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WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE AND SLOVENE DRAMATISTS (III): (1930 – 2010)

Mirko Jurak

Abstract

In the final part of my study I shall present Shakespeare's influence on Slovene dramatists from the 1930s to the present time. In this period an almost unbelievable growth in Slovene cultural activities took place. This is also reflected in a very large number of new Slovene playwrights who have written in this time, in their international orientation in dramatic art as well as in the constantly growing number of permanent (and *ad hoc*) theatre companies. Communication regarding new theatrical tendencies not only in Europe but also in the United States of America and – during the past decades – also in its global dimension has become much easiers than in previous periods and this resulted also in the application of new dramatic visions in playwriting and in theatrical productions in Slovenia. These new movements include new techniques in writing, such as symbolism, futurism, expressionism, constructivism, surrealism, political drama, the theatre of the absurd and postmodernism, which have become apparent both in new literary techniques and in new forms of production.

In this period Classical drama still preserved an important role in major Slovene theatres. Plays written by Greek playwrights, as well as plays written by Shakespeare, Molière, Schiller etc. still constitute a very relevant part of the repertoire in Slovene theatres. Besides, Slovene theatres have also performed many plays written by modern playwrights, as for example by Oscar Wilde, L. N. Tolstoy, I. S. Turgenev, Henrik Ibsen, August Strindberg, G. Hauptmann, G. Büchner, G. B. Shaw, A. P. Chekhov, John Galsworthy, Luigi Pirandello, Eugene O'Neill and many other contemporary playwrights. In the period after the Second World War the influence of American dramatists has been constantly growing. This variety also resulted in the fact that direct influence of Shakespeare and his plays upon Slovene dramatists became less frequent and less noticeable than it had been before. Plays written by Slovene dramatists are rarely inspired by whole scenes or passages from Shakespeare's plays, although there are also some exceptions from this rule. It is rather surprising how quickly Slovene theatres produced works written by important foreign dramatists already in the period following the First World War not to mention how quickly plays written by the best European and American playwrights have appeared on Slovene stages during the past fifty years.

The connection between Shakespeare's plays and plays written by Slovene playwrights became more subtle, more sophisticated, they are often based on implied symbolic references, which have become a starting point for a new interpretation of the world, particularly if compared with the Renaissance humanistic values. The sheer number of plays written by Slovene dramatists in this period makes it difficult to ascertain that all influences from Shakespeare's plays have been noticed, although it is hoped that all major borrowings and allusion are included. Slovene dramatists and theatre directors have provided numerous adaptations of Shakespeare's plays, which sometimes present a new version of an old motif so that it may hardly be linked with Shakespeare. Slovene artists, playwrights and

also theatre directors, have »rewritten«, »reset« the original text and given it a new meaning and/or a new form, and in a combination of motifs and structure they have thus created a »new play«, even stand-up comedies in which the actor depends on a scenario based on Shakespeare's play(s) but every performance represents a new improvisation. Such productions are naturally closer to the *commedia dell'arte* type of play than to a play written by Shakespeare. I briefly mention such experimental productions in the introductory part of my study. The central part of my research deals with authors in whose works traces of Shakespeare's influence are clearly noticeable. These playwrights are: Matej Bor, Jože Javoršek, Ivan Mrak, Dominik Smole, Mirko Zupančič, Gregor Strniša, Veno Taufer, Dušan Jovanović, Vinko Möderndorfer and Evald Flisar.

Key words: W. Shakespeare, his influence on Slovene dramatists (1930–2010)

1.0. GENERAL INTRODUCTION

During the period after the Second World War theatre activities have become much more vivid than in the previous times. The number of professional theatres as well as professional actors has very much grown; likewise, the number of *ad hoc* theatre groups and experimental theatres has increased from one year to another. Plays written by foreign playwrights on themes taken from Shakespeare are produced in Slovenia almost immediately after they have been performed abroad. Among such authors are, for example, Nicolaj Aldo, Jess Borgeson (together with Adam Long and Daniel Singer), Ivo Brešan, Janusz Glowacki, Eugène Ionesco, Heiner Müller, Luigi Pirandello, Peter Ustinov (if I mention only the ones who are better known). This article does not, however, include any references to the work of these playwrights.

