me to zanima v njegovi vključenosti v zgodovinski kontekst. Gre za nekaj, kar je podobno tistemu, kar Robert Darnton označi kot »zunanjo zgodovino branja« (gl. Brewer 7). Ta razsežnost praviloma ostaja zanemarjena ali kar povsem prezrta v obravnavah branja s stališča tako literarne vede kakor študij historičnega bralca.

Medtem ko je teorijam bralčevega odziva mogoče očitati, da se, kot pravi William Sherman, »ukvarjajo z vsemi mogočimi vrstami bralcev razen z realnim in zgodovinskim« (gl. Colclough 4), po drugi strani preučevanju historičnega bralca, ki se ukvarja z branjem oziroma bralnimi navadami in njihovimi individualnimi posebnostmi kot z zgodovinsko spremenljivo prakso, prav tako manjka širši materialni okvir branja in knjige, okvir, ki nujno vključuje ne-literarne in ne-besedilne dimenzije. Te postanejo opazne šele z gledišča interdisciplinarne epistemologije, ki študij branja pomakne iz območja literarne vede v polje kulturnih študij, sociologije, knjigarstva in posamičnih zgodovin, zlasti kulturne, družbene in spolske. Po mojem je prav ta pogled pomemben za celostno razumevanje branja in njegove kompleksne organske vpetosti v družbo. Če se osredotočimo na roman kot osrednjo literarno obliko, velja, da materialne razsežnosti romana in branja romana pomembno prispevajo k uveljavitvi tako romana kot literarne zvrsti kakor branja romanov kot priljubljene prostočasne prakse.¹

Takšna epistemologija izhaja iz mojega razumevanja romana kot kulturne forme, kakor jo kulturno-materialistično konceptualizira Raymond Williams. Poenostavljeno rečeno, to pomeni, da je mogoče neko kulturno produkcijo, če jo želimo scela razumeti, preučevati zgolj v razmerju do njenega družbenega in zgodovinskega okvira, se pravi, z analizo njene produkcije, distribucije in konsumpcije. Na primeru knjige to nazorno ilustrira zdaj že znameniti Darntonov »komunikacijski krog« (1982), ki sta ga leta 2006 nekoliko elaborirala Baker in Johns.

V okviru »materialnosti branja romanov« obravnavam vrsto zadev:

- fizično oziroma predmetno plat romanov in nove načine branja, ki so jih romani vpeljali;
- raznotere sledi branja, med katerimi so poleg pisanja o branju tako podobe bralcev kakor denimo bralno pohištvo;
- in predvsem različne načine, na katere liki iz fikcije prestopajo svoje izhodiščno besedilo in se pojavljajo »zunaj« strani, kar David A. Brewer (2, 78) imenuje »domišljjski podaljšek« in »migracije značajev«.

Materialnost branja se skratka nanaša na oprijemljivo, vidno stran branja, ki jo je mnogo lažje opisati kakor definirati.

Zgodovinski okvir

Moj primarni referenčni okvir bo zgodovinski kontekst, v katerem je po mnenju mnogih branje romanov prvič postalo priljubljena in razmerna razširjena prostočasna praksa – Anglija 18. stoletja, ko lahko roman

tudi prvič obravnavamo kot kulturno formo, tj. v vsej njegovi organski vpetosti v družbeno polje.

Da se je branje sploh lahko uveljavilo kot oblika prostočasa, so morali biti najprej izpolnjeni nekateri temeljni družbeni pogoji. Med njimi je predvsem določena stopnja pismenosti in s tem zadosten bralski potencial; nato razvit knjižni trg z delujočo produkcijsko in distribucijsko mrežo, ki pripelje knjige do bralcev in jih naredi dostopne tako fizično kakor cenovno; pa prosti čas in določena stopnja zasebnosti. Vse to je bilo izvedljivo samo v ugodnih religioznih in političnih okoliščinah. Anglija je bila protestantska država z močnim vplivom puritancev, kar je spodbudilo individualno branje *Biblije* v domačem jeziku in je s tem izrecno promoviralo pismenost. Poleg tega je Anglija prva vpeljala parlamentarni sistem in že konec 17. stoletja delovala kot parlamentarna monarhija.

Vse to je imelo pomembne posledice: zaradi soudeležnosti ljudstva pri odločanju o državnih zadevah je velik pomen dobila javna razprava, kar je pozitivno vplivalo na razvoj časopisne kulture. Časniki in periodika so v Angliji cveteli vse od državljanske vojne naprej (1642–1651) in tako zviševali število pismenih ter obenem krepili sekularizem, pri čemer sta se oba učinka očitno povezovala.

Pomemben dejavnik predstavlja tudi zgodnja komercializacija: Anglija je prva razvila pravo globalno kapitalistično ekonomijo; to je bila država industrijske in potrošniške revolucije, kar je bilo ne le dobra podlaga založniškega posla, pač pa je imelo tudi močne družbene učinke. Med temi sta bila najpomembnejši ločitev dela od doma, ki je može poslala v tovarne, žene pa vezala na domove, in tako psihološka kakor prostorska razmejitev javnega od zasebnega in s tem prepoznanje zasebnosti kot vrednote. Kot »zibka zasebnosti« (gl. Ariès 12) je Anglija tako izpolnila še eno pomembno predpostavko za razvoj bralnega prostočasa. To je tudi določilo prevladujoče bralno občinstvo – ženske, ki so ostajale v zasebnosti svojih domov.²

Ti dejavniki in procesi se staknejo v Angliji 18. stoletja in v drugi polovici stoletja »pridelajo« dovolj pismenih in premožnih z dovolj prostega časa, da sestavijo spodobno bralstvo romanov.³

Angleški roman 18. stoletja in *Pamela* kot študija primera

V nasprotju s tedaj prevladujočo prozo junaških romanc, ki je do konca 17. stoletja v privzdignjenem izumetničenem slogu na dolgo in široko pripovedovala o fantastičnih podvigih plemiških junakov v daljnih ekso-tičnih deželah, romani ponujajo fikcionalizirano dejanskost – stavijo na verjetnost in realizem tako v zgodbi kakor v načinu upovedovanja zgod-

be. Namesto tradicionalnih epskih zapletov, abstrahirane univerzalnosti in stiliziranih značajev kraljev in princes v abstraktnem kronotopu ponudijo ljudi iz mesa in kosti, tj. predstavnike srednjih in nižjih slojev, ter njihov »lov na srečo«. Osredotočajo se na ljubezenske in družinske odnose, se pravi, na tisto, za kar smo zaradi lastnih izkušenj vsi strokovnjaki, in to poudarja univerzalno dostopnost in odprtost romanesknih svetov. Pomembna novost je prikaz junakove notranjosti in psihološke zasebnosti, kar spodbudi proces identifikacije tako med bralci in liki kakor med bralci in avtorjem ter avtorjem in liki.

Vse to je seveda povezano s spremembami v knjižnem poslu, ko s postopnim zatonom tradicionalnega patronskega sistema vlogo neposrednega avtorjevega naslovnika prevzame anonimno bralno občinstvo. Da bi navezal stik z neznanim bralcem, avtor uporabi drugačne tehnike: neposredni nagovor, prvoosebno pisanje, kramljajoči stil; vse to zmanjšuje razdaljo med vpletenimi v bralnem komunikacijskem razmerju. Občutek bližine dodatno krepijo realne aktualne reference – na trge in ulice, na naslove časnikov in imena politikov, literatov idr. –, ki ustvarjajo skupni dogajalni kontekst in ponovno povezujejo svet bralca, avtorja in junaka. V ospredje stopi urbani svet rastoče buržoazije, ki ga beroči prepoznavata tudi kot svoje lastno, znano, domače okolje, v katerem se znajde in ki ga razume ter pozna.

Na tej podlagi romani opazno črpajo iz mnogih drugih zvrsti – literarnih in neliterarnih, stvarnih in nestvarnih, javnih in zasebnih, denimo iz dnevnikov in pisem, iz religioznih, filozofskih in zgodovinskih tekstov pa iz vzgojnih priročnikov in novinarskih žanrov. Kot tak je roman v izhodišču izrazito eklektična zvrst, ki šele postopoma najde svoj pravi izraz.

Če bi želeli zelo na kratko opredeliti značilen angleški roman 18. stoletja in bi iskali skupne poteze, bi lahko rekli, da takšen roman v ospredje vselej postavi posameznikovo zgodbo, mikrosliko nekega življenja, ki pa ostaja pripeta na ene in iste teme stalnice, ki so praviloma moralna vprašanja z izrazito didaktično noto. A četudi moralni nauk dejansko pogosto sklepa te pripovedi, je lahko zgodba sama vse prej kot moralna. Ravno tako pomembno je namreč tudi, da zabava. V grobem lahko ločimo dva tipska modela angleškega romana 18. stoletja: sentimentalne romane, ki temeljijo na prvoosebni čustveni izpovedi ženske junakinje, in pustolovsko potopisne romane z moškimi liki v tretji osebi in z bolj rokovnjaško-zabavljajškim tonom.⁴

Za ponazoritev se bom osredotočila na prvi pravi romaneskni *bestseller*, *Pamelo* Samuela Richardsona iz leta 1740. To je zgodba o krepostni mladi služabnici, ki jo začne po smrti njene gospodarice nadlegovati novi hišni oblastnik, gospodaričin sin g. B. Pamela se mu sicer uspešno upira in brani

svojo nedolžnost, vse dokler ta, potem ko med drugim skrivaj prebere njena obupana pisma staršem, ne sprevidi njenega vrlega značaja in spozna, da je vredna veliko več od bežne avanture. Ko se tudi ona ogreje zanj, jo nazadnje očaran zaprosi za roko. Tako je krepost tudi nagrajena. *Pamela* je pisana v prvoosebni pripovedi v obliki pisem oziroma dnevnika in je značilen primer sentimentalnega romana.

Fizična razsežnost romana in nove oblike branja

V Angliji 18. stoletja so romani običajno izhajali v majhnem formatu *duodecimo*, ki je bil zlahka prenosljiv in priročen tudi za v žep, tako da je lahko z njim bralec, kadar se mu je zahotelo, vstopil v »območje zasebnosti«. Ni naključje, da postanejo knjižna znamenja prav v tem času običajno v hrbet vsiti svileni trakovi za pomoč pri prekinjenemu branju.

Naslovnice romanov so učinkovale kot nekakšni oglasi, ki so poskušali čim bolje prodati vsebino. Naslovnice so bile zato na gosto popisane strani, iz katerih je bilo mogoče razbrati zgodbo, vrline glavnih junakov in moralno sporočilo. Naslov *Pamele* v celoti zveni takole: *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded, in a series of familiar letters from a beautiful young damsel to her parents. Now first published in order to cultivate the principles of virtue and religion in the minds of the youth of both sexes. A narrative which has its foundation in truth and nature and at the same time it agreeably entertains by a variety of curious and affecting incidents, is entirely divested of all those images, which, in too many Pieces calculated for Amusement only, tend to inflame the Minds they should instruct.*

Močan paratekstualni aparat priča o novosti romaneskne fikcije: njeni bralci namreč potrebujejo »uvajalna« navodila, ki šele postopoma podmačijo nov tip branja. Danes tudi nevajeni bralec praviloma nima težav s preskokom v individualne izpovedi, takrat pa je branje o neposredni sodobnosti delovalo presenetljivo tuje. Obsežni uvodi s pojasnjevanjem okoliščin nastanka dela, opombe pod črto in sprotna pojasnila zginejo šele s postopno konvencionalizacijo romanesknih zgodb. *Pamelo* tako okvirja elaborirana krovna zgodba, v kateri se Richardson predstavi zgolj kot nekdo, ki je slučajno naletel na pisma služabnice Pamele, in na ta način zasidra svoje pisanje v resničnost. Richardson je pele veliko pozneje, potem ko je uspeh romana spodbudil številne ponaredbe in nadaljevanja, razkril fiktivni značaj svojih del.

Trgovci so znali dodobra izkoristiti vsebinsko dostopnost romanov in s tem njihov potencial za privabljanje množic. Romane so ponujali v različnih vezavah, za kupce s tanjšimi in debelejšimi denarnicami: v snopičih brez platnic, vezane v karton, v usnje, ali po individualnem naročilu. Zlasti

priljubljena so bila cenejša kolportажna nadaljevanja v periodiki in rabljene ter piratske izdaje, za manj pismeno publiko pa so bile na voljo skrajšane verzije. *Pamela* je najprej izšla kot dvodelni *duodecimo*, v nekaj mescih je bila štirikrat ponatisnjena, obenem pa so jo izdali še v delih in »na črno«. In prav romani so zvrst, ki vpelje komercialne knjižnice, t. i. *circulating libraries*, ki so proti plačilu posojale knjige na dom. Roman skratka v hipu zaživi kot tržno blago. Tako Terry Lovell (28) pravi, da »roman v bistvu nastane kot tržni artikel«. Roman je prvi in edini novi žanr po izumu tiska, ki je v temeljih vpet v profitno politiko knjižnega trga – pisan za zabavo množic in za profit. Prodajajo ga skupaj z vsakdanjimi potrošnimi artikli in celo s špecerijo.⁵

Romani so vpeljali tudi nove prakse branja. Pisani so bili namreč za individualno, zasebno branje in brali so jih praviloma potihoma in na samem. V nasprotju z glasnim kolektivnim branjem, pri katerem je slišano komentirano in s tem tudi lažje cenzurirano, takšno branje uhaja vsakršnemu nadzoru. Nekateri prihodu romana pripisujejo celo glavne »zasluge« za revolucionarni prehod od intenzivnega, tj. ponavljajočega se in poglobljenega branja peščice dostopnih besedil k ekstenzivnemu, hitremu, površnemu branju velikega števila knjig, in sicer vsake le enkrat. Ta »bralna revolucija« naj bi se sklenila ravno konec 18. stoletja. To spremembo seveda pogojuje nova dejanskost, ki je v tem, da s proliferacijo in večjo dostopnostjo knjig več ljudi več bere. A glavni povzročitelji tega obrata so prav romani, ki prinašajo zgodbe, ki jih je bilo sploh mogoče požirati drugo za drugo in celo med prelistavanjem. Poleg tega tiho branje zahteva precej manj časa kakor glasno. Teza o ekstenzivnem branju, ki jo leta 1973 postavi nemški raziskovalec Rolf Engelsing, danes sicer velja za poenostavljajočo, saj odzivi na številne takratne uspešnice (Richardsonovo *Pamelo*, Rousseaujevo *Julijo*, Goethejevega *Wertherja*) dokazujejo, da so ljudje tudi po *Pameli* obsesivno brali iste tekste, jih navajali na pamet in nasploh dojemali karseda intenzivno. Zato se zdi primernejše ugotoviti, da različne vrste branja pač soobstajajo. To pa ne zanika dejstva, da so romani temeljno spremenili bralne prakse.

Spremembe v bralnih navadah pustijo sledi tudi v prostorski organizaciji domačih interierjev: branje romanov se infiltrira v intimo spalnice, hkrati pa postane »vidnejše«. T. i. bralno pohištvo – bralni pulti, zložljive bralne mizice, bralne zofe, bralne svetilke ipd. – omogočijo udobnejše druženje s knjigo in pričajo o naraščajočem pomenu bralnega prostocasja.

Vizualna reprezentacija branja

Upodobitve branja romanov so zagotovo eden ključnih primerov »po-predmetenja« prakse; ponazarjajo njeno oprijemljivo, materialno plat, in sicer zlasti zato, ker so romani verjetno edini žanr, ki postane priljubljen likovni motiv in razvije prepoznavno ikonografijo. To je sicer največkrat mogoče razumeti v okviru kampanje proti romanu, saj pogosto spremlja moralno-panični diskurz, ki se razvije ob nasprotovanju tej novi kulturni formi.

Glavna skrb se je, rečeno na kratko, nanašala na to, da bi romani s svojo brezoblično formo in bogatim repertoarjem zgodb iz življenja takšnih in drugačnih slehernikov bralce moralno spridili. Bojazen glasnikov moralne panike – vzgojiteljev, duhovnikov in ostalih nosilcev moralne avtoritete v družbi – je tičala v tem, da bi bralci posnemali neprimerna ravnanja junakov in junakinj ter tako zabredli v nesrečo. Dejstvo, da naj bi romani prikazovali resnično življenje, je strahove še krepilo. Zgodbe in liki so bili dovolj realni, da so omogočali identifikacijo, hkrati pa so bili pripetljaji vseeno bistveno zanimivejši od dejanskosti, junaki pa potencirano vrli in lepi, tako da se je meja med svetom romana in svetom bralcev lahko nevarno zabrisala. Prav to pa je vabilo v sanjarijo in po mnenju mnogih bralcev mešalo glave. Poleg tega naj bi zlasti sentimentalni romani vodili v pretirano čustvenost in slabili občutek za »pravo mero«; učinkovali naj bi kot droga, ki uporabnike zasvoji, omami in pasivizira, tako da niso za nobeno rabo več. Če k temu dodamo še, da so bili romani od zadnje tretjine stoletja naprej vsaj v eni od izdaj dostopni tako rekoč vsem razen nižjim razredom, so bile po mnenju mnogih razmere tako rekoč zrele za katastrofo.

Za glavne žrtve (in hkrati krivke) moralne panike branja romanov so veljale predvsem bralke, zlasti mlade bralke. Ženske in mladi so (bili) kot šibkejša, podrejena in ranljivejša družbena skupina, ki jo je treba vselej ščititi pred grozečimi nevarnostmi, v moralnopaničnih razpravah tudi sicer najpogosteje proglašeni za glavne oškodovance. Mladi naj bi bili namreč za slabe vplive romanov dovzetnejši zaradi neizkušenosti, ženske pa zaradi po tedanjem prepričanju prirojene sentimentalnosti, vrh vsega pa so med bralci ženske kot osebe z več prostočasje tudi prevladovale.

Še več, tiho zasebno branje romanov uhaja vsakršnemu nadzoru – prebrane zgodbe se prosto odvijajo v bralčevi glavi, in nobena višja avtoriteta se ne more vmešati v bralčeve sanjarije in ga posvariti pred morebitnimi zablodami.

Likovne upodobitve bralcev romanov praviloma prikazujejo dekleta v razpuščen drži in s pogledom, ki prevzet od prebranega zre mimo knjige nekam v neznano, nespodobnost početja pa še poudarja bralkin razkrit

dekolte, ki namiguje na prostaško vsebino romana. Da gre pri tem vselej za branje romanov, nakazuje majhnost formata, pa tudi to, da bralka na sliki skoraj nikoli zares ne bere, temveč zasanjano gleda nekam v daljavo.⁶ V resnici je bilo branje romanov takrat precej bolj obravnavano tudi kot telesna in emocionalno nabita dejavnost, to razsežnost na tekst pa osredotočena literarna veda kasneje dosledno zapostavlja. Razumeti je treba, da so romani bralce uvedli v nov svet močnih čustev in da so se bralci, nevarjeni takšnega neposrednega nagovora, tudi primerno odzivali: intenzivna identifikacija s fikijskim dogajanjem je izzvala izrazito emocionalno reakcijo. Skupina kovačev, ki so drug drugemu glasno brali *Pamelo*, kar je bila sicer redkejša oblika branja romana, je denimo ob srečnem koncu veselo stekla zvonit k bližnji cerkvi, tako zelo jo je zgodba pretresla.

Poudariti velja, da moralna kritika romanov, četudi je bila močno razširjena, ni v ničemer oslabilala priljubljenosti romanov. Ne samo da bralna moralna panika ni imela zaviralnega učinka – učinek je bil kvečjemu nasproten. Tako je bilo delno zato, ker tisto, kar je odsvetovano, še bolj privlači, predvsem pa zato, ker je moralnopanični diskurz z grajami, očitki in svarili roman paradokсно vseskozi vedno znova postavljaval v središče debate in s tem avtomatično krepil njegov položaj, ga delal opaznega, in tako dejansko pripomogel k njegovi uveljavitvi in »podomačitvi«.

To potrjuje na primer že dejstvo, da so romani, zlasti uspešnice, vse očitneje postajali del tedanje popularne kulture, tudi ne-literarne. To se kaže na številne načine in nam ponuja bogat repertoar ne-besedilnih, materialnih odmevov branja.

Popularna kultura in »povnanjanje« branja

Pamela vsekakor sodi med tiste priljubljene romane, ki so spodbudili največ ne-literarnih materialnih odmevov. Konec štiridesetih let 18. stoletja je bilo tako denimo mogoče kupiti pahljačo, poslikano z motivi romana; a ti so se pojavljali tudi na skodelicah pa celo na ščitih za kamin in na slamnikih. V tistem času namreč avtorske pravice, vsaj kar zadeva takšne ne-literarne primere, še niso bile jasno uveljavljene. Prva uradna ilustrirana izdaja *Pamele* je izšla dve leti po prvem izidu romana (tj. leta 1742 pri založbi Gravelot in Hayman), a številne upodobitve oboževane junakinje so med navdušenimi bralci krožile že veliko prej. Pamela je v Angliji in drugod postala priljubljen slikarski motiv. Joseph Highmore je po izbranih motivih romana na primer poslikal dvanajst oljnih platen. Poleg tega so takratni bralci lahko obiskali razstavo več kot sto miniaturnih voščenic figuric, ki so predstavljale različne motive Richardsonovega romana. (Ko

je izšel drugi del, je bila razstava ustrezno razširjena.) »Pamela« je bila na voljo tudi kot maškaradni kostum (gl. Sabor in Keymer 143–176).

Bralci so si zamišljali prigode fikcijskih junakov onkraj njihove zamejenosti na izvirno delo in jim tako podeljevali samostojnost in neodvisnost, s tem pa tudi moč vpletanja v svoja lastna življenja. Junake uspešnic so obravnavali kot skupno lastnino (Brewer 78). Poleg Pamele so tudi Gulliver iz *Gulliverjevih potovanj*, Polly in McHeath iz *Beraške opere* in Tristram Shandy doživeli številne pustolovščine zunaj svoje »matične biografije« in se materializirali v raznovrstnih artiklih.

Ta materialna razsežnost branja je v tistem času opravljala zelo pomembno funkcijo, ki jo je mogoče opisati kot »povnanjanje« ali socializacijo branja. V Angliji 18. stoletja, kjer so prevladovalе javne in kolektivne oblike zabave – gledališče, ples, koncerti, promenade in druženje v kavarnah –, je bilo branje romanov neobičajna oblika prostočasa, omejena na individualno zasebnost. Da bi se lahko uveljavilo kot enakovredna oblika zabave, je, ko je postajalo vse bolj priljubljeno, potrebovalo svoj odmev tudi v skupinskih javnih praksah. Materializacija branja – upodabljanje literarnih junakov, komercialni odvodi – tako izhaja iz potrebe po socializaciji intimne izkušnje, tj. po tem, da bi naša enkratna »bralna zaznavanja« delili z drugimi. Opisano povnanjanje intimne bralne izkušnje, ki se sklene v materialnem, je pomembno prispevalo k družbenemu uveljavljanju branja.

Pogled v sodobnost: diskurz okrog knjig

Ob koncu si bom koncept povnanjanja branja in s tem povezan fenomen materialnosti branja ogledala še z gledišča aktualne knjižno-bralne kulture. Danes nas obkroža zares širok razpon t. i. bralnih družabnosti: festivali in dogodki, nagrade in priznanje in številni sekundarni literarnih artikli vseh sort. A videti je, da vse to pravzaprav nima veliko opraviti s konkretnim branjem knjig kot intimno izkušnjo beročega posameznika, ki je izvirno sprožila te zunanje družabnosti. Nasprotno, zdi se, da se pomp okrog knjig sploh ne osredotoča (več) na samo branje, o čemer morda najočitneje priča razcvet t. i. diskurza okrog knjig, ki očitno prednjači pred diskurzom o knjigah. Medtem ko lahko govorimo »o« knjigi, ki smo jo prebrali, lahko govorimo samo »okrog« knjige, ki je nismo prebrali. Obenem velja, da lahko govorimo tudi »okrog« knjige, ki smo jo prebrali, ne pa tudi »o« knjigi, ki je nismo prebrali.

Okrog knjig je mogoče zlahka govoriti preprosto tako, da pogovor speljemo od teksta k nečemu, čemurkoli že, kar je glede na tekst sicer nujno zunanje, vendar ostaja kontekstualno povezano z njim. Da smo bili

nedavno priča uspehu knjige Pierra Bayarda *How to Talk About Books You Haven't Read* (Kako govoriti o knjigah, ki jih nismo prebrali) pa še knjige Henryja Hitchingsa *How to Really Talk About Books You Haven't Read* (Kako resnično govoriti o knjigah, ki jih nismo prebrali), pove veliko o vzponu in prepoznavnosti diskurza okrog knjig. Tudi zgolj občasni bralec časopisov lahko opazi, da t. i. literarne strani vse pogostejše vsebujejo zunaj-literarne teme; angleški *Guardian* nas tako seznanja na primer s sobami pisateljev, pa z njihovimi delovnimi rituali, pisalnimi orodji ipd., kar praviloma nima veliko opraviti z literaturo.⁷ Eden glavnih elementov diskurza okrog knjig se nanaša na materialnost branja in vključuje vse od najrazličnejših knjižno-bralnih pripomočkov (med katerimi so bralne svetilke⁸ pa stojala in knjižna znamenja) do tržnih literarnih artiklov.⁹

Danes, ko živimo tako rekoč v času ekscesa knjig, postajajo reference na dejanske knjižne vsebine vse redkejšje. Namesto teh snov za komentarje o knjigah vse bolj »priskrbevajo« reference iz zunaj-literarne sfere, ki zadevajo recimo avtorjevo življenje ali pa takšne ali drugačne okoliščine pisanja.¹⁰ Vsebina sama vse manj omogoča razpravo o knjigi, saj preprosto ne predstavlja več skupnega imenovalca doživljanja knjige. Z zamenjavo diskurza o knjigi za diskurz okrog knjig vsebina oziroma lastnosti samega teksta umanjajo kot temeljna skupna podlaga različnih bralnih pogledov.

Ta trend je najbolj prepoznaven v naraščajočem številu knjig o branju (in nebranju), ki artikulirajo fizično izkušnjo branja in materialne prakse ravnanja s knjigami, kot da bi želele poudariti njihovo kot-da ponovno odkrito materialnost.¹¹ To je zagotovo simptom aktualnih ugotovitev o dematerializaciji knjige, osvajalnem pohodu e-branja in o transformaciji knjižne kulture, kakršno smo poznali doslej. Ta trend se kaže tudi v vrsti na knjigo in branje oziroma pisanje osredotočenih umetniških projektov in performansov, ki poskušajo utelesiti in s tem reflektirati nove načine branja in ravnanja s knjigami.¹²

Naj sklenem z ugotovitvijo, da so bili v 18. stoletju romani »povna-njeni« in izživeti na različne načine, a medtem ko razlaga za to tiči v spremembi narave prostočasa in v popularizaciji tihega branja, je sodobna situacija v marsičem ravno obrnjena. Zdi se namreč, da je branje knjig vse manj predpogoj za govorjenje o njih. Kot da bi intenzivna materializacija branja in govorjenje okrog knjig zadoščala in nadomestila primarni referent – branje samo.

OPOMBE

¹ Prispevek predstavlja zgolj uvodno razpravo o načinih, kako misliti materialne, ne-literarne razsežnosti branja romana, zato ga velja brati kot nekakšen panoramski uvid v problematiko.

² To še zdaleč ne velja za vse ženske, pač pa za večino tistih, ki so si lahko privoščile knjige, tj. za plemkinje in pripadnice višjega srednjega sloja. Srednji sloj je bil tudi tisti, ki je najizraziteje nosil posledice industrijske revolucije; revne žene so namreč morale še vedno delati, aristokratinjam pa tako in tako že prej ni bilo treba delati.

³ Za natančnejši portret družbenega konteksta gl. A. Vogrinčič, *Družabno*.

⁴ Za podrobnejši opis zgodnjega angleškega romana gl. Hunter.

⁵ G. npr. katalog komercialne knjižnice v Bedfordu iz leta 1817.

⁶ Gl. npr. slike Pierra A. Baudoina *La Lectrice in Le Midi* (oboje ok. 1760) ter sliko J.-B. Greuza *Lady Reading the Letter of Eloize and Abelard*, ok. 1780 (med drugim na <http://www.english.ucsb.edu/faculty/warner/courses/w00/engl30/StagingReaders.ecf.8.99.htm> /31. julij 2011/).

⁷ Gl. npr. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/series/writersrooms> (31. julij 2011).

⁸ Gl. npr. <http://www.wired.com/gadgetlab/2009/07/reading-lamp-holds-books-shuts-itself-off/> (31. julij 2011).

⁹ Patricia Ard (36) preučuje povezavo med zatonom branja in vzponom literarne materialne kulture ter ugotavlja, da postaja »bralna izkušnja zreducirana in poblagovljena za kupce«.

¹⁰ Preusmeritev (medijske) pozornosti od dejanske literarne umetnine k njenemu avtorju je bilo mogoče opaziti že pred desetletji (gl. primerjalno raziskavo literarnih rubrik resnih in rumenih časopisov med letoma 1960 in 2000 v dvanajstih evropskih državah /Vogrinčič, »Literary«/). A medtem ko smo lahko to spremembo pripisali tabloidizaciji kulturnih strani, gre vzroke za današnjo spremembo diskurza o knjigah iskati drugje.

¹¹ Poleg Bayarda in Hitchingsa velja omeniti vsaj še *Ex Libris: Confessions of a Common Reader* A. Fadiman (2000), *So Many Books, So Little Time* (2003) S. Nelson, *Reading Diary* (2004) A. Manguela, *Leave Me Alone, I'm Reading* (2005) M. Corrigan, *Joy of Reading* (2008) van Dorena, *Howards End is on the Landing. A Year of Reading from Home* (2009) S. Hill in *How to Read a Novel. A User's Guide* (2006) J. Sutherlanda.

¹² Gl. npr. Fleur Thio, *Hasty Book* (Neučakana knjiga) (Vogrinčič, »K tematski« 9), knjižne fotografije Care Barer (<http://www.carabarar.com> /31. julij 2011/) ali nenavadno knjižni kip Briana Dettmerja (http://www.futureofthebook.org/blog/archives/2009/03/extraordinary_book_sculpture.html, 2009 /31. julij 2011/).

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Rabelais in knjižnica Opatije svetega Viktorja

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»Naštevaje« je eden od načinov, s katerimi se Rabelais osvobaja teže zakonitosti snovnega sveta, vnaprejšnje določenosti, vsiljenega smisla in podobnega.

»Naštevaje« je seveda podložno vsemu temu, toda kaj rado se osamosvoji, postane ritem, glasba, hipnotična mantra, molitev ali kaj podobnega, skratka, točka svobode, za katero ne veljajo vzročno-posledična razmerja, ki se v Rabelaisovi dobi izražajo v sholastični dikciji, prav to pa si avtor tako rad privošči. Pri tem ne gre za miniranje smisla, saj ta za Rabelaisa bržkone ostaja isti, kakor je bil poprej. Vsekakor pa gre za dekonstrukcijo forme, predvsem v njeni tako pogosti vlogi samoumevne nosilke smisla. Ker naj bi bil srednjeveški človek pozabil »pravo besedo«, naj bi izgubil tudi sposobnost »dobrega dejanja« (morda je bilo tudi obrnjeno, kdo ve). Knjižnice, kakršna je ta iz Pantagruela (VII. pogl.), so bile vredne vse kritike, ker so takšno izgubljanje spomina in z njim prihodnosti še pospeševale. Človek ne zna več brati, zato ne more več poslušati, prepuščen je sebi in (p)ostane idiot. Danes prav tako kakor pred petsto leti. Samo Rabelaisu in njemu podobnim gre zahvala, da se tega sploh zavedamo.

Ključne besede: humanizem / bralna kultura / knjižnice / Rabelais

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Odlomek iz *Pantagruela* (7. pogl.), ki je posvečen znameniti knjižnici, se od preostalega Rabelaisovega dela ne razlikuje niti po slogu in obliki (naštevaje najdemo še marsikje v delih tega avtorja) niti po tematiziranju »substanci«, kjer s humorjem prevladuje implicitna (ironija, parodija) ali eksplicitna kritika (satira). Četudi je snovi za eruditsko analizo dovolj, ta ugotovitev potisne zanimanje za »izvirnost« odlomka na obrobje, saj Rabelais, pravi mojster rekontekstualizacije, s tem pa navsezadnje tudi resemantizacije, v značilno srednjeveški maniri (*inventio*) na novo umešča znane in topološko jasno definirane teme, v katerih s svežim in neobremenjenim pogledom odkriva nove, običajno temačne plasti in vidike, ki jih je čas povozil, avtor pa jih ponovno prikliče v življenje predvsem zato, da se jih takoj zatem, odrešenih z njegovim smehom, dokončno znebi.

Odsotnost specifične intence je pogost pojav v delu Françoisa Rabelaisa, odlomki, ki so kakor sami sebi namen, pa so raznovrstni. Verjetno je najpogostejša manifestacija takšne razvezanosti naštevande, ki v divjem, ekstatičnem, villonovskem ritmu (na primer »*rime, raille, cymbale, lutte*« – Villon 191) kakor kakšna tarantela vodi korak opotekajočega se bralca oziroma poslušalca, človeka, pijanega od menda stoletja pozabljenih in »na novo« odkritih snovnega sveta, lastnega telesa in, s tem, prave vrednosti časa. Kajti ritem je čas in čas je človek. Naj iz tistega časa omenimo zgolj Percevala, ki sodi med najbolj znane primere, saj se med svojim brezciljnim tavanjem ne zaveda niti ure niti dneva, še tedna, meseca in leta ne (Chrétien de Troyes *III*. 6261–6266). Vendar mladi zelenec iz 12. stoletja izgubi zavedanje zato, ker pozabi na vesoljno orientacijsko točko, večnost, ki času daje smisel in ga usmerja, s tem pa mu omogoča gibanje.

Tudi Rabelais ceni odrešeni, milostni čas, ki po splošno sprejeti veri edini vodi v zveličanje, četudi ta miselnost pri njem ni izključujoča. Sholastičnih reminiscenc pa je v njegovem delu vse polno, morda je najbolj znana tista iz osmega poglavja, poglavja o Kristusu, ki bo Očetu na koncu časov vrnil vesoljni svet očiščen greha in zla (Rabelais, *Pantagruel* [1972] 121; Rabelais, *Pantagruel* [1994] 157). No, v srednjeveških delih naštevande bodisi na povsem sugestiven način označuje polnost bodisi ima za nalogo spravljati bralca oziroma poslušalstvo v smeh. Rabelais se nikoli ne norčuje iz polnosti, še manj je kdajkoli kislega obraza, v obeh primerih pa ostaja zvest srednjeveškemu (in) monastičnemu izročilu (*ioca monachorum*) (gl. J. Dubois), še posebej kadar se gre biblično parodijo (Kristusova genealogija) ali kadar z poskuša naštevanjem (iger, knjig) nakazati polnost, torej potrditi kvaliteto z uvajanjem kvantitete.

Rabelais je ustvaril prozno delo, ki slogovno sodi med najbolj dramska, kar jih poznamo, in v katerem je bilo prav vse, od prodaje do razumevanja polimorfni podrobnosti, odvisno od glasnega branja. V promocijskem smislu je bilo glasno branje na sejnih, kjer so tolste knjige prodajali vstric s kravami enake podkožne vsebnosti, ne samo nujno zaradi boljše prodaje, temveč je v najboljšem primeru besedilo popeljalo v višine, ki si jih je to zaslužilo, česar s tihim branjem ni bilo mogoče doseči. Geste, kriki, tisti bilabiali, ki jih noben fonetični sistem ne upošteva, in ostali znaki (strokovno bi rekli »markerji«) za ironijo, parodijo, satiro ipd., vse to pri tihem branju odpade.

Srednji vek naj bi bil pozabil ne le na zdravo pamet, temveč v tančico nevednosti zavil tudi zdravo telo z vsem vesoljem, ki ga je obdajalo, in se nič kaj ne zanimal, iz česa ju je bil naredil Stvarnik. Toda prav srednjeveška duša, no, »duša« je po Tomažu Akvinskem, prej pa seveda že po Aristotelu, nujna za obstoj časa, ker ga pač edina meri oziroma se ga

zaveda, je odkrila uro kot časovno enoto, ki jo bodo kot takšno humanisti tudi utemeljili (C.-G. Dubois 118 isl.; Haenens 6, 10–11, 13). Ura bo postala osnovni orientir, ki bo človeku omogočal umestitev v trenutku in usmeritev v zgodovini, v renesansi sicer še ne z dejansko znanstveno preciznostjo, saj so humanisti živeli v svetu »približkov« in »približnega« (Febvre 429), verjetno pa z željo po njej (ta »preciznost« pa bo pozneje izražala človekovo zmotno prepričanje, da je gospodar časa).

Človek se je ob misli, da gospoduje zemlji, prevzel do takšne mere (*hybris*), da je začel dojemati čas kot nekaj, kar lahko obstaja tudi brez večnosti. Zato se je prepad med posvečenim časom, tistim, ki ga Jacques Le Goff imenuje »cerkveni«, in posvetnim, »trgovčevim«, ki je nevtrarno izpraznjen, le še poglobljaj (Le Goff 53–73). V Rabelaisovem delu ni ničesar, kar bi imelo samo po sebi kakšen skrit pomen ali, po srednjeveško, *senefiance*, niti sosledje poglavij niti razporeditev snovi, niti izbor tematike niti idejne opredelitve (kjer so), niti bolj specifične reči, na primer numerologija ali kabala. Rabelais, humanist, sicer ponižuje srednji vek z izrazi, sposojenimi od italijanskih predhodnikov in kolegov, začenši s Petrarco, in ga imenuje »gotška tema«, toda Petrarca je ob tem imel v mislih etnično in geografsko delitev, medtem ko termin v Rabelaisovem času uporabljajo v kronološkem oziroma zgodovinsko-kulturološkem smislu. Prostor se je neizogibno umaknil času.

Bralec, ki pri Rabelaisu pričakuje serije poglavij, nanašajoč se na isto epizodo, predstavljeno z različnih vidikov in z vedno novimi elementi, v svojem pričakovanju ne bo razočaran, vendar bo naletel tudi na posamična poglavja, navidezno nefunkcionalna in slabo integrirana, ker v njih pač ni jasno razviden narativni cilj in smisel razen tistega, ki se mu od določenega trenutka naprej pravi »Dive Bouteille« ali božanska Steklenica, katere orakelj pa je nekje v negotovi prihodnosti oziroma na koncu pete knjige. Ta pa je še daleč.

Telesa seveda pred Rabelaisom niso zanemarjali niti v teologiji niti v vsakdanjem življenju, še v literaturi ne, iz katere je Rabelais obilno črpal. Srednjeveški humor je najpogostejše vezan na telesnost, zato ga, na primer, v romanih o gralu ni. Kako je torej mogoče, da so v obdobjih po srednjem veku, še posebej v tistem, ki je neposredno sledilo »temi«, tako posplošeno, površno in narobe sprejemali in si predstavljali srednjeveški odnos do telesa in telesnosti?

Sveti Pavel oziroma njegovi razlagalci, ki so krivi za nejasno razlikovanje med konceptom »mesa« in realnostjo telesa, gotovo nosijo del krivde. Svojo težo pa doda tudi vsesplošno in vedno implicitno prepričanje, da se je svet začel z nami in da spada vse, kar je bilo poprej, na smetišče zgodovine. Telo v Rabelaisovem času ni več kamnita ležeča figura, otrplo zleknjena

na pokrovu sarkofaga, ki tiho zapisuje svoj življenjepis v spomin mimoidočih, niti dvodimenzionalni lik, kakršnih so polne srednjeveške freske in ki pripoveduje v času vkoreninjeno zgodbo, toda s sporočilom, ki posreduje skupno in vedno enako »meta-zgodbo«, kar je tedaj pomembnejše od konkretnih, posamičnih zgodb v vsej njihovi časnosti in opreostorjenosti.

Svet se je vedno hitreje gibal, premaknil se je bil sicer že vsaj dve stoletji poprej, in kamnite figure na pokrovih sarkofagov so se, kakor na primer Franc I. v baziliki Saint-Denis, nenadoma znašle na kolenih, v molitvenem položaju, ki je bil v dani situaciji pač položaj optimalne razgibanosti, medtem pa sta na novo odkrita vizualni detajl in perspektiva v predstavljanju prostora vrnila »fizični« pogled svetu, kateremu je pripadal, svetu materije, katere prisotnost in pomembnost v zavesti zahodnega človeka bosta po- slej zgolj rasli, seveda kmalu na račun duhovnega sveta.

* * *

Knjižnica je zbir znanja, zaobjet z namenom in željo ustanovitelja in njenih uporabnikov. Tipologija knjižnic je danes bistveno bolj razvejana kakor v srednjem veku in bibliotekarski klasifikacijski sistemi zagotavljajo red in preglednost vsega razpoložljivega branja, vsaj na povrh, tja do zadnjih specializiranih knjižnic, na primer znanstvenih, ki se delijo v še bolj specializirane, na področja, o katerih v srednjem veku niti sanjali niso. Knjižnica Opatije svetega Viktorja je mešanica vsega, torej zmeda. Raznolikost naslovov odraža heterogenost ritma (oziroma ritmov), v katere(ga) je prisiljen bralec, kar še posebej velja pri glasnem branju.

Branje, kakor glasba ali arhitektura, je red, ritem, matematika. Mnogo več, seveda, vendar najprej to (mar se poglavje ne začne z imeni slavnih antičnih arhitektov in matematikov?). Uživati je mogoče ob pogledu na lepo zgradbo, četudi ni naša in ne živimo v njej, prav tako pa je to mogoče ob poslušanju besedila, ki ga sicer ne razumemo, vsečna pa nam je vsaka kadenca in melodični odtene, ki ga slišimo. Čeprav je red lahko parodičen, sporočilnost satirična, ritem pa takšen, kot smo omenili na začetku, vse skupaj lahko deluje resno za tistega, ki razume, kajti sporočilo je zapisano *dreito por linhas tortas*, kakor bi morda dejal Claudel.

S svojimi izmišljenimi naslovi, od katerih so določeni prisojeni znanim avtorjem, ki jih humanisti niso prav nič cenili, se Rabelaisova »dekonstrukcija« ne nanaša zgolj na sholastično bibliografijo z njeno dobo in načinom mišljenja vred, temveč meri širše in vključuje celo samo načelo »knjižnice«. Toda Rabelais ni nikoli samo anarhični uničevalec, z dekonstrukcijo je zaposlena samo ena roka, druga namreč sproti gradi in ustvarja. Bralec torej pomisli na možnost, da sama ustanova, ki je sposobna takšne degeneracije, kakršno predstavi avtor v našem poglavju, ni vredna pretiranega spošto-

vanja, vendar mu je kljub temu jasno, da je sporočilo docela pozitivno in optimistično, podobno kot dejanje poljedelca, ki očisti in preorje ledino, preden poseje kulturne rastline. Norčavi in satirični naslovi s parodičnimi elementi na mah izpraznijo knjižnične police, ne sicer knjig, smisla pa prav gotovo. V avtorjevem duhu, ki se mu pridružuje bralčev, saj je povabljen zraven, že samo dejanje zavedanja, kajti to razlikuje in vrednoti, ustvarja prostor smislu, ki ga bo naslednje poglavje vtilo vanj, s tem pa ponovno vzpostavlja knjižnico kot pojem in realnost ter potrjuje njeno vlogo v družbenem življenju.

Raje kakor smešne naslove naštevanih knjig si bomo zapomnili samo naštevanje, knjižnice pa se ne bomo spominjali kot ustanove, ki hrani vse in kar koli, kar je človek napisal v zgodovini svojega kratkega bivanja na zemlji, temveč kot izbor v funkciji hierarhije smisla. Poglavitna vloga knjižnice, varovanje smisla, v čemer je sorodna drugim družbenim ustanovam in družbi sami, predpostavlja dinamično in prilagodljivo knjižnico, ki združuje sedanost s preteklostjo in izročilom, ne da bi pod njunim vplivom izgubila sebi lastno naravo. Knjižnica je seveda svetišče znanja, toda če ni obenem preročišče smisla, je že v počelu vsa sklerotična, smešna in nepotrebna, tako rekoč se sama po sebi ponuja v »dekontekstualizacijo« in takojšnjo »resemantizacijo«.

Tako smo pri ključnem vprašanju, vprašanju bralca. Tistega, ki bere, da bi se kaj naučil, pa tudi drugega, ki je bil in bi moral tudi danes biti še pomembnejši, saj je s svojim znanjem in modrostjo *razlikoval*, razvijal hierarhijo in jo obnavljal, vzdrževal njeno etično in funkcionalno celovitost, s tem pa celovitost človeške skupnosti, ki se je prav zato v vsakem trenutku lahko prepoznala v svoji preteklosti in je imela določen cilj v prihodnosti. Ta tip bralca je odtlej izgubil individualnost, tako da se danes v resnici smemo vprašati, kdo bere. Za Rabelaisa je bil odgovor evidenten, njegovim sodobnikom je bral humanist. Možnost pluralnega branja je pri njem komaj nakazana, bistveno manj jasno od pluralnosti jezikov, prav gotovo, ki je vsekakor pozitivna v Gargantuovih priporočilih svojemu študioznemu sinu (VIII. poglavje), ni pa docela pozitivna, na primer, v prizoru prvega srečanja med Panurgom in Pantagruelom, kjer je predvsem nepotrebna, razen za obstoj zgodbe.

Kaj pa današnji bralec, ga poznamo? Kako bi ga le mogli prepoznati v množici, ki bere ali celo piše. Moderni bralec se skriva v vsakem naslovu iz polic knjižnice Opatije svetega Viktorja. No, pa smo v istem košu s sholastiko, bomo presenečeni, razočarani, morda celo zadovoljni in pomirjeni, toda ne, nimamo razloga za nič od tega, kajti nimamo svojega Rabelaisa. Brez Bralca, kar je bolj funkcija kakor posameznik, ki k njej prispeva svoj del samo, če jo v načelu priznava, pa obstaja nevarnost, da knjižnice posta-

nejo ogromna, neuporabna trupla, na katerih si bodo mrhovinarji postregli in se nažrli, ne da bi kar koli v kakršni koli obliki vrnili skupnosti, ki jim je požrtijo omogočila. Knjižnica je kakor živo bitje oziroma potrebuje, podobno kot čas, človekovo zavest, ki prodira skozi labirint znanja, v katerem išče smisel in ki ga bo na koncu vrnila skupnosti, za katero ga je pravzaprav šla iskat. Kadar je tako, knjižnica deluje kot temeljni kamen, na katerem sloni skupnost. Kajti tako tisti, ki so sposobni brati zase, kakor vsi ostali, ki tega niso sposobni, za (spo)razumevanje potrebujejo Bralca, kar je še najmanj, oziroma je predpogoj za pot k cilju, h kateremu bi morala težiti vsaka družba, to pa je integrirati smisel in skupne temeljne vrednote, ki omogočajo sožitje ali vsaj skupno bivanje. Če bi danes imeli svojega Rabelaisa, kaj bi nam povedal o nas samih?

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Knjižnica in bralec na Kranjskem (1670–1870) in slovenska literarna zgodovina

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Prvi del članka se ukvarja s pogledi na zasebne knjižnice plemstva in pomembnejših pisateljev v slovenski literarni in zgodovinski vedi. Drugi del članka pa raziskuje protokole izposoj v ljubljanski Licejski knjižnici v 19. stoletju.

Ključne besede: zgodovina branja / Slovenija / 19. stol. / knjižnice / bralna kultura

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Naša zgodba se prične z Janezom Krstnikom Mayrom, salzburškim tiskarjem, ki je na Elizabetin sejem leta 1678 v Ljubljani odprl svojo knjigarno in objavil katalog prodajanih knjig. Na začetku kataloga takole nagovori svojega prijatelja bralca:

Et ut scire posses, Amice Lector, libros, quos commodo tuo adduxi, eos praesenti Catalogo conscripsi. Quod si videro obsequium hoc meum gratum fuisse, majori adhunc copia Officinam meam locupletabo, quo amplius inservire possim. Tu interim Erudite Lector bene vale, & conatum meum favore promove.

Dajem ti na znanje, ljubi bralec, da sem knjige, ki sem jih zbral v tvoj prid, popisal v tem katalogu. In če bom videl, da je bila moja ustrežljivost dobrodošla, bom še z večjo zalogo obogatil svojo trgovino, da ti bom še v večji meri mogel ustreči. Ti pa, učeni bralec, medtem zdravstvuj in z naklonjenostjo podpri moje prizadevanje.

Najbrž ni odveč poudariti, da je Mayr poleg številnih teoloških, pravnih, medicinskih, filozofskih knjig v latinščini širši ljubljanski publiki verjetno prvič omogočil dostop do nekaterih historično-galantnih romanov. Na seznamu je najti romana *Aramena, die durchleuchtige Syrerinn* (Aramena, svetla Sirka) Antona Ulricha von Brauenschweig-Wolfenbüttla in *Die afrikanische Sophonisbe* (Afriška Sofonizba) Philipa von Zesena. Posebej je izpostavljen tudi nemški prevod romana Mlle de Scudéry *Clélie*.

Po tem katalogu je nemara posegel tudi baron Janez Vajkard Valvasor, znameniti baročni polihistor, ki si je na gradu Bogenšperk v tistem času ustvarjal pomembno zasebno knjižnico. Na popisu knjižnice, ki je bila leta 1690 prodana zagrebškemu škofu, je vrsta del s področja geografije, zgodovine, geometrije in arhitekture. Anja Dular (»Valvasorjeva« 268) je zapisala, da se Valvasorjeva zanimanja neverjetno dobro kažejo v vsebini knjig, ki jih je zbral v svoji grajski biblioteki. Nas bodo zanimala zlasti literarna dela, ki jih dosedanj raziskovalci niso analizirali. Poleg antičnih klasikov je imel Valvasor kar nekaj pikareskih romanov. V svoji zbirki je imel nemški prevod romana *Življenje Lazarika s Tormesa* in Alemánov roman *Guzmán de Alfarache* v italijanskem prevodu ter v nemški priredbi, ki jo je napravil Aegidius Albertinus. Očitno je poznal tudi zgodbo *Historia von Isaac Winckelfelder und Jobst von der Schneidt*, ki jo je Niclaus Ulenhart priredil po Cervantesovi noveli *Rinconete y Cortadillo* (*Kotarček in krojaček*). Zanimal se je tudi za pikaresko junakinjo iz romana Andrea Pereza *Die Iustina Dietzin Picara* (Pikara Justina). Posebej je treba poudariti, da je imel vse izvirne dele Grimmelshausnovega *Simplicissima*. Poleg pikareskih je poznal tudi nekaj zanimivih precioznih romanov. Na seznamu je najti nemške prevode romana Honoréja d'Urféja *L'Astrée* (Astreja) in *Clélie* ter *Artamène ou le Grand Cyrus* (Artamen) Mlle de Scudéry. V nasprotju s prozo je imel v svoji knjižnici od znamenitih klasicističnih dram le Corneillevo mučeniško tragedijo *Polievkt* v nemškem prevodu. Med nemškimi baročnimi dramati ki iz Valvasorjeve knjižnice je treba izpostaviti zlasti Daniela Casperja von Lohensteina z dramami *Cleopatra*, *Ibrahim Sultan* in *Sophonisbe*, katere tema je bila v času baroka in klasicizma zelo priljubljena.

Valvasorjeva knjižnica je bila na Kranjskem dejansko redkost. Sredi 17. stoletja je imel povprečni kranjski plemič v svoji knjižnici 25 do 30 knjig, 17% plemičev je imelo manj kot deset knjig. Marko Štuhec (84) je ob raziskavi zapuščinskih aktov ugotovil, da v tem času knjiga ni bila nepogrešljiva spremljevalka plemiškega vsakdana in da branje ni bila tista dejavnost, ki bi zaposlovala kranjske plemiče. Podobno pa je bilo tudi v 18. stoletju.