Since the early 1950s Slovene professional theatres produce annually three to five plays written by Shakespeare. This means that during the past sixty year our audiences have been able to see several hundred plays written by Shakespeare in Slovene theatres and at various theatre festivals. These productions are listed in the *Repertoar slovenskih gledališč, 1867-1967* (A Repertoire of Slovenian Theatres, 1867-1967) edited by Dušan Moravec and published by the Slovenski gledališki muzej in Ljubljana, 1967. Subsequent bibliographical compilations were published at first every five years and since 1993 they have been published annually. The sheer number of Slovene production of Shakespeare's plays in Slovene theatres is really astonishing, especially if we take into account the fact that there are only about two million people living in Slovenia. Besides, after the publication of the complete list of Shakespeare's plays in Slovene (edited by Matej Bor) in 1974 those interested in the theatre and in Shakespeare in particular, have had ample opportunity to become acquainted with his plays also in printed versions, not to speak about production of many foreign film versions and TV productions which have been shown in cinemas and on the television.*

* Once again I wish to express my gratitude for their help to the librarians of the Slavic Department and to the libriarians of the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures, Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana; to the staff of the Slovene Theatre Museum, Ljubljana, and to my colleague Dr. Jason Blake.

1.1. EXPERIMENTAL PRODUCTIONS OF SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS IN SLOVENE THEATRES

William Shakespeare inspired several Slovene theatre directors and actors to prepare a variety of adaptations for Slovene theatres on the basis of themes and plots taken from Shakespeare's plays (I include the name of the director / or actor who prepared the adaptation, the name of the theatre where the production took place and the date of the first night). This topic has not yet been dealt with specifically, yet it also shows Shakespeare's influence on our playwrights, on our translators and also on our theatre directors. Unless stated otherwise the premiére of these productions first took place in Ljubljana.

Already in the 1950s Andrej Hieng prepared and directed **the adaptation** of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* for the Slovene Popular Theatre Celje (the premiére was on Jan. 17, 1957). It was subtitled as »a tragic ballad«. One of the Slovene critics (Tit Vidmar) ironically reacted to this **(shortened) version** of *Macbeth* by giving his theatre review of this performance such a shortened title, »Mcbth in Clj«. Hieng preserved the main plot of the play but he shortened poetic speeches in the play so that it was reduced to »a criminal story«. Since the 1990s adaptations of Shakespeare's plays have been very popular. So, for example Tomaž Štrucl took passages from several Shakespeare's texts and directed them under the title *Hamlet n'roses* (The Experimental Theatre Glej, May 22, 1993). **Passages from three plays** by Shakespeare (*King Richard II, King Henry V, King Richard III*) **were combined into a new play** under the title *Glas* (The Voice). This production was directed by Matjaž Berger (the dramaturge was Tomaž Toporišič), and it was based on the Slovene translation of these plays by Matej Bor; some passages were also given in Latin (tr. Matjaž Babič) and in the Japanese (tr. Moritoki Hagira). The play was first performed by the Slovene Youth Theatre (SMG) on March 3, 1999. An adapted, shortened, version of *Antony and Cleopatra* was prepared by Tomaž Štrucl, who also directed the play. This adaptation was produced by the Experimental Theatre Glej on December 12, 1994. Several Shakespeare's plays were adapted by the actor (and translator) Andrej Rozman Roza; for example, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was performed at the Slovensko mladinsko gledališče (Slovene Youth Theatre - SMG) in Ljubljana on June 2, 1999. Rozman also newly translated (and adapted) *Hamlet* for the production at the same theatre. The play was directed by Dario Varga and the premiére was held on February 18, 2001. A special feature of this production was the use of »humanoids« (the idea was provided by Tomaž Lavrič and it was carried out by Bojan Mavsar). *The Tragedy of King Richard the Second*, which was translated by Matej Bor, was adapted by Dejan Sarič and Primož Vitez for the E.P.I. Centre and theatre Glej (first production took place at »Glej« on 30 Dec. 2005. *Hamlet* (*in 60 minutes*) was prepared and directed by Nana Milčinski at the »Anton Podbevšek Theatre« at Novo Mesto (10 April 2008). As a co-production of three Slovene theatres (SNG Maribor, Slovene Theatre in Trst / Trieste – Italy, SMG Ljubljana) and cultural Centre »Cankarjev dom« in Ljubljana, Shakespeare's *The Tempest* was newly translated by Andrej Rozman – Roza and directed by Vito Taufer. The première took place in Maribor (on 19 Sept. 2008) and the play was shown at cultural centres which co-operated in preparing this performance.