Za nas je zanimiva zasebna knjižnica ljubljanskega knezoškofa Karla Janeza Herbersteina iz druge polovice 18. stoletja. Poznamo jo po avkcijem katalogu, ki je bil – kot prvi takšne vrste – natisnjen v Ljubljani ob razprodaji knjižnice leta 1788. Knezoškofovo biblioteko je že v tridesetih letih 20. stoletja obravnaval literarni zgodovinar France Kidrič (»Herberstein« 304), ki je ugotovil, da njeno jedro tvorijo zlasti cerkveni očetje, ki so jih reklamirali janzenisti, ter predstavniki janzenizma, janzenističnega cerkvenega prava in janzenističnih cerkvenih reform (Arnauld, Duguët, Dupin). Kidrič med neteološkimi strokami, ki vse skupaj ne odtehtajo prejšnje skupine, opaža Herbersteinovo zanimanje za pravnofilo-

zofske spise (Montesquieu), a ugotavlja, da je kupoval razmeroma malo čisto filozofskih del (Pope, Descartes). Literarna teorija je zastopana skromno, zaloga posvetne artistične literature pa je »naravnost revna«. Kidrič (»Herberstein« 304) poudarja, da je seznam Herbersteinove biblioteke »jasno ogledalo njegove miselnosti« iz sedemdesetih let 18. stoletja.¹

V osemdesetih letih 18. stoletja pa je dal svojo knjižnico katalogizirati tudi baron Žiga Zois, tedaj najbogatejši Kranjec in osrednji mecen. Njegova knjižnica, ki jo danes poznamo po *Bibliothecae Sigismundi Liberi Baronis de Zois Catalogus*, je bila najbolj založena zlasti za področje naravoslovja. V njej je bila vrsta del iz botanike (Tournefort, Linné), mineralogije (Brongniart), geologije (Dolomieu), fizike (Nollet) in kemije. Ni pomembno, da je imel temeljna dela o teoriji kemijskih sorodnosti (Bergman, Berthollet), ki so pustile sledi v književnosti. Rad je prebiral tudi potopise, saj je v njegovi knjižnici najti Bougainvilla, kapitana Cooka in celo kapitana Bligha, poraženca upora na ladji Bounty. Zanimal se je tudi za Montesquieuja in ekonomista Neckerja. Posedoval pa je tudi Rousseaujev *Dictionnaire de musique* (Slovar glasbe). Že Kidrič (*Zgodovina* 214) je v knjižnici pogrešal več beletrističnih del pa tudi francosko enciklopedijo. V francoščini je Zois sicer poleg Rabelaisa in Montaigna lahko prebiral tudi Cervantesa, Younga in Popa. Ščasoma pa je postal vnet zbiralec slavike.

Zois je kupil vrsto knjig pri Wilhelmu Heinrichu Kornu, ljubljanskem knjigarnarju, ki je sicer v osemdesetih letih 18. stoletja objavil več katalogov (Dular, *Živeti* 194–223). Katalogi nam razkrivajo, da je Korn ljubljanskemu bralstvu postregel z nekaterimi tedaj popularnimi meščanskimi žaloigrami. Bralci so lahko kupili Goethejevega *Claviga*, Beaumarchaisovo *Eugenie* in Diderotovo dramatiko pa tudi tedaj na novo odkritega Shakespeara, ki so ga najbrž prebirali v predelavah. Leta 1789 so imeli zelo jasno predstavo o raznolikosti romanopisja 18. stoletja. Korn jim je ponujal *Robinsona Crusoeja* Daniela Defoeja, *Toma Jonesa* Henryja Fieldinga, skupaj s Cervantesovim *Don Kihotom* – vzorom angleškega razsvetljenskega romana – na eni strani ter Rousseaujevo *Novo Heloižo* (v nemščini in francoščini) in Goethejevim romanom *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* (*Trpljenje mladega Wertherja*) na drugi. Werther je bil očitno pri bralstvu priljubljen, saj se v katalogih pojavljajo nekatere wertheriade.

Tovrstni katalogi so bili pomembni, saj tedaj v Ljubljani ni bilo javnih knjižnic. Licejska knjižnica, katere osnovni fond so bile knjige razpuščenih samostanov, je javnosti svoja vrata odprla šele leta 1794, leto dni pozneje pa so si bralci lahko izposojali knjige tudi pri knjigarnarju Kleinmayerju (Dular, *Živeti* 184–193), in sicer zlasti vrsto zgodovinskih romanov, a tudi Lessingovega *Modrega Nathana* in znamenite Youngove *Night-Thoughts* (Nočne misli) v francoskem prevodu (*Les nuits*).

Slovenska intelektualna elita pa se je formirala ob Zoisovi knjižnici. Prvemu slovenskemu pesniku Valentinu Vodniku je baron dajal celo svoje dvojnice. Po Kidriču (*Zgodovina* 402) je Vodnikova knjižnica značilna biblioteka skromnega literata, ki mu je klasicizem še vedno glavni vzorec. Med literarnoteoretskimi deli je imel Vodnik Boileaujeva (*Œuvres* (Dela), med antičnimi pesniki pa Horacija, ki mu ga je kot vzor svetoval Zois. Že Kidrič (*Zgodovina* 403) je zapisal, da je bilo število beletrističnih avtorjev iz novejše dobe za človeka, ki je sam pisal pesmi, sumljivo nizko. Med sodobnejšimi nemškimi pesniki je imel Klopstocka, Wielanda, Voša in Schillerja.

Leta 1804 je Zoisov zasebni tajnik in nadzornik njegove mineraloške zbirke postal Jernej Kopitar, poznejši ugledni slavist. Tudi v Kopitarjevi zasebni knjižnici, ki je po lastnikovi smrti vzbujala zanimanje širom po Evropi, je najti vrsto del pomembnih slavistov in lingvistov, s katerimi si je ta kranjski učenjak dopisoval. Med Slovani velja omeniti zlasti dela Josefa Dobrovskega, Františka Čelakovskega, Františka Palackega, Pavla Josefa Šafárika, Jána Kollárja in seveda Vuka Stefanovića Karadžića, ki je pod Kopitarjevim mentorstvom postal ustvarjalec modernega srbskega jezika. Med zahodnoevropskimi Kopitarjevimi dopisovalci je v njegovi knjižnici najti dela arabista Silvestra de Sacyja ter spise Jacoba Grimma, Wilhelma von Humbolta in Franza Boppa. Tudi zato je Walter Lukan (16) zapisal, da je Kopitarjeva zasebna knjižnica odsev njegovih znanstvenih povezav. Že Lukana (59) pa je presenetilo, da je imel z izjemo antičnih avtorjev zelo malo leposlovja. Nekatera dela so v knjižnici pristala po srečnem naključju. Achille Jubinal mu je v zahvalo poslal zbrana dela Rutebeufa, Kokkinakes pa mu je podaril svoj prevod *Tartuffa* v novogrščino.

V nasprotju s Kopitarjem pa je imel Matija Čop v svoji knjižnici veliko sodobnega leposlovja, ki ga je v svoji korespondenci večkrat omenjal. Takole na začetku dvajsetih let 19. stoletja (13. 12. 1822) piše znancu Francu Leopoldu Saviu o svojem branju na Reki, kjer je zahajal v hišo angleškega trgovca:

[I]n Fiume also beschäftigte ich mich natürlich am meisten mit meinem eigentlichen Fache, der alten klassischen Litteratur, freylich aber konnte ich nicht umhin, manchmal auch in der neuern etwas zu naschen, besonders wenn mir interessante Erscheinungen der Zeit zukamen: West-östlicher Divan – Wanderjahre – Houwald – Tieck's Gedichte – Indische Bibliothek – Lamartine – Manzoni – Ricciarda – Biagioli's Dante etc. und vorzüglich Byron und W. Scott nebst Thomas Moore. (Čop 54)

[N]a Reki torej sem se samoumevno ukvarjal največ s svojo pravo stroko, s staro klasično literaturo, čeprav nisem mogel kaj, da se ne bi bil marsikaterikrat posladkal tudi s čim novejšim, posebno če sem naletel na zanimiva sodobna dela: West-östlicher Divan – Wanderjahre – Houwald – Tieckove pesmi – Indische

Bibliothek – Lamartine – Manzoni – Ricciarda – Biagiolijev Dante itd. in posebno Byron in W. Scott poleg Thomasa Moora idr. (55–56).

To pismo mladega slovenskega poliglota in bibliotekarja je eden pomembnih spomenikov pasivne recepcije v prvih desetletjih 19. stoletja na Kranjskem. Čop je bil eden naših prvih bralcev evropske romantične literature, ki ima osrednje mesto tudi v njegovi obsežni knjižnici. Med omenjenimi avtorji je imel že na začetku dvajsetih let 19. stoletja v svoji knjižnici *The Poetical Works* (Poetična dela) Thomasa Moora (1821), *The Works* (Dela) Walterja Scotta (1819–1830), od Byrona pa tedaj italijanski prevod *Corsairja*. Imel je tudi zgodnjo izdajo Lamartinove zbirke *Méditations poétiques* (Poetične meditacije, 1820). V svoji korespondenci večkrat piše prav o Foscolu, Lamartinu in Byronu. Poleg Manzonijevih zgodnjih del (tu je mišljena tragedija *Adelchi*, 1822) je pozneje prebiral tudi njegov roman *Il promesi sposi* (Zaročenca). V svoji knjižnici je tedaj imel tudi Goethejev roman *Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre* (Popotna leta Wilhelma Meistra), v katerem ga je morda zanimala tema popotnih prigod mladega človeka (Kos, *Matija* 66), ki si išče primeren svet, da bi v njem skladno razvil svoja nagnjenja, in zbirko West-östlicher *Divan* (Zahodno-vzhodni divan). Ob tem velja poudariti, da je Čopovo obzorje zlasti intenzivno raziskovala slovenska komparativistika, ki se je pod vplivom francoske šole zelo poglobljala v t. i. bralsko obzorje (npr. Ocvirk 121, 179).

V Čopovi biblioteki je tudi drugi zvezek zbirke *Indische Bibliothek*, ki jo je izdal August Wilhelm Schlegel. Zvezek je pomembno vplival na Čopovo pojmovanje romantike in tako tudi na strukturo njegove zasebne biblioteke, ki je po Kidriču (»Čop« 103) »ogledalo« njegovih literarnih interesov. Gre za biblioteko, ki jo je zbiral čitatelj in poznavalec vsebine, a ne iskatelj bibliofilskih redkosti. Glede na njegove gmotne razmere je množina knjig (1993 naslovov) impresivna.

Med pričevanji o slovenskih pesnikih je največ zanimanja vzbudil *Zapuščinski akt Prešernov*, v katerem je najti popis 107 knjig. Raziskovalce je na začetku najbolj zanimalo, zakaj ni v njegovi zapuščini Straussovega dela *Das Leben Christi* (Kristusovo življenje) in nekaterih drugih. Zgodnji prešernoslovci (npr. Žigon 7) so obširno razmišljali, da je morda kdo knjižnico oplenil ali vsaj izločil nekatera dela iz zapuščine. Natančno analizo seznama knjig je opravil šele Janko Kos (*Prešeren* 35) v sedemdesetih letih 20. stoletja, ki je poudaril, da so očitno zunanje okoliščine odločale o obsegu in stanju pesnikove knjižnice, popisane v zapuščinskih listih. Obstoječe stanje knjižnice pa bi nam dalo popolnoma napačno sliko dejanske Prešernove razgledanosti po stari in novejši evropski literaturi. Kos (34) poudarja, da je poleg nekaterih pravnih in filozofskih del največ an-

tičnih, saj srečamo od Grkov Homerja (*Iliada* in *Odiseja* v italijanščini), Ezopa (*Fabulae*), Ajshila (*Agamemnon* v nemščini), Sofokla in Pindarja, od Rimljanov pa Tita Livija, Cicerona, Horacija (Vossov prevod *Satir* in *Epistol*), Tibula in Kvintilijana. Italijanski avtorji so Petrarca (*Rime*), Boccaccio (Mirabeaujev francoski prevod) in Ariosto. Angleške zastopajo Pope, Paine, Byron (*Don Juan*) in Defoe (*The True Born Englishman* /Pravi Anglež/), nemških avtorjev skorajda ni. Pozornost zbuja tudi dejstvo, da je v tej zapuščini zelo malo del evropske predromantike in romantike, zlasti ni nobenega sledu o avtorjih, ki jih je Prešeren dobro poznal in cenil: Bürger, Schiller, Goethe, Grün. Skratka, prav pri Prešernu se je izkazalo, da knjižnica, vsaj ne takšna, kot jo poznamo, ne more biti edino ogledalo razgledanosti.

Pomembno pričevanje o bralskih navadah nekaterih kranjskih gimnazijcev tik pred marčno revolucijo pa je najti v Trdinovih spominih, ki jih je slovenska komparativistika tudi natančno upoštevala. Trdina (133) je v svet branja po lastnih besedah vstopil s pomočjo romanskih narodnih legend o lepi Mageloni in o štirih Haimnovih sinovih. V tem času je prebiral dvorski verzni roman Wirnta von Grafenberga o vitezu Wigaloisu. Te pripovedke so mu bile most do t. i. Rittergeschichten Ludwiga Dellarose: »Ko sem katero dobil, je nisem dejal iz rok, dokler ni bila prebrana; sedel sem pri nji včasih celo noč, med jedjo sem držal v eni roki žlico, v drugi Dellarozo.« (Trdina 133) Trdina poudarja, da so tovrstna dela v štiridesetih letih 19. stoletja brali mnogi, ki so znali nemško: »[B]ile so več let poglavitni vir nemške kulture za naše študente, frajle, polufrajle in vso jaro gospodo in vse landpomorance slovenskih krajev.« (134) V tem času je knjigar nar Giontini – kot je razvidno iz oglasa v *Laibacher Zeitung* – Dellarosova dela prodajal po 30 krajcarjev, tudi roman *Marno, der Schreckenvolle, und das Mädchen in der Löwenhöhle* (Strašni Marno in deklica v Levjem peklu) (gl. *Intelligenz-Blatt*). Tega junaka iz španske zgodovine je imel mladi Trdina za junaka, večjega kot Cezar in Napoleon. V avtobiografiji se Trdina spominja, da duhovniki mladih od tovrstne literature niso odvrčali. Ko pa se je spovedniku spovedal, da bere Wielandovo *Geschichte des Philosophen Danischmende* (Zgodba filozofa Danišmenda), mu je ta naložil knjigo vreči v ogenj: »Bilo mi je tako žal, da mu prizanesem še tri dni, dokler ga namreč nisem prebral še enkrat, potem pa ga izročim brez milosti grmadi.« (Trdina 141) Od Dellarose je prešel h Caroline Pichler, katere zgodovinske romane je tudi v zrelih letih cenil. Zanimivo pa je, da se je v tem času zelo dolgočasil ob branju Walterja Scotta. Bolj mu je ugajal Bulwer-Lytton in njegov junak Paul Clifford. Zanimivo je, da je v svojih spominih zelo strogo sodil Goetheja, ki da pripoveduje tako ganljivo, da se samomor mlademu bralcu ne zdi nič pohujšljiv (140).

Posebno zanimivo vprašanje pa je, kaj je bralo ljudstvo v neurbanem okolju. Levstik (25) je v petdesetih letih 19. stoletja pisal, da so kmetje njegove domovine radi prebirali prvo slovensko povest, *Srečo v nesreči* Janeza Ciglerja: »Komaj so dobili knjižico v vas, in brž se je vrstila od hiše do hiše; in še zdaj se časih menijo pozimske večere, kako se je bilo godilo dvojčkoma Janezu in Pavlu.« Med drugimi priljubljenimi knjigami je omenil tudi robinsoniada, ki je bila prevedena v slovenščino, nekoč pa je naletel celo na kmeta, ki je prebiral prvo slovensko knjigo o fiziki (spisal jo je Karel Robida). Levstik (26) je iz povedanega izpeljal tale didaktični sklep: »[L]judstvo bi že bralo, ko bi le imelo kaj. In kakor bi raslo med nami število dobrih knjig, tako bi rastlo med narodom veselje do njih.«

* * *

Za preučevanje bralskih navad kranjske intelektualne elite v drugi polovici 19. stoletja so zanimivi ohranjeni protokoli izposojenih del (*Protokoll der entlehnten Werke*) v tedanji Licejski knjižnici v Ljubljani (oziroma po letu 1850 Študijski knjižnici za Kranjsko). Poglejmo si bralsko recepcijo nekaterih angloameriških piscev, kar bomo primerjali z odmevi v tedanji slovenski literaturi.

Čeprav je vzbujal že zanimanje romantikov, ki so ga prevajali, je iz omenjenih protokolov razvidno, da je bil Byron priljubljeno čtivo konec petdesetih let in na začetku šestdesetih let 19. stoletja. Ni nenavadno, da je leta 1862 Valentin Zarnik objavil novelo *Maščevanje osode* (gl. Zarnik, »Maščevanje«), v kateri poljska plemkinja prebira Byronovo *Romanje grofiča Harolda* (*Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*) in hrvaškega plemiča močno razjezi z izjavo, da pesnika najbrž pozna samo po imenu. Razjezi, saj ima Hrvat v svoji knjižnici Byronova dela v nemškem prevodu, a jih ni nikoli bral. Isti avtor je pet let pozneje objavil novelo *Slovenski Nikodem*, v kateri je o nekih čudnih vaških glasovih zapisal, da so »bili podobni ponočnemu kriku Indijancev ob bregovih kanadskih jezer, kar nam je neumrlji Cooper v svojih romanih prekrasno naslikal« (Zarnik, »Slovenski« 329). Očitno so bili te romani slovenskim bralcem dobro znani. Iz protokolov je razvidno, da je bil Cooper konec šestdesetih in na začetku sedemdesetih let izjemno priljubljen. Leta 1868 je bila skoraj vsaka druga izposojena knjiga pri avtorjih na C Cooperjeva. V tem pregledu nikakor ne smemo prezreti Walterja Scotta, ki se ga izrazito izposoja zlasti na začetku 60. let. Bralci so si v tem času izposojali po več zvezkov hkrati, ki so jih nato prebirali več mesecev. Poglejmo si obdobje 1860–1862. V povprečju 7 zvezkov, ki so jih bralci vrnili 6 mesecev po izposoji. Protokoli nam omogočajo odgovoriti na vprašanje, kdo si je Scottova dela izposodil. V tem času kar dvakrat naleti-

mo na nekega Ullricha, ki si je 3. decembra 1861 izposodil 7 zvezkov, ki jih je vrnil julija 1862. Novembra istega leta si je izposodil še 10 zvezkov, ki jih je prebiral do junija 1863. Ta Ullrich je bil verjetno Ferdinand Ullrich, ki je svojemu gimnazijskemu sošolcu Josipu Jurčiču posojal Scottova dela (Levec, Spomini« 422). Jurčič si je okoli 15. decembra 1861 v svojo beležnico zapisal, da je od Scotta bral: »5, 6 Redgauntlet, 16, 17 Kloster, 31, 32 Braut von Lamer Moor, 33 Herz von Mid-loth.«¹ Ullrich si je dejansko dva tedna poprej poleg drugih sposodil 17., 31. in 32. zvezek Scottovih del. Le nekaj let pozneje je Jurčič spisal prvi slovenski roman *Deseti brat*, v incipit katerega je postavil prav Scottovo ime:

Pripovedovalci imajo, kakor trdi že sloveči romanopisec Walter Scott, staro pravico, da svojo povest začno v krčmi, to je v tistem shodišču vseh popotnih ljudi, kjer se raznovrstni značaji naravnost in odkrito pokažejo drug drugemu poleg pregovora: v vinu je resnica. Da se torej tudi mi te pravice poprimemo, izvira iz tega, ker menimo, da naše slovenske krčme in naši krčmarji, čeravno imajo po deželi veliko preprostejšo podobo, niso nič manj originalni ko staroangleški Scottovi. (Jurčič 141)

Tudi Jurčičevo ime se pojavi v protokolih. Decembra 1862 si je Jurčič izposodil Shakespeara, ki ga je vrnil 7 mesecev pozneje. Ni nenavadno, da tudi glavna junakinja Jurčičevega romana prebira Shakespeara in s tem znanjem povsem očara svojega ljubimca. Pozneje si je izposodil tudi Fieldingovega *Toma Jonesa* in si prepisal nekaj zanimivih odlomkov.

Zanimivo se je tudi vprašati, v kolikšni meri se v tem obdobju izposoja francoska književnost. Iz protokolov je očitno, da so francoski klasicistični dramatik še vedno v ospredju zanimanja. Corneilleva dramatika se izposoja konec tridesetih let 19. stoletja, intenzivno pa še v drugi polovici petdesetih let, bralci posegajo zlasti po *Cidu* in *Horaciju*. V drugi polovici petdesetih (zlasti v letih 1857–1858) je bran tudi Racine. Zanimivo, da je veliko manj bralske pozornosti deležen komediograf Molière. Med romantiki v tem času nekoliko izstopa le Chateaubriand z *Atalo*, ki je bila v petdesetih letih 19. stoletja kar dvakrat poslovenjena. Presenetljivo malo je izposoj Victorja Hugoja in celo Charlesa Nodiera, ki je bival v Ljubljani in v svojem romanu *Jean Šbogar* (Janež Žbogar) opisoval tudi Trst in Gorico. Leta 1873 si je roman izposodil Valentin Zarnik. Prav ta je pozneje spodbujal slovenske avtorje, ki bi želeli ubesediti Ilirske province, naj berejo Nodiera.³

Protokoli nam ponujajo zanimive podatke o tem, kdaj so se avtorji začeli zanimati za bolj realistično literaturo. Roman *Soll und Haben* (V breme in dobro), ki ga je Gustav Freytag objavil leta 1855, se začne izposojati enajst let po izidu, pravi bralski uspeh pa doživi med letoma 1867 in 1869. Bralci pa si ga izposojajo tudi v sedemdesetih letih. V drugi polovici se-

demdesetih let je v protokolih večkrat zaznati Bjørnsonove kmečke novele v nemškem prevodu (*Bauern-Novellen*), ki so si jih očitno bralci bolj izposojali kot Kellerjeve *Die Leute aus Seldnyla* (*Ljudje iz Seldnyle*). V Avstriji sicer priljubljeni Charles Dickens je v protokolih komaj omenjen: leta 1876 si je nekdo izposodil njegove *Pickwick Papers* (*Pickwickovci*), leta 1880 pa *Nicolasa Nickelbyja*. Iz naše raziskave je razvidno, da se pravo zanimanje za ruske realiste med bralci pojavi šele v prvih desetletjih 20. stoletja. V letih 1910 in 1911 se zelo izposojata dva Tolstojeva romana v nemških prevodih: *Ana Karenina* in *Vojna in mir*. Zolaja pa so prebirali šele, ko sta izšla prva slovenska preveda. Sicer pa je knjižnica sama šele leta 1901 pridobila *Madame Bovary*, dve leti pozneje Goncourtovo *La fille Elisa* (*Dekle Eliza*), medtem ko je od Ibsena premogla le poezijo.

Sklep

Nашa raziskava je pokazala, da so se literarni zgodovinarji zelo zanimali za zasebne knjižnice pisateljev in mecenov, zlasti za število in vrsto literarnih del. Niso skrivali razočaranja, če je bilo v knjižnici malo literarnih del. Starejši raziskovalci so v knjižnici videli ogledalo lastnikove miselnosti, to mnenje – z izjemo Janka Kosa – prevladuje še danes. Iz protokolov izposoj v ljubljanski Licejski knjižnici pa je razvidno, da je izposoja tesno vezana tudi z omembami teh del v publicistiki in literaturi, kar je zlasti očitno pri Zarniku in Jurčiču.

OPOMBE

¹ Anja Dular (»Knjižnica« 275) je tudi mnenja, da lahko knezoškofovo duhovno usmeritev spoznamo s pomočjo njegove knjižnice.

² NUK, RZ. Ms 1447. Mapa 2. B, št. 1.

³ Gl. Levčevo pismo Janku Kersniku z dne 20. 6. 1881: Levec, *Pisma* 91.

- Fortsetzung des Verzeichniß von meistens neuen Büchern, die um die billigsten Preisen bey Wilhelm Heinrich Korn, Buchbändler in Laibach, im Hummlischen Hause Nro 180 zu haben sind.* Laibach: Johann Friedrich Eger, 1788. NMS, sig 8282/4.
- Intelligenz-Blatt zur Laibacher Zeitung* (27. 11. 1847).
- Protokoll der entlentben Werke.* NUK Rz.
- Verzeichniß derjenigen Büchern, welche bei Wilhelm Heinrich Korn, Buchbändler in Laibach, nebst vielen andern, aus Theilen der Wissenschaften, zu haben sind.* Laibach: Johann Friedrich Eger, 1789. NMS, sig 8282/5.
- Verzeichniß derjenigen Büchern, welche bey Wilhelm Heinrich Korn, Buchbändler in Laibach um die billigste Preise zu bekommen sind.* Laibach: gedruckt mit Kleinmayrischen Schriften, 1783. NMS sig. 8282/1.
- Zweyte Fortsetzung des Verzeichniß von meistens neuen Büchern, die um die billigsten Preisen bey Wilhelm Heinrich Korn, Buchbändler in Laibach, im Hummlischen Hause Nro 180 zu haben sind.* Laibach: Johann Friedrich Eger, 1787. NMS, sig 8282/3.

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Mladi bralci in stare zgodbe: priredbе zgodb o kralju Arturju za mlade (in) odrasle

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Kdo je bral zgodbe o Arturju v prejšnjem stoletju in kdo še danes uživa v njih? Eden od možnih odgovorov je: mladi bralci. V prispevku pregledujem odločitve in spremembe, ki so jih vnesli avtorji arturijanskih predelav v 20. stoletju, da bi tradicionalne zgodbe prilagodili sodobnemu mlademu bralstvu.

Ključne besede: mladinska književnost / angleška književnost / romance / legende o kralju Arturju / mladi bralci / priredbe

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Različice arturijanskih zgodb za otroke in mladostnike so v obtoku že poldrugo stoletje; največ ljudi ve zanje iz otroštva.¹ Toda čeprav so večino teh zgodb zelo verjetno poznali tudi mladi principi in aristokrati poznega srednjega veka (Lynch 5), prvotno niso bile napisane za mlado bralstvo. Arturijanska književnost, zakoreninjena v legendarnem in mitskem, pa tudi kroniškem gradivu, se je razcvetela v 12. stoletju na evropskih dvorih, še posebno v Franciji. Šlo je za dvorno književnost v verzih in prozi, ki je nagovarjala kralje, kraljice in plemstvo. V Angliji se je zlata doba arturijanske romance začela sredi 14. stoletja, konec 15. stoletja pa je sir Thomas Malory v prozni kompilaciji, znani pod naslovom *Le Morte d'Arthur* (Arturjeva smrt), predal novemu veku večino zgodb o Arturju in njegovih vitezi. Medtem ko druge angleške romance pritegujejo širše kroge od njihovih francoskih in nemških ustreznih, so romance o »bretonski snovi« navadno spisane v dvornem tonu, kakor so bili dvorjani tudi njihovi bralci. Še dolgo v renesanso so jih prebirali ali kako drugače uživali v njih angleški aristokrati in monarhi; postale so vir za dvorno književnost, denimo za Spenserjevo pesnitev *The Faerie Queene* (Vilinska kraljica), in za dvorno zabavo, kakršni so bili turnirji v proslavo dne Elizabetinega kronanja in sprevodi v kraljičino čast med njenimi poletnimi potovanji. Poleg tega so do začetka 16.

stoletja arturijanske romance na novo zaživele v popularnejših umetniških oblikah, denimo venčkih balad, broširanih knjižicah ali gledaliških predstavah za praznike, kakršen je bil prvi maj. 17. in 18. stoletje sta bili za arturijanske legende temna doba, saj so se ohranile zgolj v imenih krajev in oseb v ljudskih razvedrilih ter v peščici manj pomembnih besedil.² Do konca 18. stoletja pa je v Britaniji že vzcvetelo novo zanimanje za srednji vek in tedanjo književnost, ki je še pred začetkom naslednjega stoletja privedlo do ponovnega odkritja srednjeangleških romanc, med njimi del o bretonski snovi.³ V letih 1816 in 1817 so se zvrstile tri izdaje Maloryjeve zbirke povesti; knjiga o Arturju je po eni strani postajala predmet resnega znanstvenega preučevanja, po drugi strani pa so se že pojavljali prvi namigi na spremembo medija. Kmalu so se namreč razmahnile skrajšane, prirejene različice, in Robert Southey je v uvodu k svoji izdaji (gl. *Byrth*) iz leta 1817 menil, da gre za res izvrstno deško čtivo, ki bi zlahka pridobilo nekdanjo priljubljenost, če bi ga posodobili in izdali »kot knjigo za fante«.

V drugi polovici 19. stoletja so se pojavile prve priredbe zgodb o kralju Arturju in njegovih vitezi, ki so bile izrecno namenjene fantom. Med njimi velja omeniti dve predelavi: prva, izpod peresa Jamesa T. Knowlesa, je bila natisnjena v Londonu in je med letoma 1862 in 1895 doživela osem izdaj, druga, delo Sidneyja Lanierja, pa je izšla v New Yorku leta 1880 in še pol stoletja prednjačila med popularnimi otroškimi različicami v Ameriki. Uvoda k obema deloma sta dokaj literarna in izhajata iz predpostavke, da so bralci dobro izobraženi in že seznanjeni z zgodbami o Arturju ter njihovem izvoru, saj navajata francoske in staroangleške vire v izvirniku. Poleg tega Knowles v uvodnih opombah poudari že omenjeno delitev arturijanskih bralcev v dve skupini: znanstveniki naj bi legende preučevali, medtem ko naj bi fantje v njih uživali:

Zgodba o kralju Arturju ne bo nikoli umrla, dokler bo njene povesti o pustolovčinah, drznosti, čarovnijah in zmagah preučeval še kak Anglež in požiral še kak angleški fant. [...] Če je v našem času izginila iz popularne književnosti in z deških polic, bo razlog bržčas v tem, da že vse od dni cenenih knjig nikoli ni bila niti posodobljena niti prirejena za širši obtok. Zastrta z zastarelim pravopisom in starinskim slogom je postala poslastica za znanstvenike, ne pa za povprečnega bralca, za katerega je bila predolga, preveč enolična, pretežko umljiva. Še manj je pisana na kožo fantom, ki bi verjetno najvnetejše prebirali arturijanske legende v popularni obliki. [...] Če bo [avtor] uspešno utrl pot popularni oživitvi Arturjeve zgodbe, kakršno si zasluži, oživitvi, ki bi ji zagotovila mesto v kateri koli deški knjižnici ob boku »Robinsonu Crusoeju« in »Tisoč in eni noči«, bo poplačan. (*Story* i–ii)

Po gornjem očrtu, kako se je bralstvo zgodb o Arturju in njegovih vitezi spreminjalo v teku stoletij, zdaj lahko vstopimo v deško knjižnico iz Knowlesovega uvoda in pregledamo, kakšne odločitve in spremembe so

vnesli nekateri avtorji 20. stoletja, da bi tradicionalne arturijanske zgodbe prilagodili sodobnemu mlademu bralstvu; zaradi množice priredb moja razprava sicer ne prinaša popolnega pregleda nad tem pojavom, temveč zgolj izpostavlja njegove glavne smernice.⁴ Na tem mestu moramo najprej opredeliti »mladinsko književnost«. V zadnjih desetletjih se je otroška književnost razvila v posebno področje preučevanja, v glavnem kot pogajnek kulturologije in študijev spolov, in na področju otroške književnosti v širšem smislu so se nekateri znanstveniki osredotočili na književnost za najstnike: takšno zanimanje je v zadnjih petnajstih letih spodbudila izjemna priljubljenost serij, kot so bile knjige o Harryju Potterju (1995–2007), *Severni sij* Philipa Pullmana z drugima dvema knjigama trilogije vred (1995–2000) in vampirske zgodbe Stephanie Meyer (2005–2008), če omenimo zgolj najslavnejše.⁵ Ker so te knjige izrazito mikavne tako za odrasle kot za najstnike, se je obenem razširila modna oznaka »večnaslovniško leposlovje«, tj. leposlovje, ki je v prvi vrsti namenjeno najstnikom, vendar privlači tudi odrasle bralce. Prav take pa so arturijanske predelave, ki jih tu obravnavam. Predelave zavzemajo velik delež v otroški in mladinski književnosti; najtemeljiteje sta preučila ta pojav John Stephens in Robyn McCallum v svoji temeljni študiji *Retelling Stories, Framing Culture* (Predelujemo zgodbe, oblikujemo kulturo) iz leta 1998. V angleški in ameriški književnosti 20. stoletja se je zvrstilo kar osemdeset priredb arturijanskih legend (ne všteti knjige, ki jih je arturijansko gradivo zgolj navdihnilo): za odrasle, otroke, fante ali – šele v zadnjih dvajsetih letih – za dekleta.⁶ Pri pregledu najpomembnejših in najpriljubljenejših predelav se bom osredotočila na orise otroških in najstniških junakov in junakinj, ki so zvečine zamišljeni kot vzorniki za mlade bralce.

Prve različice (od začetka do zgodnjih štiridesetih let 20. stoletja) veliko dolgujejo Maloryjevi kompilaciji proznih romanc; v tej obliki so namreč arturijanske zgodbe dosegle novi vek v angleščini, preden so odkrili in na novo uredili druge srednjeveške različice. Vrh tega se je na Maloryja tesno naslonil viktorijanski pesnik Alfred Tennyson v dvanajstih pripovednih pesmih z naslovom *The Idylls of the King* (Kraljeve idile) iz let 1856–1895, ki so v viktorijanski Angliji zgodbam o okrogli mizi prinesle izjemno priljubljenost. Tennyson je drugi stalni vir za zgodnje predelave zgodb, kajti v začetku 20. stoletja so bile njegove pesmi še vedno zelo priljubljene. Da so prvi predelovalci jemali bralce kot nekaj samoumevnega, ni težko razumeti: izdaje in skrajšane verzije Maloryja so bile še vedno v obtoku, Tennysonova poezija pa silno popularna. Prva predelava iz 20. stoletja, *The Story of King Arthur and His Knights* (Zgodba o kralju Arturju in njegovih vitezi), ki jo je leta 1903 napisal Howard Pyle, sicer ni posebej namenjena mladim bralcem in ne opisuje Arturjevih najstniških let, zato pa se jih

loteva druga znamenita predelava, tetralogija T. H. Whitea *The Once and Future King* (Nekdanji in prihodnji kralj) iz leta 1958, ki je zaslovela po zaslugi Disneyjeve risanke, prirejene po prvi knjigi *The Sword in the Stone* (Meč v kamnu) iz leta 1963.⁷ Celotna tetralogija se tesno naslanja na Maloryja in poznejšo kanonično arturijansko književnost, pripovedovalec pa svoje vire tudi pogosto omenja in tako prestopa meje leposlovja. Ob omembi kraljice Elaine (Galahadove matere), denimo, pripomni: »To ime je bilo svojčas priljubljeno in v knjigi *Morte d'Arthur* ga je nosilo več žena, še sploh zato, ker je v nekaterih rokopisnih virih prišlo do zmešnjave« (White 321); podobno zatrdi ob prvi predstavitvi Lancelota: »Tennyson in predrafaeliti bi le težka prepoznali precej čemerne in neprikupnega otroka z grdim obrazom, ki ni nikomur razkril, da živi od sanj in molitev« (White 316). Kot jasno kažejo ti navedki, imamo pred seboj zelo vsiljivega vsevednega pripovedovalca, ki bralcem poskuša pojasniti večino nadrobnosti iz srednjeveškega življenja in zgodbe o Arturju; redno se pojavljajo odlomki, kakršen je naslednji:

Bila je božična noč, predvečer božičnega srečanja. Ne pozabite, da smo v stari, čudapolni veseli Angliji, ko so rožnatolični baroni še jedli s prsti in se gostili s pavi, serviranimi z razprostrtimi repnimi peresi, ali z merjaščimi glavami, v katere so bili znova potaknjeni čekani – ko ni bilo brezposelnosti, ker je bilo premalo ljudi, ki bi jih lahko zaposlili – ko je ves gozd zvenčal od udarcev vitezov, ki so se med sabo obdelovali po šlemih, samorogi pa so v zimski mesečini topotali s srebrnimi nogami in v zmrzli zrak puhali plemenito modro sapo. Velika in prijetna čudesa so bila to. Vendar se je v stari Angliji našlo še večje čudo. Vreme se je obnašalo, kot se spodobi. (White 134–135)

Pri Whiteovem delu mladi bralci še zlasti uživajo v pustolovski zgodbi prve in druge knjige, ko sta Artur in nato njegov bratranec Gawain še mlada in pustolovska bodoča viteza: White si je prvi zamislil Arturjevo otroštvo in vzgojo v hiši njegovih rejnikov, prav tako pa je začetne strani druge knjige posvetil otroštvu Gawaina in njegovih bratov. Ko se protagonisti v teku zgodbe starajo in razvijajo v tragične like, se skokovito poveša tudi starost nakazanih bralcev, pač pa v prvih dveh knjigah najdemo več odlomkov, ki so izrecno namenjeni mladim bralcem in ki – *mutatis mutandis* – poustvarjajo situacije, domače otrokom:

Otroci so si bili zgradili nad glavo amaterski šotor iz karirastih odej, zdaj pa so se stiskali pod njim in si pripovedovali zgodbo. Slišali so mater, kako spodaj v sobi nalaga na ogenj, in šepetali, da jih ne bi slišala. [...] Zgodbo je pripovedoval Gawain, ker je bil najstarejši. Ležali so na kupu kot suhljate, čudaške, skrivnostne žabice. (White 209–210)

Druga skupina predelav iz povojnega obdobja se je osredotočila na zgodovinsko resničnost Arturja in njegovih povesti, zato je segala po psevdozgodovinskem gradivu, ki ga prinašata Nennius in Gildas: avtorji, kot sta Henry Treece in George Finkel, v iskanju realizma in vsakdanjosti ovržejo numinozne in nadnaravne prvine, da bi njihove priredbe izpolnile vzgojno vlogo zgodovinskega romana, po vzorcu katerega se iz barbarstva razvije civilizacija. Ena od njih, Treeceova *The Eagles Have Flown* (Orli so vzleteli), je še posebej neprizanesljiva v opisih spopadov in smrti, vendar poskuša avtor pritegniti mlade bralce z vpeljavo dveh fantov (Festusa in Wulfa), ki se čustveno odzivata na okrutnosti temnega veka. Zgodovinsko realistični model je postal priljubljen kmalu po vojni, a se ni dolgo obdržal. Spet drugi avtorji (denimo Matthews in Stewart ali Rosemary Sutcliff) so v iskanju vzornikov za svoje mlade bralce poskušali nuditi dober zgled in ustvarjati občutek enotnosti tako, da so se sicer vrnili k Maloryjevemu književnemu gradivu, vendar so zgodbe predstavili v saško Britanijo in posegli po keltski modrosti: hoteli so znova vzpostaviti kulturno avtentične zgodbe, ki bi prenašale svojevrstno enotnost in duhovnost ter tako navdihovale sodobni dekadentni svet. Glavna značilnost predelav vse do zgodnjih osemdesetih let je, da si avtorji prizadevajo prenašati kulturno dediščino, zato na izvirnik le redko cepijo nove zgodbe. Najočitnejši potezi sta še vedno vzgojnost zgodbe in politična ideologija, povezana z nacionalizmom, ob tem pa moramo pripomniti, da imajo ženski liki zelo skromno vlogo. Vendar Sutcliffova v svojih romanih že prične posvečati novo pozornost psihologiji likov, kot je razvidno iz naslednjega odlomka o prvem srečanju med Arturjem in Guinevere:

Zakaj na visoko obzidanem vrtu tamkajšnjega gradu je prvič uzrl Guenever, hčerko kralja Leodegrancea. [...] Princesini lasje so bili črni, z bakrenim bleskom, kjer se je vanje ujelo sonce, in ko se je ozrla kvišku od cvetlic v svojem naročju, so bile njene oči sivozelene kot vrbovi listi in polne hladnih senc. In Artur je vse to videl: toda bila je komaj kaj starejša od otroka, sam pa se je kljub svojim osemnajstim letom počutil zelo star, star in utrujen od težko pridobljenih zmag in človeških smrti. In čeprav sta si izmenjala dolg, resen pogled, preden ga je njen oče povlekel naprej, ni pozneje, ko je spet odjezdil na jug, pomislil o njunem prvem srečanju nič več kot to, da je videl deklico, ki je na kraljevem vrtu pletla cvetno kito. Toda s tem trenutkom se je v njem nekaj spremenilo. Nekaj, kar je v njem dotlej spalo, se je začelo prebujati in hrepeneti, koprneč po – sam ni vedel, po čem. (Sutcliff 46–47)

V zgodnjih osemdesetih letih (1983) je izšla uspešnica pisateljice Marion Zimmer Bradley *The Mists of Avalon* (Avalonske meglice), pohvaljena kot ena najizvirnejših in najbolj čustvenih predelav arturijanske legende. Čeprav roman ni namenjen mladim bralcem, je na zgodbo sodobnih predelav močno vplival iz dveh razlogov: prvič, ker gre za prvo-

osebno pripoved, in drugič, ker je vsa zgodba povedana s stališča ženske, še več, najbolj problematične ženske arturijanskega sveta, ki se je je oprijelo največ mitskih, legendarnih, literarnih drobcev izročila – Morgaine, tj. Morgan le Fay. Novi smeri zvečine sledijo tudi mladinske arturijade od devetdesetih let naprej, tako da pripovedujejo zgodbo z gledišča katerega izmed likov. Tak primer je že Morpurgov *Arthur, High King of Britain* (Artur, vrhovni kralj Britanije) iz leta 1994, vendar se želim osredotočiti na dve drugi besedili. Posebno zanimivi sta namreč knjigi Nancy Springer *I Am Morgan le Fay* (Ime mi je Morgan le Fay) iz leta 2001 in *I Am Mordred* (Ime mi je Mordred) iz leta 1998, saj pripovedujeta staro zgodbo z najstniškega gledišča glavnih dveh zgagarjev arturijanskega sveta: Arturjevega nezakonskega sina, ki bo razblinil kraljeve sanje o miru in redu, in Arturjeve sestre, mračne sile, ki po izročilu botruje večini ponesrečenih dogodivščin kralja in njegovih vitezov. Arturjeve sanje in tragedijo opazujemo skozi njune mladostniške oči, tako da je glavni pripovedni čas obdobje njune mladosti (bila naj bi enako stara kot njuni bralci), pogosti pogledi v prihodnost pa bralcem omogočajo poblisk v zgodbo, kakršno poznajo iz izročila. Najzanimivejša značilnost teh romanov je avtoričin poskus, da bi upodobila – in opravičila – osebnost obeh likov, ki se razgalita pogledu in presoji najstniških bralcev: srednjeveško se »prepleta s sodobnim dojetjem zla, ki ne izvira iz zunanjih, demonskih spodbud, temveč iz temne plati človeške duševnosti« (Stephens in McCallum 132). Druga nadvse pomembna značilnost avtoričinih predelav, pri kateri jasneje izstopi njen dolg Bradleyjevi, so osredotočenost na spol in pogosti namigi, kako nemočno in ježno se počuti Morgan le Fay ob svoji postranski vlogi v družinskem življenju in politiki kraljestva, ki ji pripade zgolj zato, ker je ženska. Po zaslugi prvoosebnega pripovedovalca in izbora tém – odnosa z materjo, očetom, brati in sestrami, prebujanja prvih ljubezenskih čustev – se mladi bralci odzovejo čustveno in se s protagonistoma zgodb poistovetijo. Kulturno dediščino jemlje Springerjeva kot samoumevno in je ne poudarja pretirano, ker si prizadeva ohraniti razburljivost zgodbe brez bremena vzgojne zgodovine. Vendar sta oba mlada protagonista ujeta v meje svoje tragične usode, privzdignjeni slog njunih numinoznih slutenj pa ju pogosto odtuji sodobnemu bralcu:

Tiste noči nisem mogel spati, zakaj sanjal sem o kralju Arturju. [...] Moj oče se bo ozrl name in v mojem obrazu ugledal samega sebe. Iztegnil bo roko proti meni. Vstal bo, le za kanec okleval, nato pa se spustil s prestola in me objel. Moj sin, bo rekel. Princ Mordred. (Springer, *I Am Mordred* 68)

Artur. Moj polbrat, petnajstleten mlečnozobec, ki bo kralj, medtem ko bo Thomas mrtev. Zakaj naj bi imel ta nepreizkušeni fante, ta Artur, moj polbrat,

prestol, če jaz, ki toliko vem in sem toliko pretrpela, nimam ničesar? Arturja nisem videla že vse od njegovega krsta, ko je kot tolst dojenček ležal v naročju moje matere, toda ko sem sedela na trdem stolu v materini kamri, ga nisem prezirala niti za trohico manj kot takrat; v srcu mi je gorel ognjeni zmaj in v glavi plamtele maščevalne misli. Ko sem premišljala o njem in mu priželela zlo, sem začutila, kako se je milpreve razgrel v svojem kovinskem gnezdecu na dlani moje roke. (Springer, *I Am Morgan le Fay* 215–216)⁸

Moj zadnji primer je Kevin Crossley-Holland z nagrajeno trilogijo o Arturju (2000–2003).⁹ V njej opisuje mladega fanta Arturja Caldicotskega v letu 1199, ki živi v valižanskem Vmesnem svetu. V fabuli igra veliko vlogo magični pripomoček, »preroški kamen«, po katerem je naslovljena prva knjiga trilogije: Arturju Caldicotskemu ga že na začetku izroči Merlin, mladi protagonist pa lahko skozenj opazuje življenje mitskega kralja Arturja in njegov vzpon na britanski kraljevi prestol. Veliko likov iz protagonistovega življenja je na las podobnih, ali vsaj zelo podobnih, likom iz Arturjevega, najvpadljivejša pa je prav podobnost med Arturjem Caldicotskim in mladim kraljem Arturjem, ki prvega sprva napelje na misel, da je Artur v kamnu pravzaprav on sam v bližnji prihodnosti. V tem prepričanju ga še utrdi odkritje, da sta, podobno kot pri mladem kralju Arturju, njegova domnevna starša v resnici njegova rejnika. Pozneje se razjasni, da kralj Artur živi v vzporednem svetu, dogodki v obeh svetovih pa se medsebojno zrcalijo in mlademu protagonistu pomagajo razumeti ključne epizode pri njegovem odraščanju v viteza, posestnika, ljubimca: »Kar se zgodi v mojem življenju in kar se zgodi v kamnu, je pogosto povezano kakor zvoki in odjeki ali pa kakor moje levo in desno oko, ki kažeta isto sliko, a vsako zase vidi več kot drugo. Tisto, kar vidim v kamnu, se včasih zdi podobno obljubi, kdaj drugič svarilu« (Crossley-Holland, *Na križpotjih* 255).

Crossley-Holland je odkril boljšo strategijo kot njegovi neposredni predhodniki, kako pritegniti mlade bralce, kajti v svoji pripovedi izkoristi večino značilnosti zgoraj izpostavljenih predelav in jih mojstrsko premeša. Prvič: podobno kot Springerjeva in Morpurgo uporabi prvoosebno pripoved, toda to pot so misli trinajstletnega Arturja bolj prepričljivo najstniške: strahovi in radosti Arturja Caldicotskega so umeščeni v oddaljen, a domač kontekst, saj se, četudi živi v graščini 12. stoletja, ukvarja z vsakdanjimi nalogami, čustvi in spori skupnega življenja, ljudi in dogodke pa vidimo z resnično mladega in neizkušenega gledišča.

Toda jaz nočem pisati o Abnerju in Neru, o Išbošetju, Joabu in Azahelu, posebno ne v latinščini. Opisati hočem svoje življenje, tukaj v Vmesnem svetu, med Anglijo in Walesom. Slediti svojim mislim, ki spreminjajo obliko kakor oblaki. Trinajst let

imam in rad bi opisal svoje strahove, svoje lastne radosti in bridkosti. (Crossley-Holland, *Preroški* 25)

Crossley-Hollandov prvoosebni pripovedovalec ni niti znan arturijanski lik niti gledalec, kot sta lika, ki smo ju videli v Treeceovi različici zgodbe: Artur Caldicotski je po eni strani znotraj zgodbe, saj se dogodki iz Arturjevega življenja zrcalijo v njegovem, vendar ga ne utesnjujejo njene dobro znane meje, zato napravi vtis lika iz mesa in krvi, s katerim se bralec lahko poistoveti.

Drugič, roman ima mojstrsko stkano fabulo, v kateri se pripovedni časi prekrivajo bolj pretanjeno kot s preprostim pogledom v prihodnost, to pa ustvari veliko skrivnostnejše vzdušje in večjo napetost. Poleg tega postane didaktični del s podatki in pojasnili o srednjeveškem življenju, zlasti o vsakdanjiku v podeželskih graščinah in kruti stvarnosti vojne, razburljiv, ker je sproščeno vtkan v fabulo s pomočjo pustolovskih in družinskih dogodkov. Književni viri in srednjeveški pesniki so sestavni del zgodbe, zato jih ne omenja noben tretjeosebni pripovedovalec, kakršnega uporablja White; Artur, denimo, med obiskom v samostanu spozna Marie de France: »Pozno popoldne je prispela žlahtna gospa Marie Meulanska s tremi služabniki [...]. Brat Gerard mi je povedal, da plemkinja piše zgodbe v verzih, ki jih recitirajo na dvorih in v gradovih po vsej Angliji« (Crossley-Holland, *Na križpotjih* 326); po pogovoru z njo se vrne v celico, da bi pisal o njenih zgodbah, in ugotavlja: »Zdaj to povsem jasno vidim. S temi besedami, z njihovo črno in rdečo krvjo pripovedujem zgodbo o gospe, ki mi je povedala zgodbo o pripovedovanju zgodbe, vsebovane v tej moji lastni življenjski zgodbi« (Crossley-Holland, *Na križpotjih* 337). In kot zadnje: Crossley-Hollandova predelava deklet zanesljivo ne bo pritegnila nič manj kot fante, ker najdemo v njej silno zanimive like obeh spolov. Deklice so zvečine prav tako dejavne in pomembne za fabulo kot fantje: mladi plemkinji Grace in Winnie, v kateri se Artur zaljubi, kmetova hčerka Gatty, ali pa Simona, hčerka beneškega ladjedelca. Pogled, ki ga odpre Crossley-Holland na življenje najstnikov iz 12. stoletja, je bogat, o tem ni dvoma. Navedimo še besede iz recenzije, objavljene v spletnem *Guardianu*: »najstniki se bodo poistovetili z mladim Arturjem, sanjačem, pesnikom in otrokom na pragu odraslosti, ki se v svoji zbežanosti in prizadevanju, da bi odkril svojo identiteto ter nadzoroval lastno usodo, vse bolj zapleta s svojim soimenjakom kraljem Arturjem, nekdanjim in prihodnjim kraljem« (Gardner).

Kot sta v svoji temeljni študiji pokazala John Stephens in Robyn McCallum, so sodobne priredbe starih zgodb največkrat konservativne. Včasih pa je iz starih zgodb vendarle moč izkresati povsem nove pomene – za nove rodove bralcev. Predelave arturijanskih zgodb v zadnjih dvajse-

tih letih kažejo, da je Artur lahko enako doma v dekliskih kot v fantovskih knjižnicah in da kulturno dediščino lahko predajamo zanamcem s povsem nepričakovanimi, čustveno prepričljivimi prijemi.

Prevedla Nada Grošelj

OPOMBE

¹ Za seznam slavnih pisateljev iz 20. stoletja, na katere je po lastnih besedah vplivalo doživljanje arturijanskih legend v otroštvu in mladosti, gl. *Adapting* xiv–xvii.

² plošnem preživetju arturijanskega gradiva po srednjem veku gl. Merriman. O uporabi tega gradiva v 16. stoletju gl.: Davis; Logan in Teskey; Cooper. O novem življenju arturijanskih zgodb v popularnih baladah in broširanih knjižicah gl. Simons in *Guy*.

³ Za razpravo o razpečevanju in izdajanju srednjeveških romanc med koncem osemnajstega in koncem 19. stoletja gl.: Johnston; Matthews; Santini.

⁴ Za daljši in nadrobnejši pregled gl. Lynch.

⁵ Knjige, ki predstavljajo najstniške protagoniste in med vrsticami nagovarjajo najstniško bralstvo, so se kajpak pojavile že dosti prej, v 19. stoletju; poleg tega je v sedemdesetih in osemdesetih letih 20. stoletja prihajalo na trg veliko knjig, izrecno namenjenih najstnikom, vendar je sama oznaka »mladinska književnost« [YA literature] za zvrst, s katero se ukvarjajo specializirani znanstveniki in ji je posvečeno lepo število knjižnih nagrad, novejša.

⁶ Popolnega seznama vseh izdaj in predelav arturijanskih srednjeveških besedil ni, toda za izdaje in priredbe Maloryjevih del gl. Gaines.

⁷ Te štiri knjige so izšle posamič med letoma 1938 in 1958, v zbrani izdaji iz leta 1958 pa je bilo nekaj epizod predrugačenih.

⁸ »Milpreve« je Morganin čarobni kamen, simbol njene moči.

⁹ Knjiga je dobila Guardianovo nagrado za otroško leposlovje, nagrado Tir na n-Og in knjižno nagrado Nestlé Smarties – bronasto medaljo. Prišla je tudi v ožji izbor za Whitbreadove nagrade.

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Kjer je zasebno javno: bralne prakse v socialistični Madžarski

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Veseju obravnavam založniške sisteme v socialistični Madžarski pod Kádárjevim režimom in dokazujem, da so uredniški sistemi kot nadomestki cenzorskega urada omogočali delovanje sistema s tem, ko so pred objavo dopuščali recenziranje gradiv na več ravneh..

Ključne besede: sociologija branja / literatura in cenzura / socializem / založništvo / Madžarska

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Eden mojih najbolj živih otroških spominov je, kako se po božičnih počitnicah vrnem v šolo in kako na klopi v šolski jedilnici klepetam z najboljšima prijateljicama o tem, kaj je katera dobila za božič. Sezname so se kajpak razlikovali, toda pri knjigah ne. Presenetljivo – vsaj tako se mi je zdelo takrat – so naši starši za božična darila skoraj vedno izbrali iste knjige. Tako smo se pri dvanajstih letih vse tri iz *Priročnika za najstnike z dvema levima rokama* naučile učinkovite metode, kako se odvadiš gristi nohte, pri trinajstih smo se nameravale zaljubiti v skrivnostnega dvojnega agenta v *Abigélinem* slogu, do konca osnovne šole pa smo iz zbirke *Oni in mi* Brunelle Gasperini že vse izvedele, da moramo družinski avto pobožati za lahko noč.

Morda bi kdo menil, da ni v moji izkušnji ničesar nenavadnega – mirno lahko stavimo, da bo za letošnji božič vsaj en najstnik od petih dobil roman Neila Gaimana ali Stephanie Meyer in da so skoraj vsi odraščali ob Harryju Potterju; skratka, vsaka generacija ima svoje najljubše knjige. Vendar bi mu ugovarjala, da je tu bistvena razlika. Božične izbire mojih staršev ni podpihovala najstniška mrzlica, ki bi jo ustvarjali mediji, ampak je bila posledica gospodarskih in političnih odločitev – ne njihovih, temveč vladnih. Madžarski režim mojega otroštva, t. i. Kádárjev režim (obdobje v madžarski zgodovini med letoma 1956 in 1989, imenovano po partijskem sekretarju Jánosu Kádárju, ki je po revoluciji leta 1956 vodil Madžarsko dobrih trideset let), večine svojih ciljev ni uresničil: ljudstva ni popeljal v oblublje-

ne dežele komunizma, niti ni izkoreninil dekadentnih buržujskih razvad. Pač pa je dosegel nezaslišan uspeh pri nadzoru knjižnega tiska, prodaje in trženja na vseh ravneh. V prispevku nameravam podrobneje preučiti, kako je bilo zaradi tega vseomogočnega nadzora branje na Madžarskem v minulem obdobju vedno del javnega diskurza, celo kadar je bilo na videz zasebno, opozoriti pa želim tudi na paradoksalne posledice tega sistema.

Na štirideset let madžarskega državnega socializma, ki se je začel z manipuliranimi volitvami leta 1947 in trajal vse do mirne zamenjave režima v letu 1989, ne smemo gledati kot na enotno obdobje. V prispevku se sicer osredotočam na leta po revoluciji 1956, toda če hočemo razumeti glavne cilje kadaristične kulturne politike, moramo najprej skreniti malce vstran in preleteti tudi leta pred revolucijo, še zlasti zato, ker je predhodno desetletje stalinistične diktature kljub razlikam v sprotni obravnavi književnosti in kulture položilo dobršen del temeljev za prihajajoči Kádárjev režim.

Pred drugo svetovno vojno je bilo na Madžarskem skoraj 200 zasebnih založb, ki jih je podpiral uveljavljen in utečen sistem knjigarn, antikvariatov, knjižnic in papirnic z dovoljenjem za prodajo knjig. Vojna jih je zvečine opustošila, svoje pa so prispevale tudi osvobodilne ali, bolje, osvajalske sovjetske čete. Po odloku¹časne vlade iz leta 1945 (Kókay 139) naj bi namreč zasegle in uničile vso fašistično in protisovjetsko književnost, toda ohranjenih je več poročil, kako so zlorabljale svoj položaj – med prodiranjem so uničile številne zasebne in šolske knjižnice, marsikateri dragocen zvezek iz samostanskih knjižnic pa je izginil in pristal v Sovjetski zvezi. Knjižna industrija je potrebovala vsaj dve leti, da si je opomogla, in do leta 1947 je končno spet dosegla predvojni razcvet. Vendar mirna leta niso dolgo trajala. Do leta 1948 je nova socialistična vlada že nacionalizirala vse velike založbe, do leta 1949 pa je vse knjigarne in knjižnice postavila pod neposredni nadzor Ministrstva za notranje zadeve, torej v bistvu pod neposredni politični nadzor. 7. aprila 1952 je Ministrstvo razveljavilo licence sedeminosemdesetih knjigarn v Budimpešti in petindevetdesetih na deželi, za povrh pa papirničarjem vzelo dovoljenje za prodajo knjig. Tako je postavilo pod državni nadzor vso knjižno industrijo.

V želji po vseobsegajoči oblasti nad knjižno industrijo se je zrcalil odnos režima do književnosti in branja, ki ga je Kádárjev režim prav tako podedoval od svojega predhodnika. Književnost je veljala za pomemben propagandni forum in za glavno bojišče v »kulturni vojni«² nove vlade, ki naj bi bralcem izbrisala iz misli prvine buržajske kulturne dediščine. Toda čeprav sta oba režima obravnavala književnost in bralne navade kot nekaj ključnega in obenem podrejenega politiki, sta se razlikovala po *sredstvih*, s katerimi sta jih hotela nadzirati. Skladno s sovjetskimi doktrinami si je stalinistični režim v petdesetih letih 20. stoletja prizadeval vzpostaviti ne-

posredni politični nadzor nad vsemi vidiki branja. Politično je vdrlo v zasebno sfero in centralni nadzor naj bi se izvajal tudi nad tem, *kaj* kdo bere in *kdaj*. To želim pokazati z dvema primeroma: prvi osvetljuje poskus, da bi izkoreninili tvegano gradivo, drugi pa spodbujanje novih bralnih navad.

Leta 1950 je Ministrstvo za kulturo zaporedoma objavilo dva uradna seznama knjig – prvega s 1.848 naslovi, drugega s 6.552 –, ki naj bi jih umaknili iz vaških in delavskih knjižnic, vendar sta, baje zaradi administrativne napake, postala obvezna za vse knjižnice, knjigarne in celo antikvariate (Murányi 256). 9. novembra 1950 so se pred knjigarnami nabrale kolone tovarnjakov, uradniki z Ministrstva pa so zasegli in nato zmleli več kot 120.000 zvezkov. Med naslovi na seznamu sta bila denimo Cervantesov *Don Kihot*, ker je predgovor za predvojno izdajo prispeval tedaj že emigrant-ski pisatelj Sándor Márai, in *Medvedek Pu*, ker ga je v tridesetih letih izdal buržujski založnik. Operacijo umikanja knjig je razkril radio Svobodna Evropa in sprožil mednarodni škandal. V odgovorih na obtožbe cenzure in na proteste, ki so med drugim prihajali iz Francoske akademije znanosti, so se poskusili uradniki od dogodkov distancirati. József Révai, minister za šolstvo, je izdal razglas, češ da so Cervantesa, Swifta in madžarske ljudske pravljice vtihotapile na seznam reakcionarne sile na Ministrstvu, medtem ko je Tretji kongres Madžarske delavske stranke knjigarnarjem v »strogo zaupnem« odloku ukazal, naj več zvezkov s seznamom razstavijo v izložbah. Toda kot pripominja literarna teoretičarka Zsófia Gombár,

izdajanje novih seznamov prepovedanih knjig med letoma 1952 in 1953 opisane namene očitno postavlja na laž. Novi trije zvezki so obsegali približno 14.000 naslovov. [...] Po trditvah v predgovoru naj bi bile na odpad obsojene knjige neestetske, zastarele in neakovostne, nevredne pozornosti madžarskega delovnega ljudstva, ki je bilo zdaj na poti h kulturnemu razvoju[.] (272)

Partija pa »zastarelih knjig«, kot jih je označila v naslovu teh zvezkov, ni le zavrgla z arogantno vzvišenostjo, temveč je hotela ljudem tudi neposredno predpisovati, kaj naj berejo. V tovarnah in podjetjih je uvedla t. i. »pol ure za *Szabad Nép*«, ko so se morali zbrati vsi delavci in razpravljati o uvodniku v partijskem dnevniku *Szabad Nép*. Reorganizirala je Društvo pisateljev, tako da je večino buržujskih piscev utišala, odkrito pa podprla kliko dokaj drugorazrednih socrealističnih avtorjev. Režim je zaprl madžarsko tržišče za vso novo zahodnoevropsko književnost in tako prekinil skoraj vse stike z zahodnim svetom. Vendar ta stalinistični model kulturnega nadzora nikoli ni zares obrodil sadov, ki si jih je obetal. Nevzdržnost neposrednega nadzora se je jasno pokazala po letu 1953, ko so se pisatelji med prvimi družbenimi skupinami uprli stalinistični državi in s svojo kritiko utrli pot revoluciji v letu 1956.

Letnica 1956 zaznamuje konec nekega obdobja in preobrat v več kot štiridesetih letih madžarskega državnega socializma, kajti po neuspehu revolucije sta se vsiljevali dve ugotovitvi: prvič, da se režim ne more vrniti k stalinističnim doktrinom iz petdesetih let, če noče tvegati nove vstaje, in drugič, da v bližnji prihodnosti zaradi »začasne« prisotnosti sovjetskih sil na Madžarskem ni nikakršne možnosti za demokratične spremembe. Tako so se ljudje sprijaznili z življenjem *zunaj* meja socialistične države, to pa jim je olajšal János Kádár, novi partijski voditelj, ki so mu ruski tanki na Madžarskem zagotavljali oblast. Učil se je iz padca svojih stalinističnih predhodnikov, zato je vsakdanje življenje Madžarov poudarjeno depolitiziral in s pomočjo milijardnih evropskih posojil ustvaril v državi lažni občutek blaginje, ki ga je po prestani lakoti in stiskah petdesetih let večina toplo pozdravila. V zameno za nove, višje življenjske standarde – ki so bili v primerjavi z zahodnimi zgledi še vedno smešno nizki – pa je Kádárjev režim od državljanov pričakoval, da bodo sprejeli umetno okrnjeno in strogo nadzorovano javno sfero, v kateri bo izrecna kritika prepovedana, morebitne politične pripombe pa bo dovoljeno izraziti zgolj v centralno predpisanih obrazcih. Če hočejo Madžari živeti v razmeroma spodobnih razmerah, morajo postati politično nedejavni – takšno faustovsko pogodbo je ponudil svojemu narodu Kádárjev režim.

Politična kritika se je izmikala vsem javnim forumom. Nihče ni odkrito spregovoril o aretacijah in usmrčitvah po letu 1956, o stalni prisotnosti Rdeče armade na Madžarskem ali o rastočih gospodarskih problemih v sedemdesetih letih. Stabilnost javnega življenja je temeljila na dvojnosti prenaplnotenih vprašanj, o katerih se je govorilo javno, in problemov, ki so bili deležni zgolj meglenih namigov. To je bilo poroštvo, ki je podpiralo status quo in omogočalo režimu, da je vztrajal v sedlu.

Opisana dvoličnost je prežemala kulturno politiko na vseh ravneh in knjižno založništvo ni bilo nikakršna izjema. Zlasti in predvsem je pomenila to, da Madžarska v nasprotju z večino srednjeevropskih držav ni imela centralnega cenzorskega urada. Namesto neposredne cenzure je Kádárjev režim razvil večnivojski sistem, v katerem naj bi se njegovi pripadniki na vseh ravneh cenzurirali sami. Zaradi mnogoplastnega nadzornega sistema in zaradi pričakovanja, da bo vsak državljan sodeloval s samocenzuro, oblastem zlepa ni bilo treba poseči po neposrednem nadzoru. Tu želim pokazati, da je ureditev v bistvu temeljila na večstopenjskem recenziranju knjig pred objavo, zaradi katerega so bile ob prihodu med bralce v glavnem že očiščene nevarnega gradiva. Zdaj pa se posvetimo nadrobnostim in si oglejmo, kako je sistem deloval v vsakdanjem življenju.

V nasprotju s stalinističnim binarnim sistemom, ki je knjigo bodisi prepovedal bodisi podprl, so novi predpisi temeljili na tridelni vrednostni

lestvici prepovedanih, toleriranih in podpiranih knjig. Srednja izmed teh kategorij ni bila niti predpisana niti točno opredeljena, vanjo pa so sodila umetniška dela, ki sicer niso bila odkrito socialistična, vendar so bila za režim vsaj delno sprejemljiva. Ta skupina se je nenehno spreminjala: kar je bilo danes prepovedano, je naslednjega dne zlahka izšlo. Uradnih smernic, kaj je še moč tolerirati, ni bilo, ker je režim hotel vsakogar držati v stalni pripravljenosti in negotovosti. Izogibati se je bilo treba nekaterim splošnim tabujem (vsemu, kar bi žalilo Sovjetsko zvezo ali kako prijateljsko socialistično državo, sleherni kritiki partijskega vodstva, obscenosti, vulgarnosti ali odkritim opisom spolnosti), vse drugo pa je bilo prepuščeno trenutni presoji uradnikov. Tak sistem je seveda lahko deloval le pod pogojem, da je imel na vseh ravneh zaupanja vredne uslužbence.²

Zato je jeseni 1957 partijski komite Madžarske socialistične delavske stranke izdal odločbo o založništvu, v kateri je določal, da morajo biti vse odločitve razen administrativnih in materialnih politične. V njej je predpisal smernice v skladu z načeli in predlagal, naj se usposobi nova generacija urednikov, »ki bodo dosledno cenzurirali protimarksistične težnje«. Za cilj je imel ureditev, ki bi gradila od spodaj navzgor. Ti uredniki na založbah (vse so bile v državni lasti in vsaka je imela poseben profil: Európa je izdajala svetovno književnost, Magvető in Szépirodalmi madžarsko, Móra otroško itn.) so morali prebrati vse rokopise in izdati recenzentsko poročilo, ki so ga nato predložili na tedenskem sestanku založnikov. Poročila so obsegala tako kratek povzetek kot oceno avtorjevega pomena in razvidne politične drže, vsebovati pa so morala tudi končno sodbo recenzenta-urednika, ali si rokopis zasluži objavo ali ne. Ob branju nam postane jasno, da se je na tej točki vmešala v recenzentski postopek samocenzurna politična kritika. Pripombe navadno vsebujejo fraze v slogu »niti ideološko niti umetniško sprejemljivo« ali »ni brez literarne vrednosti, toda politična stališča so nesprejemljiva«, iz katerih se jasno vidi, da sta šli estetsko in politično vrednotenje z roko v roki. Vendar je vprašanje urednikov prezapletено, da bi jih kratkomalo popredalčkali kot cenzorje.

Mnogi med njimi so bili utišani intelektualci, marsikateri pa je bil tudi sam pisatelj, čigar uredniško delo je veljalo za dokaz njegove lojalnosti. Že res, da so se največkrat ubogljivo uklonili dodeljeni vlogi, toda kakor hitro so se uveljavili kot zaupanja vredni svetovalci, so marsikdaj poskušali razrahljati režimske omejitve, zlasti pri umetniških delih, ki so jih imeli za pomembna in kakovostna. Zato lahko zatrdimo, da brez teh vnaprejšnjih recenzentov prenekatera madžarska in evropska klasika nikoli ne bi dosegla bralcev. Naj utemeljim svojo trditev s primerom in navedem usodo pesniške zbirke *Tretjega dne*, prve objavljene knjige Jánosa Pilinszkyja, ki so ga po letu 1947 iz političnih razlogov utišali. Kot član skupine buržujskih

pisatelj, ki so jih povezovali s prepovedano literarno revijo *Újhold*, si je Pilinszky prizadeval za objavo, vendar je bil nekajkrat zavrnjen, ker se je zdel oblastem njegova poezija preveč črnogleda za socialističnega pesnika. Vendar je imel Pilinszky, dandanes trdno zasidran v madžarskem kanonu kot eden največjih povojnih pesniških inovatorjev, med uredniki več simpatizerjev, ki so prepoznali njegovo nadarjenost in poskušali obrniti razpoloženje oblasti v njegov prid. Prav oni so mu predlagali, naj prvotni naslov knjige (Nikogaršnja zemlja) spremeni v nekaj manj črnogledega; prav oni so pisali ognjevitno navdušene ocene, češ da bo njegova knjiga pripomogla k protifašističnemu slovesu Madžarske, ker v več pesmih n drobno opisuje grozote koncentracijskih taborišč. Oblasti pa je naposled omehčal kompromis, ki je ravno tako pognal na uredniškem zeljniku: pesnik je bil primoran napisati še nekaj novih del, to pot v optimističnem tonu. Nato so uredniki razvrstili pesmi po kronološkem zaporedju, pod vsako pripisali datum in prepričali oblasti, da bo spodbudni ton zadnjih pesmi ustvaril vtis, koliko bolje se živi v novem Kádárjevem režimu. Tako je knjiga leta 1959 le izšla, četudi zgolj v tisoč izvodih in ob izrecni zahtevi oblasti, da mora imeti grdo naslovnico, ki bo ljudi odvrčala od nakupa. Toda ta strategija ni imela zelenega učinka – vsi izvodi so bili razprodani v enem samem dnevu, nekateri za kar tisoč forintov namesto desetih, kolikor je znašala knjigarniška cena. (Domokos 85–96) Usoda Pilinszkyjeve zbirke je le eden od številnih primerov, ko so uredniki s svojim vmešavanjem omogočili izid knjige, ki je pozneje postala temeljno delo v madžarski literarni zgodovini.

V politično dvomljivih primerih je bil zaukazan še drugi ali »notranji« krog branja, dokler ni letnega seznama založbenih publikacij naposled potrdil Založniški direktorat. Ta je bil splošno znan kot cenzorski urad, toda po zaslugi recenzentskega sistema mu zlepa ni bilo treba uveljavljati svoje pravice do preprečitve objav, še zlasti zato ne, ker je prav tako nadziral gospodarske plate založništva in je lahko uporabil kot sredstvo nadzora tudi te. Ker so bili vsi uredniški resorji pod državno kontrolo, je bilo namreč založništvo popolnoma ločeno od delovanja trga. Tako je Direktorat lahko sprejel pravila, s katerimi je umetno vplival na trg: cene knjig (nenaravno nizke, da bi spodbujale branje) so se določale na osnovi cenika za polo, po katerem sta se morali sovjetska in socialistična književnost prodajati po najnižjih cenah, sledila so jima nesocialistična, vendar neoporečniška dela, medtem ko naj bi bili šund, detektivke in podobno »lahko čtivo«, ki je bilo ideološko v navzkrižju s socialističnimi ideali, naprodaj po skoraj dvakratni ceni; nanje so za nameček nabili še dodatni »davek na kič«.

Naposled se posvetimo še bralcem in vprašanju, kako je nadzor na vseh ravneh vplival na njihove bralne izkušnje. Kot prvo so pravila vpli-

vala na strukturo knjig. Ker je vsa književnost veljala za politično gradivo, niti tolerirana dela niso bila tolerirana sama po sebi. Bralci so navadno prejeli »smernice« v obliki predgovorov ali opomb pod črto, kako razumeti njihovo vsebino. Po drugi strani pa je ob teh varnostnih ukrepih več mojstrovin svetovne književnosti doživelo ponovne izdaje, ker si je socializem hotel klasike prilastiti. Zato je bila pod Kádárjevim režimom, še zlasti v sedemdesetih letih, paleta dostopnih klasik širša kot kdaj koli prej. In ker je veliko utišanih pisateljev iskalo in našlo zaposlitev v založniški industriji ali prevajanju, je bila na neobičajni višini tudi literarna kakovost novih izdaj. Za nameček so bile cene knjig nenaravno nizke, medtem ko so se literarne teme centralno ohranjale kot del javnega diskurza. Po zaslugi vseh naštetih teženj, pospremljenih z na videz liberalnimi režimskimi metodami palice in korenčka, so madžarski razgovori o branju pod Kádárjevim režimom obarvani z rahlo nostalgijo.

S pobjaskom v zakulisne mehanizme založniške industrije sem želela v svojem esaju dokazati, da je ta nostalgija neutemeljena. Nadzorovana cenzura uredniških sistemov pod Kádárjevim režimom razkriva, da pri branju ni bilo nikakršne svobode. Zato se moramo zdaj potruditi in raziskati tako uredniška poročila kot arhiv tajne policije, da bomo dobili jasnejšo predstavo, kako je v bralnih praksah socialistične Madžarske zasebno postalo javno.

OPOMBI

¹ Številka: 530/1945 ME.

² Opis uredniškega sistema temelji na: Bart 2000.

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Branje dramskega besedila: primer empirične raziskave

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Recepcijska estetika in teorija bralčevega odziva sta tisti dve smeri literarne vede, ki sta izpostavili bralčevo aktivno vlogo v bralnem procesu in izdelali različne konstrukte bralcev, hkrati pa sta z novim raziskovalnim poljem dali spodbude tudi gledališkemu teoretikom, ki so se začeli intenzivneje zanimati za procese branja in razumevanja dramskega besedila ter zlasti v postmodernejši multimedijski civilizaciji postali pozorni tudi na zaznave gledalcev. Članek prikazuje rezultate empirične raziskave, ki na različnih ravneh bralčevega odziva preučuje konkretni stik bralcev z dramskim besedilom, hkrati pa njihove recepcijske odzive primerja z zaznavami gledalcev uprizoritve in njihovim doživetjem, kako je besedilo brala režija.

Ključne besede: dramatika / recepcijska estetika / dramska besedila / bralci / gledališko občinstvo / empirične raziskave

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Uvod

Branje je ena najkompleksnejših človekovih dejavnosti, kar dokazujejo številne študije – ki so se odmevneje začele pojavljati od sedemdesetih let 20. stoletja naprej, ko je bila bralcu vrnjena aktivna vloga pri tvorbi pomena –, ki kažejo, da je bralca možno opisati na vsaj tri načine. Prvi pristop je teoretičnega značaja in razmerje med bralcem in besedilom prikazuje s pomočjo različnih modelov hipotetičnih bralcev, med katerimi so implicitni bralec Wolfganga Iserja, modelni bralec Umberta Eca, informirani bralec Stanleya Fisha, idealni bralec Jonathana Cullerja idr.¹ Raziskovalci postavljajo bralca v širši družbeno-kulturni kontekst in raziskujejo mehanizme produkcije in recepcije, ki usmerjajo bralčevo tvorbo pomena. Bralca prikažejo tudi z vidika posameznika, njegovega dela in užitka pri branju, pri čemer se naslanjajo na spoznanja psihoanalize. Druga možnost je opis bralca iz zgodovinske perspektive – gre za analizo bralcev, njihovih bralnih navad in okusa skozi zgodovino oziroma v določenem zgodovin-

skem obdobju, in sicer v odvisnosti od družbene strukture, kulturnih in psiholoških navad, političnih in ekonomskih vplivov ipd., pri čemer raziskovalci izhajajo iz različnih arhivskih virov. Tretji, eksperimentalni pristop izhaja iz teoretičnih spoznanj, ki jih raziskovalci aplicirajo na analizo konkretnega občinstva. Zbiranje gradiva najpogosteje poteka s pomočjo različnih vprašalnikov, intervjujev in meritev bioloških funkcij bralcev, za analizo zbranega gradiva pa pogosto uporabljajo empirično metodo. Tretji pristop je torej tisti, ki daje prednost konkretnemu, vsakdanjemu, neprofesionalnemu bralcu, ki ga lahko opišemo s kvantitativno natančnostjo, ugotovljene znanstvene sodbe pa niso abstraktne, temveč se nanašajo na določeno občinstvo (in ne na bralca, ki bi bil model sofisticiranega učenjaka ali ahistorični konstrukt), zato Peter Dixon zanj uvede izraz »statistični bralec« (Dixon idr. 10). Primer takšne empirične raziskave, ki na različnih ravneh bračevega odziva preučuje konkretni stik bralcev z besedilom, bomo prikazali v tem prispevku, in sicer se bomo osredotočili na branje dramskega besedila.

Recepcijska estetika in teorija bračevega odziva sta tisti dve smeri literarne vede, ki sta izpostavili aktivno vlogo bralca v bralnem procesu in izdelali različne konstrukte bralcev. Pri svojih analizah sta se ukvarjali zlasti s prozo in liriko, medtem ko je bralec/gledalec drame redko predmet njihovih raziskav.² Kljub številnim očitkom in pomanjkljivostim sta bili obe disciplini zelo vplivni tako z novim raziskovalnim področjem (tretjo metodološko paradigmo) kot z uvedbo novih pojmov, ki so se izkazali za uporabne tudi v teoriji drame in so jih izrazito gledališko usmerjeni teoretiki vključili v svoja razmišljanja. Tako se pojmi, kakršni so konkretizacija, zapolnjevanje praznih mest, horizont pričakovanja, interpretativne skupnosti, modelni bralec, vsakodnevne fantazije, užitek idr., pojavljajo tudi pri semiotikih gledališča (med njimi so Patrice Pavis, Anne Ubersfeld, Marco de Marinis, Marvin Carlson idr.).³

Glavna razlika izhaja iz samega predmeta raziskovanja, saj je literarna komunikacija pri drami drugačna kot pri proznih ali lirskih besedilih: drama zaradi svojega dvojnega eksistenčnega statusa predvideva več vrst naslovnikov. Tako bralec bere dramatikovo besedilo, gledalec pa gleda uprizoritve, katere sestavni del je dramsko besedilo, a prebrano skozi oči režiserja in igralcev ter aktualizirano glede na pričakovanja in navade gledalcev. Iz tega izhaja, da je sprejemnik drame trojen: sestavljajo ga bralci drame, režiser in igralci (oziroma celotna gledališka skupina) ter gledalci uprizoritve.⁴ Tako bračeve kot gledalčeve recepcijske zmožnosti upošteva dramatik že pri pisanju drame. Patrice Pavis (»Teze« 119) zapiše: »[D]ramska besedila so vedno samo sled določene uprizoritvene prakse. Problem je v tem, da jih je treba brati tako, da si predstavljamo, kako so jih

med nastajanjem oblikovale omejitve igre in uprizoritve.« V postmoderni multimedijski civilizaciji pa je gledalec tisti element gledališke komunikacije, ki je postal predmet zanimanja najrazličnejših znanstvenih disciplin.

Tako smo si tudi sami zastavili cilj, da z raziskavo osvetlimo konkreten stik med bralcem in dramskim besedilom ter gledalcem in gledališko uprizoritvijo pa tudi prikažemo razlike in podobnosti med besedilom in uprizoritvijo, kot se kažejo na različnih ravneh bralčevega/gledalčevega odziva. Bistvo raziskave torej ni usmerjeno v analizo dramskega besedila in gledališke uprizoritve oziroma v primerjavo in vrednotenje teh dveh, saj gre za dva avtonomna medija z njima lastnimi zakonitostmi. Zanimata nas odziv sprejemnikov in razlike v njihovih predstavah, nastalih na podlagi branja dramskega besedila (tj. razlike v besedilnih svetovih bralcev) oziroma ogleda gledališke uprizoritve in branja uprizoritvenega teksta, tj. režije celotnih odrskih sistemov, med katere prištevamo dramsko besedilo: branje uprizoritvenega teksta implicira, da dojamemo način, kako je besedilo brala režija, kajti branje besedila je potekalo pred režijo, ki je tako odrska realizacija tega branja (Pavis, »Od besedila« 152). Raziskava se torej loteva vprašanja, kako dobi besedilo oziroma uprizoritev pomen za sprejemnika oziroma katere jezikovne znake besedila dekodirajo bralci in katere jezikovne ter nejezikovne znake uprizoritve zaznavajo gledalci. Z empirično raziskavo pa smo preverili tudi praktično uporabnost nekaterih teoretičnih pojmov.

Problem in metoda

V skladu s cilji raziskave smo izdelali vprašalnik s kvantitativnimi in kvalitativnimi vprašanji (odgovori DA/NE, obkrožanje na petstopenjski lestvici, razvrščanje elementov, izbiranje med ponujenimi možnostmi, samostojno tvorjenje odgovorov tipa: razloži, opiši, naštej, ovrednoti, utemelji). Vprašanja so se nanašala na različne ravni bralčevega/gledalčevega odziva, in sicer:

- zaznavanje različnih elementov drame, kot se kažejo skozi besedilo in/ali uprizoritev: dramska oseba (značaj, zunanja podoba, mimika in kretnje, kostum, odnosi med osebami), dramski govor (zaznavanje jezikovnih posebnosti dramskega govora, idiolekt in sociolekt, način govora, jezikovne ponovitve ...), prostor in čas (čas in kraj dogajanja, prizorišča, scenski elementi, materiali in barve, predmeti in rekviziti, zvoki, šumi in glasba);
- razumevanje in interpretacijo (zahtevnost drame za razumevanje, manj razumljivi prizori, temeljna ideja, sporočilnost drame ...);
- vrednotenje in všečnost (splošna ocena všečnosti besedila/uprizoritve, najljubši prizor, dramaturško šibek prizor ...);

– primerjavo besedila in uprizoritve (v kolikšni meri se uprizoritev ravna po besedilu drame, razlike v predstavah, nastalih ob individualnem branju in konkretno odrsko realizacijo ...).

Raziskava je bila sestavljena iz dveh delov: prva skupina anketirancev je prebrala dramsko besedilo in si nato ogledala gledališko uprizoritev, druga skupina pa si je najprej ogledala uprizoritev in nato prebrala dramsko besedilo; tako smo primerjalno preučevali, v kolikšni meri je na zaznavanje elementov uprizoritve vplivalo predhodno branje in obratno. V raziskavi je sodelovalo 60 študentov 1. letnika slovenistike s končano gimnazijsko izobrazbo, starih med 19 in 20 leti, večinoma ženskega spola in iz različnih delov Slovenije, kar je predstavljalo starostno, izobrazbeno in interesno homogen vzorec. Kot gradivo je služila drama Dušana Jovanovića *Ekshibicionist*, za katero smo predvidevali, da bo tematsko in idejno zanimiva za izbrani vzorec anketirancev,⁵ hkrati pa je bilo to igro v času izvedbe raziskave možno prebrati in videti uprizorjeno na odru. Drama je bila krstno uprizorjena v sezoni 2001–2002 v SNG Mala Drama Ljubljana v režiji Dušana Jovanovića in istega leta je bila objavljena v pripadajočem gledališkem listu, v knjižni izdaji pa je izšla leta 2004.

Rezultati raziskave⁶

Zaznavanje sestavnih delov drame

Zaznavanje različnih elementov, povezanih z dramsko osebo, jezikovnimi značilnostmi in časovno-prostorskimi dimenzijami drame, je z odgovori pokazalo, da so se anketiranci v našem primeru osredotočali predvsem na dramsko osebo (oznaka, značajske lastnosti, mimika in kretnje, kostum, problemskost ...), saj so bili ti odgovori najštevilčnejši. Odgovori tistih, ki so predhodno brali dramsko besedilo, so bili pri naštetih kategorijah na občutek izčrpnější, natančnejši in bolj poglobljeni, vendar vprašanja niso bila zastavljena dovolj odločevalno, da bi to lahko z vso gotovostjo trdili, nakazujejo pa razmišljanje, da so bili ti anketiranci manj zaposleni s samo zgodbo, tako da so lahko več pozornosti posvečali navedenim uprizoritvenim elementom. To pa ne velja za zaznavanje jezikovnih posebnosti in predmetov, rekvizitov in drugih scenskih elementov, kakršni so materiali in barve, ter glasbe; ti elementi so bili na splošno slabše zaznavani in niti predhodno branje in s tem poznavanje zgodbe ni povečalo pozornosti tem segmentom uprizoritve. Najopaznejši so bili vulgarni izrazi paznika Jimmyja in pogosta raba strokovnih terminov v govoru psihiatrinje Eve. Večino preostalih jezikovnih značilnosti je opazila manj kot polovica ozi-

roma manj kot tretjina anketirancev, rezultat za preostale osebe je še nižji, četrtna anketirancev pa je zapisala, da odgovora ne pozne, se ne spomni, ni bila pozorna na jezikovne značilnosti, ali pa odgovora sploh ni bilo. Zato so imeli bralci/gledalci tudi težave pri določanju pomenskih funkcij naštetih elementov in njihove soodvisnosti znotraj uprizoritve, tako da se pri teh vprašanjih večkrat pojavi odgovor *ne vem* oziroma odgovor ni bil zapisan. Glede usmerjanja gledalčeve pozornosti se v našem primeru potrjujeta obe osnovni predpostavki, ki ju navaja Marco de Marinis v študiji »Dramaturgija gledalca« (189–204), enem redkih prispevkov, ki se ukvarjajo s tako temeljnim problemom, kot je ta, kako gledalec iz raznolikih in razpršenih elementov sestavi uprizoritev, ki je skladna in nosi pomen, torej s problemom percepcije. Ker je gledališka umetnost tista, ki sprejemnikove čutne sposobnosti najbolj zaseda, je gledalec prisiljen zavreči ali celo izrazito izničiti del množice dražljajev, ki jim je simultano in sukcesivno izpostavljen. In kot ugotavlja de Marinis, gledalec tako avtomatično in nezavedno uporablja dva modela – pozorno fokusiranje in selektivno pozornost –, pri čemer si zastavi temeljno vprašanje, kaj privablja gledalčevo pozornost k neki stvari in kaj jo hkrati odvrča od druge. Najprej navedimo primer pozornega fokusiranja in selektivne pozornosti: dobra polovica gledalcev je kot sestavni del kostuma Daniela Parkerja navedla natikače; ti so pritegnili gledalčevo pozornost, saj jih Daniel obuva in sezuva, nosi po prostoru ipd., hkrati pa so natikači odvrnili pozornost od drugih elementov kostuma, denimo od čepice, ki jo je navedel en sam gledalec, četudi jo ima Daniel ves čas uprizoritve na glavi. Druga misel je, da mora predstava najprej gledalca presenetiti, vzbuditi njegovo zanimanje, začudenje, če hoče pritegniti njegovo pozornost. To se je pri nas pokazalo na več ravneh. Navedimo dva zgleda. Na seznamu predmetov, ki so si jih gledalci zapomnili, prva mesta zasedajo tisti predmeti, ki so nenavadni, presenetljivi in s tem fascinirajo gledalca (na primer predmet z bucikami, pisoar, drog z lučjo, žival); podobno se je pokazalo tudi pri prizorih, ki so gledalcem ostali v spominu, tj. pri prizorih, ki so pritegnili njihovo pozornost s šokantnostjo, smešnostjo, čustveno nabitostjo ali izjemno igralsko prepričljivostjo.

Razumevanje in interpretacija

Anketiranci po lastnih ocenah na splošno niso imeli težav z razumevanjem dramskega besedila in gledališke uprizoritve. Med manj razumljive prizore je več kot polovica bralcev uvrstila konec 23. prizora, ko je treba hkrati sestavljati dva vzporedna pogovora, nekateri pa so imeli težave tudi

pri Dorothyjinih dolgih monologih. Pri uprizoritvi se je za glavni problem izkazalo to, da so zaradi hitrega dogajanja gledalci prezrli določene informacije – v našem primeru je bilo tako denimo s Fredovim otroštvom in Evino preteklostjo –, torej tisti deli, ki imajo epsko dimenzijo. Potem ko so si bralci ogledali predstavo in ko so gledalci prebrali besedilo, so poročali, da dramo v celoti bolje razumejo in da so jim posamezna nejasna mesta zdaj jasnejša, kar nas nedvomno napeljuje na misel, da je za celovito razumevanje drame potrebno tako branje kot tudi ogled odrske uprizoritve, če je ta le možen.

Bralci in gledalci niso imeli težav z razbiranjem sporočila drame, res pa je, da so odgovori nekaterih zelo enostavni in sporočilo drame nekoliko poenostavljajo; vendar se v »pravilnost« interpretacije nismo spuščali. Bralci so najpogosteje pristopali k besedilu iz perspektive ene od dramskih oseb in njenih težav, zato je zanje sporočilo vezano na spoznanje, da ima vsak človek težave ne glede na svoj socialni status, izobrazbo, razlika je le v tem, da si nekateri pred težavami zatiskajo oči in si jih ne priznajo, tako da se navzven kažejo popolne, navznoter pa so polni konfliktov. Gledalci so k tej perspektivi dodali tudi širši pomen drame, torej njeno osnovno idejno sporočilo, ki kaže na osamljenost in odtujenost v sodobnem svetu. Besedilo je sicer pomensko odprto in omogoča različne pomenske poudarke, vendar se odgovori izbranega vzorca v večini primerov gibljejo znotraj navedenih dveh pomenskih polj.

Vrednotenje in vsečnost

Tako besedilo kot uprizoritev so anketiranci na lestvici všečnosti ocenili izjemno visoko (na petstopenjski lestvici je predstava dobila oceno 4,67, dramsko besedilo pa 3,97). Gledalci so zlasti pohvalili igralsko zasedbo, prikaz resnih problemov na komičen način in aktualnost same tematike oziroma prikaz realnosti sodobne družbe, bralci pa tudi odlične dialoge, kompozicijo, nekateri tudi rabo različnih ravni jezika. Kot dolgočasne so najpogosteje označili Dorothyjine monologe na začetku drame in nekatere pogovore med Dorothy in Evo. Gledališka uprizoritev omogoča tudi več različnih vrst komike, kar se je pokazalo tudi v našem primeru, saj so gledalci komičnost uprizoritve ocenili z višjo oceno kot bralci komičnost besedila (za predstavo 3,83, za besedilo 2,87). Pogosta raba kletvic in vulgarnih izrazov je anketirance presenetila, a se jim je zdela v kontekstu tega besedila/uprizoritve smiselna in učinkovita.

Primerjava besedilnih svetov bralcev z odrsko realizacijo

Primerjava dramskega besedila in gledališke uprizoritve v naši raziskavi temelji na podobnostih in razlikah med besedilom in uprizoritvijo, kot jih zaznavajo in interpretirajo sprejemniki. Gre torej predvsem za primerjavo tega, v kolikšni meri se ujemata dramsko besedilo in verbalna komponenta uprizoritve ter v kolikšni meri se ujemajo besedilni svetovi, nastali na podlagi branja bralcev in ustvarjalcev uprizoritve. Uprizoritev se razen redkih izjem, ko je izpuščena kakšna vrstica in dodan stavek, v celoti ravna po besedilu drame in vanj ne posega. Predstave anketirancev, nastale na podlagi branja, se v marsičem razlikujejo od odrske realizacije. Bralci so dramo doživljali bolj problemsko in resno, medtem ko je bila perspektiva uprizoritve lahkotnejša in bolj komična. Različno so si predstavljali tudi dogajalne prostore: bralci poročajo, da so si zamišljali zapor in rešetke, medtem ko je bila scena na odru minimalistična, prizorišča pa so se hitro menjavala, tako da jih je običajno zaznamoval samo kakšen značilen predmet. Iz odgovorov anketirancev je razbrati, da besedilo večjo pozornost odmerja Dorothy, medtem ko se uprizoritev bolj osredotoča na naslovnega junaka. Največ razlik med predstavami bralcev in ustvarjalcev gledališke uprizoritve se je pokazalo prav na ravni predstav o vseh nastopajočih osebah. Natančno smo primerjali značajske lastnosti Freda Millerja in kostum Daniela Parkerja.

Izkazalo se je, da sta podoba naslovnega junaka na podlagi branja besedila in podoba junaka na podlagi branja režije presenetljivo podobni, saj sta med ponujenimi pomenskimi dvojicami na petstopenjski lestvici obe skupini obkrožali naslednje značilnosti: Fred je inteligenčen, zavrt, osamljen, čustveno zapleten, resen, ranljiv, poklicno uspešen fant, urejene zunanosti, nenasilen in srednje privlačen. Razlike pa se pojavijo pri tistih lastnostih, ki zadevajo zunanost osebe. Gledalci so zunanost osebe označili glede na igralčev fizični videz, zato je zanje Fred nizek in svetlolas, medtem ko je za bralce Fred visok in temnolas. Enoten odgovor bralcev je presenetljiv, kajti v besedilu ni nobenega podatka o zunanosti oseb. Drugi primer pa je povezan s kostumom dramske osebe: to vprašanje smo osredotočili na osebo psihiatra Daniela Parkerja, ki ima edini skozi celotno uprizoritev nespremenjena oblačila. Bralci si na podlagi branja Daniela zamišljajo v elegantnih, dragih, uglajenih oblačilih (nekaj primerov odgovorov: brežhibna obleka po zadnji modi, hlače na rob in bela srajca, elegantna obleka temne barve s kričečo kravato, strog, uraden videz, obleka drage blagovne znamke, čevlji denimo znamke Hugo Boss, črni lakirani čevlji, moderna očala ipd.). Spet je presenetljiva enotnost odgovora, saj je takšen odgovor zapisalo kar 87 odstotkov vprašanih, medtem ko le 13 odstotkov

vidi Daniela v vsakdanjih oblačilih, tj. v kavbojkah ali drugih navadnih hlačah in srajci oziroma puloverju, dodaja pa še neusklajene barve, športne copate in očala. Drugače so si Danielov kostum zamislili ustvarjalci predstave: gledalci so najpogosteje našli natikače, oranžno srajco in rdeče hlače, med pridevniki pa pisana oblačila, hipijevska, žive barve, neusklajena, ohlapna, sproščena, neformalna, preprosta, razvlečena oblačila.

Ker v besedilu ni konkretnih podatkov o zunanosti oseb, predvidevamo, da so v opisanih dveh primerih izjemno enotni odgovori posledica splošne družbeno-kulturne vednosti, iz katere izhajajo nekakšne vnaprejšnje predstave o ekshibicionistu oziroma borznem posredniku in psihiatru (podoba uglajenega newyorškega psihiatra je lahko recimo posledica številnih podobnih nastopajočih likov v ameriških televizijskih nanizankah). Hkrati pa smo s temi vprašanji nakazali, da je duševnost oseb v besedilu natančno zarisana, medtem ko ostaja njihova zunanost primer praznega mesta (Iser) oziroma vrzeli (Ubersfeld), ki jo v našem primeru bralci zapolnjujejo drugače kot odrski ustvarjalci in za njimi gledalci, pri čemer pa sta obe možnosti legitimni in nista v nasprotju z besedilom. Lastnosti, ki zadevajo čustveni odnos sprejemnikov do družbeno zaznamovane osebe (anketiranci so na petstopenjski lestvici obkrožali vrednosti med *odvraten* – *simpatičen* ter *moja čustva ob osebi so negativna* – *moja čustva ob osebi so pozitivna*), so pokazale visoke vrednosti in pozitivno naravnost sprejemnikov: ta je pri gledalcih še višja kot pri bralcih. Tako lahko tvegamo in za Jausson, Iserjem, Brechtom in drugimi ponovimo, da srečanje z literaturo in potemtakem tujo izkušnjo prispeva k širitvi bralčevega/gledalčevega spoznavnega horizonta in tako spreminja tudi bralca/gledalca ter njegove poglede na svet.

Sklep

Primerjava lastnih predstav, nastalih na podlagi branja besedila, z branjem režije in nastalo konkretno realizacijo odrskih ustvarjalcev je eden od temeljnih virov užitka. Če beremo dramo po ogledu uprizoritve, ta dimenzija odpade, saj odgovori anketirancev kažejo, da v tem primeru beremo dramo v skladu z videnim na odru. Zato se nagibamo k odločitvi za branje dramskih besedil pred ogledom uprizoritve. Seveda pa je pri tem treba upoštevati tudi sam namen oziroma cilje branja, zato je v določenih primerih smiselno tudi obratno zaporedje.

Študentje so v našem primeru poročali, da se jim je zdel vprašalnik koristen, saj jim je pomagal oblikovati vtise, zato so v predavalnici lažje in pogumneje sodelovali v diskusiji: pokazal jim je določene elemente, na ka-

tere niso bili pozorni oziroma so jih prezrli, in njihovo funkcijo, ob njem so opazovali avtonomnost in hkrati medsebojno prepletenost dramskega besedila in gledališke uprizoritve ter spoznavali tudi različne mehanizme, ki sodelujejo pri opomenjanju in recepciji dela. Največja prednost vprašalnika je, da se nanaša na analizo konkretnega dramskega besedila/uprizoritve in tako dopolnjuje znanje s predavanj o teoriji drame oziroma šolske obravnave teoretičnih pojmov, ki so ponavadi abstraktne, splošno povzemajoče različne teorije in metodološke prijeme, vezane na izolirane dramske prvine in konkretizirane z očitnimi primeri iz različnih besedil. Takšen vprašalnik in diskusija ob njem vključuje nadgradnjo bralnih in drugih strategij, ki so specifične za branje dramskih besedil, ter spoznavanje teoretičnega aparata za analizo drame. Vprašalniki spodbujajo verbalizacijo estetske izkušnje vsakega posameznika, saj ta pri sebi ponovno podoživi in premisli o predstavi oziroma besedilu ter na podlagi zapisanega lažje primerja svoje ugotovitve in zaznave z drugimi. Analiza drame s pomočjo vprašalnika ni nova metoda: Anne Ubersfeld, André Helbo pa tudi Patrice Pavis so izdelali različne vprašalnike, ki pa so splošni in niso osredotočeni na točno določeno dramo, hkrati pa se v večji meri nanašajo na analizo gledališke uprizoritve.⁷

Pričujoča raziskava ne ponuja dokončnih odgovorov, omogoča pa pogled v procese branja in razumevanja večje skupine bralcev in pokaže, kaj bralci opazijo ob prvem, spontanem branju nekega besedila in ogledu gledališke uprizoritve, kakšna so njihova doživetja ob branju, iz katere perspektive pristopajo k besedilu, na kakšen način vključujejo informacije besedila v svoje že obstoječe miselne sheme ipd. Rezultati kažejo na pestrost besedilnih svetov, ki nastanejo na podlagi branja istega besedila, in dokazujejo, da branje in razumevanje literarnih besedil ni odvisno samo od stopnje šolanja in književnega znanja, temveč tudi od subjektivnih lastnosti posameznega bralca. V odgovorih anketirancev se tako kažejo tudi individualna, subjektivna vrednostna merila vsakega posameznika, zato so odgovori pri vprašanjih odprtega tipa razpršeni. Tudi kadar več anketirancev navede podoben odgovor, zazna isti element ali opiše isti prizor, je njihova interpretacija lahko različna in je posledica subjektivnega doživljanja oziroma sestavljanja gledaliških znakov v samo njim lastno celoto.

Prav zato takšne raziskave vsakič znova preverjajo tudi uporabnost same metodologije. Raziskave različnih vrst občinstva s pomočjo vprašalnika sodijo med najbolj razširjene oblike, njihov temeljni problem pa je zagotoviti pravo razmerje med kvalitativnimi in kvantitativnimi tipi vprašanj. Pri kvalitativnih vprašanjih, pri katerih anketiranci pišejo odgovore samostojno, so namreč odgovori razpršeni, zato jih je težko razvrstiti in ovrednotiti, so pa jasen pokazatelj spontanega odziva. Pri zaprtih vpraša-

njih, pri katerih so odgovori dani vnaprej, je te lažje prešteti in statistično obdelati, a po drugi strani izgubimo določene informacije. Posamezni raziskovalci iščejo ravnotežje med obema možnostma gleda na predmet raziskovanja in cilje. Po drugi strani pa vidimo eno poglavitnih težav tudi v sami metodologiji raziskovanja, saj je težavno raziskovati branje, ne da bi pri tem s svojim načinom raziskovanja in izbranim instrumentarijem posegali v bralčev spontani bralni proces, mu z zastavljenimi vprašanji sugerirali razumevanje, pritegnili njegovo pozornost na določen element ali ga kako drugače usmerjali. Vse naštetu pa je tudi razlog, da je tovrstnih raziskav v slovenskem prostoru še vedno zelo malo.

OPOMBE

¹ Seznam takšnih hipotetičnih bralcev je obsežen, saj je vsak raziskovalec osnoval svoj model; o tem gl. uvodno študijo Andrewa Bennetta k zborniku *Readers & Reading* (Bennett 3).

² Seveda pa dramska besedila niso popolnoma izvzeta; tako je npr. N. Holland preučeval, na kakšen način Brecht preoblikuje različne fantazije v družbeno sprejemljive pomene, W. Iser je poskušal razložiti vrste in funkcijo smeha pri Beckettu, H. R. Jauss je razlagal mit Ifigenije pri Racinu in Goetheju, iz bralčeve/gledalčeve perspektive pa je napisan tudi njegov spis *Über den Grund des Vergnügens am komischen Helden*, v katerem poskuša tragično in komično razložiti kot nekaj relativnega, odvisnega od občinstva in njegovih subjektivnih zaznav.

³ Da so navedeni pojmi uporabni pri konkretnih analizah, dokazujejo različne študije. Marvin Carlson se na primer v poglavju »Theatre Audiences and the Reading of Performance«, ki je izšlo v knjigi *Theatre Semiotics: Signs of Life* (1990), opre na teoretična izhodišča W. Iserja, H. R. Jaussa, U. Eca, M. de Marinisa in S. Fisha in jih aplicira na štiri konkretne primere. Tako najprej ugotavlja vpliv žanrskih zakonitosti na razumevanje pri različnih tipih drame skozi zgodovino. Potem razpravlja o vlogi in razvoju gledališkega lista, predvsem o tem, kako ta s svojimi informacijami usmerja recepcijo. Sledi konkreten primer drame in vpliv oglaševanja: Carlson vzame za zgled dramo *Čakajoč na Godota* in prikaže, kako oglas predvidi modelnega gledalca oziroma ga zgreši. Zadnji primer pa kaže vpliv časopisne kritike, in sicer gre za oceno uprizoritve *Češnjevi vrti*. Na podlagi navedenih primerov Carlson ugotavlja, da se gledališke študije v glavnem ukvarjajo z odzivi in občutki gledalcev po koncu predstave, premalo poudarka pa je na tem, kar oblikuje gledalčev horizont pričakovanja, torej tisto, kar gledalci že prinesejo v gledališče: pričakovanja, domneve, strategije in drugo, kar bo kreativno sodelovalo s stimuli predstave.

⁴ Do podobnih sklepov pride tudi Una Chaudhuri v članku »The Spectator in Drama/ Drama in the Spectator« (1984), kjer navedeno trojico naslovnikov še dodatno časovno ločuje, tako da jo najprej postavlja v čas nastanka drame, nato pa ločuje še vsa kasnejša branja.

⁵ *Ekshibicionist* je zgodba o Fredu Millerju, uspešnem borznem mešetarju, ki kaže čustva na družbeno nesprejemljiv način. Razkazovanje ga že tretjič pripelje v zapor, kjer se seznani s socialno delavko Dorothy Jackson, ki v njem ne vidi le spolnega iztirjenca, temveč ranljivega in nezaupljivega fanta, in med njima se postopoma splete čustvena vez. Njeno nasprotje je psihiatrinja Eva Stempowsky, zanjo je Miller pacient in izmeček, za katerega

je edina prava ozdravitev šok terapija. Igra, ki je postavljena v New York, v treh dejanjih in skupno štirinadvajsetih prizorih prikaže pet oseb (poleg naštetih sta tu še paznik Jimmy in psihiater Daniel) in njihovih intimnih usod, pri čemer vsakdo doživi novo epizodo, a se vendar gledano v celoti nič ne zgodi. Tako je *Ekshibicionist* zgodba, ki poteka predvsem na ravni jezika, zgodba, ki temelji na poznavanju sodobnega diskurza in novodobnih ritualov komunikacije, ob katerih Jovanović izpostavlja nekaj problemskih težišč sodobnega človeka: osamljenost, krhkost, ranljivost, razmerje med poklicno uspešnostjo in zasebno izpraznjenostjo, iskanje družbeno sprejemljive samopodobe ipd.

⁶ Rezultati raziskave so z vsem pripadajočim znanstvenim aparatom (statistična obdelava podatkov, tabele, preglednice, priloge z odgovori anketirancev) objavljeni v avtoričini knjigi *Najdeni pomeni: empirične raziskave recepcije literarnega dela*, v nadaljevanju pa povzemamo ključne ugotovitve.