A combination of Shakespeare's texts has also been used several times for **theatre recitals**. So, for example, Mirko Zupančič used Shakespeare's text and passages from

Slovene plays in his production entitled *Iz take smo snovi kot kranjski komedijanti.* The title is a combination of a line from Prospero's monologue in *The Tempest* (»We are such stuff / As dreams are made on..« 4.1.156-157) and it is combined with the title of Bratko Kreft's play *Kranjski komedijanti* (The Comedians from Carniola). The play was directed by Mile Korun. and the premiére was on Sept. 29, 1977 at the Mestno gledališče (Ljubljana City Theatre). On 19 March 1992 the Slovene Permanent Theatre Company (SSG) in Trst / Trieste, in Italy, produced a recital of poetry written by Shakespeare and translated into Slovene by Oton Župančič, Matej Bor and Janez Menart. The recital was performed under the title *Ves ta svet je oder* (»All the world's a stage«, *As You Like It* 2.7.139). Texts were selected by Jože Javoršek

Barbara Kapelj and other actors of the semi-professional Šentjakobsko gledališče (St. Jacob's Theatre) in Ljubljana prepared **the show** based on motifs from Shakespeare's plays titled *Iz take smo snovi kot sanje* (»We are such stuff / As dreams are made on«, *The Tempest*, 4.1.156-157). The production was directed by Barbara Kapelj, the dramaturge was Amelia Kraigher (the premiére took place on 27 Oct. 2005).

Shakespeare's plays were also prepared for **the puppet theatre** (Lutkovno gledališče) in Ljubljana. Director Miran Herzog produced the play *Kresna noč* (The Midsummer Night, on 23 Nov. 1991). – The director Vito Taufer used Oton Župančič's translation of *Hamlet* for his adaptation of this drama as a puppet play (LG Ljubljana, 19 March 2006).

Romeo and Juliet was shown as **the ballet version** by The Cankarjev dom Stage Production (the choreographer was Matjaž Farič, and the premiére took place at Murska Sobota on 22 Sept. 1995). – The choreography of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* for a female dancer (Mojca Turk) was prepared by Aleksander Jurc (see Jurak, *Acta Neophilologica* 38 (2005): 30).

Tadej Toš first performed *Hamlet* as **a stand up comedy** at the Mestno gledališče in Ptuj (The Ptuj City Theatre) in 2007[1] and he has shown his production in several other cities in Slovenia.

One of the plays in which several characters are modelled on Shakespeare's contemporaries appear in Iztok Lovrić's play *Za prgišče Šekspirja* (A Handful of »Šekspir«)[2], which was produced by the Slovensko mladinsko gledališče (Slovene Youth Theatre) in Ljubljana (the première took place on April 5, 2009). It is **a parody in the form of a musical** of some contemporary leading European and American politicians, combined with characters of actors and dramatists of the Elizabethan era. The play is divided into thirteen scenes and the plot consists of three levels. Several contemporary celebrities find themselves after a plane crash in a city of ghosts, which is located somewhere in the United States. Its »inhabitants« are named after famous Elizabethan authors and actors and they come into contact with these V.I.P's. Among these V.I.P's are Nicolas Sarkozy and his wife Carla Bruni, Vladimir Putin, Hilary Clinton, Dalai Lama, and the journalist Christiane Amanpour. Lovrić builds his characters on moral weaknesses of these

[1] I was unable to obtain either the text of this production or of the following production mentioned here. In a telephone conversation with Tadej Toš (18 May 2007) regarding his performance he told me that he adapted the text according to the theatre audience where he performed so that his performance was more in *commedia dell'arte* genre than as a traditional, Aristotelian type of a play.

[2] Iztok Lovrić is a musician, an actor and a playwright.

characters, e.g. Sarkozy is vain, arrogant and lascivious; Putin behaves like an American macho, he acts as a gunman; Hilary Clinton is represented as a naive person, constantly worrying after her husband's fidelity; Christianne Amanpour is shown as a somewhat hysterical journalist, whereas Carla Bruni, a composer of ballads and a singer, and Dalai Lama, as a new spiritual leader, are presented with a certain amount of sympathy.

The second level in the play consists of the citizens of the ghost city. They are: »the sheriff Richard Burbage«, modelled after the younger son of James Burbage, the first builder of 'Playhouses' in Elizabethan England and one of the twenty-six principal actors in Shakespeare's plays; »the undertaker Thomas Pope«, a comedian in Shakespeare's plays; »Joanna Sinclair, the owner of brothels« (in the Elizabethan times when female roles were played by young men, the real name of the actor was John Sincler); »a rich widow Augustina Phillips« and »the bank manager John Hemmings« are Augustine Phillips and John Heminge, who were also among the 'Principall Actor's' in Shakespeare's plays. After their revelries in the ghost city the V.I.P.'s realize that they will not be saved and that they have themselves become dead souls in a cemetery. They join the citizens of this ghost city and they all accept their »common values«, which are greed for money and greed for power. Their »morality« is based on lies, on murder and on stealing.

The author includes in this short play (»dramolet«) also four episodes in which he introduces as »characters in four narratives« a number of Elizabethan players and playwrights. Among them are also John Burbage, Christopher Marlowe, George Peele, Ben Jonson, John Fletcher, as well as some other Elizabethan actors and playwrights. Lovrić puts them in different roles in themes known from Shakespeare's plays (*Romeo and Juliet*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Othello* and *Hamlet*). The events in these short episodes take place in America and the characters are shown from a comic or even grotesque perspective although they are sketched on some of the main features of characters of Shakespeare's contemporaries. The dramatist obviously had too much staff for his parody so that his characters remind us of the *grande guignol.* The play ends with a unanimous agreement on life delivered by the V.I.P.'s and the citizens of the ghost city telling the audience that they believe in their »values«. The Policeman sings a song about the individual endeavours of each of them to become »a stardust« but they finish their lives as »ashes«. Lovrić includes in their song the well-known image from *The Tempest* (»We are such staff / As dreams are made of.« 4.1.156-57). In spite of some shortcomings this musical comedy is a relatively successful attempt in which the author compares the values of the past and the present and entertains young audiences with songs and with humorous treatment of serious questions.

Tomi Janežič and Male Kline prepared **the unconventional performance** for the audience of 24 viewers and of their meeting with 12 performers. The production *Romeo in publika* (Romeo and the Audience) was first staged in February 2009 by the experimental theatre group »En-knap« and directed by Tomi Janežič.

These brief details about various experimental performances based on Shakespeare's texts undoubtedly show that besides many original productions of Shakespeare's plays in Slovene there is also a rich production of experimental performances and adapations, also including various theatrical forms. Even though some of these productions may not have a very high artistic value they are definitely a sign that Slovene writers and actors are still interested in new, original interpretations of Shakespeare's art.