⁷ Med njimi je zagotovo najbolj znan Pavisov vprašalnik, ki ga je avtor izvajal s svojimi študenti in je usmerjen v semiolško analizo uprizoritve. Pavisov vprašalnik je najpogostejše citiran in ga najdemo v številnih knjigah, v slovenskem prevodu v Pavisovem *Gledališkem slovarju* (1997) ali v reviji *Maske* (1988–1989).

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O AVTORJIH

Norbert Bachleitner je profesor primerjalne literarne vede na Univerzi na Dunaju. Proučuje razmerja med angleško, francosko in nemško literaturo od 18. do 20. stoletja, zgodovino literarnega prevajanja in posredništva, moderni roman, e-literaturo in sociologijo literature, zlasti zgodovino knjige in cenzure.

Roger Chartier je profesor zgodnjenovoveške francoske kulture na Collège de France in gostujoči profesor zgodovine na Univerzi v Pennsylvaniji. Pogosto predava v ZDA, Španiji, Mehiki, Braziliji in Argentini. Njegovo proučevanje zgodnje moderne evropske zgodovine izhaja iz analovske historiografske šole in se posveča zlasti zgodovini knjige, branja in izobraževanja. Trenutno raziskuje razmerje med pisno kulturo kot celoto in literaturo v Franciji, Angliji in Španiji.

Ana Č. Vogrinčič je docentka na Oddelku za sociologijo Filozofske fakultete Univerze v Ljubljani, kjer predava tudi na Oddelku za bibliotekarstvo, informacijsko znanost in knjigarstvo. Raziskovalno se ukvarja s kulturno in družbeno zgodovino knjige in branja, z materialnimi praksami knjižne kulture in z analizo s tem povezanih sodobnih pojavov. Leta 2008 je izdala monografijo o uveljavljanju branja v Angliji 18. stoletja.

Meta Grosman je zaslužna profesorica književnosti v angleščini na Univerzi v Ljubljani. Njene študije obravnavajo različne angleške in ameriške avtorje in medkulturno recepcijo njihovih besedil v Sloveniji. Posebej jo zanimajo procesi branja, medkulturnost in prevodoslovje. Izdala je več knjig o teh problematikah in uredila knjigo o ameriški književnosti za ne-ameriško bralstvo.

Jernej Habjan je raziskovalec na literarnem inštitutu ZRC SAZU. Na Univerzi v Ljubljani je diplomiral iz rusistike in komparativistike ter doktoriral iz sociologije kulture. Na temo razmerja med dialogično strukturo literarnega teksta in družbenimi učinki literarnega dela je napisal knjigo (v slovenščini) in več znanstvenih člankov.

Karin Littau je predavateljica angleške in primerjalne literarne vede na Univerzi v Essexu. Ukvarja se z zgodovino knjige in filma in s študijami adaptacije, recepcije in prevajanja. Napisala je knjigo o teorijah utelešenega branja, s Piotrom Kuhiwczakom je uredila zbornik o prevajanju. Pripravlja knjigo o zgodovini filma in literature. Od leta 1998 je članica izvršnega odbora Britanske zveze za primerjalno literarno vedo.

Mateja Pezdirc Bartol je docentka za slovensko književnost na Oddelku za slovenistiko Filozofske fakultete Univerze v Ljubljani. V svojem pedagoškem in raziskovalnem delu se ukvarja z analizo slovenskih dramskih besedil, teorijo drame, mladinsko književnostjo in procesi branja ter razumevanja literarnih besedil. Izdala je znanstveno monografijo o empiričnih raziskavah recepcije literarne umetnine. Bila je predsednica 44. in 45. Seminarja slovenskega jezika, literature in kulture ter urednica pripadajočih zbornikov.

Miha Pintarič od leta 1988 predava starejšo francosko književnost na Filozofski fakulteti v Ljubljani. Kot gostujoči predavatelj je obiskal tudi nekatere tuje univerze.

(Toulouse, Toulon, Oxford, Reading), vodil je več raziskovalnih projektov. Urejal je različne strokovne revije (trenutno je sourednik dveh), prispeval znanstvene in strokovne članke v mednarodno in slovensko periodiko ter občasno objavljaj na kulturnih straneh dnevnega časopisa. Je avtor znanstvenih monografij in učbenikov, pesniških zbirk v več jezikih, esejev in spremnih besed.

Monica Santini je podoktorska raziskovalka in predavateljica na Univerzi v Padovi. Po diplomi iz srednjeveške angleške literature se je na doktorskem študiju ukvarjala z dediščino romane v novodobni Britaniji. Napisala je knjigo o izdajah srednjeveških angleških romanc v poznem 18. in v 19. stoletju. Trenutno raziskuje uradna pisma kraljice Elizabete I in otroško literaturo.

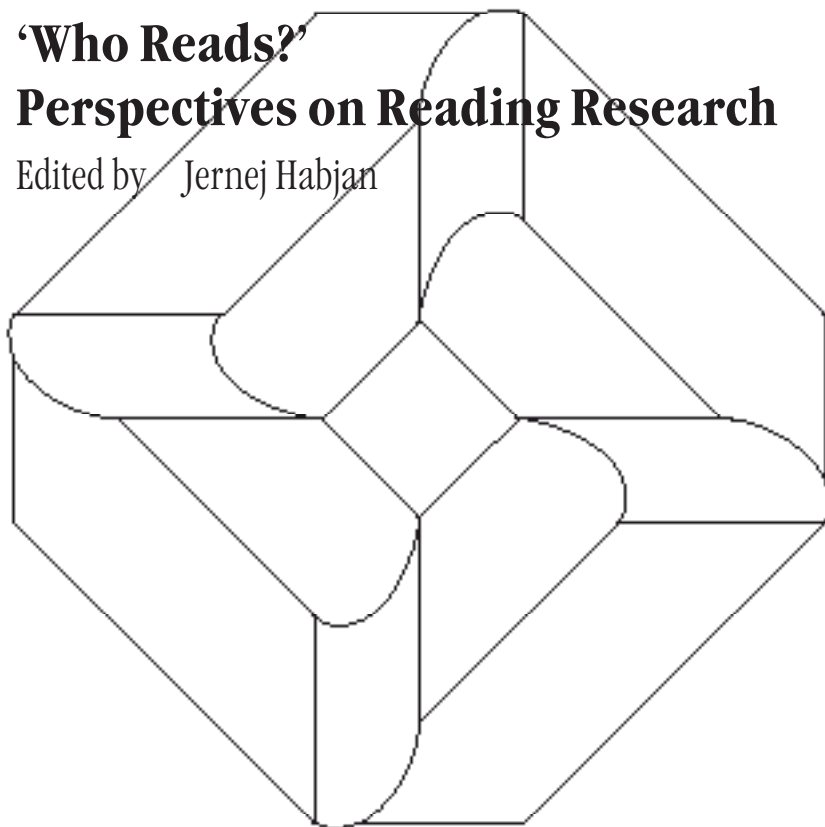
Veronika Schandl je leta 1999 diplomirala na Katoliški univerzi Pétra Pázmányja. Leta 2006 je doktorirala, leta 2007 je bila Fulbrightova gostujoča profesorica na Univerzi Rutgers. Leta 2009 je izdala knjigo o uprizarjanju Shakespeara v poznem obdobju Kádárjevega režima. Pripravlja madžarsko monografijo o recepciji Shakespeara v Kádárjevem režimu in projekt o literarni cenzuri na Madžarskem.

Tone Smolej je izredni profesor na Oddelku za primerjalno književnost in literarno teorijo Filozofske fakultete Univerze v Ljubljani. Ukvarja se z imagologijo, tematologijo, literarno retoriko, zgodovino primerjalne književnosti in francosko-slovenskimi literarnimi odnosi. Leta 2007 je objavil monografijo o slovenski recepciji Emila Zolaja v letih 1880–1945 in (v soavtorstvu z Majdo Stanovnik) biografijo Antona Ocvirka.

Shafquat Towheed je študiral na Univerzi v Londonu in na Univerzi v Cambridgu. Predava angleško književnost na Open University v Londonu in vodi projekt Reading Experience Database, 1450–1945 (RED). Souredil je več zbornikov o zgodovini branja in knjige. Osrednji predmet njegovega proučevanja sta britanska in ameriška književnost 19. in 20. stoletja.

**‘Who Reads?’
Perspectives on Reading Research**

Edited by Jernej Habjan



‘Who Reads?’: Perspectives on Reading Research

Ana Č. Vogrinčič

UDK 028

The eighth international comparative literature colloquium, which was part of the twenty-fifth Vilenica literary festival, was devoted to the issues of the reader and reading. It offered three thematically divided, albeit interconnected and overlapping, sections: the first one was to focus on the historical reader and reading habits, providing the social and cultural contextualisation of reading practices, including the contemporary ones; the second was to address various reading motifs (e.g., the motif of the reader or of the library), and the third to (re)consider theories of reading and reflect on the future of the practice. As such, the topic of the reader was intended to complement the previous two Vilenica colloquia, which centred on the role of the author (*The Author: Who or What Is Writing Literature?*) and on the importance of literary mediators (such as publishers, editors and critics) in contemporary literature and culture (*Who Chooses? Literature and Literary Mediation*), thus closing the chain of author – publisher/book-seller – reader.

The end result, however, steered away from the planned themes, as the papers comprised two, rather than three, sections, i.e., treatises addressing theoretical and methodological approaches to reading research (Grosman, Bachleitner, Towheed, Habjan, Pezdirc-Bartol), and historically oriented discussions closer to individual case studies (Littau, Pintarič, Čepič Vogrinčič, Smolej, Santini, Schandl). Needless to say, historical and theoretical approaches were often productively interrelated. This resulted in an interesting combination of theory and practice, inviting us to consider the possibilities of applying the one to the other.

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In her essay ‘Readers and Reading as Interaction with Literary Texts’, Meta Grosman, Professor of English literature at the University of Ljubljana, stresses the importance of understanding reading as a process of communication and a unique literary experience. Even though her per-

spective was largely ahistorical, an attempt to understand what readers do when reading and how they themselves contribute to the mental representation of the text can, as she argues, help us understand the contemporary situation, i.e., the reader's interaction with e-texts.

If Grosman refers to individual reading as an intimate act of temporary cohabitation with fictional characters, Norbert Bachleitner, Associate Professor of Comparative Literature at the University of Vienna, addresses in his contribution, 'From the Reading Public and Individual Readers towards a Sociology of Reading Milieus', the importance of sociological approaches to the history of reading, which enable us to grasp the reading habits of different classes and audiences, rather than individual readers. Referring to numerous studies that addressed the social aspects of reading, most notably Jost Schneider's recent study of reading milieus, i.e., of reading audiences from the perspective of social milieus, Bachleitner calls for the merging of the history of reading with history of literature, and thus forming a history of literary communication.

In some respects Jernej Habjan, researcher at the Institute of Slovenian Literature and Literary Studies, SRC SASA, deals with methodological issues as well, albeit of a particular sort. In his paper 'Research as Reading: From the Close Reading of Difference to the Distant Reading of Distance', he focuses on Franco Moretti's concept of 'distant reading', which was introduced as an alternative to the dominant method of close reading. Habjan offers an epistemological comment on Moretti's approach, and attempts to answer, from its own viewpoint, the most typical CompLit critiques of distant reading.

The article of Roger Chartier, Professor of the History of Modern Europe at Collège de France and one of the most prominent book historians, bridges the methodological and the historical contributions. In 'Cervantes, Menard and Borges', Chartier sketches six different readings of Borges' story *Pierre Menard, Author of the Quixote*, as a text that is self-referential at the biographical, autobiographical, allegorical, critical, aesthetic and bibliographical levels.

The section comprising case studies is introduced by Karin Littau, who teaches English and Comparative Literature at the University of Essex. In 'An Archaeology of Affect: Reading, History and Gender', Littau traces the marginalisation of affects, i.e., the affective pleasures of reading. Whereas affect was a measure of a work's excellence from antiquity to the eighteenth century, by the twentieth century the link between pleasurable reading and the heights of literary achievement has, as she argues, become almost untenable. By introducing the physical, bodily response to the text into the discussion on reading, her paper brings forth

the infamous woman reader, a crucial topic of (feminist) reception and gender studies.

While Littau's paper reveals the historically changing perception of reading, more precisely, of the changing evaluation of the power of literature, Shafquat Towheed, Lecturer in English at the Open University, presents in his paper 'Locating the Reader, Or What Do We Do with the Man in the Hat?' a unique reading database that can help us understand the historical transformations of reading practices. Towheed is a Project Supervisor of *The Reading Experience Database* (RED), an open-access database already containing over 30,000 records documenting the history of reading in Britain from 1450 to 1945. Evidence of reading is drawn from published and unpublished sources as diverse as diaries, commonplace books, memoirs, sociological surveys, criminal court and prison records. As such, the database containing qualitative and quantitative information about what British people used to read, where and when they read it, and what they thought of books, presents an invaluable resource not only for book and reading historians, but also for a variety of other disciplines.

Ana Č. Vogrinčič, Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana, discusses in her paper, 'Materiality of Reading: The Case of 18th-Century Novel-Readers in England, and a Glimpse into the Present', material aspects of book-reading and the non-textual dimension of the literary experience. She argues that from the eighteenth-century England onwards, the novel as an object has played an important role in the popularisation of leisure reading. Among significant contributions to the rise of the genre has been the materialisation of literary characters in other leisure and pleasure forms. This process, as well as numerous other ways in which the material read was articulated in conversation, is defined as 'externalisation' of the otherwise silent individual reading experience. This 'externalisation' can also be observed in contemporary book culture, characterised by the talk 'around' books rather than 'about' books.

Miha Pintarič, Lecturer in French Medieval and Renaissance Literature at the University of Ljubljana, examines in his paper, 'La satire de la Bibliothèque de l'Abbaye de Saint-Victor' (The Satire of the Library of the St. Victor Abbey), a fictional reading-related motif: that of a library parodically described in Rabelais' Renaissance classic *Gargantua and Pantagruel*. Although the library of the St. Victor Abbey is, at first glance, just a list of titles, Pintarič succeeds in analysing the complex meanings behind them.

On the other hand, Tone Smolej, Associate Professor at the Department of Comparative Literature and Literary Theory at the University of Ljubljana, presents a study on 'La bibliothèque et le lecteur en Carniole

(1670–1870) et l'histoire littéraire slovène' (The Library and the Reader in Carniola [1670–1870] and Slovene Literary Studies), which focuses on the well-documented libraries, i.e., those established and run by Slovene aristocracy from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries.

Monica Santini, a post-doc fellow and junior lecturer at the University of Padua, draws attention to yet another important issue: writing for children and young adults as a specific reading audience. In 'Young Readers and Old Stories: Young-Adult and Crossover Adaptations of the Arthurian Stories', she reviews and compares the choices and changes made by the authors/retellers of traditional Arthurian stories in an effort to adapt them to a modern and young readership.

Veronika Schandl, Assistant Professor at the Pázmány Péter Catholic University, Hungary, presents reading practices in the historical context of socialist Hungary. She demonstrates how the authoritarian Kádár regime wished to influence, and hence exercise control over, the reading habits of the nation. Her study 'Where Private is Public: Reading Practices in Socialist Hungary' is based on numerous reports that have become available only recently and thus offer fresh findings on the government's tailoring of the reading menus.

Mateja Pezdirc Bartol, Assistant Professor of Slovene Literature at the Department of Slovene Studies at the University of Ljubljana, closes the volume with an overview of approaches to reading reception. Her article 'Reading a Drama Text: An Empirical Case Study' examines the contact of readers with a selected drama text and then compares, at several levels, this contact to the spectators' perception of the staging of the text.

* * *

Although the contributions undoubtedly present very different views, some recurring topics can easily be recognised. The first and foremost is the problematic relationship between research on individual readers and on audiences: the latter is most thoroughly discussed in Bachleitner's study but present in many others as well, notably in the contributions of Towheed and Pezdirc Bartol.

With the exception of the Emma Bovary case discussed by Karin Littau, none of the papers portrays the reading habits of a certain individual, as they are all focused on general issues and on collective audiences. However, according to Stanley Fish's concept of interpretive communities (see Fish), the individual and the collective audience can never be regarded separately, since every individual reading implies the presence of a larger audience.

The *Reading Research Database* stresses this relationship particularly strongly, for it seems to bridge the gap, providing some insights into individual reading practices, as well as allowing for a more general idea of collective ones. Contrary to the first impression, RED, despite starting from predominantly fragmented and often anecdotal 'instances' of reading traces, offers, when properly examined, knowledge about reading audiences. This is not only because it includes a special category on reading groups, but also because, in a comparative perspective, even anecdotal evidence reaches beyond the accidental. What seems more problematic is the question whether this information can be taken as representative at all. Since the vast majority of readers, as we all know from our personal experience, leave no traces, those who do are necessarily atypical, which means that any writing about reading is automatically unusual. What RED offers is therefore inevitably exceptional, and that certainly limits its otherwise impressive potential. But even so, the collected information already pushes the study of reading in new directions, enabling it to progress beyond the speculative, especially since RED has recently been internationalising its scope and is currently working with research partners in Australia, Canada, the Netherlands and New Zealand.

Another recurring dichotomy is the relation between historical and ahistorical focus, the former providing overviews of certain historically changing reading-related questions and/or providing particular case studies, and the latter tackling methodological and theoretical issues.

On the whole, the papers offer insights into various spatio-temporal contexts – sixteenth-century France, seventeenth- to nineteenth-century Carniola, eighteenth-century England and socialist Hungary – and discuss different reader types, such as the young (Santini), the censored (Schandl), the professional (Habjan), or the female reader (Littau).

The last clearly surfaces in Littau's and Vogrinčič's discussions on the moral panic antinovel discourse. The two essays complement each other at other levels, too. When read together, they seem to maintain that the contemporary book culture with newly emerging book formats reintroduces the questions of the bodily dimension of reading, the material aspects of the book and the sensual experience of reading, as it forces us to reconsider the way we handle books.

One might even suggest a connection between Moretti's distant reading and the talk around books, although distant reading should not be taken as something replacing proper reading, but rather as a new sort of research that introduces a hitherto unknown literary history, allowing us to grasp general tendencies and patterns in literary evolution (the *longue durée*

of literary history). Which is in fact also what RED tries to accomplish in the field of the history of reading.

Interestingly enough, the participants did not devote much thought to the challenges of the e-era. This should most likely be taken as a sure sign that the e-era is to some extent already taken for granted and does not call for special attention anymore. As such, it is clearly present in the contributions of Grosman, Vogrinčič and, obviously, Towheed. If we are soon going to switch to e-books, and if the Google Books project succeeds, the Reading Research Database will become a precious e-storage of readers' traces, preserving print book marginalia that would otherwise be lost forever. Even so, one should keep in mind that such databases are silent on the tangible, material side of the reading evidence, which obliges us once more to pay close attention to both past and contemporary processes of the materialisation of reading.

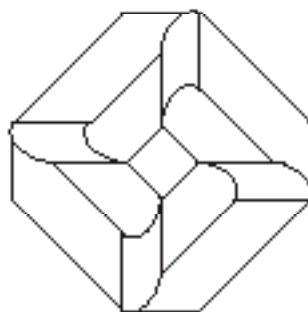
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Papers



From the Reading Public and Individual Readers Towards a Sociology of Reading Milieus

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In spite of studies on the external history of reading and on individual readers we know very little about the reading habits of groups of readers. Bourdieu has provided a model for the correlation of class and taste but his model is rather crude compared with contemporary studies based on 'sinus milieus'. Jost Schneider reconstructs, for instance, the taste of the lower middle class which is characterized by stasis, of the liberal-technocrat milieu which is oriented toward the formal experiments of the 'classical' avant-garde and the hedonistic milieu which is searching for new styles and trends. Schneider's results still await corroboration by empirical data.

Keywords: history of reading / sociology of reading / readers / social class / reading culture / reading habits / Sinus milieus

UDK 028:316.7

A history of literature that excludes readers deals only with the *offer* of communication but not with literary communication itself. If literary history is conceived as a parade of authors and texts it covers only virtual meanings and interpretations established by a synthesis of the readings of a handful of prominent critics. If the communication aspect is taken seriously, the impact of literature, the 'use' that readers make of books, is as important as textual analysis. Only if we take into account the readers' response we can hope to find answers to the questions about the role of literature in history, about the distribution of ideas, the formation of opinions and mentalities by literary texts, and about the construction of group identities. If the focus is directed at the consumption of literature the selection of works will be totally different from the canon constructed in conventional literary histories.

Reading research started with studies of the external history of reading. Book historians have compiled substantial quantitative data, which can be divided into two types, namely macro and micro evidence. (cf. Darnton,

'First Steps' 158). On the macro level, statistics based on national bibliographies (e.g., catalogues of the Leipzig book fair, the *Bibliographie de la France*, the papers of the *Stationers' company*) show the emergence of the modern book market and the corresponding reading public. Data on the degree of literacy, the number of book shops, book prices, print runs and sales provide a tentative image of the impact of literature and of the literary audience at a certain point of time. The history of press legislation and censorship contributes to the reconstruction of literary communication: it demonstrates the limits of the distribution of literature. Rudolf Schenda came to the conclusion that the vast majority of the lower and lower middle-classes remained illiterate and virtually excluded from literary communication until the 20th century. Reading was (and to a certain extent still is) the privilege of an educated minority.

On the micro level, the catalogues of private libraries of the nobility, of clergymen and other outstanding personalities provide insights into individuals' book holdings. Remarks in letters, diaries and other autobiographical sources yield often detailed information about individuals' reading practices. From the point of view of literary studies, and especially from a Comparative Literature perspective, authors' own reading habits, their literary education and knowledge, is of particular interest. Contemporary images of readers provide information about the mode of reading, e.g., about the development of reading from a social to a private experience, or the change from reading aloud to silent reading. In a similar vein, the representations of reading in the works of imaginative writers, mainly in novels, may be used as a source for reading manners and habits. From the 18th century on, the catalogues of reading clubs and circulating libraries add information about the favourite reading matter.

Other sources apt for the reconstruction of reading are the pedagogical writings of the 18th and 19th centuries which condemn the extensive reading of novels (called 'Lesesucht' in German) and in particular of novels like *Werther* and *La nouvelle Héloïse*. Robert Darnton ('Readers') has analysed letters sent to Rousseau revealing the new modes of sentimental reading and identification with fictional characters. Autobiographical accounts such as memoirs and diaries sometimes provide data about the quality of reading and marginal notes in books may testify to the fact that reading often leads to immediate virtual dialogue. Recently, psychologist Norbert Groeben (cf. Christmann and Groeben) has proposed empirical studies of the psychology of the reading process by way of certain experiments and questionnaires. Currently at Vienna university, in a dissertation prepared by Maria Handler, this type of study is applied in order to 'test' the impression of English translations of Rilke's poems and the original German texts on a sample of readers.

To sum up, in early reading research the focus was on the outlines of the quantitative development of the reading public and microanalytical studies compiling data on individual readers. But we still know very little about the reading habits of certain groups of readers. In the late 18th century the reading public started to grow considerably and to differentiate into groups with tastes of their own. By then, a hierarchy of cultural goods, corresponding to social hierarchy, had to a large extent already emerged. Pierre Bourdieu in *La distinction* was the first to research systematically different life styles.¹ According to Bourdieu not only do social groups have a taste of their own but, more important still, art serves as a means of social distinction.

The taste for high brow art and literature (Bourdieu speaks of legitimate art) is *not* a natural gift; it presupposes education, cultural competence and of course enough spare-time for an adequate reception of a work of art. The understanding of legitimate art requires the knowledge of its 'code' and of its history, of the development of styles and techniques, since a single work makes only sense if it is set in relation to other works. By the way, the consumption of works of art, which are by definition 'useless' from a practical point of view, demonstrates that the consumer is free from economic necessity and can afford such a 'luxury' activity. Legitimate art is autonomous and independent from everyday life as well as from any particular purpose. It is considered a pure form and requires a 'pure' gaze from the reader as well as distance and disinterestedness, e.g., distance from the characters in a novel and disinterestedness in features like a happy ending, suspense, amusement and the like.

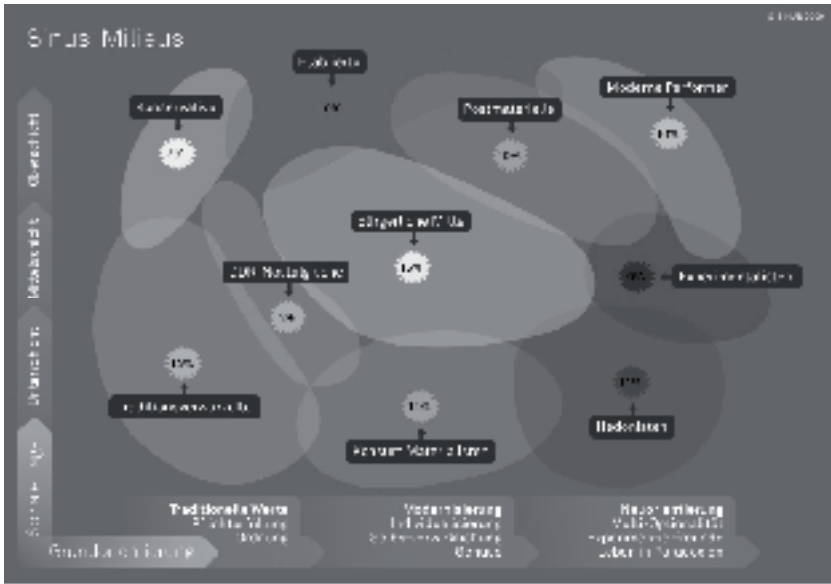
On the other hand, popular art and taste do not lay claim to any independent aesthetic value. Whereas legitimate art implies a sort of agnostic attitude, popular art is heteronomous, and more likely to present ethical or political issues. Works of art are regarded as useful and scarcely distinguished from objects of everyday life. Whereas legitimate art provides no 'natural' pleasures and requires a refusal of everything 'human' (which is by definition common and vulgar), popular art relies on the stimulation of the senses and invites the recipient to participate in the game, e.g., in a drama or a novel.

Bourdieu distinguishes between three zones of taste:

- le gout légitime (legitimate taste), i.e., the taste for legitimate works;
- le gout 'moyen' (middle brow taste), which comprises the minor works of the major arts; and
- le gout 'populaire' (popular taste) (*Distinction* 14–16).

Bourdieu's model of the relation between class and taste is very convincing but the method of classification is still rather crude. A recent study

by Jost Schneider entitled *Social History of Reading* uses the ten ‘*sinus milieus*’ instead of the system of three classes. Society has become more complex and diverse than it was 35 years ago when Bourdieu started his research. Today all classes have at least theoretically access to cultural production, including literature. The concept of class should therefore be replaced by the more flexible concept of milieu which provides a much more subtle system of categorisation. The system of ‘*sinus milieus*’, originally developed for marketing research, seems an appropriate means of distinguishing between consumer groups. The idea of the *sinus milieus* is based on the correlation of two parameters: on the one hand, social position (which divides upper, middle and lower classes and which was the main parameter for the distinction between social *classes*), on the other hand, value orientation on a spectrum spanning conservative and progressive views.



Source: http://www.google.at/images?hl=de&biw=1020&bih=614&rlz=1R2GGLL_de&q=sinus+milieus+2009&revid=1890806054&um=1&ie=UTF-8&source=univ&ei=hd8oTefeNYS18QO_sbSFAw&sa=X&oi=image_result_group&ct=title&resnum=3&ved=0CDQQAQwAg

The system of ‘*sinus milieus*’ appears in different variations. In the version used by Schneider the region between the group of the well-established (*Etablierte*) and the post-materialists (*Postmaterielle*) is called liberal-technocrat milieu (*Technokratisch-liberales Milieu*), the bourgeois middle class is labelled as a class that is heading towards social advancement (*aufstiegsorientiertes Milieu*), the modern performers (*moderne Performer*) are called alternative milieu (*alternatives Milieu*).

Die Milieulandschaft der 80er Jahre



Source: http://www.google.at/images?hl=de&biw=1020&bih=614&rlz=1R2GGLL_de&q=sinus+milieus+2009&revid=1890806054&um=1&ie=UTF-8&source=univ&ei=hd8oTefeNYS18QO_sbSFAw&sa=X&oi=image_result_group&ct=title&resnum=3&ved=0CDQQAQwAg

In what follows, we shall take a closer look at the reading habits of three milieus.

1) The members of the traditional milieus comprise the lower middle class; their overall goal is to maintain their relatively modest standard of living, since any change of the status quo is liable to lead to social decline. Law and order, moral standards, positive thinking, a traditional codex of behaviour and homeliness (*Gemütlichkeit*) are important in this milieu. The lower middle class prefer popular authors like Heinz Konsalik, Johannes Mario Simmel and Utta Danella (who represent the 'lower middle class' also in terms of literary value; it is significant that their books are distributed mainly in supermarkets and book-clubs, not in regular book shops). It is perhaps worth mentioning *en passant* that Konsalik and Simmel have been translated into dozens of languages and that their success is almost world-wide. We have already stated that popular art is more likely to present moral issues. Thus, in his adventurous and romantic plots Simmel regularly introduces contemporary social problems and plays the role of a friend of the common people who defends civil rights. On the other hand, Danella is a favourite of traditional female milieus; it goes without saying that her model of partnership of the sexes approves marriage and family-life. Her critique of 'the rich' and their lack of morals coincides perfectly with lower

middle-class attitudes and values. The same applies to the use of dialect and stereotypical motifs, sentiments and wording (Kitsch) in the lyrics of modern popular songs, most of them related to a pseudo-rural setting. In popular comedy the class opponents, the members of the 'uncivilized' working class and the rich and intellectual elite, are exposed to ridicule.

2) The liberal-technocrat milieu is composed of two groups, the former Bildungsbürgertum (i.e., the intellectuals, comprising e.g., lawyers, medical doctors and architects) and the leading circles in politics and economy (the 'experts' and 'managers'). The members of this milieu hold the most responsible positions in various sectors of society; in their opinion art should not only be a formalist play without purpose, they appreciate an earnestness of approach, e.g., the moral commitment of authors like Thomas Bernhard or Elfriede Jelinek. It is quite clear that the understanding of this kind of literature requires a solid education in history, philosophy and many other disciplines, a private library that enables the reader to check names and allusions of any sort, and the ability and the will to concentrate on a text for a certain time-span.

Furthermore, this milieu prefers world literature, including avant-garde works employing formal experiments. Liberal technocrats approve of the individual point of view produced by narrative techniques like inner monologue and stream-of-consciousness. Through the use of unusual words and syntax, modern poetry often comes close to very private language and expression. Finally, self-irony is a technique for expressing the relativism of values which is the central dogma in the liberal milieu.

3) Non-conformism and sympathy for the avant-garde are the hallmarks of the hedonistic milieu. It comprises mainly young people who are not yet established and have abundant leisure time. What counts most and provides the highest prestige among hedonists is the discovery of still unknown works and styles that are liable to set a trend. It is no surprise that marketing research is very interested in the taste and habits of this milieu. Innovations produced here are often copied and adopted in the cultural mainstream. Hedonists do not accept the boundary between high and popular literature. In art and literature – as in life – they appreciate strong stimuli and instant pleasure. On the whole, (pop-)music plays a more important role than reading for them. A literary genre that suits this milieu well is so-called pop literature (represented, among others, by Benjamin Stuckrad-Barre), it discusses the problems of young people in a highly self-indulgent but also self-ironic tone. Slamming poetry is a format that combines easy-to-consume text and musical rhythm. The relation of this milieu to consumer society is ambivalent, hedonists waver between consumerism and critical distance.

Conclusion

Schneider's book deserves respect as a first attempt at a sociological history of reading but his approach requires a critical review.

1) The classification of readers he employs is sometimes quite convincing and even self-evident, but sometimes very problematic. For instance, the inclusion of technocrats and intellectuals in one milieu neglects the traditional tensions between commercial and intellectual bourgeoisie, between economic and cultural/symbolic capital (Besitz- and Bildungsbürgertum). According to Bourdieu's analysis, economic and cultural capital tend to exclude each other, their relation is complementary and chiasmic, i.e., 'les fractions les plus riches en capital économique relèguent les investissements culturels et éducatifs au profit des investissements économiques' (*Distinction* 133). In other words, those who have already accumulated a certain amount of economic capital lose interest in accumulating cultural capital. The reason for this is the social hierarchy within the upper classes: those rich in economic capital prevail over the intellectuals.

2) Schneider's indications of reading habits represent only a tendency, they are 'typical' of a certain milieu, describe cultural choices and preferences that are statistically over-represented. The correlations between readers of a certain milieu and individual books are only assumptions about the identity of the values inherent in texts and the values ascribed to a certain milieu. Future sociological reader research should try to establish empirical data on reading habits and tastes. Interviews or question-forms are the most exact instruments for measuring taste but they require funding and a research team. As an alternative, the data from sources used for historical reader research – records of individuals, catalogues of private libraries, indications about reading in autobiographical texts and letters – must be accumulated with respect to social groups and milieus. Finally, the readers' choice in public libraries must be screened, even if the protection of privacy may sometimes render this type of research difficult.²

3) But, in spite of such problems, Schneider's history of *reading* may serve as a model for a future history of *literature* structured not by literary genres but by classes of readers and their interests. In fact it seems necessary that the history of reading be combined with a history of the texts. The sociology of literary production and literary styles should be linked with readers' expectations and different functions and 'uses' of literary texts by different milieus of readers. If we succeed in developing the history of *reading* along the lines sketched above, it may one day become a history of literary *communication*, that is, a history of the production, distribution and reception of literature.

NOTES

¹ An important forerunner was Levin L. Schücking who in his *Soziologie der literarischen Geschmacksbildung* had underlined the necessity to differentiate the reading public in various milieus and regarded the *form* of a work of art as a means of social distinction.

² The Department of Comparative literature at Vienna University holds the papers of Vienna's last private circulating library, the Leihbibliothek Last & Co. which was closed in 1962; cf. the study of Bachleitner (1986) based on the lists of books taken out by individual readers.

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Readers and Reading as Interaction with Literary Texts

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The concept of reading as the interaction between the reader and the text makes it possible to examine some less studied dimensions of the reading process and the literary experience. It centres attention on what the readers do when they actually read and on their own contribution to the mental representation of the text. Such a concept also helps to understand the reader's interaction with the electronic texts.

Keywords: reading / readers / reception theory / literary experience / interaction / digital literature

UDK 028:82.09

To describe reading as the process of the reader's interaction with texts is common practice in both literary theory, especially in reader-response criticism, and psychology of reading. By including both the reader and the text, or the literary text if that be the case, such conceptualisation of reading makes it possible to focus on different aspects of the interaction, the reader's part in producing meaning in the process of reading conceived as either textual world or the mental representation of the text, the process of reading itself, and the potential of the text to generate various meanings, if read. When attention is paid to individual aspects of the reader's activity during linear reading of print-based texts and the challenges of different formats of digital texts, it is easy to understand why reading is now considered to be the most complex form of human linguistic behaviour. In a way, the anticipations of the complexity of the processes of literary reading can be traced to the earliest studies of some British critics in the 1920s.¹

The interest in readers first started with the endeavours to construct a more persuasive defence of the importance of literature by claiming for it a distinct communicative power. In order to present a persuasive argument for such a power, the reader's interaction with literary texts was conceptualised as a special form of communication between the writer and the reader in which the writer's artistic experience was transferred to

the reader. The fundamental belief: 'For evidently, whatever else literature may be, communication it must be: no communication, no literature' was shared by a number of authors² of the time. As long as the critics were interested simply in communicating literary experiences in abstract terms, most frequently without additionally qualifying them as aesthetic³, such a transfer seemed to be unproblematic. However, when they turned to a detailed discussion of the activities of readers in interaction with texts, the qualities of their literary experiences and the conditions of the transfer of artist's experiences into the reader's mind, there appeared numerous problems, and the complexity of the reading processes as a linguistic transfer of artistic experiences started to seem less easy to conceptualise.

As early as 1921 Percy Lubbock spoke about the problems of literary experience as 'the shadowy and fantasmal form' of a book which

melts and shifts in memory; even at the moment when the last page is turned, a great part of the book, its finer detail, is already vague and doubtful. [...] A cluster of impressions, some clear points emerging from a mist of uncertainty, this is all we can possess, generally speaking, in the name of a book. The experience of reading it has left something behind, and these relics we call by the book's name. (Lubbock 1)

He also came to observe that in reading readers tended to treat a book as a piece of life around them by selecting elements that struck them the most. Creation of this kind is, in his view, daily practice:

[W]e are continually piecing together our fragmentary experience of the people around us and moulding their images in thought. It is the way in which we make our world; partially, imperfectly, very much at haphazard, but still perpetually, everybody deals with his experience as an artist. (Lubbock 7)

The parallel between the process of reading and the daily activities of imperfect perception and understanding lead Lubbock to search for the possibilities of overcoming this common feature of literary reading providing the reader with such an unreliable basis for talking about literature in more attentive ways of reading literary texts.

The reader's tendency to choose individual textual clues from literary texts in accordance with their own interests is not the only factor limiting the potential of what texts have to offer. In her frequently reprinted essay *The Handling of Words*, Vernon Lee perceives the communication of literary experiences from the writer to the reader as a struggle between the thinking and feeling of the writer and the thinking and feeling of the reader (Lee 65). She tries to find out why it is so difficult for writers to persuade the readers and manipulate them to accept writers' words. She

believes the answer lies in the reader's different minds: 'The writer makes his book not merely out of his own mind's content, but out of the reader's mind too, so the impact of literature depends on the greater or lesser similarity of their minds. The writer has to find out how to manipulate 'single impressions, single ideas and emotions stored up in the Reader's mind and deposited there by no act of the Writer's' (Lee 1). She recommends that writers should not follow their descriptions in the order that is familiar to themselves, but rather endeavour to consider the reader and the possibility that the unfamiliarity of the author's thoughts could be distracted by the reader's own different thoughts and feelings (64). She emphasises the inevitable dependence of the results of reading on the reader's own previous experience and knowledge by drawing a parallel between the readers' own meanings and understanding of texts and the sound of the strings of a piano on which the writer/pianist can only play/press the keys. In this way, she also raises the question of the inevitable difference between what is offered by the writer in the text and what the reader gets out of it as literary experiences. The description of what exactly readers talk about when discussing literary texts and the question of the importance of the readers' own contribution in reading will continue to attract critical attention.

The turn to the reader in the 1970s

The questions about the conditions and qualities of readers' interaction with literary texts in processes of assembling textual meanings were reopened by numerous writers of criticism in the 1970s when readers' interaction with texts became the critical preoccupation. The interest in the reader's productive role in the construction of meaning has led to a vast body of scholarship about readers and reading recognising the importance of the readers' part in reading. Let us just have a look at some selected reader-oriented descriptions. In his preface to *Surprised by Sin: The Reader in Paradise Lost*, Stanley Fish observes: 'Meaning is an event, something that happens, not on the page, where we are accustomed to look for it, but in the interaction between the flow of print (or sound) and the active mediating consciousness of a reader-hearer.' (Fish x)

The event of reading seems the most difficult concept of the reader's interaction with texts to be presented by Wolfgang Iser in his *Act of Reading*:

Reading is an activity that is guided by the text; this must be processed by the reader who is then, in turn, affected by what he has processed. It is difficult to describe this interaction, not least because the literary critic has very little to go on

in the way of guidelines, and, of course, the two partners are far easier to analyse than is the event that takes place between them. (Iser 163)

Like Vernon Lee previously, Iser emphasises the role of the pre-existent content and experience in the reader's mind in the production of textual meaning:

[T]he structure of the text sets off a sequence of mental images which lead to the text translating itself into the reader's consciousness. The actual content of these mental images will be coloured by the reader's existing stock of experience, which acts as a referential background against which the unfamiliar can be conceived and processed. (Iser 38)

In *The Structure of Literary Understanding* Stein Haugom Olsen states that in order to understand literary texts readers must be able to use their extratextual knowledge from daily life to recognise similar presentations of situations in literary texts:

It is a common feature of literary works that they invoke the reader's knowledge of non-literary aspects of the world. To understand a literary work a reader must be able to transfer distinctions and concepts from ordinary living to works of literature. (Olsen 96)

The ways in which readers use extraliterary knowledge and experience in their interaction with texts to build around them a 'scenario, a text world, a set of states of affairs, in which that text makes sense' (Enkvist 7) seem to elude a detailed description of 'what elements in the contents of the reader's mind' and in which ways contribute to their understanding. It is taken for granted that readers can imagine themselves in situations very different from the ones they are in; they can create images of the sensations they could have and become aware, in part, of the meaning they should see in them, but it is obviously difficult to conceive how all this comes true. Countless studies are devoted to an experimental examination of a wide range of different personal characteristics and textual features that could be considered factors influencing readerly interaction with texts. Thus for instance empirical research of Rand Spiro (313) suggests the role of the reader's prior knowledge at several stages of reading: in receiving individual parts of stories, in selecting what is remembered, in the attribution of alien elements and distortion of existent ones and, of course, in the final formulation of the reader's coherent semantic representation of the text. Later research tries to include even more specific aspects of reading. The two joint projects of Douglas Vipond and Russell Hunt (Vipond and Hunt; Hunt and Vipond) discuss the possibilities of different modes

of literary reading as resulting from changed readerly attitudes, or rather interests. They also describe the direct impact of such changing attitudes on the quality of reading and evaluation. Based on extensive research with actual readers and substantiated by valid empirical evidence, such analyses offer new insights into the process of reading and contribute to a more realistic picture of readers' interaction with texts; however, they still cannot satisfactorily answer the questions about the reader's actual idiosyncratic use of their knowledge in interaction with texts.

The examination of individual textual features, i.e., of the elements in the text that provoke readers' world-building around the text and the details in the built-up world in the reader's imagination, at first seems to promise better results when it follows the linearity of readers' interaction. Advances in linguistics and discourse analysis have opened up new vistas for linguistic analysis of textual features triggering various responses and structures organising readers' perceptions of individual text items (see Fowler) and provided interesting insights into the functioning of literary texts as a special form of socially agreed speech acts (see Pratt; Ong). They have revealed important dimensions of the social embeddedness of readerly interactions with texts, the various influences on such interaction, and a new orientation in analytical studies supporting intense self-reflection about reading. Examination of individual properties of literary texts that are responsible for the various experiential states of readers continues to attract critical attention.

A more detailed analysis of such features is attempted in the project by Marisa Bortolussi and Peter Dixon in their empirical study of the reader's processing of narrative, *Psychonarratology: Foundations for the Empirical Study of Literary Response* (see Bortolussi and Dixon). Their analysis of the reader's interaction with narratives is based on an interdisciplinary use of insights of narratology, literary studies, linguistics, epistemology, and findings of cognitive psychology and discourse processing based on extensive experimental work with manipulated texts aiming to establish the impact of individual textual features on experimental readers. In order to scrutinise individual textual effects on readers, the study maintains a strict distinction between the use of the term 'textual feature' as referring to anything in the text that can be objectively identified, and 'reader's constructions' for readers' experience as events and representations happening in the minds of readers, including various kinds of subjectively constructed mental representations. They reject the frequent earlier assumption that the author's intended message is unambiguously coded in the text and that the reader's task is simply to decode this message; on the contrary, they view the text as a stimulus to which the readers respond.

Readerly responses are possibly subject to any number of influences in the reader's mental makeup or of the reading context. Thus in the nine years of their experimental research Bortolussi and Dixon have endeavoured to examine such influences in a systematic manner by observing actual readers as they read. Perfectly aware of the fact that the readers' interaction with texts vary with the characteristics of individual readers, the nature of the text, and the context in which the reading takes place, they are sure that the answer to the central question: 'What do readers actually do with the text?' requires a large body of empirical evidence on how these variables operate, how they interact, and how they combine to determine the readers' interaction with texts. Their massive experimental work provides several interesting answers concerning various details of readerly interaction with texts, as for instance how readers use their prior knowledge, expectations, and beliefs in interacting with the textual features of characterisation, how they attribute different traits to characters, how they form concepts of narrators, narrative perspective and spatial perceptions of narrative venues. They never lose sight of the fact that the mind cannot be directly observed, which is why the complexities of the mental reading experience are not amenable to empirical observation and individual literary experiences are only knowable with a certain measure of abstraction; to achieve such an abstraction they imagine a carefully constructed statistical reader.

In this connection it is worth mentioning that cognitive linguists are also interested in the results of the reader's interaction with texts that in psychology are conceived of as 'the mental representation of the text', which usually means the final stage of comprehension at which acquired knowledge from the text can be integrated into previous schemas and becomes usable to the reader. Though emphasising that readers must carry out complex reasoning with respect to a text and construct elaborate situation models which integrate information from the text with readers' real-world knowledge and provide interesting insight in the semantic processes of reader's active construction of meaning, linguists dealing with reading have had little to say about the nature and shape of such mental representations of texts (see Kintsch and van Dijk).

In recent decades, various studies of the reading process have tried to resolve in new ways the ancient question of the reader's emotional involvement in reading and to provide answers to this question with new analyses of the various possible emotions accompanying reading. Such studies may range from the reader's motivation for reading, sustaining the interest while reading, to various attempts to describe and analyse particular emotions accompanying reading or resulting from it. Readers'

responses to literary texts are usually believed to include some emotions engendered by their experience of texts like: 'I laughed', 'I cried' and even 'I was frightened' (Gerrig 179), though this means having emotions about situations readers must know to be unreal. Descriptions of such spontaneous responses may also involve other positive emotions such as admiration, fascination with the text's form and delight in its beauty, and include various negative responses. The capacity of literary texts to elicit (some) emotional responses is taken for granted and having emotional responses is considered a natural part of appreciation. It is commonly agreed that readers must bring with them their existent psychological makeup, attitudes, interests, values, prejudices and so forth; however, the ways in which literary texts address the emotions of readers and the nature of emotions elicited in that way are less clear. Emotions are still regarded as underdefined and insufficiently known. Noël Carroll ('Art' 191) believes that the readers' emotional involvement with narrative texts is generally promoted by the garden-variety emotions: fear, anger, horror, reverence, suspense, pity, admiration, indignation, awe, repugnance, grief, compassion, infatuation, comic amusement and the like. He believes that emotions not only are responsible for keeping the reader 'glued to the story' but also have an important function of focusing the reader's attention. They organise the reader's attention in terms of what is going on and the way in which the reader attends to individual parts of the text. In Carroll's view, emotions shape the way in which the reader follows the text and organises perception. Other authors emphasise the important relationship between readerly emotions and cognition and the omnipresent cognitive overtones of emotions (see van Peer 218).

Of the emotions arising during reading, suspense and empathy have attracted the most attention. Suspense is usually described as an emotional state. Several authors view it as the reader's response in narrative situations in which the outcome that concerns the reader intensely is uncertain when the course of events points to two logically opposed outcomes. One of the alternative outcomes is morally correct but improbable, whereas another outcome is morally incorrect or evil, but highly probable. The text must encourage the reader to form some (moral) preferences about alternative outcomes; the readers, on the other hand, are expected to form anticipations by using their extratextual knowledge, values, in particular moral judgments, and genre conventions (see Carroll, 'The Paradox' 84; Brewer 107; Vorderer 248). Because of the frequent condition of the use of individual moral consideration the readers' interaction with texts varies a great deal. This is also the case with empathy. The ability to take another person's perspective was first analysed empirically in developmental

psychology; in reading, it depends on the reader's individual disposition to emotionally react to other people, and this is the reason for considerable differences among readers, since some people are more empathetic whereas others feel little empathy, if at all. Suzanne Keen (4) describes empathy as a vicarious, spontaneous sharing of affect either in witnessing another's emotional state or when reading about such states. She attributes the capacity to experience empathy to the human brain's system for automatically sharing feelings by registering them in mirror neurons. In experiencing empathy, the readers feel what they believe to be the emotions of other people. In Keen's opinion, empathy involves emotion and cognition and is at the same time a source of the reader's pleasure. The various emotions resulting in pleasure during readerly interaction with texts have been the subject of numerous studies with rather varied descriptions of the pleasures of reading (Nell; Gerrig). Differences of emotions are enhanced by the inclusion of readers' own extratextual knowledge and experiences. In this connection, it is worth mentioning that such differences play an important role in textual perception and all verbalisations of literary experiences, in both private opinions of taste and critical evaluations.

Though the reader's interaction with literary texts has been scrutinised in hundreds of studies and books and extensively examined experimentally, it is premature to say that it has been adequately understood. It is obvious that readers have to build around the text a textual world (or an appropriate mental model) in which the text makes sense and becomes interpretable; the ways of building such textual worlds, however, are rather idiosyncratic and less known. Similarly, we cannot say with certainty what distinctions and concepts from ordinary living the reader must be able to transfer to reading and what the emotions accompanying reading are really like for individual readers. When literary narrative is no longer regarded as primarily a source of entertainment, it becomes a subject of interdisciplinary examination. Psychologists and cognitive scientists are interested in the cognitive, social, and emotional outcomes of 'exposure' to narrative in the short term and over one's lifetime. Various aspects of emotion occurring during readers' interaction with narrative fiction are examined before, during and after reading (see the beginning of Mar et al.).

The impact of various stylistic features of texts on readers has been experimentally examined, yet the insights based on individual analyses cannot be generalised to all forms of readers' interaction with texts. What data reduction processes are necessary in linear reading to achieve comprehension remains unsettled among cognitive linguists. And critics still face the problem of explaining the differences between the text on the page and the 'text' in the reader's head. Though linear reading processes

have been recently a frequent subject of fMRI examination, the insights from such imaging have not resulted in an acceptable explanation of such differences.

More and more researchers have come to realise that the reader's interaction with texts is always an associative and therefore a memory-enriched process. The enrichment derives from autobiographic episodic memory rather than from verifiable semantic memory related to textual information. The individual comprehension therefore depends on how long the reader's attention focuses on individual descriptions and how effectively such descriptions are related to the reader's own memory structures. The kind of knowledge that readers use in reading depends on the idiosyncrasies of their own situation and experience. When confronted with literary texts, readers obviously find more or less successful solutions to all such questions, but the ways in which they use their knowledge and experiences or have emotions seem to defy generalisations. Psychological research into reading provides at least partial answers to such questions. It (Brooke 361) has proved beyond doubt that in the reader's mental representations of texts (or in textual worlds) the information provided by the text and the reader's own contribution from the individual store of knowledge, memory and own experiences are intertwined in so complex ways that the source of individual items in the mental representation cannot be traced with any certainty even by reading specialists. So the search for certainty concerning readers' interaction seems to lead us to infinite subjectivity of reading depending on factors too complex to be generalisable. Experimental research on reading (*Reader Response*; Miall and Kuiken) can shed some light on partial aspects of literary reading but it is hardly expected to explain all the dimensions of living readers' linear interaction with literary texts or describe their immediate prediscursive literary experience, i.e., experience prior to the attempts to verbalise it in various interpretations.

The challenges of electronic texts

The technological development of the last two decades has made possible the production of new forms of texts and new genres of literature on electronic platforms that have introduced profound changes in the reader's interaction with electronic texts due to their ever more frequent inclusion of visual representation. The change from the print-based media of the page and book to the screen as the dominant medium of communication in the new information technology has introduced profound changes in the logic of the representation of messages. The traditional organisation of

writing governed by the logic of time, of sequence of the elements in time and their temporal arrangements has been replaced by the organisation of the image that, by contrast, is governed by the logic of space, by the simultaneity of its visual/depicted elements in spatially organised arrangements (Kress 2). The new electronic texts: with easy inclusion of visual representation Internet, web, CD-ROMs and computer RAM constitute a new field for recording, organising and presenting texts that radically refashions the printed book and calls for a very different interaction on the part of the reader. Bolter (12) describes these media as the new contemporary writing space that introduces the possibility of the so-called hypertexts. In the 1960s, long before its actual emergence, hypertext was described by Theodor H. Nelson (qtd. in Landow 4) as 'nonsequential writing', a text branching and allowing choices to the reader, best read on an interactive screen. Now hypertext is used to describe an information medium that combines verbal and nonverbal information: a text composed of blocks of text, also called nodes (*lexia*), and of visual information, sound, animation, videos, and other forms of data, all presented in binary codes, connected by electronic links and inviting nonlinear, or rather multilinear/multisequential interaction by the reader. All the presented components of such texts bear meaning and are part of the message to be comprehended simultaneously. With its digital technology and the changed relationship between the use of language and figurative presentation and sound, the new electronic texts/hypertexts create new conditions for experiencing meaning and information and introduce new ways of readers' interaction with digital texts by replacing unidirectionality with bidirectionality and introducing interactivity.

They also introduce perpetually unfinished and unstable textuality, reduced authority of the text, and profound changes in the relationships between the authors and their readers. Besides combining discrete units of text and various visual presentations, hypertexts use links to define relationships between individual textual elements. Links can perform different functions, ranging from making the structure transparent, providing possibilities of footnotes, returning the user/reader of the text to the basic document, to moving the user/reader to other websites. The use of links changes the reader's interaction with hypertexts: the act of reading becomes the act of choosing and deciding among various components of the hypertext, their individual combinations, and the span and quality of attention paid to each of them. Readers thus have to create their own individual paths through the hypertext and face countless possibilities of choosing different paths, also called chains or trails. In this sense readerly interaction with hypertexts is very different from linear reading.

In reading a linear novel, the reader is expected to forget the process of reading and to see the events and characters, whereas in interacting with a hypertext the reader must pay attention to the process by which the text is presented and renewed on the screen in order to continue deciding about and choosing the next screen. The reader is invited to 'navigate' the text by choosing different links. In this way the basic operation of authorship is literally transferred from the author to the reader who becomes a secondary author: 'In reading hypertext fiction the reader not only recreates narratives but creates and invents new ones not even conceived by the primary author.' (Liestol 98)

The use of digital technology has also brought about a profound change in the ways literary texts are created and read, leading to the emergence of a new genre: electronic literature. This genre is developing in different directions and so far includes various kinds of hybrid narratives and interactive texts, for instance the combination of narratives with videos into vooks and nooks that can only be read on e-readers. Though the body/amount of electronic literature is still limited, the institutions supporting its development are already active. The Electronic Literature Organization has the mission to 'promote the writing, publishing and reading of literature in electronic media' (Hayles 3). By definition electronic literature usually excludes print literature that has been digitalised and insists on the 'digital born', i.e., a first-generation digital object created on a computer and (usually) meant to be read on a computer or e-reader; the committee of the Electronic Literature, however, has opted for a more open definition of electronic literature as 'work with an important literary aspect that takes advantage of the capabilities and contexts provided by the stand-alone or networked computer' (ibid.). The first volume of *Electronic Literature Collection* offers free use of some sixty texts for educational purposes and clearly shows the hybrid nature of e-literature: a third have no recognisable words, virtually all have important visual components, and many have sonic effects (Hayles 4). Electronic literature is proliferating and developing into several distinguishable forms of interactive fiction: hypertext novels or short fictions, hypermedia narrative forms that re-fashion films or television, hypermediated digital performance, interactive or kinetic poetry. In Europe electronic literature promotion and research are organised by ELMCIP (Electronic Literature as a Model of Creativity and Innovation in Practice: <http://elmcip.net/>) under the auspices of HERA (Humanities in the European Research Area). The ELMCIP research project seeks to expand the definition of e-literature, so besides hyperfiction and hyperpoetry it includes also current diverse text-based practices, programmable and network media, new media based narratives,

interactive installations and other forms of artwork consciously produced as E-literature, shaped through text-based installation, networked art, performance and other media. Various forms of e-texts develop and change, so the email novels that were popular in the 1990s have recently been replaced by various forms of e-texts dependent on mobile technologies such as short fiction delivered on cell phones (Hayles 11). All these texts depend on the reader's active interaction by the use of links to bring up new segments of text, or rather new screens; that is why readers are frequently referred to as users, screeners and even interactors.

The reader's interaction with electronic literature shares one characteristic feature with linear reading: it rests on the readers' willingness and ability to select aspects of their lives which are relevantly attachable to the text. Also, in reading the words inside individual blocks of narrative texts or nodes the reader may use conventional linear reading habits. The interaction by links makes reading very different, the processes of active choice and design to find the path necessarily result in the development of different readerly interests and rather different emotions. Leaving the frame of an individual text unit or node will result in the obligation of the reader to follow new rules and changed experience, since the readers have to determine their individual path through the text by choosing among available links. The experience of electronic literature is certainly different from linear reading because the reader must constantly make decisions as to which link to choose to bring up the next screen, the next segment of the story or image, the order of which is not predetermined as in linear texts by the total of computer-stored materials. The stored materials of a hypertext make possible countless paths through them: in interacting with a hypertext readers create their individual paths by selecting and combining the elements existing in a spatial and nonlinear arrangements of nodes and links. From the reader's point of view, each reading of a hypertext as a special path is linear, in the sense that the reader must move from episode to episode by activating links and follow the path of chosen elements of the text sequentially. It is, however, next to impossible for any two readers to be able to create identical paths through the same hypertext. Because each reading determines the story of a hypertext by choosing an individual path through it, it is possible to say that the hypertext has no story; there exist just various readings of it (see Bolter 125). For instance, the iconic example of electronic literature Michael Joyce's *afternoon, a story* (see Joyce) with its 539 narrative segments and 950 links has been subject to several different readings by scholars (Bolter 124 *sq.*; Hayles 59 *sq.*) testifying to inexhaustible possibilities of readings, with each reading producing a different story through choosing various possible paths. Shifting words and

images create an infinite number of possible combinations; a work of literature is thus like an instrument to be played (Hayles 121) or an event of specific instance of the reader's singular interaction. Electronic texts thus invite different levels of interaction between the reader and the text. Will this result in a different model of literature? How the non-scholarly readers are to interact with electronic literature has not yet been discussed though several American universities have already introduced courses on electronic literature.

As it grows, the genre of e-literature will certainly raise lots of new questions: perhaps the most important one concerns the role of language when it is subject to the logic of the spatial organisation of the screen and, accordingly, has only partial role in the multimodal message. The discussion of the possible impacts of digital reading on the human brain opens even more disturbing questions: will the ever-shorter span of attention developing with e-reading make it impossible for the younger generations of readers to develop depth of thought and the capacity of empathy as stimulated by linear reading (Carr 220)? Will the transition from a reading brain to an increasingly digital one (Wolf 14) have a permanent impact on the circuits of the human brain? Amid these and similar questions one thing is certain: Readers' interaction with literary texts and electronic literature will remain in the centre of critical examination of the processes of meaning making in literary reading. As readers become social in new ways, digitally mobile and interconnected, the ways in which they interact with texts will call for new answers to the questions of why and how they respond to what forms of e-texts.

NOTES

¹ So many studies have been published in the field of reader response that my overview of literary reading as interaction with texts will be a very selective presentation of those that make it possible to chart the trend of this discussion.

² See, e.g., Abercrombie; Drinkwater; Cruse. In his *Principles of Literary Criticism*, I. A. Richards constructed a sophisticated theory of the 'scientifically oriented' psychological value of literary experience only to be abandoned in his later experimentally based study *Practical Criticism*, which was soon to become the most influential text in the later development of reader-response studies.

³ The belief that literary experiences were continuous with all other experiences and did not form a separate category of experiencing was shared by many authors at that time within the theory of 'continuity of literary experience'.

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Research as Reading: From the Close Reading of Difference to the Distant Reading of Distance

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Insofar as the reading of literary artworks is increasingly limited to literary criticism, any study of reading of such works is a study of critical, that is, close reading. Yet even within criticism, close reading has been rejected by distant reading, which enables, precisely by way of this rejection, both the reading of uncanonised texts, neglected by close reading, and a new reading of the canon itself.

Keywords: comparative literature / deconstruction / distant reading / close reading / Moretti, Franco

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Today, literary critics tell us that they remain the only readers of literary works of art. They tend to state this as an argument for the conclusion that criticism should be reconstructed.¹ I will draw a much more modest conclusion, one that only concerns the question of reading (and that may as such, nonetheless, touch on the big issue of reconstruction): if it is true that critics are the only readers – and why would they say it if it were not? – then any study of reading should be a study of critical reading. From this point of view, it becomes obvious that the critics' statement, gloomy as it may appear, is even optimistic. For Franco Moretti, one of the most influential critics today, openly encourages his own colleagues, the supposed only remaining readers, to omit reading literary texts. Granted, Moretti discards here a specific practice of critical reading, the close reading of canonical texts, but as, for him, close reading 'has radiated from the cheerful town of New Haven over the whole field of literary studies' ('The Slaughterhouse' 208), by close reading, he really means reading.

I wish to suggest that with this absolute negation of reading, the ongoing marginalisation of reading reaches its climax – and hence its dialectical turn. Moretti forsakes the close reading of the Western canon not for non-reading, but for the so-called distant reading of the history of formal differentiation of world literature. He relies on quantitative history's

graphs, geography's maps and evolutionary biology's trees to delineate respectively time, space and, finally, chronotopes of those formal elements that overdetermine the genres that in turn overdetermine world literature. These so-called 'abstract models' (*Graphs* 2, 8) that replace close reading with distant reading become concrete strategies if observed from the viewpoint that inverts the spontaneous notion of the relation between the abstract and the concrete. The viewpoint is of course Hegel's, and its elaboration for historical analysis of Moretti's kind can be found in Marx's 'Introduction' to the *Grundrisse*.

Of literary maps, Moretti himself writes 'you *reduce* the text to a few elements, and *abstract* them from the narrative flow, and construct a new, *artificial* object like these maps [...]. And with a little luck, these maps will *be more than the sum of their parts*: they will possess "emerging" qualities, which were not visible on the lower level' (*Graphs* 53). So when he claims that 'before indulging in speculations at a more abstract level, we must learn to share the significant facts of literary history across our specialized niches' ('More' 75), this should be read as a call for a move from academically, institutionally delimited, abstract, close readings of real objects to their concretisation by way of constructing, across institutionalised epistemological obstacles, an object of knowledge; it is only after such a move that 'indulging in speculations' can be discarded as remaining 'at a more abstract level'.

Hence the dialectic of distant reading; and the overdetermining character of the analysed infra- and supra-textual elements. Consider the final and most complex case study in his five-year series of attempts to grasp the world literary system. Moretti's construction of an evolutionary tree of free indirect style (*Graphs* 81–92) can be seen as a concretisation of Bakhtin's close reading of Dostoevsky. For Bakhtin, Dostoevsky uses free indirect style and similar devices in order to stage the polyphony of perspectives. As such, he is supposed to be the heir of Socratic dialogues and other carnivalised genres; the alternative to his contemporary, Tolstoy; and a precursor of a polyphony to come. Today, a rigorous materialist account of such a *longue durée* could argue that this polyphony to come has already come in the form of the reactionary multicultural *mésalliance* of carnival and monophony (Breznik 249–254); that among the humble predecessors of this symbiosis is precisely the monologue of Socratic dialogues (Barthes 178);² and that one of this account's own precursors is Tolstoy's historiography of the infinitesimal (Lotman 224; Rancière 33–34).

Such an account of polyphony might rely also on Moretti's tree compared to which Bakhtin's Dostoevsky appears quite abstract. Moretti understands free indirect style as the narrativisation of ideological interpella-

tion of individuals in modern, bourgeois societies. Dostoevsky becomes then part of the history of modernity, not a quilting point between the supposedly pre-ideological, carnivalesque past and the post-ideological, polyphonic future.

According to the tree, from Austen to Flaubert and Zola, free indirect style progressively closes the gap between the character and the narrator. After this saturation, the antagonism between the individual and the social reemerges as the device moves to Dostoevsky's Russia. A closure, yet not without antagonism, follows when free indirect style returns to Europe, yet this time around to Verga's Sicilian, unconsolidated region. And the character and the narrator separate once more along the core/periphery axis with estrangements of the objective in European high modernism and of the subjective in Latin American, say, Vargas Llosa's, 'dictator novels'.

Instead of unrelated deconstructive close readings (which would, moreover, hardly deem Verga's or even Vargas Llosa's style worthy of being deconstructed), we get a process whose dialectic is materially articulated onto geography: modern interpellation is recognised and reified in the nineteenth-century core of the world-system; questioned as such in the modernising Russia; only partially restored in the European southern semi-periphery; and then problematised again in the initial Western European core and in the hitherto passive Latin American periphery, both of which have by now, in the American century, become semi-peripheral. Distant reading, however, is designed to travel the distance not merely between Austen and Vargas Llosa, but also between Austen and Amelia Opie, between Vargas Llosa and David Viñas. It is not meant to (de)construct the canon, but to see it as just one of the potential outcomes of literary history, the one that has become the actual one for the reasons that make for the laws of literary history. It is against the backdrop of the unrealised potentialities, the 'boring' inertia of forms (*Atlas* 150), that the canonised texts are read. This renders interesting not only 'boredom', but – an even more difficult task – the canon itself, which suddenly poses anxiety-ridden questions such as 'How does a new narrative form crystallize out of a collection of haphazard, half-baked, often horrendous attempts?' (Ibid.)

This is evident in Moretti's other central case study employing the tree, namely his archaeology of the subgenres of the detective story that have remained mere uncanonised potentialities due to Conan Doyle's victorious use of the device of clues (*Graphs* 70–78; 'The Slaughterhouse' 212–223). Clues introduced by Doyle as signs of truth – rather than of the depicted detective's brilliance, of the criminal's depravity, of technological progress, of the correspondences with the transcendent or of nothing at all ('The Slaughterhouse' 223n17, 216n10) – are clearly an event. They

introduce modern science in a situation, the genre of detective fiction, which allows only for bourgeois individualism, moralism, determinism, obscurantism or plain redundancy. This is why they remain unnoticed as a revolutionary ‘jump’ (225) by Doyle’s competition – and even by Doyle himself: they serve (the truth within) the plot, not Doyle’s ‘myth of Sherlock Holmes’ (215). Far from remaining, like coke or the violin, an ‘attribute’ (ibid.), a fetish object, of Holmes, they are the subject-supposed-to-know that makes the ‘bourgeois’ (212n7) detective a subject of truth. And they are seen as such only by the ‘blind canon makers’ (210, 211), the contemporary readers, whose choice of Doyle over everyone else is an act of subjectivation, of fidelity to the event. This choice of ‘form’ (211), plot, over ‘boredom’, myth, also explains why Doyle’s own choices can be seen by Moretti as ‘making fewer errors early on, when the problems are simpler – and more errors later, when they are more complex’ (215). These readers then serve as subject-supposed-to-know for the next generations of readers, who read (and consequently canonise) Doyle simply because the previous generation is said to have read him. Unlike the ‘blind’ readers, subsequent generations make the choice offered to them by the market informed by hearsay, the ‘information cascade’ (210–211), the symbolic Other itself – and not the choice made by the formal ‘paradigm shift’ (215), the void, the unknown of the Other.

But the event of naming the truth of the situation – the event of enacting the ‘salient aspect of a historical transformation’, namely, ‘the impact of rationalisation over adventures’ (‘The End’ 74n11) – is betrayed not only by its own situation and by subsequent canonisation, but even by science. Moretti maintains that the motive of these ‘blind canon makers’ is a ‘blind spot’ (‘The Slaughterhouse’ 211, 218) of economic analyses of the cultural commodity market, and a ‘black box’ (‘The End’ 75) of literary history itself. ‘[T]he event that starts the “information cascade” is unknowable.’ (‘The Slaughterhouse’ 211) One of the commentators readily suggests cognitive science as the answer; Moretti expresses openness to this kind of suggestions (‘The End’ 75), but does not actually proceed in that direction. It seems that precisely by keeping the question unanswered and not taking the path of a cognitivist or any other kind of rationalisation of the event, Moretti’s project in effect remains falsifiable and thereby scientific.

Thus, the dialectic of unity and asymmetry that makes world literature ‘one-and-unequal’ (‘Conjectures’ 66; see also 55–56, 64), a system, is formalised best by trees. Trees can uncover relations between seemingly unrelated actualities as well as potentialities overshadowed by actualities; that is, they can shed new light not only on relations within the canon, but also on peripheral literary forms that were marginalised by the canon

as a whole. In the first case, the trees reconstruct the diversification of units (such as the device of free indirect style), in the second, the opposite process (illustrated by the tree of clues). In the initial proposal of distant reading, these two processes were divided between diversifying, nation-like trees and unifying, market-like waves ('Conjectures' 66–68); it seems that now this difference is reflected in the tree itself, which can now show both kinds of processes. Yet this should by no means be taken as a revision, yielding to the many critiques of the initial 'Conjectures'. If anything, the new trees highlight even more complexly – that is, more concretely in Hegel's and Marx's sense – the core/periphery relation between such actualities as Austen and Vargas Llosa, or, say, the market mechanisms that render non-Doylean clues mere potentialities. These trees can be even more readily deployed in Moretti's (68) initial struggle against the study of literatures as particularistic national and even local identities.

This dialectic, and the consequent critique of identity politics, are effectively the targets of the critiques of distant reading mentioned above (the early cases are addressed by Moretti in 'More'). For from the standpoint of the targets themselves, one might claim that these critiques pertain to the identity politics of recognition based, as Rastko Močnik shows, on a misreading of the Hegelian dialectic of *Anerkennung* (Močnik 183–184, 188–199). For Hegel, an identity statement ($A = A$) is inevitably recognised as self-contradictory, lacking the difference between its subject and predicate. The predicate under which contemporary post-political identity groups subsume themselves as subjects does differ from them, but it is postulated abstractly, in terms borrowed from the ruling ideology, rather than developed by means of any conceptual thought. That is, these groups identify themselves as subjects of human rights and cultural life-styles, not as members of a class or of one of two sexes. In a word, they identify themselves as (life-style, gender, ethnic, religious) identities, not as subjects (of class struggle or the unconscious). Consequently, their identity hinges on recognition by the ideology from which their predicate is borrowed.

This ideology is reproduced in reproaches to distant reading for considering language abstractly, for failing to recognise the particularity of each language and relying solely on philological studies that are second-hand (and written in English: Arac 40). Here, a dialectical and non-identitary reply would be that distant reading refers to second-hand studies precisely so as to articulate their object, a given local literature, onto the object of world literary system analysis. Distant reading takes the risk of reading extra-textual devices and genres (and secondary literature written in English) in order not to be limited, like close reading, to reading (primary) literature written in English.

Distant reading has been criticised for reducing the particularity of every culture to its position in a binary *dispositif* of core and periphery. Yet with all their embeddedness in critical theory, the critiques do not seem to be engaged in deconstructing the dichotomy, in arguing somehow that the distinction favours the core, while resting on periphery – they simply try to prove that the cultures they identify with are not peripheral. Instead of deconstructing the canon, they seek canonical recognition of their local literatures. They act as if core and periphery were words of ordinary language, not concepts of the world-systems analysis, a theory of cores exploiting peripheries – a deconstructionist *faux pas* if ever there was one, especially since ordinary language reproduces the ruling ideology, in this case, the politics of recognition of peripheries by the core.

So, deconstruction is what critiques of distant reading preach – and what they are prone to. And it is also what they neglect: they miss Moretti's own 'deconstructive' use of the dichotomy. Moretti does start by claiming that the novel's expansion as adaptation to an external influence is characteristic of peripheries, while the spontaneous expansion is characteristic of the core. But he does it in order to be able to demonstrate that the former is the rule, not the latter ('Conjectures' 60–61). He effectively introduces the rule/exception opposition and, projecting it on the core/periphery dyad, ends up with a more concrete relation between the periphery-as-the-rule and the core-as-the-exception. And in the final analysis ('More' 79–80), he shows that spontaneity is not merely exceptional, but nonexistent, since the expansion of the novel is always, even in the core, the result of a compromise. He thus implies that cores are specific merely insofar as they are not only results of compromises with expanding forms, but also sources of expansion in their own right. The barring of spontaneity does not lead then to multicultural relativism: the difference between the core and the periphery holds, it is just that it lies in a form's position within the system rather than in its genesis; what counts is where a form is in relation to the core, not whether or not it emerged spontaneously.

Similarly, Moretti, unlike postcolonial studies, approaches Jameson from the standpoint of materialist theory rather than the politics of recognition. He treats as a law of literary history Jameson's intuition of expansion being a result of a compromise between a foreign form and local material. What the critiques miss, however, is that Moretti goes on to add a local form to the pair ('Conjectures' 65). By suggesting that the latter is destabilised by a foreign form, he conceptualises it as overdetermined, doubly inscribed: as local, the local form is determined by material, and as a form, by the foreign – the latter determination being overdetermination, since the foreign form determines not only the local form, but also the

local material that in turn determines the local form. This form is hence a condensation, a symptom, of the asymmetry of the compromise: the instability of the local form (say, the narrator) betrays the subordination of the local and the material to the foreign and the form (say, of the local character to a foreign plot: 62n23).

The critiques of distant reading are therefore presented with a deconstruction of the core/periphery couplet in their very target, and one that affirms their local cultures better than they themselves do. For as this target treats these cultures as exploited by the core, it certainly does more than simply pitch them as part of the canon – as if the canon were not, like contemporary identity statements, dependent on ideological, rather than scientific, recognition. According to Moretti, the ideology is that of the average reader (that is, as the tree of clues tells us, the market): ‘Readers, not professors, make canons: academic decisions are mere echoes of a process that unfolds fundamentally outside the school: reluctant rubber-stamping, not much more.’ (‘The Slaughterhouse’ 209)

This attack on distant reading is then clearly not a defence of close reading. And it is a defence of neither deconstructionism nor philology. A decade after Moretti’s plea for the distant reading of world literature, some of the most influential thinkers on the cultural and theoretical Left are rejecting close reading in favour of historical materialism, while CompLit critiques of Moretti culminate, say, in Holquist’s (81) casual dismissal of distant reading in the name of Jakobsonian philology.³ Distant reading can indeed be charged with ripping close reading (‘a theological exercise’; ‘secularized theology’: ‘Conjectures’ 57; ‘The Slaughterhouse’ 208) – but not Jakobson’s poetics. On the contrary, the ‘jumps’ reconstructed by Moretti through quantitative analyses of their ‘boring’ situation activate precisely what Roman Jakobson calls the ‘orientation on the expression’ (Jakobson, ‘Noveishaya’ 305) and, later on, the ‘poetic function of language’, which ‘*projects the principle of equivalence from the axis of selection into the axis of combination*’ (Jakobson, ‘Closing’ 71). Recall the trees: geographic dislocation of free indirect style is viewed as the vehicle of the device’s deautomatisation; and clues are grasped as that which activates the poetic function of the language of detective stories. Jakobson is ignored not by distant reading, but by none other than the multiculturalism that is rejecting distant reading.⁴ Even in his recent hard-core quantitative study, Moretti maintains that ‘formal analysis is [...] what any new approach – quantitative, digital, evolutionary, whatever – must prove itself against’ (‘Style’ 154).

This is the point of Jakobson’s (in)famous pun that literary study without formal analysis is as random as an arrest without clues: ‘[T]he subject of literary scholarship is not literature, but literariness, i.e. that which

makes a given work literary. However, literary historians have been so far very much like the police, who in their goal to arrest a certain person take, just to make sure, also everyone and everything in the flat as well as casual passers-by.' (Jakobson, 'Noveishaya' 305; my translation) It is precisely this pun that is being rejected by much of the current comparative literary scholarship that is also dismissing distant reading. This double rejection becomes clear as soon as one realises that formal analysis of Jakobson's or Moretti's kind can hardly corroborate the current scholarly pleas to recognise local literatures and cultures as unique identities, independent of any world-systemic overdetermination; in most cases, rigorous formal analysis simply cannot confirm that these identities are independent and as such worthy of canonisation, as these pleas would have it.

Local literary facts that are supposed to refute Moretti's core/periphery model and/or Jakobson's definition of poetic function of language bring me to my final point: identity ideology is an epistemological obstacle to understanding falsification. Not only is it in Althusser's materialist epistemology ideology, and not theory, that which is eternal (159–160), but even in Popper's liberal epistemology a claim is theoretical precisely insofar as it is falsifiable (113, 92), and for Feyerabend, theory is no less than unfalsifiable by facts, since it is refutable solely by a stronger theory (29–31, 65–66, 303). Thus, falsifiability is good news for a theory, and its falsification is good news for theory as such, since falsification of a theory merely means the advent of an even stronger, more concrete theorisation of 'facts'. The strength of a theory increases in proportion with the theory's falsifiability, and drops to zero the moment falsifiability is actualised in falsification by a stronger theory. This is the dialectic that Moretti is effectively designating when he agrees with Popper that 'the value of a theory is in direct proportion to its improbability' (Moretti, *Signs* 23). And this is what critiques of distant reading are neglecting when they try to falsify it by bringing in not concepts, but facts about particular cultural identities.

The barring of the core-as-spontaneity is a case in point. Moretti is indeed reminded, by Jale Parla ('The Object' 117, 120–121) and Jonathan Arac ('Anglo-Globalism?' 38), that even a central author like Fielding admitted the influence of Cervantes. But the reason he accepts this critique of his equation of core and spontaneous expansion is that it reminds him of a possible theoretical, not empirical, objection: the materialist theories of form as compromise ('More' 79; 'The End' 73).

Returning to Althusser, one may add that the belief in the power of facts to falsify theories depends on a disavowal of the difference between a real object and an object of knowledge. For a decade now, Moretti has been reminding his (potential) critics that distant reading is supposed to

conceptualise a new object of knowledge, the world literary system, and not simply deny the existence of particular local literatures. And although virtually every critique of distant reading starts by citing his initial suggestion that ‘world literature is not an object, [but] a *problem*’ (‘Conjectures’ 55), they all continue by bombarding the theory with individual cases purporting to show the singularity of local identities. It is no wonder then that he had to reiterate the point even in his recent quantitative analysis of *Hamlet* (‘Network’), which, incidentally, elaborates on, rather than falsifies, his far from quantitative interpretation of Elizabethan and Jacobean tragedy (*Signs* 42–82) written more than three decades ago.

Halfway through this (anti-)distant reading decade, however, Moretti (‘The End’ 71, 86) abandoned the methodological debate on distant reading for distant reading itself. This makes sense insofar as a theoretical construction of an object of knowledge cannot be naturalised into a method. Constructedness, non-givenness, of an object of knowledge thus makes any purely methodological debate pre-theoretical. But it also makes the debate on theory constitutive of theory, since a theorisation of an object of knowledge cannot verify itself simply by referring pre-theoretically to a given real object. Moretti limits the power of falsification to theory (and gets ample criticism from CompLit theorists for it); this is why his refusal of the elegant methodological debate in favour of a prosaic empirical analysis (at the end of ‘The End’) should be read as a refusal of an abstract ideological practice in favour of a concrete theoretical practice of constructing an object of knowledge out of a real object.

This can finally serve as a reflection on my own practice of commenting on distant reading. Insofar as I have succeeded in contributing to a theoretical legitimisation of the theory of distant reading, I have at once managed to legitimate my reading of the theoretical, and not practical, aspects of distant reading – making through this reflection my practice a theoretical practice, one that is able to reflect on precisely on its own practical dimension. I have argued that, far from returning to close reading, critiques of distant reading are very much in the present, interpellated by the politics of recognition, the ideology of contemporary (semi-)peripheral societies. They reproduce, rather than analyse, this ideology. As such, these responses to Moretti’s analysis of cores and (semi-)peripheries are always-already potentially analysed by their addressee: as soon as they are uttered they retroactively become the object of this analysis of (central and) (semi-)peripheral ideologies. In this respect, my critique of these critiques of distant reading is, I hope, already a positive contribution, albeit at a zero-degree, to the criticised analysis of cultural cores and (semi-)peripheries.

NOTES

1 In a recent attempt at reconstruction of literary criticism, Marko Juvan notes, 'from the last third of the nineteenth century onwards, intellectuals were required to systematically learn about the artists of their national languages in school in order to accumulate cultural capital and strengthen national awareness. However, after leaving school, only a few among them [...] remained active readers and admirers of high literature. [...] Today literature is obviously losing this special charm and is increasingly merging into public discourse crowded with print and electronic media' (Juvan *Literary* 178–179). And it is with reconstruction in mind that Marjorie Perloff (182) speaks, in response to the 1993 ACLA report, of the undergraduate 'who has read precious little of that "high" literature in elementary and secondary school', and of 'the retrenchment and attrition of graduate programs'.

2 At a certain point, Bakhtin himself ('K pererabotke' 309–310) says that Socratic dialogue is in effect monologic.

3 The self-assured brevity of Holquist's dismissal can be read as a saturation of such older critiques as, say, Gayatri Spivak's, Emily Apter's, and Jonathan Arac's: Spivak (107–109n1) downgrades distant reading to a source of reference tools for, and hence an object of critique of, close reading; Apter (256, 280–281) suggests Spitzerian transnational philology as a counterweight to distant reading; and Arac (35) sees in distant reading no less than a case of globalisation-friendly theory, which disregards the singularity of language and hence of literary criticism.

4 That is, the ideology that is reproduced even in Holquist's (85, 94) defence of Jakobson against Moretti, portraying as it is Jakobson as an advocate of minor literatures and a demystifier of truth as mere language.

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Cervantes, Menard and Borges

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The article examines Borges's 'Pierre Menard, Author of the Quixote' from the biographical, autobiographical, allegorical, critical, aesthetic and bibliographical perspective. In all these contexts, the story reveals itself as either explicitly or implicitly self-referential, reading in each instance itself in its relation to the author, the publication and the reader.

Keywords: Borges, Jorge Luis / *Don Quixote* / Cervantes / reading / fiction / pastiche

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My intention to say something new about the story that is undoubtedly one of the most commented upon, analysed and interpreted texts of the twentieth century, is quite hopeless.

Nonetheless I have to give it a try. I will approach the problem in a scholastic manner, trying to uncover the sedimented senses of the story 'Pierre Menard, Author of the *Quixote*', which was characterised by Borges as 'a halfway house between the essay and the true tale' (Borges and di Giovanni, 'An Autobiographical' 171). However, unlike the scholastics, I shall not ground my reading in the four Biblical senses (the historical, the analogical, the moral and the anagogical), but shall rather excavate from 'Pierre Menard' six different senses: the biographical, the reflexive, the allegorical, the critical, the aesthetic and the bibliographical.

1. The first sense is biographical. The story was published in the journal *Sur* in May 1939, and in 1941 it appeared in a collection in whose title contains a botanical metaphor à la Antonio de Torquemada, *El jardín de senderos que se bifurcan* ('The Garden of Forking Paths'). In 'An Autobiographical Essay', dictated to Norman Thomas di Giovanni, Borges relates the story to an accident that occurred on 24 December 1938, leaving him unconscious and unable to speak:

It was on Christmas Eve of 1938 – the same year my father died – that I had a severe accident. I was running up a stairway and suddenly felt something brush my scalp. I had grazed a freshly painted open casement window. In spite of first-aid treatment, the wound became poisoned, and for a period of a week or so I lay sleepless every night and had hallucinations and high fever. One evening, I lost the

power of speech and had to be rushed to the hospital for an immediate operation. Septicemia had set in, and for a month I hovered, all unknowingly, between life and death. (Much later, I was to write about this in my story "The South.") When I began to recover, I feared for my mental integrity. [...] A bit later, I wondered whether I could ever write again. I had previously written quite a few poems and dozens of short reviews. I thought that if I tried to write a review now and failed, I'd be all through intellectually but that if I tried something I have never really done before and failed at that it wouldn't be so bad and might even prepare me for the final revelation. I decided I would try to write a story. The result was "Pierre Menard, Author of *Don Quixote*." (Borges and di Giovanni, 'An Autobiographical' 170–171)

A fictional work about a writer who abandons his original creative power and reinvents an already written work is therefore a kind of inverted mirror of the fate of Borges, who tested his ability to write by abandoning the genres with which he had already been familiar (poetry, reviews, articles) in order to adopt a literary genre in which he had never written before: something that is neither an essay nor a story – or that is both.

2. This opens up the possibility of a different, autobiographical reading. In this sense, one might focus on the catalogue of nineteen books that comprise '[t]he visible *oeuvre*' ('[l]a obra visible') (Borges, 'Pierre Menard, Author' 88; 'Pierre Menard, autor' 444) of Pierre Menard – in the same manner as scholasticism ascribes nineteen attributes to God. In a ludist fashion, the catalogue summarises Borges's bibliographical experience from the time when he worked as a principal assistant librarian in a poor district of Buenos Aires, and was primarily responsible for the cataloguing of books. All the texts written by Pierre Menard might as well be written by Borges, and are pastiches of Borges's own works. So, in Pierre Menard's bibliography one comes across authors, works and themes that obsessed Borges before and after 1939: *Ars magna generalis* by Ramón Llull, the universal language of Leibniz or Wilkins, the problem of Achilles and the tortoise, the French poets Paul-Jean Toulet and Valéry. Pierre Menard's notes, too, are similar to those of Borges: 'Recuerdo sus cadernos cuadriculados, sus negras tachaduras, sus peculiares símbolos tipográficos y su letra de insecto.' (Borges, 'Pierre Menard, autor' 450n1); 'I recall his square-ruled notebooks, his black crossings-out, his peculiar typographical symbols, and his insect-like handwriting.' (Borges, 'Pierre Menard, Author' 95n3)

This reflexive dimension of 'Pierre Menard', however, goes even beyond pastiche. In an interview conducted by James Irby in 1962 (and published in the 1964 volume *Cahier de l'Herne* dedicated to Borges) Borges emphasises that his stories are 'but notes to other books' (Borges, *J. Luis Borges* 398). This is why many of the texts collected in *Fictions* in 1944, are rewritings of already existing works: rewritten are José Hernández's *Martín*

Fierro (in 'The End'), De Quincy's *Judas Iscariot* (in 'Three Versions of Judas') and Kafka's 'Prometheus'; Borges translated Kafka's 'Metamorphosis' in 1938, immediately after having translated two books by Virginia Woolf.

Yet Borges is not the author of the story 'Pierre Menard, Author of the *Quixote*'. The text was written in 1939 by a friend of Menard's who had the same anti-Protestant, anti-Semitic and anti-Masonic views as Menard. It is no accident that for the residence of Pierre Menard, Borges chose Nîmes, a city torn by conflicts between Protestants and Catholics since the second half of the sixteenth century. And it is no accident that the text written by Menard's friend is dated 1939, the year of the publication of the story. Moreover, Borges knew very well that Charles Maurras's political movement *Action Française*, which had a strong anti-Semitic and anti-Republican orientation and directed its attacks the Popular Front government with Léon Blum as its leader since 1936, was very successful in Provence.

3. One can also suggest an allegorical reading of 'Pierre Menard'. Borges himself alluded to it in 1967, when he said to Georges Charbonnier the following about Pierre Menard:

Il y a chez lui un excès d'intelligence, un sens de l'inutilité de la littérature ; l'idée qu'il y a déjà trop de livres, que c'est un manque de politesse ou de culture que d'encombrer les bibliothèques avec des livres nouveaux ; une sorte de résignation enfin. (Charbonnier 111)

(There is in him an excess of intelligence, a sense of uselessness of literature; a thought that there are too many books, that the packing of libraries with new books betrays a lack of courtesy and refinement; and finally, a kind of resignation.)

One could also understand a reinvention of *Don Quixote* – that is, of a book already written – as an allegorical image of a world saturated with and drowning in books. In this sense 'Pierre Menard' is the inverted image of 'The Library of Babel'; more precisely, 'Pierre Menard' is the 'disproportionate depression' ('depresión excesiva') that has followed the apparent 'unbounded joy' ('extravagante felicidad') that arose '[w]hen it was announced that the Library contained all the books' ('[c]uando se proclamó que la Biblioteca abarcaba todos los libros') (Borges, 'The Library' 115–116; 'La Biblioteca' 468).

4. A critical reading would emphasise the experimental dimension of the story, which, much like the story 'The Mirror and the Mask', deals with the question of possible variations of the sense of a text that remains stable at the literal level. Like the prologues to *Celestina* and *Don Quixote*, 'Pierre Menard' belongs to the family of texts that reflect on various elements that produce different senses of a given work, for example, the age, the situation and the disposition of the readers and the audiences.

Yet Borges introduces the temporal difference as a crucial variable. So, the most spectacular example is the sentence about ‘history, the *mother of truth*’ (‘la historia, *madre de la verdad*’), whose sense has become utterly different after thinkers such as Nietzsche or William James:

Es una revelación cotejar el *Don Quijote* de Menard con el de Cervantes. Éste, por ejemplo, escribió (*Don Quijote*, primera parte, noveno capítulo):

... la verdad, cuya madre es la historia, émula del tiempo, depósito de las acciones, testigo de lo pasado, ejemplo y aviso de lo presente, advertencia de lo por venir.

Redactada en el siglo diecisiete, redactada por el ‘ingenio lego’ Cervantes, esa enumeración es un mero elogio retórico de la historia. Menard, en cambio, escribe:

... la verdad, cuya madre es la historia, émula del tiempo, depósito de las acciones, testigo de lo pasado, ejemplo y aviso de lo presente, advertencia de lo por venir.

La historia, *madre de la verdad*; la idea es asombrosa. Menard, contemporáneo de William James, no define la historia como una indagación de la realidad sino como su origen. La verdad histórica, para él, no es lo que sucedió; es lo que juzgamos que sucedió. Las cláusulas finales – *ejemplo y aviso de lo presente, advertencia de lo por venir* – son descaradamente pragmáticas. (Borges, ‘Pierre Menard, autor’ 449)

(It is a revelation to compare the *Don Quixote* of Pierre Menard with that of Miguel de Cervantes. Cervantes, for example, wrote the following [Part I, Chapter IX]:

... truth, whose mother is history, rival of time, depository of deeds, witness of the past, exemplar and adviser to the present, and the future’s counselor.

This catalog of attributes, written in the seventeenth century, and written by the ‘ingenious layman’ Miguel de Cervantes, is mere rhetorical praise of history. Menard, on the other hand, writes:

... truth, whose mother is history, rival of time, depository of deeds, witness of the past, exemplar and adviser to the present, and the future’s counselor.

History, the mother of truth! – the idea is staggering. Menard, a contemporary of William James, defines history not as a *delving into* reality but as the very *fount* of reality. Historical truth, for Menard, is not ‘what happened’; it is what we *believe* happened. The final phrases – *exemplar and adviser to the present, and the future’s counselor* – are brazenly pragmatic. [Borges, ‘Pierre Menard, Author’ 94]

Pierre Bourdieu once said, ‘A book changes even though it does not change, since the world changes.’ (Bourdieu and Chartier 236) This idea runs throughout Borges’s story. The production of sense is up to the reader, the reading and the reception: ‘El texto de Cervantes y el de Menard

son verbalmente idénticos, pero el segundo es casi infinamente más rico.’; ‘The Cervantes text and the Menard text are verbally identical, but the second is almost infinitely richer.’ (Borges, ‘Pierre Menard, autor’ 449; ‘Pierre Menard, Author’ 94) What is put forward is the theme of a retrospective construction of the precursor:

Componer el Quijote a principios del siglo diecisiete era una empresa razonable, necesaria, acaso fatal; a principios del veinte, es casi imposible. No en vano han transcurrido trescientos años, cargados de complejísimos hechos. Entre ellos, para mencionar uno solo: el mismo Quijote. (‘Pierre Menard, autor’ 448)

(Composing the *Quixote* in the early seventeenth century was a reasonable, necessary, perhaps even inevitable undertaking; in the early twentieth, it is virtually impossible. Not for nothing have three hundred years elapsed, freighted with the most complex events. Among those events, to mention but one, is the *Quixote* itself. [‘Pierre Menard, Author’ 93])

Fiction invites us to practice anachronistic reading:

Menard (acaso sin quererlo) ha enriquecido mediante una técnica nueva el arte detenido y rudimentario de la lectura: la técnica del anacronismo deliberado y de las atribuciones erróneas. Esa técnica de aplicación infinita nos insta a recorrer la *Odisea* como si fuera posterior a la *Eneida* y el libro *Le jardin du Centaure* de madame Henri Bachelier como si fuera de madame Henri Bachelier. Esa técnica puebla de aventura los libros más calmosos. Atribuir a Louis Ferdinand Céline o a James Joyce la *Imitación de Cristo* ¿no es una suficiente renovación de esos tenues avisos espirituales? (‘Pierre Menard, autor’ 450)

(Menard has [perhaps unwittingly] enriched the slow and rudimentary art of reading by means of a new technique – the technique of deliberate anachronism and fallacious attribution. That technique, requiring infinite patience and concentration, encourages us to read the *Odyssey* as though it came after the *Eneid*, to read Mme. Henri Bachelier’s *Le jardin du Centaure* as though it were written by Mme. Henri Bachelier. This technique fills the calmest books with adventure. Attributing the *Imitatio Christi* to Louis Ferdinand Céline or James Joyce – is that not sufficient renovation of those faint spiritual admonitions? [‘Pierre Menard, Author’ 95])

Alberto Manguel recalls how thoroughly Borges enjoyed practicing the technique of anachronistic reading:

He amused himself with such subversions. ‘Imagine,’ he would say, ‘reading *Don Quixote* as if it were a detective novel. *En un lugar de la Mancha, de cuyo nombre no quiero acordarme* ... [(Cervantes Saavedra, *Don Quijote* 27) *In a village of La Mancha, whose name I have no intention to recall* ... (Cervantes Saavedra, *Don Quixote* 17) – Translator’s note.] The author tells us he doesn’t want to remember the name of the village. Why? What clue is he concealing? As readers of a detective novel we are meant to suspect something, no?’ And he would laugh. (Manguel 84)

5. An aesthetic reading of 'Pierre Menard' always defines any writing as rewriting. Pierre Menard does not attempt to transcribe *Don Quixote*, he does not modernise it, he does not identify with its author. He refuses mechanical copying of the work as well as producing a contemporary *Don Quixote* or vainly trying to be Cervantes. He dedicates himself 'to repeating in a foreign tongue a book that already existed', 'en una idioma ajeno un libro preexistente' (Borges, 'Pierre Menard, Author' 95; 'Pierre Menard, autor' 450). Hence his radical and absurd kind of the aesthetics of literary creation as repetition – the aesthetics demanded by Borges. Talking to Georges Charbonnier, Borges affirms that this story tries to demonstrate 'that one invents nothing, that one works with one's memory or, more precisely, that one works in oblivion', 'qu'on n'invente rien, qu'on travaille avec la mémoire ou, pour parler d'une façon plus précise, qu'on travaille dans l'oubli' (Charbonnier 113).

6. The aesthetics of writing as rewriting opens up a new question and proposes a final, bibliographical reading. Pierre Menard reinvents *Don Quixote*. But which *Don Quixote*? The *Don Quixote* of the Castilian edition of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, which Menard read in Nîmes? The *Don Quixote* of the Garnier edition, which Borges read as a child in Buenos Aires? The *Don Quixote* of the *princeps* edition, which was published by Francisco de Robles and printed in Juan de la Cuesta's print shop in Madrid towards the end of 1604 and in which the episode of the theft and the retrieval of Sancho Panza's donkey is missing? Or perhaps the later edition containing Cervantes's additions for the Madrid reeditions of 1605 and 1608? In all these and in many other editions Cervantes's text is never constant. Sometimes it is the very literal meaning that changes, however, what is always changeable is its material aspect, i.e., the use of punctuation, the spelling, the division of the book into sections, the inscriptions on the pages, the presence (or absence) of illustrations. Taking as a starting point the presupposition that *Don Quixote* has always been and will eternally remain what it was when Cervantes first wrote it, Borges completely abolishes such infinite variations. This is a jump from reality into an impossible dream of a work that is always identical to itself.

Translated by Jernej Habjan

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An Archaeology of Affect: Reading, History and Gender

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Literary history is filled with stories of reading as a deeply affective experience. Why does our own age deem such reactions trivial? And why is affective reading almost exclusively now associated with women readers?

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‘It is a general phenomenon of our nature that the mournful, the shocking, the shudder-inducing attracts us with irresistible magic, that we feel ourselves repelled and attracted with equal force when lamentation and fright come upon us.’ (30) These words by Friedrich Schiller about the powerful effects of art are as applicable to the concept of catharsis in antiquity as to the eighteenth century sublime; as relevant to the tender emotions promised by the sentimental novel as to the blood-curdlings of the Gothic or the nerve-tinglings of sensation fiction; are still as germane to the shock tactics of the twentieth century avant-garde as to the thrills of the Hollywood blockbuster in our own time; and will be pertinent when it comes to the multi-sensory stimulations of virtual reality.

It is one thing, of course, to concede that a work of art can move us to compassion, and force tears to our eyes, or strike such fear into its readers as to make their hair stand on end, or that an erotic work might tease us sufficiently to inflame our passions; it is another thing, particularly in our present age, to entertain the idea that art is pleasurable, and as such also worthy, because it has the capacity to affect – *move* – its audience. And yet, terms associated with the affective pleasures of literature, such as ‘*moving, exciting, entertaining, pitiful*’ which the New Criticism declared ‘uncritical’ (Ransom 343), circumscribed an audience’s encounter with the ‘literary’ for almost two millennia. The clearest articulation that affect once was a measure of a work’s excellence is to be found in the rhetorical tradition, comprising writers such as Gorgias, Aristotle, Horace, and in the

neo-Longinian principles of the sublime re-visited in the eighteenth century. Its clearest rejection as an important aesthetic literary category is articulated in W. K. Wimsatt and Monroe C. Beardsley's 'The Affective Fallacy' where they argue that catharsis, empathy, rapture, synaesthesia and the willingness to suspend disbelief are hallmarks of critical vagary – a confusion between 'the poem and its *results*' (22), what literature *is* and what it *does*. Even the more contemporary accounts of affective reader-response which dismiss the affective fallacy, such as Janice Radway's *A Feeling for Books*, often identify the pleasures of reading with the practices of the 'common' reader and align the enjoyments experienced with reading popular fiction. This suggests that the link which the ancients once made between pleasurable reading and the heights of literary achievement has become mutually exclusive.

My aim here is to outline some of the reasons for this mutual exclusivity, and to suggest an alternative. I want to show how the reading of literary texts, and crucially our conceptions of what this involves, has changed historically, not least because of the invention of print – without which the novel as a genre is unthinkable (Feather 96–97, 150). In so doing, I want to trace the demise of affect as an important critical category of literary reception, a demise we can first notice in the de-valuation of affect in eighteenth century rational discourses, as well as in the suspicion during this period, often voiced in anti-fiction writings and novels about novel-reading, that the new genre affected readers, especially women, too much. The novel and in particular its sub-genres, the sentimental, the gothic and the sensation novel, which deliberately played on affective response, were associated with the facile and visceral tastes of a newly emerging consumer class of novel-reader – more interested, educationalists feared, in the gratification of the senses than the cultivation of the mind. In other words, the affected reader is no longer a *connoisseur* of refined sentiment, but an avid consumer of what Adorno and Horkheimer would later call the culture industry.

I want to suggest that the rise of the novel was a crucial reason why affective pleasure ceased to be a valuable aesthetic category of literary criticism. Whereas affect had been part of the dominant aesthetics of taste since the ancients (a yardstick for sifting out effective from ineffective poetic and dramatic techniques), with the rise of the novel affect is no longer a sensation to be approved of but resisted, and the pleasures of affected reading, as we shall see, no longer endorsed but pathologised. In this respect, the novel as a genre was instrumental in the association of affect with what Pierre Bourdieu calls a 'popular aesthetic' based on "vulgar" enjoyment' (Bourdieu 4). That this demarcation of taste, which in effect

creates a polarity between 'low' and 'high-brow' pleasures of reading, or between the 'common' and the 'academic' reader, still informs even those critics intent to mobilise affect as a crucial aspect of reader experience, is a testament to how persuasive discourses which since Kant have stressed the dispassionate and disinterested encounter with literature have been.

Finally, I want to illustrate why affect, although a troubled category for feminism, especially for those who take their cue from Mary Wollstonecraft's form of rational sexual politics, should nevertheless form a vital aspect of research in the history of reading from the perspective of gender. Thus, rather than devaluing affect as a mushy form of engagement with imaginative works, appropriate and mostly applicable to culinary art, we ought to remind ourselves of the long history this concept has enjoyed as a distinguished category of aesthetic experience.

Affective responses

In the rhetorical tradition of criticism there was little doubt amongst critics that the poetic and dramatic was not only meant to please (*delectare*) and instruct (*docere*), but also move (*movere*) audiences – a dictum which had 'justified all aesthetic practice from antiquity to the later modern period' (Jauss 30). Take Gorgias, just one of the many ancient thinkers who stressed the affective power of the poetic. 'To its listeners', Gorgias explains, 'poetry brings a fearful shuddering, a tearful pity, and a grieving desire while through its words the soul feels its own feelings for good and bad fortune in the affairs and lives of others' (Gorgias 9). Gorgias also reasons that speech can have both positive and negative effects on its listeners: it can persuade as well as delude, it can stimulate the world of the senses as well as numb them, it can 'stir' us to noble deeds as well as 'bewitch' us to do evil. In this sense, poetry (which is 'speech [*logos*] with meter') can be understood as *pharmakon*, namely as having both a beneficial *and* a harmful effect (14). Similarly, Aristotle's explanation of catharsis points to the disturbing and therapeutic effects that 'pity and fear, and "enthusiasm" too' can have on audiences. The array of sensory emotions, which tragedy arouses in its audience, carries them to fever pitch as they feel for the suffering of others. Afterwards, however, in the proportion appropriate to the pity and fear experienced, the audience's pent-up emotion finds 'pleasurable relief'. It is not only sympathy for a given character's plight which unleashes emotions: a melody is just as capable of stirring 'the mind to frenzy', only then to restore and attain, 'healing and catharsis' (Aristotle 1342a 4–15).

In this respect affect is not just the result of identification – a mistake often made by critics who see the classic realist novel, drama or film, because it encourages an affective bond between readers/spectators and characters, as the primary means by which an audience might lose themselves in fiction; rather, affect can also be experienced when it comes to an art form as non-representational as music, or when it comes to the rhythms of language. Why? Because music and words make themselves felt in the body. Thus, skillful composition, whether of music or words, is a source of the sublime for Longinus. In his treatise *On the Sublime* he points to stylistic and structural features as a means by which to transport an audience to rapture, casting ‘a spell on us’ and ‘gaining a complete mastery over our minds’ (159). As such, affect is triggered not just by sympathetic identification but also by the sheer power of poetic structure and expression; in a modern lexis, by content but also by form. This is perhaps nowhere more clearly expressed than in Hélène Cixous’ address of the somatics of reading:

[W]hat remains of music in writing, and which exists also in music properly speaking, is indeed that scansion which *also* does its work on the body of the reader. The texts that touch me most strongly, to the point of making me shiver or laugh, are those that have not repressed their musical structure [...]. (Cixous and Callegger 64)

If what is abstract, without representational content, can move the reader, *make her shiver*, as Cixous claims here, then affect does not rely on meaning or cognition, but rather the reverse. Nor does affect rely on recognition, the experiential communion so often associated with representational realism, but can also be stimulated by formally experimental avant-garde works of art where understanding meaning is of little relevance. Affect for Cixous is transformative, but not in the sense of a self-definition, a finding of oneself in the other, as it is the case for the humanistically oriented critic. Rather, the self is put into *ek-stasis* – literally beyond itself. As such the self undergoes passion, responds viscerally rather than cognitively, that is, prior to the control of mind. This somatism is also reflected in Cixous’ conception of writing. Of her own practice she says that ‘I undergo writing! [...] I was seized. From where? [...] From some bodily region. I don’t know where. “Writing” seized me, gripped me, around the diaphragm, between the stomach and the chest [...]’ (Cixous, “*Coming to Writing*” 9). Thus, for Cixous the affective delights of transport are linked to the sublime, and as such also to a Longinian tradition, where the medium of expression itself – say, language – can grip us, get hold of us, and move the writer and the reader to new passionate heights.

(Early) resisting readers

In the Longinian scenario of audience response, it is apparent that the reader/hearer, when faced with the sublime as the very height of poetic achievement is powerless to its 'irresistible' effects. There are several lines of thought which follow from this. The arts are potentially dangerous, as Plato already made clear, because of the passions they 'feed and water' in us (*Republic* 607). But so are affect and ecstasy, because they entail a loss of self. When Socrates asks whether a man moved to tears or terror by a tale is a man who is still 'in his senses' (*Ion* 535d–e), his critique of the poetic, while acknowledging the power of affect, also deems it dangerously irrational; so dangerous that Plato suggests it must be banished from the Republic. Loss of the critical faculties is also a reason why affect is pathologised in eighteenth century rationalist discourses, including in Kant's *Critique of Judgement*. Affect threatens to undermine the autonomy of self, and with it agency. Affect must therefore be resisted for the subject to determine, through acting in accordance with law, him- or herself as a subject. For if the subject succumbs to affect, she is carried away, overwhelmed passively, by emotion rather than engaging actively her critical faculty. Mind in effect would have given in to body. When Kant (89–96) talks about the necessity of guarding against, and resisting, the power of affect – whether with reference to nature or art – he is concerned that we master that which threatens to master us. Schiller makes a similar point in his essay 'On the Pathetic' with reference to tragedy. The more intense the suffering and the more heightened therefore the pathos experienced, the more it is a test for us to prove our mastery over affect. This is to say, there must be pathos, because only through our resistance to its powerful hold can we prove our freedom and independence as rational subjects (Schiller 55). For rationalists sensations and feelings – because they are not amenable to the mind's rational control – are not only dangerous for the proper arrangement of an individual's faculties but also to the whole fabric of society. We must therefore, to borrow Wollstonecraft's repetition of these ideas, ascend from 'creatures of sensation' to 'rational creatures' (Wollstonecraft 131, 101).