2.0. SHAKESPEARE'S INFLUENCE ON SLOVENE DRAMATISTS

In the period after the First World War Ivan Cankar's plays were frequently performed in Slovene theatres and they often influenced Slovene dramatists either directly or by different allusions or references. Shakespeare's influence is quite noticeable in several of his plays as I have shown in my previous study (*Acta Neophilologica* 43. 1-2, 2010: 16-30). Therefore it is not surprising that Shakespeare's influence upon Slovene playwrights was also indirectly introduced through Cankar's plays. In a recently published study *Tokovi slovenske dramatike I, II* (Trends in Slovene Drama. Ljubljana: Slovenski gledališki muzej, 2010) Malina Schmidt Snoj offers a broad and penetrating insight into the thematic, artistic and dramaturgic development of all major trends in Slovene drama from its beginnings to the present time. In her analyses she also mentions Shakespeare's influence on five Slovene dramatists whose works have appeared during the decades discussed in my study. I shall include in my research also some younger Slovene playwrights in whose works we can find references or allusions to Shakespeare's plays. These parallels have not been discussed yet, so that they will hopefully supplement the picture regarding Shakespeare's influence on Slovene dramatists. A number of parallels between Shakespeare's plays and the works of these playwrights are rather indirect. Some of them represent a complete disagreement with Shakespeare's views on the world, with his humanistic ideas, and with ethical principles underlying the meaning of his plays. It seems that in some cases Slovene dramatists have simply tried to capture Shakespeare's mastery in creating complex human characters, using the structure of his plays as their model, they tried to bring the rhythmical pattern of Shakespeare's blank verse into the rhythm of Slovene, they also included rich poetic imagery into Slovene plays. Although Shakespeare's influence on Slovene dramatists diminished in the second half of the twentieth century his work still represents a source of inspiration for Slovene dramatists.

In a number of Slovene plays written in this period allusions, quotations and other references to Shakespeare's plays cannot be easily specified either because other dramatic elements are much more influential or simply because direct echoes from Shakespeare's plays would be hard to prove. Let me mention only some major Slovene authors in whose plays we may find some echoes or paralles related to Shakespeare's plays (including themes, images, symbols, the structure of the play, character portrayal, dramatic irony, the subtext etc.). One of the older representatives among Slovene playwrights, whose works are based on motifs from Slovene history and daily life, Ivan Potrč (1913-1983), clearly admits his debt to Shakespeare in an interview with Branko Hofman. He says that he was inspired by Shakespeare in various was, e.g. »How to write a sentence, to create the atmosphere and to form the thought … to create the expectation, the intense resonance, the tension, the fatality, dramatic conflicts, poetic maze, how to form a parallel between man's feeling and completeness of the total composition«. (Hofman 1978: 379) Such general observations regarding the artistic value of dramatic works could undoubtedly be noticed also in the works of some of the best Slovene dramatists, although we may not find in them obvious parallels, influences or allusions to Shakespeare's plays. Still, an indirect influence of Shakespeare can no doubt be noticed also in plays written by some of the best Slovene playwright, as for example, plays written by Mira Mihelič, Igor Torkar, Primož Kozak, Andrej Hieng, Janez Žmavc, Smiljan Rozman, Marjan Rožanc,

Peter Božič, Dane Zajc, Rudi Šeligo, Dimitrij Rupel, Drago Jančar, Ivo Svetina, Tone Partljič, Milan Jesih. However, my research has been limited to playwrights in whose works Shakespeare's influence can be definitely proved.

2.1. MATEJ BOR

It was undoubtedly a most fortunate coincidence that after 1949, when Oton Župančič died, his work as the most important translator of Shakespeare's plays into Slovene in the first half of the twentieth century, was continued by another poet, Matej Bor (1913-1993; Bor is the pen-name of Vladimir Pavšič). Although Slovene literary historians and critics certainly esteem Župančič as a poet much higher than Bor, the latter had in addition to his poetic talent also a fine ear for everyday spoken Slovene language. This makes his translations easier to speak on the stage than poetic language which was used by Župančič. On the other hand as far as the aesthetic beauty of their translations Župančič is still respected as the best Slovene translator of Shakespeare's plays although his translations are also less accurate as regards the meaning of the text than Bor's. In his study of Shakespeare and the Slovenes Dušan Moravec also stresses that Bor's poetic translations of Shakespeare's plays into Slovene are »simple, clear, they almost sound as if they had been written in our native language«, although »nobody could assert that any new translations either in our time or in the future would reach a higher value than poetic translations prepared by Oton Župančič in his time« (Moravec 1974: 480). Among Slovene theatre critics Lojze Filipič wrote one of the first detailed studies on Bor's plays, which is published as an Introduction to Bor's selected works (1973: 5-25). He analytically reviewed Bor's plays and his characters and also pointed out to Bor's allusions to contemporary Slovene society.