The sensuous reader

The widespread assumption that '[r]eason is in man, feeling in woman' (Novalis 382) fed the fear that woman's supposed emotionalism would lead her to overreact to what she reads. The quixotic reader, who ap-

pears frequently in eighteenth and nineteenth century novels, is as a consequence stereotypically female. Take the main protagonist of Flaubert's *Emma Bovary*. Unlike Charlotte Lennox' Arabella or Jane Austen's Catherine Morland, two heroines who learn to become sensible readers, Emma Bovary remains a sensuous reader to the bitter end. Perpetually on the look-out for stimulation and excitement, to alleviate the boredom of her own existence, she hurries from one page, or book, to another, using fiction 'to kindle her passions' (*Flaubert* 30) and to feed her 'impure longings' (176). She yearns for the kind of life that 'brings the senses into bloom' (34). And whether she would fall into a trance (47) over a book, or scream in terror (235), or whether she would be 'trembling all over' which she does at the opera 'as though the bows of the violins were being drawn across her nerves' (180), or be 'sinking her fingernails into the velvet on her box' in the theatre (181), or nearly faint with the pressure of 'suffocating palpitations' (183), her enjoyment in all these instances is bodily. Her interest in fiction is therefore 'rooted in sensual rather than cognitive interests' (Felski, *Gender* 84). Even her engagement with religion, and its ostensibly instructive texts, she turns into extensions of her own romantic and sensuous fantasies (*Flaubert* 27).

Emma is not the kind of reader who reads between the lines; rather, the novel suggests, her mode of reading is akin to 'dreaming between the lines' (47). Thus she 'would forge connections' between real life and fictional lovers (45), and so absorbed is she in books that '[s]he was the lover in every novel, the heroine in every play, the vague *she* in every volume of poetry' (215). It is not just that Emma reads her own life into fiction, she also wants her life to be like the life represented in the fiction. Importantly for her, reading also introduces drama into her existence, illustrative of her willingness to live her life as if it were a fiction. Rita Felski argues that the reason why Emma reads too 'literally', and consequently blurs the distinction between 'life and art' (Felski, *Gender* 87), is because she fails to recognise 'the mediating authority of literary form' (83). This makes Emma's 'uncritical devouring of fiction', so Felski, 'a disturbing and threatening phenomenon, because it negates the autonomy of the literary artifact' (86). True, Emma does lose consciousness of the form which shapes the contents of a story, because it is transparent to her, but she also loses consciousness of self. If we ignore this, we miss a central aspect of Emma's pleasure of reading, and why it is deemed dangerous. What is disturbing and threatening about Emma's self-absorbing mode of reading is not, as Felski suggests, that it negates the *autonomy of the literary artifact* but that it negates the *autonomy of the subject*, that is, this subject's – here the reader's – agency in the interests of the passions. Emma is no longer, as Plato would

say, 'in [her] senses'. Her reading experience is not cognitive or rational but affective, that is, deeply bodily.

On the one hand then, Emma is an intensive and absorbed reader who loses herself in a book. On the other, she reads so extensively that her reading practice cannot but be disparate. Thus, 'her reading went the same way as her needlework, cluttering the cupboard, half finished; she picked it up, put it down, went on to something else' (*Flaubert* 100). She is the very epitome of the warnings sounded in the periodical press of the day: she reads distractedly and fleetingly. Her restlessness thus makes her the paradigmatic nervous modern reader, who has barely finished one novel before grabbing the next. Emma's reading habits are not even limited to novels, but are so voracious and uncontrolled that she seemingly reads everything in print, from the Bible, advertisements, reviews of dinner parties, 'bizarre books, full of orgiastic set-pieces' to 'bloodthirsty adventures' (45, 235). In this sense, Emma is a true product of print culture, as well as its prototypical mass consumer. Less interested in quality than quantity, or style than plot, she reads only for immediate pleasurable gratification: 'From everything she had to extract some kind of personal profit; and she discarded as useless anything that did not lend itself to her heart's immediate satisfaction' (28).

The reader as consumer

The reader as a consumer – literally consuming, that is, devouring books – is the figure most demonized during this period. The finger is consistently pointed at Gutenberg's invention of print. As an efficient technology for the production of the written word, it is blamed for commercialising and democratising it, bringing not merely many books to many readers, but, it was felt, too many, and too fast, thus bringing about the kinds of indiscriminate reading practices Emma has fallen victim to. The novel's fortunes, as I said earlier, are closely tied to changes in modern book production, not least because, unlike poetry (which given its size can be circulated easily) and unlike drama (which is intended for theatrical performance), it relies for its public existence on being printed, bound and mass-produced (Lodge 156). From its very beginnings the novel was a consumer product; a reason also why it had a questionable status, when compared to older literary forms such as poetry, addressed to the few. Indeed, invectives against the novel often came from poets, who saw it at best as a rival art to poetry, and at worst as a cheap form of entertainment (see Coleridge 463). The sheer number of warnings against (excessive) novel-reading illustrates the deep

distrust of a genre, which had so bewitched those who were literate and could read. Warnings in the periodical press about novels, and print in general, were occasioned variously by subject matters unfit for polite society; characters drawn too sympathetically; print hampering thinking, enfeebling minds, even the vigour of nations; fiction leading to work-shyness, idleness, and lofty notions of romance; reading-related illnesses with medical symptoms ranging from constipation, flabby stomachs, eye and brain disorders, to nerve complaints and mental disease. This is how A. Innes Shand (238–239) assesses the impact of Gutenberg's invention in 1879:

With printing and the promiscuous circulation of books the mischief that had broken out in Germany was spread everywhere by insidious contagion, like the Black Death of the fourteenth century. But unlike that subtle and deadly plague, it has gone on running its course ever since, and diffusing itself gradually through all classes of the community. The ferment of thought, the restless craving for intellectual excitement of some kind, have been stimulated; till now, in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, we are being driven along at high-pressure pace; and it is impossible for any one who is recalcitrant to stop himself.

What is clear from this description is that the pace of reading, just as the pace of life, has accelerated to the extent that the very structure of experience has undergone a change: 'restless' and 'driven', but also fragmentary and discontinuous. The mind can barely keep pace with the tempo of modern times. When Nietzsche, less than ten years later, talks about the restlessness of his age, his definition of modernity conveys the sense of a modern sensibility which has become 'immensely more irritable', given the 'abundance of disparate impressions'. Thus, the intensity of physical and mental stimulation that an urban, and increasingly technologized, environment induced, has turned the 'critic', the 'interpreter', the 'observer', and crucially also the 'reader', into 'reactive talents' (Nietzsche 47). Stimuli are responded to, as if by reflex, and it has become impossible to absorb anything but in fragments.

Overstimulated readers

Practices of reading were not only different before and after the invention of print in the mid-fifteenth century, but they also changed as the means of book production changed and increased output. Pulp, invented around 1860, contributed to the expansion of the book trade, because book production no longer relied on rags but could draw on the plentiful supply of wood (Martin 402), ensuring maximally consumable products. Thus pulp

supplied the raw material for cheap, mass-produced novels, not as artifacts to be preserved but as affordable products to be consumed and then discarded (*Practice and Representation* 8–9). This quantitative increase had qualitative cultural effects: overload in material and sensory terms. Insofar as the speed of production fed the rate of consumption, it is technology in this instance which is responsible for the afflictions that modern readers suffered. In short, the impact of technology on physiology became incremental.

Affective response, once epitomised by Odyssean tears (see Littau 65–69, 84), has, by the time Nietzsche writes, become a matter of nerves. This historicity of affect is borne out by Shand's comparison between the 'easy-going tranquillity' of a bygone age, which the 'discovery of printing recklessly disturbed', and his own time, where 'nimble fingers' are busy 'mechanically translating thought into metal' (Shand 240). Pre-Gutenberg, he insists, '[t]here was no wear-and-tear of the mental fibres, and, consequently, there were none of those painful brain and nerve diseases that fill our asylums' now (236). It is not incidental that Emma is an avid reader and also a neurotic. Flaubert, like Shand, shows us how conditions of reading changed as production levels rose. Where reading had once been a fever (such as the famous Werther-fever) as easily caught as any contagious disease, by the mid-nineteenth century reading is experienced as a shock to the nervous system, linked to information overload, sensory assault and 'mental overcharge' (Richardson 162) – in short, to the experience of modernity.

Concomitantly, affective response underwent a critical de-evaluation in theories of reading, changing from a prestigious descriptor of the structure of feeling in the neo-Longinian sublime to a devalued descriptor of particular feminized responses to the sentimental novel, the Gothic, Melodrama, and sensation fiction. While affective reading has never disappeared as a *practice of reading*, as book clubs testify (see Radway, *Feeling*), its association with a vulgar pleasure of the senses (Bourdieu's 'taste of sense') eventually led to its demise altogether in *theories of reading*. Meritorious in ancient times, dangerous in the hey-day of the novel, affective, bodily responses are paid little attention in contemporary reader-oriented theories. The dominant paradigm continues to be based on the 'taste of reflection', what Pierre Bourdieu (6) calls a 'pure pleasure, pleasure purified of pleasure'; that is, reading devoid of passion: distanced, dispassionate, disinterested. This hierarchical division has left a lasting legacy, since affect is now relegated to those who *merely* read like a woman (and not like a scholar, see Berggren 167), or to those who *merely* read genre fiction (and not high modernist texts, see Radway, *Reading*).

Affective reading is not just devalued under a neo-Kantian paradigm, but actively resisted. The sheer number of resisting readers in contempo-

rary critical discourses (for a summary, see Littau 127–142) is a testament to this legacy, as is the virtual absence of non-resisting readers. For the resisting reader, the pleasure of reading is cognitive, not affective, a negative pleasure insofar as it is realised in the distance from the text required in order to recognise its ideological traps, without falling victim to them. Reading here is self-assertion and a confirmation of agency. Important as this work was in the early phases of feminism, and continues to be now, maybe the time has come to revisit the affective pleasures of reading which the Emma Bovarys enjoyed, and which Radway and Berggren describe as having been driven from them by the academy.

One way of doing this would be to re-examine the history of reading practices from the perspective of an affects tradition. Another way would be to attend to theories of affective reading, plunder and claim them on behalf of feminism; as in many respects Cixous does in her somatics of reading which proposes a ‘non-resisting relationship’ between text and reader (Cixous, *Reading* 3). An archeology of affect might allow us not just to overcome the ‘fear of feeling’, which Felski has addressed in her contribution on the visceral pleasures involved in reading (Felski, *Literature* 23–56, 56), but also re-position the coordinates between affect, gender and history. Affective reading need not be a descriptor of a practice negatively referred to as ‘reading like a woman’, but lends itself to be re-coded as a gendered mode of reading in the interests of the feminine. After all, to read affectively is to read passionately, and to read without passion is to read according to the strictures of reason, distance, mind, namely those categories historically conceived ‘as transcendence of the feminine’ (Lloyd 104), and therefore associated with the masculine. It follows that to read affectively is neither, essentially, to read like a woman, nor to read like a common reader, but to read in a manner at odds with the *purely* rational, the *strictly* definable, the *only* knowable.

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Locating the Reader, or What do We do With the Man in the Hat? Methodological Perspectives and Evidence from the *United Kingdom Reading Experience Database, 1450–1945 (UK RED)*

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Using images of readers and textual sources, this essay explains the methodological basis for the Reading Experience Database and international partners. It shows how the RED projects can combine quantitative and qualitative data to locate and recover the experiences of readers through history.

Keywords: history of reading / reading culture / Great Britain / 19th cent. / 20th cent. / visual representations / Browning, Elizabeth Barrett / Lee, Vernon / Gladstone, W. E. / empirical research

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I want to start this essay by closely examining a series of three inter-linked images. Images like these will be very familiar to many scholars working on nineteenth-century British, American or French literature and culture, and are readily recognised as cultural artefacts of the period. However, my interest in these images is a more specific one. As a historian of reading, I am implicitly aware of the material conditions and representations of acts of reading through history. Here are three representations of that most ubiquitous and everyday occurrence in the late nineteenth century urban centres of Europe and North America: reading on the omnibus.



Image 1: Maurice Delondre (n.d.), 'On the Omnibus' (c.1880), oil on canvas.



Image 2: George William Joy (1844–1925), 'The Bayswater Omnibus' (1895), oil on canvas.



Image 3: 'Sunday Morning on a Fifth Avenue Omnibus', American School (nineteenth century), colour lithograph.

The first image, painted by Maurice Delondre, is French, and dates from around 1880. A Parisian man, part banker, part *flâneur*, perhaps, dressed in a top hat and coat is depicted holding open a newspaper. Is he engrossed in reading it, or is he, as his gaze suggests, fitfully attentive, frequently glancing across the compartment, and using his newspaper as a tool for flirting? Is he an absorbed and immersed intensive newspaper reader, or is he distracted? Is he reading the paper for professional information, or merely to pass the time? The second image is British: a London man, again in a top hat, this time an immersed reader, concentrating on his paper. 'The Bayswater Omnibus' is painted by George William Joy in 1895. The third image is an American lithograph, and is quite clearly derivative: a New York man, reading the newspaper we are told, on a Sunday morning on Fifth Avenue – before church, perhaps? It is the work of an unknown lithographer, and undated, though clearly imitative of Joy's 1895 painting.

In one sense, locating the reader in these three images is disturbingly easy: in each representation, it is the respectable, middle aged white man in a top hat holding open a newspaper. But locating readers in reality, whether in contemporary or archive based historical research, is a much more difficult proposition. Readers are mobile, elusive and extraordinarily numerous; most readers rarely, if ever, record their responses to reading. They may also read and not pass any judgement on what they read; they may engage

with the printed word collectively, may read it out aloud or have it read to them. They may or may not keep the printed matter (books, newspapers, magazines, pamphlets, ephemera) that they have just read, or they may circulate it informally, with no way of recovering the chain or sequences of readers and their responses. Think for example of that most annoying of pre-digital textual phenomena, the chain letter – a process of iteration and circulation which is perpetuated entirely through the act of reading. The vast majority of readers are not in fact easily amenable subjects for this kind of excavation and recovery, nor should we expect them to be. Readers do not exist for the convenience of research projects, and real readers, whether now or in the past, are not like the man in the top hat in the omnibus in the three representations discussed above: they cannot be readily located in a seat on the proverbial omnibus, captured for posterity in the act of reading. And even if, like the man in the top hat, we could locate our readers during the act of reading, we still might not be able to easily identify what they were reading, and how they might have responded to it.

I might have painted a rather impossible picture about how we might locate and interpret readers through history, but the truth, I think, is rather more prosaic and less daunting. While the majority of readers leave little trace of their reading habits and no extant record of their responses, a small but significant minority of readers, whether intentionally or accidentally, record their reading. Often this kind of evidence of reading is recorded in personal correspondence, which may end up published in a volume of letters. Research projects such as the *UK Reading Experience Database* (<http://www.open.ac.uk/Arts/RED/>) have drawn upon such published and unpublished resources to systematically gather together the evidence left behind by readers in history.¹ Here is a perfect example of such a reader – a child prodigy who grew up to be one of Victorian Britain's most prolific poets. In this instance, she records her reading of a range of literature in a letter to her uncle:

I have read 'Douglas on the Modern Greeks.' I think it a most amusing book ... I have not yet finished 'Bigland on the Character and Circumstances of Nations.' An admirable work indeed ... I do not admire 'Madame de Sevigne's letters,' though the French is excellent [...] yet the sentiment is not novel, and the rhapsody of the style is so affected, so disgusting, so entirely FRENCH, that every time I open the book it is rather as a task than a pleasure -- the last Canto of 'Childe Harold' (certainly much superior to the others) has delighted me more than I can express. The description of the waterfall is the most exquisite piece of poetry that I ever read [...]. All the energy, all the sublimity of modern verse is centered in those lines. (Elizabeth Barrett to Samuel Moulton-Barrett, November 1818: *UK RED*, ID: 15975)

The reader here is the child who will grow up to become the famous British nineteenth-century poet Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1806–1861), and this letter to her uncle shows both the precocity of her intellect (this is the reading and writing of a 12 year old), and the extent to which recording a judgement on books that have just been read can help fashion a sense of identity and self-worth. Not only has she been reading Frederick Sylvester North Douglas's comparative analysis of Greece, *An Essay on Certain Points of Resemblance between the Ancient and Modern Greeks* (Douglas), but she has started John Bigland's polemical history, *An Historical Display of the Effects of Physical and Moral Causes on the Character and Circumstances of Nations* (Bigland); neither of these books were written for children. Both were recent publications, and expensive to buy for the standards of the time. For Elizabeth Barrett, Madame de Sévigné's letters (Sévigné), an established model for belles-lettres, are cloyingly conventional, while Byron's verse – the last canto of the just published and highly acclaimed *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* (Byron) – is original and captivating. Barrett contrasts French affectation with British originality, and Enlightenment style with Romantic sublimity. This literary judgement is expressed in a letter to a member of her extended family (her uncle, Samuel Moulton-Barrett) and suggests that she already craved recognition as an aspiring writer and accomplished reader.

While Barrett Browning's childhood reading glitters with precocious genius, many extant records of reading evidence are altogether more prosaic; Barrett Browning, after all, was no ordinary reader. In contrast and over a century later is the British 25 year old woman Pamela Slater's record of her reading in response to the Mass Observation sociology project's questionnaire about reading in May 1940, which was sent to a large and diverse group of ordinary readers. She lists her newspaper and journal reading (*The New Statesman* and *The Picture Post*) and admits that 'I take most of my opinions on news from the *New Statesman*, none from a daily paper ... the editorial columns so often express what I feel that I naturally appreciate the editors views considerably!' (*Mass Observation Online*, Directive Replies 1939–1942, respondent 1009). Slater's judgement of her reading material is significantly less confident and accomplished than that of Elizabeth Barrett; she reads to have her views formed and confirmed by the editorial line of her favourite journal. The evidence is also recorded in a different context – this time not in family correspondence, but in the archives of a research project and prompted by a directed questionnaire, which was part of the process of government information gathering during wartime. The fact that this is a response to a formal request may also have contributed to the rather acquiescent tone of the recorded evidence.

While Pamela Slater's record was in response to a directed questionnaire, the male agricultural worker Ronald Frank agreed to become one of the Mass Observation project's diarists. Recording his daily activities (including reading) during February 1940, Frank lists the new literary magazine *Horizon*, E. M. Forster's biographical study of Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson (Forster) and Beatrice Webb's autobiography *My Apprenticeship* (Webb) as his current reading (*Mass Observation Online*, January 1940 to March 1941, Diarist number 5071). Frank's reading is overtly political; all three publications were broadly Socialist and identified with the rise of the British Labour party. Unlike Barrett's family letter, or Slater's solicited and structured questionnaire response, Frank's account is in the form of one of the richest and most immediate sources for recovering the evidence of reading: the diary.

Whereas diaries embed reading within accounts of (and reflections upon) other aspects of daily life, commonplace books and the records of reading groups concentrate solely on reading itself. The Anglo-Florentine novelist, essayist, critic and art historian Vernon Lee (1856–1935) kept prodigiously detailed commonplace books that recorded her reading from 1887 to 1900; there are 12 volumes of commonplace books totalling some 1,300 pages, and each volume has a list of the titles read during that period appended to the front.² Vernon Lee was a formidable intellectual and read widely in many disciplines and in four European languages (English, French, German and Italian). She also kept exceptionally detailed records of her reading. While her commonplace books record detailed and considered engagements with a specific text, they do not register the immediate first impact of the act of reading – the evidence of readers' initial engagement with texts is often recorded in the texts themselves, in the form of notes or marginalia. Vernon Lee was not only a conscientious keeper of commonplace books about her reading, but she also compulsively marked books that she had possessed and read with considerable marginalia.³ A typical example of this is her copy of Charles Augustus Strong's *A Theory of Knowledge* (Strong), a book that she read on three separate occasions between July 1928 and January 1932; the extensive marginal notes in this volume serve not only as an aid to memory, highlighting her initial responses to Strong's main ideas, but also serves to fashion future re-reading of the text. Marginalia and commonplace books can outline the developing responses of a reader to a text, from initial engagement to concerted reflection and deliberation. Reading and response is not a singular event, but a negotiated and contingent process.

As these examples indicate, we can find the evidence of readers' responses in a wide range of material: personal correspondence, memoirs,

diaries, commonplace books and scrap books, individual and collective marginal marks in owned and borrowed books, in the comment books of libraries, learned societies and public institutions, in the letters to the editor sections of newspapers and magazines, in the minutes of reading groups and societies, in the book acquisition reports of school boards and the notes of censorship committees, in responses to questionnaires and surveys, in fan mail sent to authors, and so on. There are other ways of recovering the evidence of readers, even when the readers themselves have left no record of their own. For example, court room trial transcripts, the official records of prison authorities, the minute books of missionary societies, the regimental records of army units and the surveillance activities of state intelligence services often provide incidental and valuable details of reading and response. Red Cross and prisoner of war camp archives provide considerable evidence of reading, as do ships' captain's log books and the records of medical and psychiatric institutions. Records such as these provide a vast amount of information about reading in the past.

In our own twenty-first century, there is an even greater excess of evidence of reading that is being gathered involuntarily, and is still underutilised in humanities research. Closed-circuit television footage relentlessly and systematically records reading in public spaces, while automatically gathered GPS and other usage data offered through mobile digital networks accurately records the download and use of electronic books and other texts. The collected network data of Amazon's Kindle or Sony's e-reader would provide a detailed picture of current reading habits. The mass digitisation of pre-twentieth century library holdings by Google through the Google books project and Archive.org is bringing to our notice the cumulative freight of readers' marginal marks in borrowed books. And most obviously, the recent extraordinary rise of digital social networking (Facebook, Twitter and the blogosphere, to name a few) offers researchers rich and continuously evolving data about how readers engage with texts.

In fact, there is an extraordinary amount of data of reading and response that has been generated, but the problem is that this data is disaggregated, and not always easily recovered.

Grappling with the disaggregated evidence of both individual readers and reading communities throughout the centuries, historians of reading have often divided their attention between broad text or period based studies, or those which are reader-centred, focussed and highly contingent. So for example, period based studies such as Jan Fergus's *Provincial Readers in Eighteenth-Century England* (Fergus), Kate Flint's exemplary study of Victorian women readers, *The Woman Reader, 1837–1914* (Flint), Ronald

J and Mary Saracino Zboray's study of pre- and post-independence New Englanders, *Everyday Ideas* (Zboray and Saracino Zboray) and William St Clair's political economy of reading, *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period* (St Clair) have amassed considerable data for a particular historical period and geographical space by harnessing a wide range of source material. Conversely, reader-centred studies have concentrated on fleshing out the imaginative universe of a single reader, and thereby offering us a detailed insight into the cultural history of a period, usually through the exhaustive study of a single material archive. Examples include Carlo Ginzburg's *The Cheese and the Worms* (Ginzburg), Robert DeMaria's *Samuel Johnson and the Life of Reading* (DeMaria), Timothy Ryback's *Hitler's Private Library* (Ryback), Kevin Hayes's *The Road to Monticello: The Life and Mind of Thomas Jefferson* (Hayes) and Ruth Clayton Windscheffel's *Reading Gladstone* (Windscheffel). Indeed, there have traditionally been two opposing approaches to telling the history of reading: the macro-analytical, and the micro-analytical. The impossibility that any individual could read even a small proportion of the cumulative human output of books implicitly urges us to engage with the broader issue of collecting the quantitative, statistical evidence of reading, a methodology that allows us to examine broader trends in reading practices, and make sense of the mind-boggling weight of extant titles and their possible readers. While an individual reader's engagement can tell us little about the broader trends and patterns of *how* a particular text was consumed, collating a range of quantifiable data, such as that offered by print runs, library circulation records, literacy figures, sale prices, average incomes, distribution networks and advertising, can accurately reconstruct the environment for reading in a particular period and territory.

Perhaps the best way of dealing with the plethora of data and sources in the history of reading is to create a searchable, inclusive, yet defined database, allowing us to weigh individual pieces of data equally, while still providing for qualitative and evaluative analysis. Consciously a methodologically inclusive project, the *United Kingdom Reading Experience Database* (UKRED) was set up in 1996, and unveiled as an online digital resource in 2007. In gathering data for the project, it has welcomed both macro- and micro-analytical approaches with equal enthusiasm. Housed at the Open University, UKRED gathers the evidence of reading of British subjects at home and abroad, as well as visitors' reading in Britain, between 1450 and 1945. It does so while carefully defining the type and accuracy of the data it records (we have some 150 individual data fields), as well as making sure a wide variety of sources can be consulted and harvested for evidence of reading. For the purposes of the project, UKRED defines a 'reading experience'

rience' as a 'recorded engagement with a written or printed text – beyond the mere fact of possession' (<http://www.open.ac.uk/Arts/RED/experience.htm> [accessed 23 March 2011]). *UK RED* now has well over 30,000 entries, the majority of them in the period from 1800–1900, an era which coincides with the establishment of mass literacy in Britain. Detailed and combinable search criteria allow users to interrogate the cumulative data in complex and imaginative ways, with filters for gender, age, place, socio-economic group, genre, and so on. *UK RED* is an open access resource committed to the social construction of knowledge; anyone can access its data, or contribute to the research project. Given enough time and data, *UK RED* will be able to start mapping broad trends in British reading habits over the centuries.

While *UK RED* will be able to offer us valuable information about British reading practices through time, books as well as their readers are increasingly mobile across space. In order to start addressing some of the pressing questions about reading across the world, *UK RED* is currently working with research partners in four different countries to internationalise this effort in recovering the evidence of readers. Partner projects have started in Australia, Canada, the Netherlands and New Zealand to multiply the collective effort, ensure interoperability between databases and explore future directions and possibilities for further research collaboration in the history of reading. *UK RED* and its four new partner databases will be linked through a new web infrastructure, *The Reading Experience Database* (RED), which will serve as an integrated search interface (<http://www.open.ac.uk/Arts/reading/>). The new partner reading experience databases will all be doing something different from *UK RED*, capitalising upon the respective strengths of resources, and needs of each particular society, as well as pursuing best practices in the Digital Humanities.

With a much shorter historical period, Australia will be including visual (photographic) records of reading, and oral history records (audio material) of remembered reading, gathering evidence up to the year 2000. The *Australian Reading Experience Database* (*AusRED*) is housed at Griffith University in Brisbane, and will be constituted within Australia's premier digital resource for research in the Arts, AustLit (<http://www.austlit.edu.au/>). *AusRED* has already gathered a considerable body of data, which will be made publicly available soon. In including audio-visual material and oral history, the *AusRED* project team are clearly building upon the pioneering work of Martyn Lyons and Lucy Taksa in their landmark study of Australian popular cultural memory, *Australian Readers Remember* (Lyons and Taksa). The Canadian project, the *Canadian Reading Experience Database* / *Banque de données sur les pratiques de lecture* (CAN-RED-LEC) is housed at

Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia, and will present a bilingual interface for French and English speaking users. *CAN-RED-LEC* will have a particular interest in the history of immigrant reading, and therefore will utilise geographical information systems to plot the spread of readers across Canada's vast terrain. It will also mine social networking sites for contemporary evidence of reading in Canada. The Dutch project, the *Netherlands Reading Experience Database* (NL-RED) will be housed at the University of Utrecht, with the collaboration of the Huygens Instituut KNAW in The Hague (<http://www.red-nl.huygens.knaw.nl>). NL-RED will have the widest historical sweep (c.1000AD–2000), drawing upon the wealth of information already available on manuscript culture and early printing in the Low Countries, and it will also include fictional representations of reading. The New Zealand project, the *New Zealand Reading Experience Database* (NZ-RED) is housed at Victoria University Wellington (<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/wtapress/NZ-RED/>). NZ-RED will offer a bi-cultural project, bringing together Anglophone and Māoritanga concepts of reading and response, but it will also be historically specific, with a first phase of data collection concentrating on the First World War. NZ-RED will be particularly innovative in their data acquisition and entry by utilising crowd sourcing. Eventually all five projects will be successively searchable through a single entry portal, and will allow us to begin testing hypotheses about reading in a much wider context. New research questions and contexts will be generated by such a deeply interconnected, interdisciplinary and transnational approach.

If quantitative analysis requires a critical mass to be accumulated by a database *before* it can generate any meaningful trend data, then the implications for these projects are obvious: we must expand the volume of stored data many times, before attempting to answer the bigger questions about the history of reading through the centuries. But when is enough data really sufficient to be representative across a long historical period? How long can we wait before asking and trying to answer (however speculatively) the key questions in the history of reading, such as whether a *Leserevolution* really took place in the late-eighteenth century? And is representativeness, like the man in the top hat sitting in the omnibus, nothing more than a convenient fiction? The detailed qualitative analysis of the close reading recorded in dairies, marginalia, manuscript material and correspondence often provides the greatest density of data in the history of reading, however anomalous the reader might be. Indeed, despite dozens of claims for exemplary, outstanding, remarkable or brilliantly self-sufficient readers, historians of reading have continued to draw upon these rare individuals who kept a detailed record of their reading. Perhaps the only satisfac-

tory answer, as we currently see in all these reading experience database projects, is to do both: to delve deep into the archive, but also to sweep broadly across many different types of material and sources of information from across the centuries.

I want to end with two final images, which I think illustrate some of the issues of recovering evidence and interpreting reading that I have discussed in this essay: first the often arbitrary nature of *how*, *why* and *where* the evidence of reading is recorded, and second, the issue of representativeness in recovering such a record. My essay is subtitled ‘what do we do with the man in the hat?’, but the answer to this question may sometimes be, not very much, for while the man in the hat is an emblematic representation of a reader, he may not be at all representative of the diversity of actual readers in any given historical period. The first of my two final images is perhaps the most famous visual representation of reading in the omnibus in the nineteenth-century, William Egley’s ‘Omnibus Life in London’ (1859).



Image 4: William Egley (1826–1916), ‘Omnibus Life in London’ (1859), oil on canvas.



Image 5: Alfred Morgan (fl.1862–1904), 'An Omnibus Ride to Piccadilly Circus, Mr Gladstone travelling with ordinary people' (1885).

Egley's perspective deliberately accentuates the crowded metropolitan scene, with people and goods, and all manner of passengers, crammed into a particularly small space. Additional faces can be seen peering in, looking for somewhere to sit. There are at least two readers (and possibly more) depicted in Egley's painting: first of all, a young woman, the last figure seated on the right hand side of the omnibus, who is studiously engrossed in reading her book (it looks like a hardback, and possibly a volume from a lending library), and thereby presumably avoiding unnecessary eye contact with her fellow male passengers. The second possible reader is the red-haired man peering into the omnibus, his gaze seemingly focussed on the young woman's book. There are other potential readers in the omnibus, for the interior walls are plastered with advertisements, including text that the passengers could not help but read; the gaze of the woman in the red shawl is intently focussed on the text of the advertising hoarding opposite her. In Egley's painting, the men in hats inside the omnibus (there are four of them) are not engaged in reading, while at least two of the women inside the carriage possibly are; there are obvious reasons why women in public transport in the nineteenth-century would want to use reading material to avoid the gaze of male passengers. There are also evident reasons why such transient reading experiences have by and large not been recorded, and cannot be easily recovered from the archives (people

do not routinely keep records of their reading of advertising hoardings in situ, or of borrowed library volumes).

The second is a painting by Alfred Morgan from 1885 titled 'An Omnibus Ride to Piccadilly Circus: Mr Gladstone travelling with ordinary passengers'. Once again, a man in a hat (not a top hat, in this case) is clutching a newspaper, while the British Prime Minister William Ewart Gladstone dressed as ever in black is resolutely not reading during his journey, but purposefully staring into the distance. The extraordinary irony here is that Gladstone was one of the most prolific readers ever recorded in the nineteenth-century. He owned over 32,000 books in his private library, many of which he marked with marginal notes, frequently read 3 books in a single day, and constantly referred to his reading in his correspondence. Gladstone's reading has been systematically recovered by the Gladstone Catalogue project (<http://www.st-deiniols.com/library-collection/glad-cat/>), and by scholars such as Ruth Windscheffel in her study *Reading Gladstone*; but the man in the hat clutching his disposable and biodegradable newspaper, one of his reading countrymen, has vanished entirely from the historical record.

NOTES

¹ For more information about the background to *UK RED*, its history, methodological rationale and future directions, please see the 'About UK RED' webpage (<http://www.open.ac.uk/Arts/reading/UK/about.php>) and the background article by Simon Eliot, 'The Reading Experience Database' (Eliot), both accessed 23 March 2011.

² Vernon Lee's commonplace books are housed in the Vernon Lee archive, Colby College Special Collections, Colby College, Waterville, Maine, USA. Evidence from this source is being entered into *UK RED*.

³ Vernon Lee's books are housed in the Special Collections of the Harold Acton Library, The British Institute of Florence. Of the 425 extant books, 299 have marginalia, with the majority featuring considerable marking. Evidence from this source is being entered into *UK RED*.

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Materiality of Reading: The Case of 18th-Century Novel Readers in England, And a Glimpse into the Present

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Despite the physical materiality of books and reading often being neglected in the literary studies, the history of book practices repeatedly draws our attention to the significance of the non-textual aspects of the literary experience. In my contribution I will present various dimensions of the materiality of reading, which were already evident when novel reading became a popular and relatively wide-spread leisure practice, i.e., in 18th-century England. Using examples, notably the notorious bestselling Richardson's Pamela, I will try to show that novel reading could not emerge and proliferate without certain material dimensions of the novel and novel reading, or without the ways in which what was read was articulated, i.e., 'externalised' through conversation, domestic performances of selected episodes, discussions in book clubs, societies and libraries, and in particular through re-enactment of fictional characters in other leisure and social activities. I will conclude by reflecting on contemporary versions of the 'externalisation' of reading, and on the evidently increased interest for the materiality of books, which seems to be one of the side-effects of the recent metamorphosis of book formats.

Keywords: history of reading / English literature / novel / 18th cent. / Richardson, Samuel

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Introduction

In this paper, I will discuss the material aspects of reading – the concrete, tangible, objectified dimension of the practice, embedded in the historical context, something akin to what Robert Darnton describes as 'external history of reading' (see Brewer 7). It is the aspect that often remains neglected, if not entirely ignored, when reading is considered from

the perspective of literary studies, but it is also missing from the historical-reader approach.

While reader-response criticism is often explicitly criticised for, to cite William Sherman, being 'peopled with every kind of reader except the real and historical' (see Colclough 4), the historical reader approach, dwelling on the particularities of individual reading habits as a historically changing practice, is in fact as well often missing the wider material context of reading and the book, which necessarily includes non-literary and non-textual dimensions. As such, the wider material context of reading and the book becomes more visible when studied from the interdisciplinary epistemology, which is indeed taking the study of reading further away from the literary field, turning it into an object of cultural studies, sociology, book studies and particular histories – cultural, social and gender history. I believe this aspect is of great importance for fully understanding the complex ways in which reading is organically embedded in society. Focusing on the novel as the quintessential literary form, I believe that the material aspects of the novel and novel reading decisively contributed to the novel's establishment as a literary genre and to the establishment of novel reading as a popular cultural leisure practice.¹

The epistemology behind this aspect follows from my understanding of the novel not simply as a literary genre, but rather as a 'cultural form' in Raymond Williams' cultural materialist sense, in which culture (in order to be properly understood) should be studied only in relation to its specific social and historical frameworks, i.e., through the analysis of its production, distribution and consumption, as is well presented in the now famous 'book communication circuit', which was introduced by Darnton in 1982 and elaborated by Baker and Johns in 2006.

By materiality of novel reading, I refer to a range of different issues:

- the physical aspects of novels and the ways in which they introduced new modes of reading;
- the various traces of reading, which apart from writing about reading also include images of readers and, for instance, reading furniture;
- and above all the different ways in which mainly fictional characters transcend their textual origins and reappear off-page, something David A. Brewer (2, 78) refers to as 'imaginative expansion' and 'character migration'.

In short, the materiality of reading refers to the tangible, visible side of reading, and is as such much easier to describe than to define.

The historical frame

My primary frame of reference will be the historical context which is according to many researchers the one in which novel reading first became a popular and relatively wide spread leisure practice – i.e., 18th-century England; and therefore I will be also focusing on English novels of the time. This is the period when the novel could first be regarded as a cultural form, namely, as organically embedded in the social texture.

For reading to have been able to establish itself as a popular pleasure, some basic social conditions had to be met: first, a certain level of literacy, allowing for a sufficient reading potential; second, a fairly developed book market with a well functioning production and distribution net that enabled people to access books physically as well as financially; third, leisure; and last but not least, some level of privacy.

All this was possible only in a favourable religious and political environment. England was a protestant country with a strong puritan influence, which encouraged individual reading of the *Bible* in the vernacular, and therefore explicitly promoted literacy. More crucially, England was also the first to establish parliamentarism as it functioned as a parliamentary monarchy ever since the end of the 17th century. This had important implications: assuming the participation of a wider society in the state decision making, it stressed the significance of public debate and consequently stimulated the development of news culture. Newspapers and periodicals in England had flourished since the Civil War (1642–1651), increasing the numbers of the reading public as well as strengthening secularism – the two effects being obviously connected.

Early commercialisation is yet another thing that cannot go unmentioned. England developed the first truly global capitalist economy: it was the first country of industrial and, correspondingly, commercial revolution, which not only provided a solid basis for the publishing business, but had profound social effects. By separating home from work, sending men to the factories and confining women to their homes, it differentiated the public from the private, allowing the concept of privacy to become distinguished spatially as well as psychologically, and to be recognised as a value. There is a reason why England is said to represent ‘a cradle of privacy’ (see Ariès 12), fulfilling yet another important condition for the development of leisure reading. The latter also determined the predominant reading public: those staying in the privacy of their homes were women.²

All these factors and processes coincide in 18th-century England, ‘producing’ in its second half enough of the literate, the leisured and the well-off to create a considerable novel reading public.³

The 18th-century novel and the case study of *Pamela*

In contrast to lengthy heroic romances which narrated in an exalted poetic language the fatal deeds of aristocratic heroes fighting for 'the big cause' in distant historical settings, the novels, briefly speaking, represented fictionalised reality, an image of everyday life of ordinary people. Instead of traditional epic plots, abstract universality and stylised (either good or bad) characters, they introduced in simple colloquial prose middle and even lower class heroes placed in contemporary context, thus founding their poetics not only on credibility and realism in content, but also, and mostly, in form. The genre obviously borrowed from many other literary forms; fictional and non-fictional, public and personal (from conduct books and religious tracts, philosophical essays and periodicals, diaries, poetry, to science and history books), resulting in a hybrid, eclectic form.

An important new feature was the novel's dealing with the inner life and the individual psychology, creating a bond of intimacy between the reader and the hero as well as the reader and the author, which enabled the process of identification. The latter was facilitated by setting the stories in a familiar context and by using contemporary references to well known figures of the time (politicians, writers, actors etc.) as well as to famous venues and events. In short, the author, the hero and the reader shared the same 'world'.

The plot put forward the micro image of life, but it always attached this image to the 'big issues' of morale and virtue, often with an explicit didactic component. It has to be said, though, that what was moral was not always agreed upon, and the heroes regularly strayed from 'the right path' only to find it again in the end. This was one of the sources of criticism, although it was usually tolerated in the name of the authors' duty to both teach and amuse.

As a brief and simplified sketch of a typical 18th-century English novel, I could say that there were perhaps two main types. They both focused on the individual, but one was written in the first person narrative, usually in the form of a diary or letters, while the other used the third-person narrator and sent the hero wandering around the world, where he had to live through different, more or less adventurous episodes in a picaresque-like style. If the latter type of novel writing allowed for a more vulgar poetics and chose predominantly male protagonists, the diary and epistolary novels rather functioned as sentimental confessions of the heroine's emotions.⁴

For the sake of an illustration, I will focus on the first big literary bestseller in the history of English fiction, the novel *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded* by Samuel Richardson, which was first published in 1740. This is a story of a beautiful and virtuous young servant, who after the death of her mistress

becomes a victim of the new master of the house, the mistress' son, Mr. B. Pamela evades Mr. B.'s attempts to seduce her and successfully defends her virginity, until Mr. B. finally realises – after secretly reading Pamela's letters to her parents – how very virtuous she indeed is, and instead of physically exploiting her, eventually decides to make her a proper marriage proposal. In the meantime he grows to her heart as well – and here we have a virtue rewarded. *Pamela* is a first-person narrative, an epistolary novel and a typical example of a sentimental novel.

The physical aspects of the novel and new ways of reading

In 18th-century England novels usually came in small, duodecimo format, which were easily portable, allowing the individual to enter via reading into a zone of privacy whenever s/he could afford to. It is not a coincidence that novels often came with sewn-in silk-strips for bookmarks that helped with interrupted reading.

The title pages usually functioned as a sort of advertisement as they endeavoured to sell the contents, and they were indeed often used as separate sheets that booksellers hung in their window-shops or on the walls of various public venues. These were thus as a rule densely written pages that allowed one to grasp the plot of the story as well as the virtues of the protagonists and the moral message.

This is how *Pamela's* title page read in full: *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded, in a series of familiar letters from a beautiful young damsel to her parents. Now first published in order to cultivate the principles of virtue and religion in the minds of the youth of both sexes. A narrative which has its foundation in truth and nature and at the same time it agreeably entertains by a variety of curious and affecting incidents, is entirely divested of all those images, which, in too many Pieces calculated for Amusement only, tend to inflame the Minds they should instruct.*

Later on a new fictional form came with a heavy paratextual apparatus containing reading instructions or guidelines that helped the reader accommodate to, and domesticate, the new type of fiction. Today, even a complete non-reader would not have problems if, upon opening a book, s/he would find him/herself in the midst of a personal confession, but at the time writing about intimate affairs set in the immediate present could be taken as confusing or even unsettling. Lengthy introductions, explaining the origins of the work, disappeared only after a period of 'adaptation'.

Pamela thus came accompanied with an elaborate frame story in which Richardson presented himself as a mere editor who came across the actual letters written by a real servant-maid Pamela, thus grounding his writing

in reality. It was only later, when the novel's success brought forth numerous plagiarisms and continuations, that he revealed the true nature of his works.

Merchants knew how to take advantage of the approachable novelistic contents and how to exploit their potential for drawing in the masses. They offered novels in various bindings and different editions for customers with thinner and thicker wallets: in coverless fascicles, cardboard or leather bound, and on individual request. Especially popular were cheap editions in parts or continuations that appeared in newspapers and periodicals, as well as second hand and abridged versions. *Pamela* was first published in two duodecimo volumes; within months it was reprinted four times, as well as published in parts and pirated.

The fact is that, as stated by Terry Lovell and many times repeated, 'novel came into existence as a commodity' (28). It was the first new genre after the invention of the press, and it was inherently embedded in the profitable politics of literary market.⁵

The novel form brought new ways of reading: its content and form called for a private individual reading, and it was indeed predominantly read alone and in silence. Contrary to loud collective readings, novels were (re)played in readers' own heads with no intermediaries censoring the potentially damaging immoral sequences.

Moreover, the rise of the novel was said to bring about another transformation of reading practices, which according to some researchers makes for a proper 18th-century reading revolution: a shift from intensive, i.e., repetitive, thorough reading of only few available texts to extensive, rapid, superficial reading of a large number of books and each only once. However, the theory has been contested and today it is generally agreed that extensive reading did not replace intensive reading, but the two modes rather coexisted, as is proved already by the case of *Pamela* and a number of other bestsellers that were obsessively read again and again. In any case, extensive reading was certainly a consequence of changed reality, and it was possible only when books became more accessible and more people began to read more. And it was the novels, bringing stories that could be easily skimmed, that decisively contributed to the emergence of extensive reading.

The changes in reading habits also left traces in spatial arrangements of domestic interiors: novel reading became more infiltrated in the intimate space of the bedroom and more 'visible' – so-called reading furniture such as reading stands, detachable or folding reading desks, reading sofas, reading lamps and the like – also made it more comfortable and testified to the growing importance of reading as leisure.

Visual representation of reading

Visual representations of novel reading are certainly one of the prime examples of its material, tangible aspects. Novels are probably the only genre that became a popular motif with painters and gained a recognisable iconography. In many cases this motif can be seen as part of the anti-novel campaign as it often seems to accompany the moral-panic discourse.

To put it briefly, the main concern was that novels with their amorphous form and a wide repertoire of stories could and would morally corrupt the readers. The moral-panic heralds ascribed to novels dangerous psychological affects; they were afraid that readers (especially young women) would imitate the inappropriate behaviour of heroes and heroines, and adopt wrong ideas about love and life. Novels were accused of creating expectations that life could not fulfil, and of wearying the sympathies and producing callousness by constantly exposing the reader to scenes of exciting pathos (Williams 13–15).⁶ That novels supposedly presented real life only strengthened those fears, as the plots and characters were plausible enough to encourage identification, but the heroes and heroines were much more virtuous and beautiful, and their lives were considerably more interesting, which was exactly what – as some were convinced – caused confusion and dangerously blurred the boundary between the novelistic and the real. Thrilling, emotionally gripping plots were said to have the effect of a drug, making readers addicted to ever new fictional adventures and turning them into useless passive daydreamers. Add to this the fact that by the last third of the century, novels in one form or the other financially came within easy reach of almost everybody above the lower class, and the circumstances are ripe for a catastrophe! All you need are naïve, inexperienced, susceptible readers – ‘the young, the ignorant and the idle’, as was famously warned by Samuel Johnson – to jump at the bait. Considering that the novel reading public was regarded as predominantly female and that women were already perceived as fanciful, sensitive and thus more liable to bad influence, the situation seemed all the more alarming. In addition, the way novels were read in privacy and solitude with no outer control was seen as particularly prone to manipulation and as such suspicious, as it strongly differed from the loud collective readings, where what was read was always much easier to comment, censure and control.

In most cases, depictions of novel readers represent (young) women in a slouching pose, often dishevelled or even erotically disclosed, as if confirming the indecency of their manners and hinting at the vulgar nature of the book they hold in their hands. That we are certainly looking at a novel

reader is confirmed by the size of the book format – a duodecimo – as well as by the fact that the reader is as a rule not reading the book, but rather dreamily gazing at the distance, evidently loosing herself in her thoughts about what she has just read.⁷

It has to be said that novel reading was at the time experienced and thus regarded as a much more emotional activity, which naturally resulted in a physical, bodily response. One has to understand that novels opened up a whole new world of strong sentiments and readers unused to the new intimate address responded accordingly – wobbling in emotions aroused by an intensive identification with the fictional goings-on. For instance, it is recorded that a group of smiths, who read *Pamela* to each other, ran out to ring the church bell when they reached the happy ending. Unfortunately, the bodily dimension has been ignored by the text-oriented literary studies as well as by the reader-response theories.

The novel panic discourse rather paradoxically not only turned the novel into a more appealing forbidden fruit, but – by making it a recurrent topic of conversation – indirectly legitimated and strengthened its position as a literary, cultural and social form. This is confirmed by the way novels, especially bestsellers, inscribed themselves in the everyday, non-literary experience and became part of popular culture of the time. The latter shows in numerous ways and it offers us the richest evidence of non-textual, material echoes of reading.

Popular culture and the ‘externalisation’ of reading

Pamela was certainly among those popular novels that triggered most spin-offs: in late 1740s you could for instance buy a fan decorated with key scenes from the novel, scenes that also appeared on chinaware, tea-cups and even flat straw-hats and stove-shields. This was still the time when authors’ rights, at least as far as such non-literary items were concerned, were far from established. The official illustrated *Pamela* appeared two years after it had been first published (in the 1742 edition by Gravelot and Hayman), but numerous depictions of the adored heroine had long before circulated among avid readers. Pamela also became a popular motif with painters (in England and abroad): for instance, Joseph Highmore made twelve oil canvases, and one could visit an exhibition of more than hundred miniature wax figures representing the main protagonists of Richardson’s novel. (When the second volume came out, the exhibit was expanded accordingly.) In addition, Pamela was available as a masquerade costume (see Keymer and Sabor 143–176).

As David A. Brewer says, readers imagined characters' lives as extending off-page in ways which suggested their fundamental independence and detachability, and their capacity to migrate into the lives of readers themselves. The characters in broadly successful texts were treated as if they were a common property of all. (Brewer 78) Apart from Pamela, Gulliver of *Gulliver's Travels*, Polly and McHeath of *The Beggar's Opera* and, for instance, Tristram Shandy also lived through an explosion of off-page adventures and materialised in various literary commodities. Such spin-offs in my view form one of the staples of Darnton's external history of novel reading.

I believe this strong material dimension of reading had at the time a very important function, which could be described as externalisation or socialisation of reading. For in 18th-century England, in a time when dominant forms of leisure and pleasure, such as theatre, balls, concerts, promenades, sports and coffee houses, were still collective and public, novel reading was one among the rare leisure practices that were confined to the individual's privacy. Becoming increasingly popular, it therefore needed an echo in the communal public practices in order to be recognised and to establish itself as an equal form of entertainment. Materialising in character visualisation, spin-offs etc., these echoes of reading thus originated in the need to share a unique and intimate experience.

This externalisation of the intimate act of reading, resulting in material evidence, was of great importance and formed a vital part of the social establishment of reading.

Contemporary issues: the discourse *around* the book

In the end, I will look at the concept of externalisation (of reading) and the related notion of the materiality of reading from the perspective of the present.

Today we are surrounded by a wide range of reading sociabilities – festivals and events, prizes and awards, and literary spin-offs of all sorts. All this, however, does not seem to have necessarily much to do with the actual reading of books as a solitary endeavour, which originally triggered these external sociabilities. On the contrary, it seems that the 'circus' around books is no longer centred on reading itself – this is perhaps best seen in the proliferation of what I call the discourse *around*, rather than *about*, books.

My point is that while you can only talk *about* a book you have read, you can only talk *around* a book you have not read. A common and easy

solution for talking *around* a book is to lead the conversation away from the text to anything external, albeit relationally contextual. The fact that we have recently witnessed a success of a book about *How to Talk About Books You Haven't Read* by Pierre Bayard (see Bayard) and another one entitled *How to Really Talk About Books You Haven't Read* by Henry Hitchings (see Hitchings) says a lot about the rise of the discourse *around* the book. Even an occasional reader of contemporary newspapers could notice that the so-called literary sections are increasingly including extra-literary topics, such as (in *The Guardian*) writers' rooms or authors' working rituals and their writing equipment, that often do not have much to do with literature.⁸ One of the staple elements of the discourse around books refers to the materiality of reading – a field which is becoming more and more exploited and which encompasses everything from book paraphernalia and so-called book gadgets (such as special reading lamps,⁹ stands, shelves and bookmarks) to 'literary merchandise'.¹⁰

I do believe that in our time, when book narratives are extremely common, references to the actual content of books are actually becoming less frequent. Instead, what is most successfully providing a common ground for book comments are extra-literary references that pertain either to the author's life or to the circumstances of a writing process and the like. In short, the book talk addresses the extensions of books and reading into more generally familiar spheres, because the contents are less and less something that can be shared as common knowledge.¹¹ The trend is most evident in a rapid proliferation of books about reading (and not-reading), which are also increasingly articulating the physical experience of reading and the material practices of handling books – as if stressing their (re)discovered materiality.¹² This is, I believe, deeply symptomatic of the present time of the announced dematerialisation of the book, the coming era of e-reading and of the changing materiality of book culture as we know it. Apart from that, a stream of book-focused art-projects and reading/writing related performances reflects the changing forms of the book itself and at once tries to embody (and thereby comment on) new ways of reading and of dealing with books.¹³

To conclude: in the 18th century, novels were 'acted out' in various ways. But while this can be explained by the changing nature of leisure and the spread of private silent novel reading, the current situation is in many ways reversed. Reading books seems to be less and less the prerequisite for talking about them. The abundant material embodiment of reading and the around-the-book-talk seem to suffice, as if replacing the primary referent of reading itself.

NOTES

¹ This essay merely touches upon various dimensions or various ways in which we may think about the material, non-literary aspects of novel reading, and it should be taken as a sort of introductory panoramic overview of the subject.

² This certainly did not apply to all women, but it held true for most of those who could afford to read books, i.e., the gentry and the upper middle class. The middle class was also the one most affected by the industrial revolution, since the wives of the poor had to remain working, while those belonging to the aristocracy never worked in the first place.

³ For a detailed account of the social context, see Vogrinčič, *Družabno*.

⁴ For a more detailed general description of the early English novel, see Hunter.

⁵ That it was sold together with everyday commodities – even with grocery – is telling in itself. An ad for, e.g., Bedford's circulating library from 1817 also advertised lemon pickle and soaps. Also, it was novels that paved the success of circulating libraries which lent books for money.

⁶ A piece published in *The Critical Review* (October 1765, no. xx) can be cited as a typical complaint: 'From the usual strain of these compositions, one would be apt to conclude that love is not only the principal, but almost the sole passion that actuates the human heart. The youth of both sexes are thereby rendered liable to the grossest illusions. They fondly imagine that every thing must yield to the irresistible influence of all conquering love: but upon mixing with the world, they find, to their cost, that they have been miserably deceived; that they have viewed human nature through a false medium.' (See Taylor 66)

⁷ See, e.g., A. Baudouin's *La Lectrice* and *Le Midi*, both c. 1760, as well as J.-B. Greuze's *Lady Reading the Letter of Eloïze and Abelard*, c. 1780 (<http://www.english.ucsb.edu/faculty/warner/courses/w00/engl30/StagingReaders.ecf.8.99.htm> [31 July 2011]).

⁸ See, e.g. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/series/writersrooms> (31 July 2011).

⁹ See, e.g. <http://www.wired.com/gadgetlab/2009/07/reading-lamp-holds-books-shuts-itself-off/> (31 July 2011).

¹⁰ Patricia Ard (36) explores the connection between the decline of reading and the increased material culture spawned by literature, and argues that 'the reading experience has been miniaturised and commodified for buyers'.

¹¹ The shift of (media) focus from the actual work to its author has been observed decades ago (see a comparative survey of literary pages of quality and tabloid newspapers between 1960 and 2000 in twelve European countries [Vogrinčič, 'Literary']). But while this change could be attributed to the tabloidisation of cultural pages, the reasons for the changed discourse on books should be looked for elsewhere.

¹² Apart from Bayard and Hitchings, one should mention at least Fadiman's *Ex Libris: Confessions of a Common Reader* (2000), Nelson's *So Many Books, So Little Time* (2003), Manguel's *Reading Diary* (2004), Corrigan's *Leave Me Alone, I'm Reading* (2005), van Doren's *Joy of Reading* (2008), Hill's *Howards End is on the Landing. A Year of Reading from Home* (2009) and Sutherland's *How to Read a Novel. A User's Guide* (2006).

¹³ See, e.g., Fleur Thio's 2009 *Hasty Book* (Vogrinčič, 'K tematski' 9), Cara Barer's book photographs (<http://www.carabarar.com/> [31 July 2011]) or Brian Dettmer's extraordinary book sculpture (http://www.futureofthebook.org/blog/archives/2009/03/extraordinary_book_sculpture.html, 2009 [31 July 2011]).

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La satire de la Bibliothèque de l'Abbaye de Saint-Victor ou la bibliothèque impossible

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L'énumération est l'un des procédés employés par Rabelais pour se libérer des lois du monde matériel, de la prédétermination, du sens imposé, etc. Bien sûr, l'énumération est, elle aussi, soumise à tout cela, mais elle s'en libère aisément en devenant rythme, musique, mantra hypnotique, prière ou autre, c'est-à-dire un point de liberté échappant aux relations de cause à effet que Rabelais se plaît à exprimer sous la forme d'une diction scholastique. Il ne s'agit pas pour lui de miner le sens – celui-ci demeure intact – mais d'opérer une déconstruction de la forme, surtout lorsque celle-ci est considérée a priori comme porteuse du sens. Comme l'homme médiéval semble avoir perdu la parole véritable, il semble aussi avoir perdu la capacité de réaliser des actions méritoires (à moins que ce ne soit l'inverse, qui sait). Les bibliothèques telles qu'elles apparaissent dans Pantagruel (ch. VII), méritent d'être critiquées dans la mesure où elles ne font qu'accélérer la perte de la mémoire et, de ce fait, également celle de l'avenir. À l'homme livré à lui-même, encore moins capable d'écouter que de lire, sera réservé le sort d'idiot, dont personne ne s'est jamais plaint.

Mots-clés : humanisme / culture de la lecture / bibliothèques / Rabelais, François

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Le passage sur la Bibliothèque de l'Abbaye de Saint-Victor (*Pantagruel*, ch. VII) ne saurait se démarquer du reste de l'œuvre rabelaisienne ni par le style ou par le ton ni par sa « substance », forme (énumération) et sujet(s) abordé(s) et thématisé(s) de façon implicitement (ironie, parodie) ou explicitement critique (satire). Ce constat, s'il met hors de propos l'« originalité » du passage, insiste toutefois sur la variante médiévale de cette dernière, l'*inventio*. Rabelais est passé maître inventeur de nouveaux contextes, surtout de ceux, comiques (parodiques, satiriques), dans lesquelles il replace un sujet par ailleurs connu, et dont l'image est « substantiellement » modifiée par de nouvelles circonstances que découvre un regard frais et irrévérent, lui-même porteur d'« originalité », que la lettre tue par sa rigi-

dité. Certes, l'auteur fait revivre un esprit relégué dans la poussière des mentalités et des idées « révolues », cependant il n'en prend soin que pour mieux s'en débarrasser.

L'œuvre de Rabelais abonde en formes de gratuité dont la plus évidente, sinon la plus caractéristique, l'énumération, porte le lecteur à imaginer qu'elle suit un rythme fou (celui du *rime*, *raïlle*, *cymbale*, *lutte* de Villon) (191) ou un rythme extatique en manière de tarentelle, tout en n'ayant rien en commun avec elle, ou encore titubant comme une danse d'ivrogne, toujours cependant celui de l'être humain enivré du monde matériel et de son corps « redécouverts » après de longs siècles d'« oubli » où l'on n'aurait pas eu conscience de la vraie valeur du temps terrestre. Car le rythme, c'est le temps, et le temps, c'est l'être humain. Pour ne citer qu'un exemple des plus connus, on se souviendra de Perceval qui, pendant ses années d'errance, n'avait nulle idée, non seulement de l'heure du jour, mais encore du jour lui-même, de la semaine, du mois et même de l'année (Chrétien de Troyes *iv*. 6261–6266) ; ajoutons toutefois que le *nice* jeune homme du XII^e siècle a perdu la conscience temporelle parce qu'il a oublié le repère universel, l'éternité, qui conférerait au temps le sens, c'est-à-dire la direction et, avec celle-ci, le mouvement.

Le seul temps apprécié par la mentalité médiévale, le temps de grâce, racheté par le Seigneur dont l'action rédemptrice demeure la seule voie de salut universellement reconnue, a cependant trouvé sa place dans l'œuvre de Rabelais. La phrase scolastique intégrée au chapitre VIII, portant sur le monde que Jésus-Christ rendra à son Père à la fin des temps, est célèbre à juste titre (Rabelais, *Pantagruel* [1972] 121 ; Rabelais, *Pantagruel* [1994] 157) à juste titre. Dans une œuvre médiévale, l'énumération figure la plénitude qu'elle ne saurait d'ailleurs que suggérer, ou doit être compris comme un procédé dramatique destiné à faire rire. Loin de se moquer de la plénitude ni, et d'autant moins, de montrer un visage morne, Rabelais, fidèle, même ici, à la tradition monastique (*ioca monacorum*) (cf. J. Dubois), prend plaisir à parodier les moyens bibliques (généalogie du Christ) et médiévaux (jeux, livres) qui consistent à « énumérer » pour montrer la plénitude, c'est-à-dire à produire de la quantité comme preuve de qualité.

Rabelais, auteur de textes, a produit une des œuvres en prose des plus dramatiques de tous les temps, et dont tout, de la vente jusqu'à la pleine appréciation du détail polymorphe, dépendait de la lecture à haute voix. Certes, la lecture promotionnelle dans les foires, où les livres de « haute graisse » côtoyaient les vaches de même consistance, n'était pas qu'inévitable pour pousser la vente, elle rendait en outre justice au texte, ce qu'une lecture en silence n'aurait pas su faire. Les gestes, cris, certaines bilabiales non-reconnues par les systèmes phonétiques, voire linguistiques,

et d'autres marqueurs d'ironie, parodie, satire, etc. : tout cela perd à être lu en silence.

Le Moyen Âge, loin d'envelopper uniquement le bon sens commun, aurait caché à l'homme l'étoffe même dont ce dernier avait été créé, lui et son monde, par le souverain Plasmateur. Dans les profondeurs de l'âme humaine, cette âme qui, d'après Aristote, est indispensable à l'existence du temps puisqu'elle seule le mesure et, de ce fait, en prend conscience, l'homme médiéval a découvert l'heure fixée par les humanistes comme unité fondamentale du temps (C.-G. Dubois 118 ss. ; Haenens 6, 10–11, 13) et le repère mental principal par rapport auquel l'homme a pu prendre sa position dans l'immédiat et dans l'histoire, non dans le sens d'une exactitude réelle, signe de l'impossible maîtrise du temps, puisqu'il continuait à vivre dans un monde de l'« à peu près » (Febvre 429). Cependant, on peut peut-être y voir l'expression d'une aspiration à cette précision.

Enorgueilli de son statut de maître de la terre (*hybris*) l'homme en vient même à concevoir le temps sans l'associer à l'au-delà. Entre un temps plein, celui de l'Église, et un temps neutre, vide, celui du marchand (cf. Le Goff), l'abîme n'a fait que grandir. Rien dans l'œuvre de Rabelais, ni la séquence des chapitres ni la distribution de la matière, ni le(s) choix thématique(s) ni le parti pris idéologique, dans la mesure où il existe, ni encore les aspects plus « spécifiques » et « exacts », comme, par exemple, la numérologie ou la Kabbale, rien n'a nécessairement de *senefiance* à l'exemple médiéval. Il est vrai que l'auteur, tout humaniste qu'il soit, appelle le Moyen Âge les « ténèbres gothiques » à l'exemple de Pétrarque qui, toutefois, utilisait ce terme dans le sens d'une distribution ethnique et géographique tandis que le mot prend à l'époque de Rabelais une acception chronologique, historique, voire culturelle. L'espace a inévitablement cédé place au temps.

Tout en relevant, certes, des séries de chapitres portant sur le même épisode et mettant au jour les différents aspects ou y ajoutant sans cesse de nouveaux éléments, le lecteur n'en découvre pas moins des chapitres isolés, apparemment dépourvus de fonction et mal intégrés, sans rapport à un « sens » immédiat quelconque, sinon à celui, fort aléatoire, de la Dive Bacuc à la fin du dernier livre.

Le corps, certes, n'était pas négligé avant Rabelais, ni en théologie ni en pratique quotidienne, ni même en littérature où Rabelais a lui-même abondamment puisé. L'humour médiéval en dépend jusqu'à son inexistence dans la littérature du graal, pour ne mentionner que cet exemple. On peut donc s'étonner que, aux époques postérieures et, notamment, durant la période ayant immédiatement suivi lesdites « ténèbres », la réception de l'attitude médiévale face au corps fût tellement en désaccord avec la réalité historique.

Le double concept paulinien chair/corps, mal distingué et encore plus souvent confondu, y est visiblement pour quelque chose. Sans parler du sentiment universel qui nous amène à penser que le monde commence avec nous et à reléguer tout ce qui a préexisté dans la poussière des siècles. Le corps n'est plus le gisant de pierre ou de marbre, raide et étendu sur la dalle du sarcophage, ni une figure « bi-dimensionnelle » peuplant les fresques et racontant une histoire ancrée dans le temps comme chaque gisant imprimait silencieusement un CV dans la mémoire des passants, leur message transmettant une « méta-histoire » identique et universelle, primant sur celle qui est inscrite dans l'espace et le temps.

Le monde s'est mis en mouvement, il bougeait d'ailleurs au moins depuis deux siècles, il a découvert le détail, et les gisants s'en sont soudain trouvés priant à genoux comme François I^{er} à Saint-Denis, dynamisés dans la mesure du possible, tandis que l'introduction de la perspective dans la représentation de l'espace a rendu le regard physique à ce monde auquel il appartenait, monde matériel dont la présence et l'importance n'iraient dorénavant qu'en croissant, naturellement, au dépens du monde spirituel.

Une bibliothèque est une somme de savoir réunie par l'intention et le désir de son fondateur et de ceux qui la fréquentent. La typologie des bibliothèques est bien plus ramifiée de nos jours, certes, qu'à l'époque médiévale et suit un système de classification assurant l'ordre et permettant un contrôle au moins superficiel de toute lecture disponible des bibliothèques spécialisées, par exemple scientifiques, subdivisées encore en domaines inconnus il y a cinq siècles. La Bibliothèque de l'Abbaye de Saint-Victor est un mélange de tout et, par conséquent, un ensemble confus. L'hétérogénéité des titres reflète celle du rythme (ou des rythmes) à laquelle est contraint le lecteur quand il y prête attention et, d'autant plus, s'il lit à haute voix.

La lecture, comme la musique ou l'architecture, est ordre, rythme, mathématiques. Elle est bien plus que cela, mais elle est d'abord cela ; d'ailleurs, le chapitre ne s'ouvre-t-il pas, précisément, par des noms de célèbres architectes et mathématiciens de l'antiquité ? Comme il est possible de jouir de la vue d'une belle maison sans y habiter, de même on peut écouter un texte en prêtant attention à chaque cadence et inflexion de la voix, même sans le comprendre. L'ordre peut bien être parodique, le message, satirique, et le rythme comme on l'a défini au départ, ils n'en sont pas moins sérieux dans leur mission puisque leur intention est de transmettre un message *dreito por linhas tortas*. Comme la logique formelle ou un modèle mathématique du rythme sous-tendant le flux des paroles demeure iden-

tique, leur corollaire, le message rabelaisien, règne sereinement sur tout ce qui, autrement, pourrait passer pour un comique burlesque sans suite.

Par ses titres inventés, dont un certain nombre sont attribués à des auteurs connus et peu appréciés des humanistes, Rabelais déconstruit non seulement la « bibliographie » scolastique, une certaine époque et une manière de penser, il déconstruit tout, jusqu'au principe même de « bibliothèque ». Toutefois, il reconstruit en même temps et redresse de la main droite ce qu'il a renversé de la gauche, avant même d'en venir au chapitre VIII. L'idée qu'une institution susceptible de pareille dégénération mérite peu de respect effleure au moins la pensée du lecteur qui, toutefois, comprend que le message de Rabelais est parfaitement positif, tel le geste de l'agriculteur défrichant la terre pour cultiver les plantes utiles à l'homme. Les titres cocasses, satirique, riches en éléments parodiques, vident les rayons de la bibliothèque, non pas des livres, mais du sens. Par le seul acte de conscience qui distingue et évalue, dresse en creux le lieu du sens auquel le chapitre suivant accordera un nouveau contenu, l'esprit de l'auteur, auquel se joint celui du lecteur, devenu co-créateur, rétablit la bibliothèque dans ses droits légitimes.

On ne retiendra pas, de ce chapitre, les titres comiques des livres énumérés, mais plutôt l'énumération elle-même. Non la bibliothèque en tant qu'institution qui, de ce que l'homme a écrit dans l'histoire de son court passage sur la terre, garde tout et n'importe quoi, mais comme la sélection en vue d'une hiérarchie se dressant vers le sens. Le rôle principal de la bibliothèque, celui d'être la gardienne du sens, rôle résumant la raison d'être d'autres institutions sinon de la société entière, suppose une bibliothèque dynamique, d'une grande souplesse, où le moment présent s'unit à la tradition sans se laisser dénaturer. La bibliothèque, certes, est un temple du savoir. Toutefois, si elle n'est en même temps un oracle du sens, elle sera d'emblée sclérosée, ridicule et inutile, toute prête pour une décontextualisation et pour une immédiate resémantisation.

On en vient à la question clé, celle du lecteur. Celui qui lit pour apprendre, certes, mais aussi cet autre dont le savoir et la sagesse lui permettait jadis de lire pour distinguer, de renouveler la hiérarchie, de faire des ajouts tout en assurant l'intégrité et la continuité de la communauté des hommes. Ce lecteur qui a depuis perdu l'individualité est bien plus important. Qui lit ? Un lecteur humaniste, pour Rabelais, c'est une évidence. Une pluralité de lectures, comme celle des langues à l'occasion de la rencontre de Pantagruel et Panurge, s'esquisse à peine, et ce n'est pas pour être favorisée. Notre lecteur à nous, le connaît-on ? Non, puisque l'on se perd dans la multitude de ceux qui lisent et dont beaucoup, en outre, se prennent même à écrire. Chacun des titres de la Bibliothèque de

l'Abbaye de Saint-Victor cache un lecteur moderne. Voilà, on est sur le même pied que la scolastique, dira-t-on, surpris, déçu, content ou rassuré, malheureusement, il n'en est rien puisqu'il nous manque un Rabelais. Sans le Lecteur, compris comme fonction et non comme individu, les bibliothèques deviennent des monstres inutiles, des charognes sur lesquelles les oiseaux de proie descendent pour en arracher chacun sa portion qu'ils dévorent et digèrent seuls, sans rendre leur dû aux autres. La bibliothèque, être vivant, un peu comme le temps, a besoin d'une conscience capable de trouver une voie dans le labyrinthe du savoir, pour en tirer le sens à partager avec tout le monde. Lorsqu'il en est ainsi, la bibliothèque est la pierre de touche d'une société. Car ceux qui sont capables de lire pour eux-mêmes, et tous les autres qui ne le sont pas, ont besoin du Lecteur, condition préalable nécessaire pour intégrer le sens et les mêmes valeurs fondatrices permettant une vie en commun. Si nous avons notre Rabelais à nous, que nous apprendrait-il sur nous-mêmes ?

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La bibliothèque et le lecteur en Carniole (1670–1870) et l'histoire littéraire slovène

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La première partie de l'article est consacrée à la perception des bibliothèques privées de la noblesse et des grands écrivains chez les historiens de la littérature slovène. Dans la deuxième partie, il est question des fiches de prêt établies par la bibliothèque du lycée de Ljubljana au XIX^e siècle.

Mots-clés : histoire de la lecture / Slovénie / 19^eme siècle / bibliothèques / culture de la lecture

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Notre histoire commence avec Janez Krstnik Mayr, imprimeur de Salzbourg, qui ouvrit sa librairie à Ljubljana en 1678, lors de la foire d'Élisabeth, et publia le catalogue des livres en vente. Au début de son catalogue, il s'adresse ainsi à son ami lecteur :

Et ut scire posses, Amice Lector, libros, quos commodo tuo adduxi, eos praesenti Catalogo conscripsi. Quod si videro obsequium hoc meum gratum fuisse, majori adhuc copia Officinam meam locupletabo, quo amplius inservire possim. Tu interim Erudite Lector bene vale, & conatum meum favore promove.

Peut-être n'est-il pas inutile de souligner que, en dehors des nombreux livres théologiques, juridiques, médicaux et philosophiques en latin, Mayr a permis pour la première fois au public de Ljubljana l'accès à quelques romans historico-galants. Sur cette liste, on trouve les romans *Aramena, die durchleuchtige Syrerinn* d'Anton Ulrich von Brauenschweig-Wolfenbüttel et *Die afrikanische Sophonisbe* de Philip von Zesen. La présence de la traduction allemande du roman *Clélie* de Mlle de Scudéry est particulièrement mise en valeur.

Le baron Janez Vajkard Valvasor, célèbre poly-historien baroque qui se constituait lui-même une importante bibliothèque personnelle au château de Bogenšperk, se servit sans aucun doute de ce catalogue. Sur l'inventaire

de la bibliothèque qui fut vendue en 1690 à l'évêque de Zagreb, on trouve toute une série d'ouvrages géographiques, historiques, de géométrie et d'architecture. Anja Dular (« Valvasorjeva » 268) a écrit que les intérêts de Valvasor se reflètent parfaitement dans le contenu des livres qu'il avait rassemblés dans la bibliothèque de son château. Nous nous intéresserons avant tout aux œuvres littéraires que les chercheurs n'ont pas encore analysées jusqu'à présent. À côté des auteurs classiques de l'antiquité, Valvasor possédait un nombre considérable de romans picaresques. Dans sa collection, on trouve la traduction allemande du roman *Lazarillo de Tormes*, la traduction italienne du roman *Guzmán de Alfranche* d'Alemán ainsi que son adaptation allemande élaborée par Aegidius Albertinus. Apparemment, il connaissait également l'ouvrage *Historia von Isaac Winckelfelder und Jobst von der Schneidt* que Niclaus Ulenhart avait adapté d'après la nouvelle *Rinconete y Cortadillo* de Cervantès. Visiblement, il s'intéressait aussi à l'héroïne picaresque du roman *Die Iustina Dietzin Picara* d'Andrea Perez. Il faut souligner également qu'il possédait tous les cahiers de l'édition originale de *Simplicissimus* de Grimmelshausen. À côté des romans picaresques, il connaissait également quelques romans précieux intéressants. Dans l'inventaire, on trouve les traductions allemandes de *L'Astrée* d'Honoré d'Urfé ou de *Clélie* et *Artamène ou le Grand Cyrus* de Mlle de Scudéry. Si nous nous en tenons à la prose, de toutes les œuvres dramatiques néoclassiques il ne possédait que la tragédie chrétienne *Polyeucte* de Corneille en traduction allemande. Parmi les auteurs dramatiques allemands baroques se trouvant à la bibliothèque de Valvasor, il faut mentionner Daniel Caspar von Lohenstein avec ses drames *Cleopatra*, *Ibrahim Sultan* et *Sophonisbe* dont le thème était très apprécié à l'époque du baroque et du néo-classicisme.

La bibliothèque de Valvasor représentait en effet une rareté en Carniole. Au milieu du XVII^e siècle, un gentilhomme carnolien moyen avait dans sa bibliothèque entre 25 et 30 livres, et 17 % des gentilshommes avaient moins de dix livres. En étudiant les actes de succession, Marko Štuhec (84) a constaté qu'à cette époque le livre ne représentait pas le compagnon indispensable du quotidien des gentilshommes et que la lecture n'était pas une activité susceptible d'occuper les gentilshommes carnoliens. Au XVIII^e siècle, la situation était similaire.

Ce qui est intéressant pour nous, c'est la bibliothèque particulière de Karel Janez Herberstein, prince-évêque de Ljubljana durant la seconde moitié du XVIII^e siècle. Nous la connaissons grâce au catalogue de la vente aux enchères qui fut – en tant que premier document de ce type – imprimé à Ljubljana lors de la liquidation de la bibliothèque en 1788. L'historien littéraire France Kidrič (« Herberstein » 304), examinant la bibliothèque du prince-évêque dès les années 1830, a constaté que le noyau de cette

bibliothèque était constituée avant tout des Pères de l'Église diffusés par les jansénistes et les représentants du jansénisme, du droit ecclésiastique janséniste ainsi que des réformes ecclésiastiques jansénistes (Arnauld, Duguet, Dupin). Parmi les disciplines non théologiques, qui toutes ensemble ne valaient pas le groupe susmentionné, Kidrič remarque que Herberstein s'intéressait aux écrits juridico-philosophiques (Montesquieu), mais constate qu'il achetait relativement peu d'ouvrages purement philosophiques (Pope, Descartes). La théorie littéraire y est représentée modestement tandis que la littérature artistique profane est « franchement pauvre ». Kidrič (« Herberstein » 304) souligne que la catalogue de la bibliothèque de Herberstein représente le « miroir manifeste de sa mentalité » des 1770.¹

Dans les années quatre-vingts du XVIII^e siècle, le baron Žiga Zois, à l'époque le Carnolien le plus riche et le mécène principal, fit également faire le catalogue de sa bibliothèque. Cette dernière, que nous connaissons aujourd'hui grâce au catalogue *Bibliothecae Sigismundi Liberi Baronis de Zois Catalogus*, était pourvue surtout de livres de sciences naturelles. Il y avait toute une série d'ouvrages de botanique (Tournefort, Linné), de minéralogie (Brongniart), de géologie (Dolomieu), de physique (Nollet) et de chimie. Il est important de préciser qu'il possédait les ouvrages de base de la théorie chimique des affinités (Bergman, Berthollet) qui a laissé des traces dans la littérature. Il aimait lire aussi les récits de voyage, car on trouve dans sa bibliothèque Bougainville, le capitaine Cook et même le capitaine Blight, le vaincu de la révolte du Bounty. Il s'intéressait également à Montesquieu ainsi qu'à l'économiste Necker. Il possédait aussi le *Dictionnaire de musique* de Rousseau. Déjà Kidrič (*Zgodovina* 214) notait le nombre restreint d'œuvres des belles-lettres. À côté de Rabelais et de Montaigne Zois lisait Cervantès, Young et Pope en français. Peu à peu, il est devenu un collectionneur fervent de slavica.

Zois acheta toute une série de livres chez Wilhelm Heinrich Korn, libraire de Ljubljana qui publia plusieurs catalogues dans les années 1770 (Dular, *Živeti* 194–223). Ces catalogues nous révèlent que Korn offrait aux lecteurs de Ljubljana quelques pièces « bourgeoises ». C'est ainsi que les lecteurs pouvaient acheter *Clavigo* de Goethe, *Eugénie* de Beaumarchais et les tragédies bourgeoises de Diderot, mais aussi les pièces de Shakespeare, auteur nouvellement découvert, qu'ils lisaient probablement en adaptation. En 1789, les lecteurs avaient une idée très claire de la diversité caractérisant l'écriture des romans au XVIII^e siècle. Korn leur proposait *Robinson Crusoe* de Daniel Defoe, *Tom Jones* de Henry Fielding avec *Don Quichotte* de Cervantès – modèle du roman anglais des lumières – d'un côté et, de l'autre, *La nouvelle Héloïse* de Rousseau (en allemand et en français) et *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* (*Les Souffrances du jeune Werther*) de Goethe.

Apparemment, Werther était très apprécié des lecteurs puisqu'on trouve dans les catalogues certaines « wertheriades ».

Ces catalogues étaient importants car, à l'époque, il n'y avait pas de bibliothèques publiques à Ljubljana. La bibliothèque du lycée, dont les fonds de base comportaient les livres des monastères supprimés, ouvrit ses portes au public dès 1794. Une année plus tard, les lecteurs pouvaient emprunter des livres chez le libraire Kleinmayer (Dular, *Živeti* 184–193), principalement toute une série de romans historiques, mais aussi *Nathan le sage* de Lessing ainsi que *Night-Thoughts* de Young en traduction française (*Les nuits*).

Cependant, l'élite intellectuelle slovène s'est formée avant tout grâce à la bibliothèque de Zois. Le baron donnait d'ailleurs ce qu'il avait en double au premier poète slovène Valentin Vodnik. D'après Kidrič (*Zgodovina* 402), la bibliothèque de Vodnik était une bibliothèque typique d'un homme de lettres modeste pour qui le classicisme représentait toujours le modèle principal. Parmi les ouvrages littéraires théoriques, Vodnik possédait les *Œuvres* de Boileau et, parmi les poètes antiques, Horace, auteur que Zois lui avait conseillé de prendre pour modèle. Déjà Kidrič (*Zgodovina* 403) écrit que, pour quelqu'un qui lui-même écrivait des poèmes, le nombre d'œuvres littéraires récentes était curieusement restreint. Parmi les poètes allemands de son époque, Vodnik possédait Klopstock, Wieland, Voß et Schiller.

En 1804, Jernej Kopitar, plus tard slavisant renommé, devint secrétaire personnel de Zois ainsi que conservateur de sa collection minéralogique. Dans la bibliothèque personnelle de Kopitar qui, après sa mort, éveilla un vif intérêt à travers l'Europe, on trouve aussi un nombre considérable d'ouvrages de slavissants et de linguistes importants avec lesquels cet érudit carnolien était en correspondance. Parmi les Slaves, il faut avant tout mentionner les ouvrages de Josef Dobrovský, František Čelakovský, František Palacký, Pavel Josef Šafárik, Ján Kollár et, bien sûr, ceux de Vuk Stefanović Karadžić qui était devenu le créateur de la langue serbe moderne à l'instigation de Kopitar. Parmi les correspondants de Kopitar de l'Europe de l'ouest nous trouvons dans sa bibliothèque les ouvrages de l'orientaliste Silvestre de Sacy ainsi que les écrits de Jacob Grimm, Wilhelm von Humboldt et Franz Bopp. C'est la raison pour laquelle Walter Lukan (16) écrit que la bibliothèque personnelle est le reflet de ses relations scientifiques. Cependant, Lukan (59) s'étonne du fait que, à l'exception des auteurs antiques, Kopitar possédait si peu d'œuvres littéraires. Certaines œuvres se sont retrouvées dans sa bibliothèque grâce à un heureux hasard. Achille Jubinal lui envoya en témoignage de reconnaissance les œuvres complètes de Rutebeuf, tandis que Kokkinakes lui offrit sa traduction de *Tartuffe* en grec moderne.

Contrairement à Kopitar, Matija Čop avait dans sa bibliothèque un grand nombre d'œuvres littéraires contemporaines qu'il mentionnait souvent dans sa correspondance. Ainsi, au début des années 1820 (le 13 décembre 1822), il écrivit les lignes suivantes à Franc Leopold Savio, un de ses amis, à propos des œuvres lues à Rijeka, où il fréquentait la maison d'un commerçant anglais :

In Fiume also beschäftigte ich mich natürlich am meisten mit meinem eigentlichen Fache, der alten klassischen Litteratur, freylich aber konnte ich nicht umhin, manchmal auch in der neuern etwas zu naschen, besonders wenn mir interessante Erscheinungen der Zeit zukamen: West-östlicher Divan – Wanderjahre – Houwald – Tieck's Gedichte – Indische Bibliothek – Lamartine – Manzoni – Ricciarda – Biagioli's Dante etc. und vorzüglich Byron und W. Scott nebst Thomas Moore. (Čop 54)

(À Rijeka je me suis donc, tout naturellement, consacré au premier chef à ma véritable spécialité, à la littérature classique, cependant je n'ai pas pu m'empêcher de goûter bien des fois à des livres plus récents, en particulier lorsqu'il s'agissait d'œuvres intéressantes : West-östlicher Divan – Wanderjahre – Houwald – les poèmes de Tieck – Indische Bibliothek – Lamartine – Manzoni – Ricciarda – le Dante de Biagioli, etc. Et surtout Byron et W. Scott, en dehors de Thomas Moore.)

La lettre du jeune polyglotte et bibliothécaire slovène citée ci-dessus représente l'un des documents importants de la réception passive dans les premières décennies du XIX^e siècle en Carniole. Čop est l'un de nos premiers lecteurs de littérature romantique européenne et celle-ci occupe également une place centrale dans sa vaste bibliothèque. Parmi les auteurs mentionnés dans sa lettre, Čop avait déjà dans sa bibliothèque au début des années vingt du XIX^e siècle *The Poetical Works* de Thomas Moore (1821), *The Works* de Walter Scott (1819–1830), et de Byron, la traduction italienne de son *Corsair*. Il possédait aussi une des premières éditions de *Méditations poétiques* (1820) de Lamartine. Dans sa correspondance, il parle justement plusieurs fois de Foscolo, Lamartine ou de Byron. En dehors des premières œuvres de Manzoni (ici on pense à la tragédie *Adelchi*, 1822), il lit plus tard également son roman *Il promesi sposi* (*Les fiancés*). Dans sa bibliothèque, il avait à l'époque aussi le roman de Goethe *Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre* (*Les Années de voyage de Wilhelm Meister*) (où il s'intéressa probablement au thème des aventures de voyage d'un jeune homme cherchant un monde approprié pour y développer harmonieusement ses penchants, Kos, *Matija Čop* 66), ainsi que son recueil poétique *West-östlicher Divan* (*Le Divan occidental-oriental*). Ici, il faut souligner que, sous l'influence de l'école française, le comparatisme slovène approfondit l'étude de ces « lectures » (voir : Ocvirk 121, 179) et étudia particulièrement bien l'horizon littéraire de Čop.

Dans la bibliothèque de Čop, on trouve également le deuxième volume d'*Indische Bibliothek* édité par August Wilhelm Schlegel. Ce dernier avait une forte influence sur sa conception du romantisme et, par là aussi, sur la structure de sa bibliothèque personnelle qui représente, d'après Kidrič (« Čop » 103), le miroir de ses intérêts littéraires. Il s'agit d'une bibliothèque constituée par un lecteur et connaisseur des contenus et non point par un chercheur à l'affût de raretés bibliophiles. Vu sa situation financière, Čop possédait un nombre de livres assez impressionnant (1993 titres).

Parmi les témoignages sur les poètes slovènes, l'acte de succession de France Prešeren nous fournit un inventaire de 107 livres qui a éveillé le plus grand intérêt. Ce qui intéressait le plus les chercheurs au début, c'était le fait que l'œuvre de Strauss *Das Leben Christi* (*Vie de Jésus*), ainsi que quelques autres, ne figuraient pas dans la succession. Les premiers spécialistes de Prešeren (e.g., Žigon 7) ont estimé que peut-être quelqu'un avait pillé la bibliothèque ou, du moins, éliminé certains œuvres de la succession. Il faut attendre les années 1970 pour que Janko Kos (*Prešeren* 35) procède à une analyse détaillée de l'inventaire de ces livres en soulignant que c'étaient sans doute les circonstances extérieures qui avaient décidé du volume et de l'état de la bibliothèque du poète répertoriée dans les documents de succession. Cet inventaire nous donnerait une image complètement erronée de la vaste connaissance effective qu'avait Prešeren de la littérature européenne ancienne et plus récente. Kos (34) souligne que, en dehors de certains ouvrages juridiques et philosophiques, Prešeren possédait la plupart des ouvrages antiques puisque, parmi les Grecs, on y rencontre Homère (*L'Iliade* et *L'Odyssée* en italien), Ésope (*Fabulae*), Eschyle (*Agamemnon* en allemand), Sophocle et Pindare. Parmi les Romains, nous pouvons mentionner Tite-Live, Cicéron, Horace (la traduction de Voss des *Satires* et *Épîtres*), Tibulle et Quintilien. Les auteurs Italiens sont Pétrarque (*Rimes*), Boccace (traduction française de Mirabeau) et Arioste. Les auteurs anglais sont représentés par Pope, Paine, Byron (*Don Juan*), et Defoe (*The True Born Englishman*), tandis que les auteurs allemands sont presque absents. Il est remarquable que, dans cette succession, il y ait si peu d'ouvrages du préromantisme et du romantisme européens et surtout qu'il n'y ait aucune trace des auteurs que Prešeren connaissait bien et estimait beaucoup comme, par exemple : Bürger, Schiller, Goethe, ou Grün. Enfin, c'est précisément le cas de Prešeren qui nous montre que la bibliothèque, du moins telle que nous la connaissons, ne peut être le miroir exclusif de la culture d'une personne.

Les mémoires de Trdina, que la littérature comparée slovène a bien prises en considération, apportent un témoignage important sur les habitudes de lecture de certains lycéens carnoliens juste avant la Révolution

de mars. Selon ses propres mots, Trdina (133) est entré dans l'univers de la lecture grâce aux légendes nationales romanes sur la Belle Maguelone et sur les quatre fils Aymon. À cette époque, il lisait le roman en vers sur le chevalier Wigalois de Wirnt von Grafenberg. Ces contes représentaient pour lui comme un pont le guidant vers les « Rittergeschichten » de Ludwig Dellarose : « Lorsque je m'en procurais un, je ne le lâchais plus avant de l'avoir lu en entier ; parfois, j'étais assis à côté toute la nuit, en mangeant je tenais dans une main ma cuillère, dans l'autre Dellarose. » (Trdina 133) Trdina souligne que, dans les années 1840, de nombreuses personnes parlant allemand lisaient cette sorte d'ouvrages : « Ils représentaient plus que la source principale de la culture allemande pour nos étudiants, demoiselles et demi-demoiselles ainsi que pour tous les parvenus et toute l'innocence campagnarde [*die Landpomeranze*] des villages slovènes. » (134) À cette époque, le libraire Giontini – comme il apparaît dans une annonce de *Laibacher Zeitung* – vendait les œuvres de Dellarose à 30 kreutzer la pièce, entre autre, aussi le roman *Marno, der Schreckenvolle, und das Mädchen in der Löwenhöhle* (v. *Intelligenz-Blatt*). Le jeune Trdina considérait ce héros de l'histoire espagnole comme étant plus grand que César ou Napoléon. Dans son autobiographie, Trdina se rappelle que les prêtres ne dissuadaient pas les jeunes de lire ce type de littérature. Mais lorsqu'il confessa à son directeur de conscience qu'il lisait *Geschichte des Philosophen Danischmende* de Wieland, celui-ci lui imposa de jeter le livre au feu : « J'étais bien désolé, je l'ai épargné encore trois jours, c'est-à-dire jusqu'à ce que je l'ai lu encore une fois, et puis je l'ai livré sans pitié au bûcher. » (Trdina 141) De Dellarose il est passé à Caroline Pichler dont il appréciait les romans historiques encore à l'âge mûr. Cependant, il est intéressant d'apprendre qu'à cette époque il s'ennuyait beaucoup en lisant Walter Scott. Il lui préférait Bulwer-Lytton et son héros Paul Clifford. Ce qui est curieux, c'est que dans ses mémoires il critique sévèrement Goethe qui, selon lui, parle du suicide d'une manière si touchante qu'il peut ne plus paraître au jeune lecteur être quelque chose de scandaleux (140).

Il est particulièrement intéressant d'étudier ce que lisait le peuple vivant hors des centres urbains. Au milieu du XIX^e siècle, Levstik (25) note que les paysans de son pays lisent avec plaisir le premier récit slovène, *Sreča v nesreči* (Le bonheur dans le malheur) de Janez Cigler : « À peine le petit livre eut-il fait son entrée dans le village qu'on commença à se le passer d'une maison à l'autre ; et, aujourd'hui encore, on évoque durant les soirées d'hiver les aventures des jumeaux Janez et Pavel. » Parmi les autres livres prisés des lecteurs, il mentionne également Robinson Crusoé, déjà traduit en slovène, et raconte avoir un jour rencontré un paysan qui avait lu l'ouvrage de Karel Robida, premier livre slovène consacré à la physique.

Levstik (26) aboutit à la conclusion didactique suivante : « [L]e peuple lirait s'il avait quoi lire. Et plus le nombre de bons livres augmenterait dans nos régions, plus le peuple aurait de plaisir à les lire. »

* * *

Pour étudier les habitudes de lecture de l'élite intellectuelle carnolienne il est intéressant de consulter les protocoles de prêt (*Protokoll der entlehnten Werke*) de la Bibliothèque du Lycée de Ljubljana de l'époque (voire de la Bibliothèque d'études pour la Carniole après 1850) qui se sont conservés jusqu'à nos jours. Regardons la réception de certains auteurs anglo-américains que nous allons comparer aux échos dans la littérature slovène de l'époque.

Byron éveillait de l'intérêt déjà auprès des romantiques qui traduisaient ses œuvres, mais il ressort des protocoles susmentionnés, qu'il représentait encore une lecture estimée au tournant des années 1850–1860. Donc, il n'est pas surprenant que Valentin Zarnik ait publié en 1862 une nouvelle intitulée *Maščevanje osode* (La Vengeance du destin) dans laquelle une dame noble polonaise lit *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* (*Le Pèlerinage de Childe Harold*) et irrite un gentilhomme croate en déclarant qu'il ne connaît probablement cet auteur que de nom (Zarnik, « Maščevanje »). En réalité le Croate se fâche car, dans sa bibliothèque, il a les œuvres de Byron en traduction allemande, mais il ne les a jamais lues. Cinq ans plus tard, le même auteur publie la nouvelle *Slovenski Nikodem* (Nicodème slovène) dans laquelle il dit de certaines voix villageoises qu'elles « ressemblaient au cri de nuit des Indiens au bord des lacs canadiens, ce que l'immortel Cooper nous a si merveilleusement dépeint dans ses romans » (Zarnik 329). Il est donc évident que ces romans étaient bien connus des lecteurs slovènes et que Cooper était extrêmement estimé au tournant des années 1860–1870. En 1868, pour les auteurs dont le patronyme commençant par C, la moitié des ouvrages empruntés était un livre de Cooper. Dans cette énumération, nous ne devons en aucun cas négliger Walter Scott que l'on empruntait beaucoup, notamment au début des années 1860. À l'époque, les lecteurs empruntaient plusieurs volumes à la fois qu'ils lisaient ensuite plusieurs mois. Si nous observons de plus près les années 1860–1862, nous voyons que les lecteurs prenaient en moyenne sept volumes qu'ils rendaient six mois après l'emprunt. Les fiches nous permettent de connaître les personnes qui empruntaient les œuvres de Scott. Pendant cette période, nous rencontrons deux fois le nom d'un certain Ullrich qui avait emprunté en décembre 1861 sept volumes rendus ensuite en juillet 1862. En novembre de la même année, il a emprunté encore dix volumes jusqu'au mois de juin 1863. Cet Ullrich était probable-

ment Ferdinand Ullrich, celui qui prêta les œuvres de Scott à son camarade de lycée Josip Jurčič (Levec, « Spomini » 422). Vers le 15 décembre 1861, celui-ci écrivit dans son carnet avoir lu les volumes de Scott suivants : « 5, 6 Redgauntlet, 16, 17 Kloster, 31, 32 Braut von Lamer Moor, 33 Herz von Mid-loth. »² Effectivement, Ullrich avait emprunté deux semaines plus tôt les tomes 17, 31 et 32 des œuvres de Scott. À peine quelques années plus tard, Jurčič écrivit le premier roman slovène, *Deseti brat* (Le Dixième frère) où le nom de Scott apparaît dès l'*incipit* :

Pripovedovalci imajo, kakor trdi že sloveči romanopisec Walter Scott, staro pravico, da svojo povest začno v krčmi, to je v tistem shodišču vseh popotnih ljudi, kjer se raznovrstni značaji naravnost in odkrito pokažejo drug drugemu poleg pregovora: v vinu je resnica. Da se torej tudi mi te pravice poprimemo, izvira iz tega, ker menimo, da naše slovenske krčme in naši krčmarji, čeravno imajo po deželi veliko preprostejšo podobo, niso nič manj originalni ko staroangleški Scottovi. (Jurčič 141)

(Les conteurs ont, comme l'affirme déjà le célèbre romancier Walter Scott, l'ancien droit de commencer leur histoire dans une auberge, dans ce lieu de rencontre de tous les gens de voyage où les divers caractères se montrent directement et ouvertement les uns aux autres en plus du proverbe : dans le vin, la vérité. La raison pour laquelle nous tenons à ce droit est que nous croyons que nos auberges slovènes et nos aubergistes, tout en ayant à la campagne une image beaucoup plus simple, ne sont pas moins originaux que ceux de l'ancienne Angleterre de Scott.)

Le nom de Jurčič apparaît également sur les fiches de prêt. En décembre 1862, il emprunta Shakespeare qu'il rendit sept mois plus tard. Ainsi, il n'est pas surprenant que l'héroïne principale du roman de Jurčič lise Shakespeare et fascine complètement son amant par ses connaissances concernant le dramaturge anglais. Plus tard, il emprunta également *Tom Jones* de Fielding dont il recopia certains passages intéressants.

Il convient également de se demander dans quelle mesure les œuvres de la littérature française étaient empruntées à cette époque-là. Le fichier des prêts montre clairement que le théâtre classique français était au premier plan. Les pièces de Corneille sont fréquemment empruntées vers 1830 et continuent à l'être durant la seconde moitié des années 1850. Les lecteurs témoignent une préférence marquée pour *Le Cid* et *Horace*. Durant la seconde moitié des années 1850 (en particulier en 1857–1858), Racine est également très lu. Il est étonnant de constater que Molière suscite beaucoup moins d'intérêt. Parmi les romantiques français, Chateaubriand prédomine, en particulier son roman *Atala*, traduit deux fois en slovène dans les années 1850. Étonnamment, les lecteurs empruntaient peu Victor Hugo et même Charles Nodier, qui avait pourtant séjourné à Ljubljana et

avait également décrit dans son roman *Jean Sbogar* les villes de Trieste et de Gorizia. En 1873, ce livre fut emprunté par Valentin Zarnik. Or, c'est précisément ce dernier qui recommandait aux écrivains slovènes désireux de dépeindre les Provinces illyriennes de lire Nodier.³

Le fichier des prêts nous fournit des renseignements intéressants permettant de déterminer quand les écrivains commencèrent à s'intéresser à la littérature réaliste. Le roman *Soll und Haben* de Gustav Freytag (1855) commença à être emprunté onze ans après sa parution et ne devint un succès que dans les années 1867–1869. Du reste, les lecteurs continuent à l'emprunter dans les années 1870. Durant la seconde moitié des années 1870, on rencontre à plusieurs reprises dans le fichier des prêts l'ouvrage de Bjørnson intitulé *Bauern-Novellen* dans la traduction allemande que les lecteurs empruntaient plus volontiers que le recueil de Keller *Die Lente von Seldnyla* (*Les gens de Seldnyla*). Bien que très populaire en Autriche, Charles Dickens est à peine mentionné dans le fichier des prêts : en 1876, un seul lecteur emprunta *Pickwick Papers* (*Les Papiers posthumes du Pickwick Club*) et, en 1880, un autre lit *Nicolas Nickelby*. Notre recherche montre que l'intérêt des lecteurs pour les réalistes russes ne se manifeste que dans les premières décennies du XX^e siècle. Durant les années 1910–1911, deux romans de Tolstoï en traduction allemande sont très souvent empruntés : *Anna Karénine* et *Guerre et Paix*. Les lecteurs ne commencèrent à lire Zola qu'après la parution des deux premières traductions slovènes de ses œuvres. Du reste, il faut attendre 1901 pour que *Madame Bovary* fasse son apparition sur les étagères de la bibliothèque et l'acquisition de *La fille Elisa* d'Edmond de Goncourt date de deux années plus tard. Quant à Ibsen, les lecteurs slovènes n'avaient accès qu'à sa poésie.

Conclusion

Notre recherche a montré que les historiens de la littérature se sont beaucoup intéressés aux bibliothèques privées des écrivains et principaux mécènes, en particulier au nombre et à la nature des œuvres littéraires qu'elles renfermaient. Ils ne cachaient pas leur déception si le nombre de ces œuvres était peu important. Les chercheurs plus anciens voyaient dans les bibliothèques le miroir de la mentalité de leurs propriétaires, opinion qui prévaut encore aujourd'hui, si on excepte certains chercheurs comme Janko Kos. Il ressort des fiches de prêt laissées par la bibliothèque du Lycée de Ljubljana que le prêt dépendait étroitement des mentions de ces œuvres dans la presse et la littérature, comme nous le remarquons très clairement chez Zarnik et Jurčič.

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NOTES

¹ Anja Dular (« Knjižnica » 275) pense également que l'examen attentif de la bibliothèque du prince-archevêque permet de déduire quelle était son orientation spirituelle.

² NUK, Rz. Ms 1447. Folio 2. B, št. 1.

³ Voir la lettre de Levec à Janko Kersnik (20 juin 1881) : Levec, *Pisma* 91.

Yellow Book 6. Band 174. 3. 5. 13.	22. 22. 27. 33. 34.
Scott f. Walter 174. 3. 5. 13.	22. 22. 27. 33. 34.
— f. Walter 174. 3. 5. 13.	22. 22. 27. 33. 34.
— f. Walter 174. 3. 5. 13.	22. 22. 27. 33. 34.
— f. Walter 174. 3. 5. 13.	22. 22. 27. 33. 34.
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— f. Walter 174. 3. 5. 13.	22. 22. 27. 33. 34.
— f. Walter 174. 3. 5. 13.	22. 22. 27. 33. 34.
— f. Walter 174. 3. 5. 13.	22. 22. 27. 33. 34.
— f. Walter 174. 3. 5. 13.	22. 22. 27. 33. 34.

Le 3 décembre 1861, Ferdinand Ullrich a emprunté certains romans de Scott (Protokoll der entlehnten Werke. NUK. Rz). Il en a ensuite prêté quelques-uns à son camarade de classe Josip Jurčič qui devint bientôt très friand du romancier britannique.

Scott Walter f. Walter 174. 3. 5. 13.	22. 22. 27. 33. 34.
— f. Walter 174. 3. 5. 13.	22. 22. 27. 33. 34.
— f. Walter 174. 3. 5. 13.	22. 22. 27. 33. 34.
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— f. Walter 174. 3. 5. 13.	22. 22. 27. 33. 34.
— f. Walter 174. 3. 5. 13.	22. 22. 27. 33. 34.
— f. Walter 174. 3. 5. 13.	22. 22. 27. 33. 34.
— f. Walter 174. 3. 5. 13.	22. 22. 27. 33. 34.
— f. Walter 174. 3. 5. 13.	22. 22. 27. 33. 34.
— f. Walter 174. 3. 5. 13.	22. 22. 27. 33. 34.

Le 10 décembre 1862, Josip Jurčič a emprunté le théâtre de Shakespeare (Protokoll der entlehnten Werke. NUK. Rz). Le fait que l'héroïne de son roman *Deseti brat* (Le Dixième frère, 1866) lise précisément cet auteur n'est sans doute pas anodin.

Fabricius, 174. 3. 5. 13.	22. 22. 27. 33. 34.
— f. Walter 174. 3. 5. 13.	22. 22. 27. 33. 34.
— f. Walter 174. 3. 5. 13.	22. 22. 27. 33. 34.
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Young Readers and Old Stories. Young-Adult and Crossover Adaptations of the Arthurian Stories

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Who has read Arthurian stories in the last century and who is still enjoying them today? One of the possible answers is: young readers. This paper reviews the choices and changes the authors of twentieth-century Arthurian retellings have made in an effort to adapt the traditional stories to a modern young readership.

Keywords: young adult literature / English literature / romance / Arthurian legends / young readers / adaptations

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Versions of Arthurian stories for children and young adults have been in circulation for a century and a half, and most people have heard about these stories in their childhood.¹ Although back in the late Middle Ages young princes and aristocrats are very likely to have been acquainted with most of the stories (Lynch 5), they were not originally written for a young audience. Arthurian literature, rooted in legendary and mythical as well as chronicle material, began to flourish in the courts of Europe, especially France, in the twelfth century. It was a courtly literature addressed to kings, queens and noblemen and it was composed both in verse and in prose. In England the Golden Age of Arthurian romance began in the middle of the fourteenth century and at the end of the fifteenth century the prose compilation known as *The Death of Arthur*, by Sir Thomas Malory, delivered most of the stories of Arthur and his knights to the modern age. Although other English romances have a more popular appeal than their French and German counterparts, those of the matter of Britain are usually courtly in tone and so is their readership. Well into the Renaissance Arthurian romances continued to be read or otherwise enjoyed by the English aristoc-

racy and monarchs and they became source material for courtly literature, such as Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, and courtly entertainment, such as the tournaments that celebrated Queen Elizabeth's Accession Day and the pageants held in her honour during her summer progresses. However, by the beginning of the sixteenth century, Arthurian romances also started a new life in more popular forms of art, such as garland ballads, chapbooks, theatre performances for festive days such as May Day. The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were dark ages for the Arthurian legends, which survived only as place and characters' names in popular entertainments, and in a few minor texts.² However, by the end of the eighteenth century a new interest in the Middle Ages and its literary products began to flourish in Britain and, by the beginning of the following century, it had led to the rediscovery of Middle English romances, including those of the Matter of Britain.³ There were three editions of Thomas Malory's collection of tales between 1816 and 1817 and, if on the one hand the book began to become the subject of serious scholarly study, on the other there were also the first hints of a change of medium: abridgements and adaptations soon began to flourish and in the introductory remarks to his 1817 edition (see *Byrth*) Robert Southey suggested that it was indeed good reading material for boys and it could easily regain its popularity if it were modernised and published 'as a book for boys'.