Malina Schmidt Snoj mentions in her study that Bor's tendency to create powerful (Renaissance) negative characters is apparent in all of his plays, from his earliest plays to his last play. She persuasively proves this statement by referring to several Bor's protagonists.[3] Further on she concludes that in Bor’s dramaturgic concept, in his use of metrics, in the inclusion of the intrigue and love affairs, in his comic features, the imitation of Shakespeare's drama is present. Among other examples she mentions also the importance of fate in man's life, a large number of coincidences, happy ending (the three couples in Bor's poetic play *Bele vode* (White Water, w. in 1948/49 are happily reunited). These elements remind the critic of Shakespeare's comedy *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (416). In Bor's portrayal of a »cool«, nihilistic intellectual thinker Van Velden (in *Ples smeti,* The Dance of Dust; w. in 1968, perf. in 1970 by the Municipal Theatre in Ljubljana), she sees a similarity with Shakespeare's treatment of his historical, morally questionable characters as well as the formal, linguistic influence of Shakespeare's comedies. She agrees with Moravec's conclusion about Bor's use of rhythmic prose and poetry, as well

[3] Among such characters in Bor’s plays Malina Schmidt Snoj mentions Matoh in Bor’s play *Težka ura* (The Crucial Hour), Ferlež in *Raztrganci* ('The Tattered' Soldiers), Mokorel in *Zvezde so večne* (The Stars Are Eternal), Koritnik in *Kolesa teme* (The Wheels of Darkness), the families of Lorenzi and Visconti in *Ples smeti* (Tha Dance of Dust), Ahriman in *Šola noči* (The School of the Night) and Ignac in *Popoldanski počitek* (The Siesta) .

as about Bor's dualistic, Manichean distinction between good and evil, which is linked in Bor's plays with the belief that good finally wins in life. The plot of Bor's play *The Dance od Death* is situated in the 15th century Siena (in Italy). Bor characterizes his characters as people who cheat and betray their compatriots, who are always suspicious, who spy on their fellow-men, but who are also intelligent and witty.

In his essay on *The Dance of Dust* (which bears the subtitle »divertimento in blank verse according to old models«) Bor explains why he used blank verse in his plays. He says that although Shakespeare's blank verse is very close to prose »it has something which is not inherent in common speech, the hypnotic power of rhythm«, which »brings thoughts and images into deeper layers of man's consciousness«. (Bor 1977: 413) In this essay Bor also admits the similarity between Shakespeare's and his own works. He is enthusiatic about Shakespeare's practice which does not limit the spirit of his plays regardless of the fact if they take place in Denmark, in ancient Greece or in the Renaissance Italy, in the Arden forest or in Illyria. Shakespeare knew how to encompass in his plays all the human race, showing in them its beauties and its weaknesses, presenting in them general human values and their timelessness. The achievements of his own age represented to Shakespeare only the building blocks for his own art, and on man's dreams, which are an essential part of human life, giving him the reason for his existence even by showing human weaknesses. Bor believes that modern drama lacks the richness of human spirit, the potentiality of human passion and the magic of dramatic art. His meditation on Shakespeare's art and his high evaluation of it prove that Slovene critics have justly interpreted not only his translations of Shakespeare's plays but also the form and the »message« of Bor's plays. He tried to present in his characters both positive and negative traits and therefore his play *Vrnitev Blažonovih* (The Return of the Blažon Family, w. in 1946), which was first produced by the Slovene National Theatre in Ljubljana in 1948, only had five performances (compared with other plays whch had in the same year – like Shakespeare's *Hamlet* – on average 27 performances). In this play Bor presents two brothers, Andrej and Miha, who were both partisans and who have returned to their native village after the war. But neither of them is just a positive figure.[4] Such characterization according to which the members of the new political and social power are not only morally positive heroes was not approved of in the arts by the Communist Party which could not »tolerate« such characters to be shown on the stage (although Bor was an active member of the »partisan« resistance movement in Slovenia during the Second World War). The authorities also could not accept Bor's occasional irony and humour, with which he wished to make the presentation of life more realistic, more complex. Janko Kos believes that Bor wished to link his plays indirectly through Shakespeare to poetic drama and in a smaller degree to the examples offered by T. S. Eliot (Kos 2001: 363). In spite of the above mentioned »incident« with Slovene political authorities Bor continued for some time to write plays in which some basic features of Shakespeare's plays are also visible, as e.g. strong individual characterization in *Kolesa teme,* the use of poetry (blank verse) in *Vesolje v akvariju*, comic scenes in *Zvezde so večne*, etc. These features were also mentioned in Jože Koruza's study of Slovene drama (Koruza 1967: 41-42). But, as we have seen, even more noticeable references to Shake-

[4] See also Schmidt Snoj 2010: 213-215.

speare's plays may be found in Bor's »historical comedy« *Ples smeti* (The Dance of Dust, 1968). In this play Bor introduced in addition to corrupt leaders (noblemen) also witty servants, and the dialogues spoken by Cipelj and Capelj (Bor 1975: 233) remind us of the grave-diggers rhetoric in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* or of servants, in his comedies; but they behave also like Didi and Gogo in Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* (Bor makes fun of the importance of Lorenzo's boots). Eaves-dropping is a popular »sport« in this society (Cipelj, Capelj, Gato, Van Velden etc.) and it reminds us of eaves-dropping by Polonius in *Hamlet* (and of course also about the practice of the secret police in Slovenia between 1945 and 1990). Before his final defeat Lorenzo is left powerless to his enemies (»Kje je moj meč? Dajte mi meč!«; Where is my sword? Give me my sword, *ibid.* 284) Lorenzo is just as vulnarable as Richard III without the horse. There are also several implied references to contemporary Slovene society, particularly of the leading class, who wishes to gain more power and to rule the mob, Van Valden remarks that if they wished to bring peace and order to the people they should first of all find peace in themselves (*ibid.* 289). Visconti's remark about Lorenzo's business with fish brings to our mind Hamlet's teasing of Polonius and Hamlet's witticisms. Visconti's monologues are filled with paradoxical statements just like Hamlet's monologues. Visconti's plan of Lorenzo's murder echoes similar scenes in *Julius Caesar*, but in Bor's play it turns out to be a parody of a similar scene in Shakespeare's play. Although several of Bor's characters appear in scenes in which the meaning is diametrically opposed to scenes in Shakespeare's plays, the original source of Bor's inpiration is still noticeable. In his view history repeats itsef, but this time it is repeated in an ironic version declared by the playwright (it is almost like Prufrock's conclusion, »For I have known them all already, known them all–» in Eliot's poem »The Love Song of J. Alred Prufrock«). Jože Koruza mentions in his survey of Slovene drama (1967: 41, 42) that Shakespeare's influence upon Matej Bor can be seen in some other works, e.g. in *Vesolje v akvariju* (The Universe in Aquarium, 1955) and *Zvezde so večne* (The Stars Are Eternal, 1959), mainly in Bor's mixing of serious and comic scenes and in his use of blank verse. If we examine all of Bor's plays with regard to Shakespeare's influence the most noticeable case can undoubtedly be seen in his play *Ples smeti.*

Since the late 1940s Bor's main preoccupation was to prepare a complete translation of Shakespeare's plays into Slovene. When Bor addressed members of the PEN Conference at lake Bled in 1964 he stressed that although Slovene is not spoken by many people it is just as noble and firm as a pine-tree, which is used for a string instrument, and which gives special resonance and beauty to works written by Dante, Shakespeare, Molière, Pushkin (Bor 3, 1975: 296). Bor's main contribution to Slovene drama and theatre is undoubtedly in his effort to bring Shakespeare's dramatic legacy into artically valuable translation of Shakespeare's plays. He thereby successfully completed the process which had been so well begun by Oton Župančič.