In the second half of the century the first adaptations of the stories of king Arthur and his knights specifically aimed at boys began to appear. Two of these nineteenth-century retellings are worth mentioning: one by James T. Knowles, printed in London, which went through eight editions between 1862 and 1895, and one by Sidney Lanier, published in New York in 1880, which dominated the popular children's versions in America for half a century. The introductions to both works are quite literary and the readers are assumed to be well-educated and to know about Arthur's stories and their origins, as French and Old English sources are quoted in the original. Moreover, in his introductory remarks, Knowles highlights the splitting in two of the Arthurian readership mentioned above: scholars are supposed to study the Arthurian legends, boys are supposed to enjoy them:

The story of king Arthur will never die while there are English men to study and English boys to devour its tales of adventure and daring and magic and conquest. [...] If in our time it has disappeared from the popular literature and the boys' bookshelves, the cause is, probably, that, since the days of cheap books, it has never been modernised or adapted for general circulation. Concealed in antiquated spelling and quaint style, it has become a treat for scholars rather than for the general reader, who would find it too long, too monotonous, too obscure. Still

less is it fitted for boys, who would probably become the principal readers of the Arthur legends in a popular form. [...] If [the author] shall succeed in paving the way for such a popular revival of the Story as is its due, and which would place it in boys' libraries anywhere beside 'Robinson Crusoe' and 'The Arabian Nights', he will have obtained his reward. (*Story* i–ii)

Having briefly shown how the readership of the stories of Arthur and his knights evolved through the centuries, we can now move inside the boys' library mentioned by Knowles and review the choices and changes some twentieth-century authors have made in an effort to adapt the traditional Arthurian stories to a modern and young readership: given the number of adaptations, my discussion will not be a complete review but will highlight the main trends of the phenomenon.⁴ A definition of 'Young-Adult literature' (usually abbreviated YA) is here needed. The last few decades have seen the emergence of children's literature as a particular field of study, mainly branching out of cultural and gender studies and within the wider field of children's literature some scholars have started to focus on literature for teenagers: such interest has boomed in the last fifteen years as a consequence of the extreme popularity of series such as the Harry Potter books (1995–2007), Philip Pullman's *Golden Compass* and the other two books of the trilogy (1995–2000), and Stephanie Meyer's vampire stories (2005–2008) – just to mention the most famous.⁵ The particular appeal of these books to adults as well as teenagers, has also brought to the spreading of the trendy label 'crossover fiction', i.e., fiction primarily aimed at teenagers but attracting adult readers as well. This is exactly what the Arthurian retellings considered here are. Retellings are a huge chunk of children's and YA literature, and the most thorough study of the phenomenon is Stephens and McCallum's seminal study *Retelling Stories, Framing Culture* (1998). In twentieth-century English and American literature there were no less than eighty adaptations of the Arthurian legends (and that is without counting the books that were inspired by Arthurian material), some for adults, some for children, some for boys, and, only in the last two decades, for girls.⁶ In reviewing the most relevant and popular retellings, I will focus on the depiction of child and teenage heroes and heroines, as in most cases they are offered as models for the young readers to follow.

The first versions, from the beginning of the century to the early 1940s, are very indebted to Thomas Malory's compilation of prose romances, which is, as far as English is concerned, the form in which Arthurian stories reached modernity before the other medieval versions were discovered and reedited. The Victorian poet Alfred Tennyson was much indebted to Malory in his composition of the twelve narrative poems known

as *The Idylls of the King* (1856–1895) which made the stories of the Round Table extremely popular in Victorian England. Tennyson is the other constant reference in the first retellings of the stories as his poems were still very popular in the beginning of the twentieth century. The first retellings take a literary audience for granted and it is easy to see why: editions and abridgments of Malory were still circulating and Tennyson's poetry was very popular. The first retelling of the century is Howard Pyle's *The Story of King Arthur and His Knights* (1903), which, however, is not particularly aimed at young readers and does not give any account of Arthur's teenage years, as does the second famous retelling: T. H. White's tetralogy *The Once and Future King* (1958), which was made famous by Walt Disney's animated film adaptation of the first book, *The Sword in the Stone* (1963).⁷ What we find throughout the tetralogy is a strong indebtedness to Malory and the following canonical Arthurian literature and these sources are repeatedly mentioned so that the fictional barrier is often broken by the narrator. After mentioning Queen Elaine (Galahad's mother), for example, the narrator observes: 'it was a popular name in those days and several women in the *Morte D'Arthur* had it, particularly as some of its manuscript sources have got mixed up' (White 321); and when introducing Lancelot for the first time he states: 'Tennyson and the Pre-Raphaelites would have found it difficult to recognize this rather sullen and unsatisfactory child, with the ugly face, who did not disclose to anybody that he was living on dreams and prayers' (White 316). As these quotations clearly show, what we have here is a very intruding omniscient narrator who tries to explain most details of medieval life and the Arthurian story to his readers; passages such as the following are common occurrences:

It was Christmas night, the eve of the Boxing Day Meet. You must remember that this was the old Merry England of Gramarye, when the rosy barons ate with fingers, and had peacock served before them with all their tail feathers streaming, or boar's heads with the tusks stuck in again – when there was no unemployment because there were too few people to be employed – when the forest rang with knights walloping each other on the helm, and the unicorns in the wintry moonlight stamped with their silver feet and snorted their noble breaths of blue upon the frozen air. Such marvels were great and comfortable ones. But in the Old England there was a greater marvel still. The weather behaved itself. (White 134–135)

In White's work, the adventure story is particularly enjoyable for young readers in the first and second book, when Arthur and his cousin Gawain respectively, are still young and adventurous knights-to-be: White was the first to imagine Arthur's childhood and upbringing in his foster parents' house and he also devoted the first pages of his second book to the child-

hood of Gawain and his brothers. As the story progresses and the protagonists grow old and tragic, the age of the implied readerships also leaps forward, but in the first two books we find several passages specifically aimed at young readers and reproducing, *mutatis mutandis*, situations they would find familiar:

The children had erected an amateur tent over their heads, out of the plaids, and under this they were lying close together, telling a story. They could hear their mother stoking the fire in the room below, which made them whisper for fear that she could hear. [...] Gawain was telling a story because he was the eldest. They lay together, like thin, strange, secret frogs. (White 209–210)

A second group of retellings during the post-war period focused on the historicity of Arthur and his tales and used the pseudo-historical material found in Nennius and Gildas: authors such as Henry Treece and George Finkel debunk the numinous and supernatural elements in search of realism and everydayness because they want their adaptations to fulfil the exemplary function of historical fiction, the pattern being that of the emergence of civilisation out of barbarism. One of them, Treece's *The Eagles Have Flown*, is particularly gritty in his description of fighting and death, but the author tries to attract his young readers by introducing two boys (Festus and Wulf) to register emotional responses to the cruelties of the dark ages. The historical and realistic model was popular soon after the war but it did not last long. Other authors (for example Matthews and Stewart, and Rosemary Sutcliff) in search of exemplary models for their young readers tried to offer exemplarity and a sense of unity by going back to the literary material of Malory but setting the stories in Saxon Britain and resorting to Celtic lore: the idea was to recover culturally authentic stories to transmit a version of unity and spirituality to inspire the contemporary decadent world. The main characteristic of all these retellings, up to the early 1980s, is the effort to transmit the cultural heritage and this is why new stories are seldom grafted to the original. The exemplarity of the story and the political ideology linked to nationalism are still the most evident features and it must be observed that female characters play a very small part. However, in Sutcliff's novels a new attention to the psychology of the characters starts to emerge, as is clear from the following passage, which describes the first encounter between Arthur and Guinevere:

For in the high-walled garden of the castle there, he saw Guenever, King Leodegrance's daughter, for the first time. [...] The princess's hair was black with a shimmer of copper where the sun caught it, and her eyes, when she looked up from the flowers in her lap, were grey-green as willow leaves and full of cool shadows. And Arthur saw all this; but she was scarcely more than a child, and

though he was but eighteen himself, he was feeling very old, old and weary with his hard-won victories and deaths of men. And though they gave each other one long grave look before her father swept him on his way, he thought no more of that first encounter after he rode south again, than that he had seen a girl making a flower-chain in the king's garden. Yet something of him was changed from that moment. Something in him that had been asleep before, began to stir and to ache, longing for – he did not know what. (Sutcliffe 46–47)

The early 1980s saw the publication of Marion Zimmer Bradley's best-selling *The Mists of Avalon* (1983), lauded as one of the most original and emotional retellings of the Arthurian legend. Although the novel is not aimed at young readers, Bradley's work strongly influenced the story of modern retellings for two reasons: firstly it is a first-person narration; secondly, it retells the whole story from the point of view not only of a woman, but of the most troublesome woman – and the one on whom most mythical, legendary, literary scraps of tradition have deposited – of the Arthurian world, Morgaine, i.e., Morgan le Fay. Juvenile Arthuriads from the 1990s onwards mostly follow this new trend and tell the story from the point of view of one of the characters. Morpurgo's *Arthur, High King of Britain* (1994) is one example, but I would like to focus on two other texts. Nancy Springer's *I Am Morgan le Fay* (2001) and *I Am Mordred* (1998) are particularly interesting because they retell the story from the point of view of the two troublemakers of the Arthurian world in their teens: Arthur's bastard son, who will bring his dream of peace and order to an end, and Arthur's sister, the traditional dark force behind most of Arthur's and his knights' unlucky adventures. The Arthurian dream and tragedy are viewed through their adolescent eyes so that the main time of the narration is that of their youth (supposedly they are the same age as their readers), but there are frequent flash-forwards that allow the readers to glimpse at the story they know from tradition. The most interesting feature of these novels is the effort to portray – and justify – the personalities of the characters, which are laid bare for teenage readers to see and judge: the medieval is 'combined with the modern apprehension of the evil that arises from the dark side of the human psyche rather than from external, demonic promptings' (Stephens and McCallum 132). The other very relevant characteristic of Springer's retellings, and the place where the author's indebtedness to Bradley is more evident, is her focus on gender and the frequent allusion to Morgan le Fay's frustration and anger at playing a minor role in the family life and kingdom politics just because she is a woman. The first-person narrator and the choice of topics – relationship with his or her mother, father, siblings, and stirring of first love feelings – create an emotive response in the young readers and an identification with

the protagonists of the story. The cultural heritage is taken for granted and not particularly emphasised in an effort to retain the exciting features of the story without the burden of exemplary history. However, the two young protagonists are confined within the boundaries of their own tragic destiny, and the lofty style of their numinous premonitions often creates a distance from the modern reader:

I could not sleep that night for dreaming of king Arthur. [...] My father would look upon myself and see himself in my face. He would reach out to me. He would stand, wavering just a little, and step down from his throne and embrace me. My son, he would say. Prince Mordred. (Springer, *I Am Mordred* 68)

Arthur. My half brother, a fifteen-year-old stripling who would be king while Thomas lay dead. Why should this untried youth, this Arthur, my half brother, have a throne when I, who knew much and had suffered much, had nothing? I had not met Arthur since his name day, when he had lain a fat baby in my mother's arms, but sitting on a hard chair in my mother's chamber I still despised him every bit as much as I had then, with the fire dragon burning in my heart and vengeful thoughts blazing in my mind. Thinking of him, wishing him ill, I felt the milpreve go hot in its metal nest in the palm of my hand. (Springer, *I Am Morgan* 215–216)⁸

My last example is Kevin Crossley-Holland's prize-winning Arthur trilogy (2000–2003),⁹ which deals with the life of a young boy named Arthur de Caldicot living in the Welsh Middle Marches in 1199. A magical device called 'the Seeing Stone', after which the first book of the trilogy is titled, plays a large part in the plot of the story: it is given to Arthur de Caldicot early in the story by Merlin and through it the young protagonist can observe the life of the mythical King Arthur and his rise to power as King of Britain. Many of the characters in the protagonist's life look exactly like or very similar to characters in Arthur's life. The most notable resemblance is that between Arthur de Caldicot and young King Arthur himself, which leads him at first to believe that the Arthur in the stone is actually him in the near future. Such belief is strengthened when he finds out that, like the young King Arthur, the people he believes to be his parents are actually his foster parents. Later into the story, it becomes clear that King Arthur inhabits a parallel universe, with various events in both worlds reflecting one another and helping the young protagonist to understand some key passages of his growing into a knight, a landlord, a lover: '[W]hat happens in my life and what happens inside the stone are often connected like sounds and echoes, or like my left and right eye which overlap but can each see more than the other. What I see in the stone sometimes seems like a promise, sometimes like a warning' (Crossley-Holland, *At the Crossing* 219).

Crossley-Holland identifies a better strategy to appeal to young readers than his immediate predecessors as his narrative exploits most of the characteristics of the retellings highlighted above and mingles them in a masterly way. First of all, like Springer and Morpurgo, he uses first-person narration, but this time the thoughts of the thirteen-year-old Arthur are more convincingly those of a teenager: Arthur de Caldicot's fears and joys are cast in a remote yet familiar context, because though living in a twelfth-century manor, he is struggling with everyday chores, feelings and disputes of life within a community and people and incidents are seen from a truly young and inexperienced perspective.

I don't want to write about Abner and Ner and Ishbosheth and Joab and Asabhel, especially not in Latin. I want to write my own life here in the Marches, between England and Wales. My own thoughts, which keep changing shape like clouds. I am thirteen and I want to write my own fears and joys and sorrows. (Crossley-Holland, *The Seeing* 12)

Crossley-Holland's first person narrator is neither one of the well-known Arthurian characters nor a spectator like those we have seen in Treece's version of the story: by being both inside the story, as events from Arthur's life are mirrored in his, but not confined within its well-known boundaries, Arthur de Caldicot comes out as a real character the reader can identify with.

Secondly, the novel has a masterly woven plot with narrative times overlapping in more sophisticated ways than simple flash-forward: this makes the atmosphere far more mysterious and increases the suspense. Moreover, the didactic part with information and explanations about medieval life, especially the everyday life of rural manor houses and the harsh realities of war, is rendered exciting because it is nonchalantly woven into the plot through adventurous and domestic incidents. Literary sources and medieval poets are part of the story and not mentioned by a third-person narrator such as the one used by White; during his stay at a monastery, for example, Arthur meets Marie de France: '[L]ate this afternoon, Lady Marie de Meulan arrived here with three servants [...]. Brother Gerard told me that she writes story-poems which are recited in courts and castles all over England' (Crossley-Holland, *At the Crossing* 282–283); and after talking to her and going back to his cell to write about her stories he observes: 'I can see it plain now. With these words, their red and black blood, I'm telling a story about a lady who told me a story about telling a story inside this story of my own life' (Crossley-Holland, *At the Crossing* 293). Lastly, Crossley-Holland's retelling is bound to be equally interesting for boys and girls because we find very interesting characters of both

genders. Most young girls are just as active and relevant to the plot of the story as boys: Grace and Winnie, the two young noblewomen Arthur falls in love with, Gatty, the daughter of a farmer, Simona, the daughter of a Venetian shipbuilder. The doors Crossley-Holland opens on the life of twelfth-century teenagers is truly rich and, to quote the words of a review that appeared on *The Guardian*, ‘teenagers will identify with young Arthur, dreamer, poet and child on the brink of adulthood whose personal confusions and struggles to find out who he is and control his own destiny find him increasingly caught up with his namesake, King Arthur, the once and future king’ (Gardner).

As Stephens and McCallum have shown in their seminal study, in most cases modern adaptations of old stories tend to be conservative. However, there are cases when completely new meanings – for new generations of readers – can be produced from old stories. The retellings of the Arthurian stories of the last twenty years have shown that Arthur can be in girls’ libraries as well as boys’, and that cultural heritage can be transmitted in a very unexpected and emotionally convincing way.

NOTES

¹ For a list of famous twentieth-century writers who declared they were influenced by their experiences of the legends during childhood and youth see *Adapting* xiv–xvii.

² For the survival of Arthurian materials after the Middle Ages in general see Meriman; for the use of Arthurian material in the sixteenth century see Davis, Logan and Teskey, and Cooper; for the new life of Arthurian stories in popular ballads and chapbooks see Simons and *Guy*.

³ For a discussion of the circulation and edition of medieval romances between the end of the eighteenth and the end of the nineteenth century see Johnston, Matthews, and Santini.

⁴ For a longer and more detailed review see Lynch.

⁵ Books featuring teenage protagonists and implicitly addressed to a teenage readership are of course a much older phenomenon, dating back from the nineteenth century and there were many books specifically marketed for teenagers back in the 1970s and 1980s, but the emergence of the label ‘YA literature’ – with specialised scholars working on it and quite a few literary prizes devoted to it – is more recent.

⁶ A complete list of all editions and retellings of Arthurian medieval texts does not exist, but for editions and adaptations of Malory’s works see Gaines.

⁷ The four books appeared separately between 1938 and 1958 and some episodes were modified in the single edition published in 1958.

⁸ The ‘milpreve’ is Morgan’s magic stone, the symbol of her power.

⁹ The book was awarded the Guardian Children’s Fiction Award, the Tír na n-Og prize, and the Nestlé Smarties Book Prize bronze medal. It was also shortlisted for the Whitbread Awards.

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Where Private is Public. Reading Practices in Socialist Hungary

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The essay concerns itself with the publishing systems of Kádár-regime Socialist Hungary, and argues that the editorial systems which were the substitutes for a censorship office enabled the system to work because they allowed the pre-reading of the publishable materials on several levels.

Keywords: sociology of reading / literature and censorship / socialism / publishing industry / Hungary

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One of my most vivid childhood memories is going back to school after the Christmas break, sitting on the cafeteria bench with my two best friends and discussing what we got for Christmas. The lists varied of course, but not when it came to books. Surprisingly – or at least so I thought then – our parents almost always chose the same books as Christmas presents. So, when we were 12 all three of us learnt an effective method about how to stop chewing our fingernails from *The Handbook of Teenagers with Two Left Hands*, at 13 we planned to fall in love with a mysterious double agent *Abigél* style, and by the time we left primary school, from Brunella Gasperini's *Them and Us* series we all knew that we had to pat-pat our family cars good night.

One might say that there is nothing unusual in this experience – we can safely bet that at least one in five teenagers this Christmas will get a Neil Gaiman or Stephanie Meyer novel, and that they almost all grew up on Harry Potter, that is we all have our generational book favourites. I would argue, however, that there is a significant difference there. My parents' Christmas choices were not fuelled by a media generated teenage frenzy, but were the results of economic and political decisions, not on their part, but on the part of our government. The Hungarian regime of my childhood, the so-called Kádár-regime, the period in Hungarian history between 1956 and 1989, named after Party secretary János Kádár, who governed Hungary for more than thirty years after the 1956 revolu-

tion, did not accomplish most of its goals: it did not lead the people to the promised lands of Communism and did not wipe out decadent bourgeois living habits, but it succeeded on an unprecedented scale in controlling all levels of book printing, selling and marketing. In this paper I wish to take a closer look at how, as a result of this all-powerful control, reading in Hungary in the previous era, even when seemingly private, was always part of a public discourse, and I also wish to point out the paradoxical results of this system.

The forty years of Hungarian state Socialism, starting with the manipulated elections of 1947, and lasting until 1989, the peaceful change of the regime, should not be viewed as a homogeneous period. My main focus here is the years after the 1956 revolution, but to be able to understand the main objectives of Kádárist cultural politics, we should first digress a little and take a fleeting look at the pre-revolution years as well, especially because, albeit different in its day-to-day handling of literature and culture, this previous decade of Stalinist dictatorship had laid down many of the foundations of the upcoming Kádár-regime.

Before the Second World War there had been almost 200 private publishing houses in Hungary, supported by an established and well-running system of bookshops, second hand bookshops, libraries and stationeries with book selling licences. The war left most of them devastated, and the liberating or rather conquering Soviet troops also added insult to injury. The interim government of 1945 issued a decree¹ (Kókay 139) which ordered all fascist and anti-Soviet literature to be confiscated and destroyed. Several reports have survived about the Soviet troops' repeated abuse of power – numerous private and school libraries were destroyed by the advancing army, while various more precious volumes from monastery libraries disappeared and ended up in the Soviet Union. It took at least two years for the book industry to recover, and by 1947 it finally reached its pre-war flourish. However, the years of peace did not last long. By 1948 the new Socialist government nationalised all the big publishing houses and by 1949 it placed all bookshops and libraries under the direct control of the Ministry of Interior Affairs, which basically meant placing them under direct political control. On 7 April 1952, the Ministry withdrew the licences of 87 bookshops in Budapest, and 95 bookshops in the countryside, in addition to abolishing the bookselling permit of stationers, thus placing the whole of the book industry under state control.

The wish to have all-encompassing rule over the book industry showed the regime's attitude towards literature and reading, something the Kádár-regime also inherited from its predecessor. Literature was seen as an important forum for propaganda, and the foremost field for the new

government's 'cultural war', the aim of which was to erase the elements of bourgeois cultural heritage from the reading public's mind. While both regimes handled literature and reading habits as vital and subordinate to politics, where they differed was *the means* they wished to control it by. In harmony with Soviet doctrines the Stalinist regime of 1950s' aimed at applying direct political control over all aspects of reading. The political entered the private sphere and central control was to be exercised also over *what* people read and *when*. I would like to demonstrate this through two examples, the first illustrating the attempt to eradicate hazardous material, the second: an effort to promote new reading habits.

In 1950 the Ministry of Culture issued two consecutive official book withdrawal lists for village and work-trade libraries. The first one contained 1,848, the second 6,552 titles, all of which were to be removed from these libraries. Allegedly as a result of an administrative mistake, however, the withdrawal lists were made compulsory for all libraries, bookshops and second hand bookshops as well (Murányi 256). On 9 November 1950, trucks lined up before bookshops and the officials of the Ministry confiscated and then pulped more than 120,000 volumes. Titles on the list included Cervantes's *Don Quijote* because its pre-war edition featured a preface by the then émigré author Sándor Márai, or *Winnie-the-Pooh*, which was published in the 1930s by a bourgeois publisher. Radio Free Europe leaked the withdrawal campaign, causing an international scandal. Answering censorship allegations and protests, among others from the French Academy of Sciences, officials tried to distance themselves from the events. József Révai, Minister of Education, issued a proclamation in which he accused certain reactionary forces in the Ministry of having placed Cervantes, Swift and Hungarian folktales on the withdrawal lists, while the 3rd Congress of the Hungarian Party of Workers in a 'top secret' decree ordered booksellers to place several volumes from the list on display in their shop windows. Nonetheless, as literary scholar Zsófia Gombár remarks,

the publication of further withdrawal lists between 1952 and 1953 seems to flatly contradict the above-mentioned intentions. The three further volumes contained approximately 14,000 titles. [...] According to the preface, the books destined to be discarded were aesthetically worthless, obsolete and of inferior quality, underserving of being read by the Hungarian working people, who were now on the road to cultural development[.] (272)

While discarding these 'outdated books' – as the title of the volumes called them – in an act of arrogant superiority, the Party also wished to directly dictate what people should read. The so-called *Szabad Nép* half-hour

was introduced in factories and firms, where all workers had to gather and discuss the editorial of the Party daily, *Szabad Nép*. The Writers' League was reorganised, most bourgeois writers silenced and a clique of rather second-rate Socialist Realist authors openly supported. The regime severed almost all contact with the Western world, banning all new Western-European literature from the Hungarian market. This Stalinist model of cultural control, however, never really brought about the results it was hoping to get. What clearly showed the unsustainability of this direct control was that the writers were among the first social groups to rebel against the Stalinist state after 1953, their criticism preparing the way for the revolution of 1956.

The year 1956 marks the end of an era and a turning point in the more than forty years of Hungarian state Socialism, since after the failure of the revolution, two conclusions had to be drawn: first, that the regime could not return to the Stalinist doctrines of the 1950s, if it did not want to risk another uprising, and second, that with the Soviet forces 'temporarily' located in Hungary, no democratic changes were possible in the foreseeable future. Thus people were resigned to live *within* the boundaries of the Socialist state, and János Kádár, the new party leader whose rule was ensured by the Russian tanks stationed in Hungary, made it easier for them. Drawing a lesson from the downfall of his Stalinist predecessors, Kádár pointedly depoliticised the everyday life of Hungarians, and created, with the help of billions of European loans, a false sense of well-being in the country, which, after the starvation and hardships of the 1950s, was warmly embraced by most. In exchange for these new, higher standards of living – which were still ridiculously low compared to Western examples – the Kádár-regime expected its citizens to accept an artificially reduced and strongly controlled public sphere where explicit criticism was forbidden and potential political comments could only be sounded in centrally prescribed forms. If Hungarians wanted to live in relatively decent conditions they had to become politically inert – this was the Faustian deal the Kádár-regime offered its people.

Political criticism eluded all public forums. No one talked openly about the imprisonments and executions after 1956, the permanent presence of the Red Army in Hungary, or the growing economic problems of the 1970s. The stability of public life relied on the double nature of pseudo-important issues pronounced openly and of problems only vaguely hinted at. This was the guarantee that held up the status quo and made the regime able to sustain itself.

This duplicity saturated all levels of cultural politics, and book publishing was no exception. What it first and foremost meant was that uniquely

among most Central-European countries, Hungary did not have a central censorship office. Instead of direct censorship the Kádár-regime developed a multi-level system, in which it expected the members on all levels to self-censor themselves. Through this regulatory system of many layers, and anticipating the self-censoring cooperation of its citizen, the authorities very rarely had to resort to the means of direct control. What I would like to argue here is that this arrangement basically relied on pre-reading the books in several degrees, ensuring that by the time they reached the reading public, they had been weeded of most dangerous material. Let us now turn to the details and see how the system worked on an everyday basis.

Contrary to the binary system of banned or supported of the Stalinist regime, the new regulations relied on the tri-partite value scale of banned, tolerated and supported, the middle being a non-prescribed, only vaguely defined category of works of art, which, although not openly Socialist were at least partly acceptable for the regime. This group changed incessantly, what was banned one day, could easily be published the next. No official guidelines were put down for what passed as tolerable, since the regime wished to keep everyone on their toes, guessing. There were certain general taboos that had to be avoided (anything that would offend the Soviet Union or any friendly Socialist countries, any criticism of the Party leadership, obscenity or vulgarity, or open description of sexual acts), but everything beyond these was up to the temporary judgment of the officials. Of course, to make a system like this work, one needed trustworthy employees on all levels.²

That is why in the autumn of 1957 the Party Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party issued a ruling about book publishing, establishing that besides administrative and material decisions all other resolutions had to be political. The decree prescribed a guidance based on principles, suggesting that a new generation of editors should be trained, 'who will consistently censure anti-Marxist tendencies'. The aim was to create an arrangement which was building from the bottom upwards. These editors in the publishing houses (all of which were state owned, and had a specific profile: Európa was publishing world literature, Magvető and Szépirodalmi Hungarian literature, Móra children's literature, etc.) had to read all manuscripts and issue a reader's report, which in turn was submitted to the weekly publishers' meetings. The reports contained a brief summary, as well as an assessment of the author's importance and known political stance. Furthermore, they also needed to include a final judgment on the reader-editor's part, whether the manuscript was worthy for publishing, or not. Reading these reports it becomes obvious that this

is where self-censoring political criticism entered the reviewing process. Remarks usually include phrases like: neither ideologically, not artistically acceptable, or: does carry a literary value, but its political stance is unacceptable – clearly signifying that aesthetic and political evaluation went hand in hand. However, the question of editors is more complicated than to simply categorize them as censors.

Many of them were silenced intellectuals, several among them writers in their own right, whose work as an editor was seen as a proof of their loyalty. While it is very often the case that they dutifully obliged to the role they were given, once established as trustworthy consultants, they were frequently trying to push the boundaries offered by the regime, especially in the case of works of art they deemed important and of merit. We can therefore claim that had it not been for these pre-readers, several Hungarian and European classics would have never have reached the reading public. To justify this with an example, let me quote here the fate of János Pilinszky's volume of poetry *On the Third Day* which was the first book to appear by the poet, who was silenced after 1947 for political reasons. Belonging to the group of bourgeois writers who came to be associated with the banned literary journal, *Újbold*, Pilinszky had been trying to get published, but was denied the opportunity several times, since the authorities deemed his poetry too pessimistic for a Socialist poet. Pilinszky, who is now firmly established in the Hungarian canon as one of the greatest poetic innovators of the post-war era, had several supporters among the editors, who, realising his talent, tried to tilt the authorities' favours towards him. It was them who suggested that he should change the original title of the book (*No Man's Land*) to something less pessimistic, as well as them who wrote flamingly enthusiastic reviews about how the volume would help Hungary's reputation as anti-fascist country, since it contained several poems detailing the horrors of the concentration camps. What finally turned the authorities around was the compromise, also suggested by the editors, which compelled the poet to write a few new works, which were optimistic in tone. The editors then arranged the poems in chronological order, with dates underneath each poem, and convinced the authorities that the upbeat tone of the last poems would suggest that the new Kádár-regime was a better place to live. Thus the volume was published in 1959, albeit in only 1,000 copies and with a special remark from the authorities requesting an ugly cover to dissuade people from buying it. This strategy, however, failed to produce the required effect – all copies were sold in a day, some going at 1,000 forints, instead of the store price of 10. (Domokos 85–96) The fate of Pilinszky's volume is just one from the many examples where the intervening of the editors was instrumental

in ensuring the publication of a book which later became fundamental in Hungarian literary history.

In politically dubious cases a second or 'inner' cycle of reading was ordered, until the Publishers' Directorate finally authorised the publishers' annual list of publications. The Directorate was generally known as the censor's office, but thanks to the reader system it rarely had to exercise its power to stop publications, especially since it also controlled the economic aspects of book publishing, which it could also use as a means of regulation. Since all echelons of editing were under state control, book publishing was absolutely detached from the workings of the market. The Directorate could thus enact certain rules through which it could artificially modify the movements of the market – book price (which were kept unnaturally low to encourage reading) were determined on the basis of a sheet-price system which prescribed that Soviet and Socialist literature was to be sold at the lowest prices, followed by friendly non-Socialist works, while pulp fiction, detective writing as other such 'easy readings' – which clashed ideologically with Socialist ideals were to be sold at almost double the price; furthermore, these works had an additional 'kitsch tax' imposed on them.

Finally, let us turn to the reading public, and to how the control on all levels affected their reading experiences. The rules first of all affected the structure of the books. Since all literature was considered to be political material, even tolerated works were not tolerated in their own right. In the form of prefaces or footnotes readers usually received 'guidelines' as to how to understand the contents of these books. With these precautions, however, several works from world literature got republished, since Socialism wanted to reclaim the classics as their own. Therefore, under the Kádár-regime, and especially in the 1970s the range of available classics was wider than ever before. Furthermore, since many of the silenced writers sought and found work in the publishing industry or as translators, the literary merit of these new editions was also unusually high. Adding to this was the fact that book prices were kept unnaturally low, while literary matters were centrally kept as part of the public discourse. These tendencies, coupled with the seeming liberalism of the carrot and stick methods of the regime all result in that there is a faint sense of nostalgia in Hungarian discussions about reading in the Kádár-regime.

Looking at the behind-the-scene mechanisms of the publishing industry, I wished to argue in this essay that the nostalgia is unjustified. The controlled censorship of the Kádár-regime's editorial systems reveals that there was no freedom when it came to reading. Therefore a special effort is needed now to research the editors' reports as well as the secret police's

archives, in order to obtain a clearer picture of how the private became public in Socialist Hungarian reading practices.

NOTES

¹ Number: 530/1945 ME.

² The description of the editorial system is based on: Bart 2000.

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Reading a Drama Text: An Empirical Case Study

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Reception aesthetics and reader-response theory are the two strands of literary criticism to have underlined the reader's active role in the reading process, forming various reader constructs. Moreover, the new field of research has prompted theatre theorists to take a keener interest in the processes of reading and understanding drama texts, as well as to pay attention – especially in the postmodern multimedia civilisation – to the audience's perceptions. The paper presents the results of an empirical case study examining the readers' contact with a selected drama text at several levels of response. Their responses are compared to the perceptions of spectators on attending the performance, and to the spectators' understanding of the production's reading.

Keywords: drama / reception theory / readers / theatre audience / empirical research

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Introduction

Reading ranks among the most complex human activities, as has been demonstrated by a number of studies brought to prominence in the 1970s, a decade which restored to the reader an active role in the generation of meaning. According to these studies, the reader can be described in three ways at least. The first, theoretical, approach presents the relation between reader and text through various models of hypothetical readers, including Wolfgang Iser's implicit reader, Umberto Eco's model reader, Stanley Fish's informed reader, Jonathan Culler's ideal reader, and others.¹ This research places the reader in a larger socio-cultural context, delving into the mechanisms of production and reception governing the reader's generation of meaning. In addition, the findings of psychoanalysis are employed to tackle the reader as an individual, from the perspective of both his/her work and his/her enjoyment of reading. A second possibility is to describe the reader from a historical perspective, involving an analysis of readers and their reading habits and tastes through history or a certain historical period. What is taken into account is social structure, cultural and psychological habits,

political and economic influences etc., as attested by archive sources. The third, experimental, approach is based on theoretical findings applied to the analysis of a particular audience. The material is usually gathered by means of questionnaires, interviews or measurements of the readers' biological functions, and analysed by the empirical method. It is this third approach, then, which foregrounds the concrete, everyday, lay reader, who may be described with a quantitative precision. Since the scholarly conclusions thus arrived at are not abstract, referring as they do to a specific audience (rather than to a reader who is the model of a sophisticated scholar or an ahistorical construct), Peter Dixon has introduced the term 'statistical reader' (Dixon et al. 10). An example of such empirical research, which examines the readers' contact with the text at several reader-response levels, will be presented in this paper, focusing on reading a drama text.

Reception aesthetics and reader-response theory are the two strands of literary criticism to have underlined the reader's active role in the reading process, forming various reader constructs. Their analyses have tended to focus on prose and lyric poetry, while the reader/spectator of a play has rarely been the object of their research.² For all their shortcomings and proneness to criticism, the two disciplines have exercised great influence, both through their new field of research (the third methodological paradigm) and through introducing new concepts, which have proved viable in drama theory as well and have been included in the reflections of emphatically theatre-oriented theorists. Concepts like concretisation, blank filling, horizon of expectations, interpretive communities, model reader, everyday fantasies, enjoyment occur in the works by theatre semioticians as well (including Patrice Pavis, Anne Ubersfeld, Marco de Marinis, Marvin Carlson and others).³

The major difference stems from the very object of research, since the literary communication of drama differs from that of prose or lyric texts: due to its double existential status, drama envisages several types of addressee. The reader thus reads the playwright's text, while the spectator watches a performance; the latter does include the text, but the text as read through the eyes of the director and actors, actualised according to the audience's expectations and habits. It follows that the drama recipient is a triple one, composed of readers, the director and actors (that is, the whole troupe), and spectators.⁴ Both the reader's and spectator's receptive capabilities are taken into account by the playwright in the very process of writing. According to Patrice Pavis ('Teze' 119), drama texts are simply traces of a certain performance practice; while reading, we should envision how their creation was shaped by the limitations of acting and staging. In the post-modern multimedia civilisation, on the other hand, the element of theatre

communication scrutinised by sundry disciplines has been the spectator.

Consequently, my aim was to illumine through research the contact between reader and drama text, as well as between spectator and performance, and to present the similarities and differences between text and performance as reflected at various levels of reader-/spectator-response. The essence of the research is thus not directed at analysing the text and performance, that is, at comparing and evaluating the two, since they are independent media with features of their own. The focus of interest is the recipients' response and the differences between their mental representations based on reading the drama text (that is, the differences between the readers' textual worlds), or on attending the performance and reading the performance text – the production of entire stage systems, which include the drama text: reading the performance text entails grasp of the production's reading of the text. This reading precedes the production itself, making the latter a stage realisation of the reading (Pavis, 'Od besedila' 152). The present study, then, addresses the question of how a text or performance acquires meaning for the recipient – which linguistic signs of the text are decoded by readers and which signs of the performance, linguistic and non-linguistic, are perceived by spectators. Moreover, the empirical study has tested the applicability of certain theoretical concepts.

Problem and Method

In keeping with the research aims, a questionnaire was prepared including quantitative and qualitative questions (YES/NO answers, a five-degree marking scale, arrangement of elements, multiple choice items, independent wording of answers to such questions as Explain, Describe, Enumerate, Evaluate, Substantiate). The questions referred to sundry levels of reader-/spectator-response, that is:

- perception of various drama elements as revealed through the text and/or performance: the protagonists (character, appearance, facial expression and gestures, costume, interpersonal relationships), discourse (perception of the linguistic peculiarities of drama discourse, idiolect and sociolect, manner of speaking, repetition ...), time and place (time and place of action, settings, *mise-en-scène*, materials and colours, objects and props, sounds, noises, music);
- understanding and interpretation (level of difficulty, less intelligible scenes, the basic idea, message of the play ...);
- evaluation and appreciation (general assessment of text/performance enjoyability, favourite scene, dramaturgically weak scene ...);

– comparison between text and performance (the extent to which the performance follows the text, differences between the mental representations formed through individual reading and through the given stage realisation ...).

The research consisted of two parts: the first group of interviewees read the text first and saw it performed later, while the second group saw the performance first, reading the text afterwards. This enabled a comparative study of the degree to which a preliminary reading had affected the perception of performance elements, and vice versa. The research involved 60 first-year students of the Slovene language with completed secondary education, aged 19–20 years, mostly female, and hailing from various parts of Slovenia, which ensured a homogenous sample in terms of age, education and interests. The material was *Ekshibicionist* (The Exhibitionist), a play by Dušan Jovanović featuring themes and ideas which were expected to interest the selected sample of interviewees;⁵ moreover, the play was available for both reading and watching at the time of the research. Directed by Jovanović, it was premiered in the 2001–2002 season at the theatre SNG Mala Drama Ljubljana and published the same year in the accompanying theatre booklet, with the book edition following in 2004.

Research Results⁶

Perception of the constituent parts of the play

To judge by the answers involving the protagonist, the linguistic features and the spatio-temporal dimensions of the play, the interviewees had mostly focused on the protagonist (characterisation, personality traits, facial expression and gestures, costume, complexity ...), as these answers were in the majority. The answers of those who had read the text in advance gave the impression of being more exhaustive, precise and reflective in the above categories, but the questions were not posed decisively enough to warrant an authoritative conclusion. They do, however, suggest that these interviewees were less preoccupied with the plot itself, which enabled them to focus more attentively on the performance elements listed above, with the exception of linguistic peculiarities, objects, props, other scenic elements, such as materials and colours, or music; the perception of these elements was generally weaker, and not even the familiarity with the plot ensured by a preliminary reading channelled attention to these performance segments. The most striking features were the vulgar expressions used by Jimmy, a prison guard, and the frequent use of technical terms by Eva, a psychiatrist.

Most other linguistic traits were noticed by fewer than half of the readers and a third of the spectators; the results for the other characters were lower still, while one fourth of the interviewees either left a blank or replied that they did not know the answer, could not remember it, or had not paid attention to the linguistic features. Therefore the readers/spectators had trouble identifying the functions of these elements and their correlation within the performance: such questions were repeatedly answered with *I don't know*, or not at all. As for channelling the spectator's attention, our case confirms both basic premises cited in Marco de Marinis' study 'Dramaturgija gledalca' (Dramaturgy of the Spectator) (189–204), one of the rare papers addressing an issue so fundamental as the question of how the varied and scattered elements are pieced together by the spectator into a harmonious and meaningful performance – that is, the issue of perception. Since theatre art has the greatest claim on the recipient's sensory abilities, the spectator is forced to discard, or even actively annul, some of the numerous stimuli to which he is exposed simultaneously and successively. As noted by de Marinis, the spectator thus employs, automatically and unconsciously, two models – attentive focusing and selective attention – which prompts de Marinis' fundamental question: What draws the spectator's attention to one thing and away from another? We may begin with an example of attentive focusing and selective attention: the item of Daniel Parker's costume cited by more than half of the spectators was his flip-flops, which had attracted attention by Daniel putting them on and taking them off, carrying them around, etc. At the same time, the flip-flops diverted attention from other elements of his costume, such as his cap, mentioned by a single spectator although worn by Daniel throughout the performance. De Marinis' second idea is that the performance should begin by surprising the spectator, arousing his interest and wonder, if it is to secure his attention. This was borne out at several levels. To give two instances: the list of objects remembered by the spectators was headed by the unusual, surprising and therefore fascinating ones (e.g., the object with pins, the urinal, the lamppost, the animal); the same applies to the scenes which proved memorable, i.e., the scenes commanding attention by being shocking, funny, emotionally charged or enacted with exceptional persuasion.

Understanding and interpretation

By their own assessment, the interviewees had no difficulties understanding either the overall text or performance. Among the scenes experienced as less intelligible, more than half of the readers listed the end of

Scene 23, where two parallel conversations have to be followed simultaneously, while a few were perplexed by Dorothy's long monologues. As for the performance, the major snag turned out to be the fast pace of the action, which caused the spectators to overlook certain information, for example about Fred's childhood and Eva's past – that is, the parts with an epic dimension. After the readers had seen the performance and the spectators had read the text, both claimed to understand the overall play better and to find the unclear particulars clearer, which certainly suggests that the holistic understanding of a play requires both reading the text and seeing its performance – if possible, that is.

Neither readers nor spectators had trouble identifying the message of the play. True, some of the answers were very simple or even simplistic, but it was not the 'correctness' of the interpretation that was at issue here. Most readers approached the text from the perspective of one of the characters and his or her problems, thus perceiving the message in terms of the recognition that everyone has problems, regardless of their social status or education: the only difference is that some shut their eyes to trouble rather than admit it to themselves, presenting a perfect front while inwardly ravaged by conflicts. The spectators supplemented this perspective with the wider meaning of the play, its fundamental message, which points to the loneliness and alienation of the modern world. Although the text is semantically open, admitting various emphases of meaning, the answers of the selected sample mostly remained within the two semantic fields described above.

Evaluation and appreciation

Both text and performance rated very highly on the enjoyability scale (on a five-degree scale, the performance was awarded a grade of 4.67 and the play 3.97). The spectators praised particularly the cast, the comic portrayal of serious problems and the topical theme, that is, the reality of contemporary society. To these, the readers added the brilliant dialogues, composition and – in some cases – the use of varied language registers. The passages most often labelled as tedious were Dorothy's monologues at the beginning of the play, as well as some of the conversations between Dorothy and Eva. Furthermore, a theatre performance admits more types of comedy than one, and the comic quality accordingly ranked more highly with the spectators than with the readers (the performance was awarded 3.83, the text 2.87). While surprised by the frequent oaths and vulgarisms, the interviewees found them meaningful and effective in the context of the text/performance.

Comparison between the readers' textual worlds and the theatre realisation

The comparison between the drama text and its performance is based here on the similarities and differences between the text and its staging as perceived and interpreted by the recipients. What is assessed, then, is primarily the correspondence between the text and the verbal component of the performance, as well as between the textual worlds formed by the readers and by the authors of the performance. Except for a handful of line omissions or sentence additions, the performance strictly followed the text without interfering. However, the representations formed by the interviewees on the basis of reading often differed from the theatre realisation. The readers experienced the play as problem-oriented and serious, while the performance took a lighter and more comical perspective. Moreover, the settings were envisaged differently: the readers had imagined a prison with bars, while the scene on the stage was in fact minimalistic, with the rapidly shifting settings usually marked only with a representative object. The interviewees' answers suggested that the text paid more attention to Dorothy, whereas the performance focused on the eponymous protagonist. In fact, it was at the cast-of-characters level that the discrepancies between the readers' and artists' mental representations occurred most frequently. We compared in detail the envisioned character traits of Fred Miller and the costume of Daniel Parker.

It transpired that the image of the eponymous protagonist evoked by the text was surprisingly close to the one evoked by the production: among the semantic pairs provided on a five-degree scale, the following characteristics were marked by both groups: Fred is an intelligent, inhibited, lonely, emotionally complex, serious, vulnerable, professionally successful young man of neat appearance, non-violent and moderately attractive. Differences crop up, however, when it comes to his appearance. The spectators, associating the character's physical appearance with the actor's, saw Fred as short and fair-haired, while the readers saw him as tall and dark. This uniformity of reader-response is surprising, for the text gives no clue as to the characters' appearance. The second example involves a character's costume, concentrating on the character of psychiatrist Daniel Parker, the only one who wears an unchanging set of clothes throughout the performance. On the basis of reading, Daniel was envisaged as wearing elegant, expensive, refined clothing (examples of answers include: an impeccable suit of the latest fashion, formal trousers and a white shirt, an elegant dark-coloured suit with a loud tie, a stern, formal appearance, an expensive brand name suit, brand name shoes such as Hugo Boss, black

lacquered shoes, fashionable glasses, etc.). Again, the uniformity of the reply is striking: it was given by as many as 87 per cent of the interviewees, while only 13 per cent imagined Daniel wearing everyday clothes, that is, jeans or other casual trousers and a shirt or sweater, compounded by mismatched colours, tennis shoes and glasses. A different costume, however, was envisioned by the authors of the performance: the items most frequently listed by the spectators were flip-flops, an orange shirt and red trousers, while the most frequent adjectives to describe his clothing were motley, hippie, bright, mismatched, loose, casual, informal, simple, baggy.

Since the text gives no specific clue as to the characters' appearance, the strikingly uniform answers in these two cases presumably stem from a general socio-cultural knowledge, which generates in advance our mental representations of an exhibitionist-cum-stockbroker and a psychiatrist (the image of an urbane New York psychiatrist, for example, may result from the many similar characters featured in American TV series). At the same time, these answers suggest that the psyche of the characters in the text is clearly delineated, while their appearance remains a blank (Iser) or gap (Ubersfeld). In our case, the latter is filled in differently by the readers and by the theatre artists (with the spectators in their wake), but both options are legitimate and in no contradiction with the text. The recipients' emotional attitudes to a socially stigmatised character (the interviewees marked on a five-degree scale the values ranging from *odious* to *likeable*, from *my feelings about this character are negative* to *my feelings about this character are positive*) yielded high values, revealing a positive attitude on the recipient's part, the spectator's even more so than the reader's. Thus we may venture to repeat after Jauss, Iser, Brecht and others that an encounter with literature, that is, with an alien experience, helps to broaden the reader's/spectator's cognitive horizon, thus affecting both the reader/spectator and his views of the world.

Conclusion

Comparing our own mental representations, formed through reading a text, with the production's reading and the resulting realisation by the theatre artists is a major source of enjoyment. Reading the play after viewing the performance precludes this dimension because, to judge by the interviewees' answers, the reading conforms to what has been seen on the stage. Therefore it seems advisable to read a play before seeing it performed. Still, depending on the aim of the reading, the reverse sequence may make sense in some cases as well.

In our case the students reported finding the questionnaire useful: as a means of forming their impressions into shape, it enabled them to participate more easily and confidently in the classroom discussion; it alerted them to some of the previously neglected elements and to their functions; it helped them observe the autonomous yet interwoven relationship between text and performance, and introduced them to the mechanisms guiding the audience's reception as well as attribution of meaning. The greatest advantage of the questionnaire is its focus on one particular text/performance, which complements the drama theory lectures, that is, the classroom introduction to theoretical concepts: these tend to be sweeping, abstract summaries of various theories and methodological approaches, limited to isolated dramatic elements and illustrated with straightforward examples from diverse texts. This type of questionnaire and the accompanying discussion refines the strategies specific to reading drama texts, as well as introduces the theoretical apparatus of drama analysis. Such questionnaires encourage the verbalisation of individual aesthetic experience: the individual mentally re-enacts and considers the performance or text, making notes which will assist him in comparing his own conclusions and observations with others'. To be sure, drama analysis with the aid of a questionnaire is no novelty: various questionnaires have been developed by Anne Ubersfeld, André Helbo and Patrice Pavis, but those are general rather than focused on a single play, and more attentive to analysing the performance itself.⁷

Our case study provides no final answers, but it does allow an insight into the reading and understanding processes of a larger group of readers, revealing what the readers notice on spontaneously reading a text or attending a theatre performance for the first time; what they experience during the reading; from what perspective they approach the text; how they integrate the text information into their existing mental schemes, etc. The results show the diversity of the textual worlds based on reading the same text, proving that the reading and understanding of literary texts depends not only on the reader's level of education and literary knowledge, but also on his or her subjective qualities. The interviewees' answers thus reveal their individual, subjective value standards, which result in heterogeneous answers to open-ended questions. Even when several interviewees give a similar answer, notice the same element, or describe the same scene, their interpretations may differ because they spring from a subjective experience, from piecing the theatre signs together into an idiosyncratic whole.

That is why such case studies at the same time test the viability of the methodology itself. Studying various kinds of audience with the aid of questionnaires ranks among the most widespread forms, but its key prob-

lem is ensuring the right proportion between qualitative and quantitative question types. The qualitative types, to be answered in the interviewees' own words, elicit heterogeneous answers, which are difficult to categorise and evaluate yet clearly indicate a spontaneous response. The answers to closed-type questions, on the other hand, are suggested in advance and thus easier to count and process statistically, but they entail the loss of certain aspects of information. Individual researchers seek a balance between the two possibilities, depending on the subject and goals of their research. Moreover, a crucial problem is the research methodology itself: it is difficult to explore reading without interfering, through our research methods and instruments, with the readers' spontaneous reading processes – without suggesting by our questions how the text should be understood, or drawing attention to a certain element, or guiding them in some other way. All these drawbacks result in the scarcity of such studies in Slovenia.

NOTES

¹ The list of such hypothetical readers is comprehensive, with each researcher having designed his or her own model; see Andrew Bennett's introduction to the essay collection *Readers & Reading* (Bennett 3).

² o be sure, drama texts have not been completely excluded: N. Holland, for example, examines how Brecht transforms fantasies into socially accepted meanings, W. Iser attempts to explain the types of laughter and its function in Beckett, and H. R. Jauss explains the Iphigenia myth as used by Racine and Goethe; the reader's/spectator's viewpoint is also the perspective of Jauss' *Über den Grund des Vergnügens am komischen Helden*, which seeks to explain the tragic and the comic as relative, depending on the audience and their subjective perceptions.

³ The applicability of the above terms to concrete analyses has been proved by a number of studies. Marvin Carlson's chapter on 'Theatre Audiences and the Reading of Performance', published in his book *Theatre Semiotics: Signs of Life* (1990), starts from the theoretical premises of W. Iser, H. R. Jauss, U. Eco, M. de Marinis and S. Fish, applying them to four examples. Having assessed the influence of genre on understanding various drama types throughout history, Carlson moves on to the role and development of the theatre booklet, particularly to the way in which the information provided guides the audience's reception. On the example of a specific play, *Waiting for Godot*, Carlson addresses the impact of advertising, demonstrating how an ad may either anticipate or miss the model spectator. The last example illustrates the influence exerted by newspaper reviews, in this case by the review of a *Cherry Orchard* performance. Based on these examples, Carlson observes that theatre studies mainly deal with the audience's reactions and feelings after the performance, while paying too little attention to the factors shaping their horizons of expectations, that is, to what the audience itself brings to the theatre: expectations, assumptions, strategies and anything else that will creatively cooperate with the stimuli of the performance.

⁴ Similar conclusions are drawn in Una Chaudhuri's article 'The Spectator in Drama/Drama in the Spectator' (1984), which makes an additional temporal distinction between the three recipients, first setting them in the time of the play's creation, and then distinguishing further between all subsequent readings.

⁵ *Ekshibicionist* is the story of Fred Miller, a successful stockbroker who shows his emotions in a socially unacceptable way. This is the third time that exhibitionism has landed him in jail, where he meets Dorothy Jackson, a social worker who sees him not as a mere sexual pervert but as a vulnerable and mistrustful young man, and they gradually develop an emotional tie. Her opposite is the psychiatrist Eva Stempowsky: she considers Miller a patient and a scum, who can only be healed through shock therapy. In a total of three acts and twenty-four scenes, the play, set in New York, presents five characters (the above three plus Jimmy, a prison guard, and another psychiatrist, Daniel) and their intimate destinies, with each of them going through a new episode although, generally speaking, nothing happens. It is thus a story unfolding mainly at the level of language, a story based on familiarity with contemporary discourse and the modern rituals of communication, which serve Jovanović as a foil for the modern man's central problems: loneliness, fragility, vulnerability, relation between professional success and private hollowness, search of a socially acceptable self-image, etc.

⁶ The research results, accompanied by the full scholarly apparatus (statistical data processing, tables, charts, appendixes including the interviewees' responses), have been published in my monograph *Najdeni pomeni: empirične raziskave recepcije literarnega dela* (Found Meanings: Empirical Research into the Reception of a Work of Literature), while the present article only summarises the key findings.

⁷ The best known must be the Pavis questionnaire, practised by its author with his students and directed at a semiological analysis of the performance. Most often cited, the Pavis questionnaire has been included in a number of books; its Slovene translation is found in Pavis' *Gledališki slovar* (Dictionary of the Theatre) (1997) or the *Maska* (Mask) magazine (1988–1989).

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