2.2. JOŽE JAVORŠEK

Among Slovene dramatists who were open to new ideas regarding dreamatic art and the art of the theatre Jože Javoršek (1920-1990) seemed quite a promising figure

although the expectations of some Slovene critics and the public regarding his future achievements seem to have been somewhat exaggerated. He introduced in his plays some novelties which turned them away from traditional psychological drama to the world of phantasy, to surrealistic visions of life. His ideas were based primarily on theoretical treatises as presented by Antonin Artaud, Adolphe Appia and Edward Gordon Craig (Schmidt Snoj 2010: 442). The language of his plays is often symbolic, his characters express the repressed, unconscious side of their minds in which the nature of man's cruelty becomes particularly apparent in critical situations emerging both in closed, family circles as well as in society at large. A minor reference to Shakespeare's characters can be seen in his »morality-play« *Konec hrepenenja* (The End of Yearning, perf. in 1971, publ. in 1975) in which he compares the ideal love of Shakespeare's heroes (Caesar, Cleopatra, Mark Antony, Romeo) with the sensual love of his hero Čedo, without high ideals and platonic vision.

In his trilogy *Manevri* (Maneuvers, perf. in 1960, print. in 1967), *Dežela gasilcev* (The Country of Firemen, publ. 1975, perf. in 1985) and *Improvizacija v Ljubljani* (The Improvisation in Ljubljana, print. in 1977) Javoršek makes a number of references to Shakespeare's *Hamlet* as well as to some contemporary plays (e.g. to Brendan Behan's play *The Hostage*). These plays deal with the contemporary art and political problems in Slovenia. Javoršek treats these problems as »the reflection of real life«: in *Dežela gasilcev* as a »clownish play in two parts with an epilogue« and in the improvisions as a dialogue among actors; it is more like a critical piece than like a play and in form it is quite similar to an essay.

Slovene critics generally assert that Javoršek was inspired to write I*mprovizacija v Ljubljani* by similar improvisations written by playwrights like Molière, Jacques Copeau, Jean Giroudoux, but as mentioned similarities may also be found between his play and John Dryden's *Essay of Dramatic Poesie*, written in 1668. Javoršek's play is also more like a critical dialogue than like a play with live characters that are profoundly psychological in their portrayals. In this »treatise« several actors belonging to the Slovene National Theatre in Ljubljana discuss the critical situation in their theatre and generally the state of modern European theatre (e.g. they evaluate plays written by Samuel Beckett, Peter Handke and a number of other modern and classical authors). Some of them defend the traditional, the classical type of a play, and others modern improvisations, which do not stick to classical rules of the theatre. The only prop on the stage is a coffin and throughout the play actors try to guess who/what might be hidden in it. One of the actors suggests that in the modern theatre the actors' hearts have turned into stones and therefore we cannot expect an actor to »cry for Hecuba« (cf. the speech of the First Player in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (2.2.503-524). In Javoršek's play there are also several other references, for instance to *Hamlet* (e.g. allusions to Ophelia's distracted mind and her offering of flowers to people at the court signifying the nature of their character, »There's rosemary, that's for remembrance«, etc. 4.5.174-185). In the dream-like scene in *Improvizacija v Ljubljani* the Clown mocks the Players that »they have such long ears«, just like Bottom in Shakespeare's comedy *A Midnight's Dream* (3.1.), who has long ears and an ass's head. Shakespeare's humorous attacks are generalized whereas Javoršek's »actors« use the real names of actors performing in the Slovene National Theatre in Ljubljana, and therefore the dramatist's attack is much more personal. The secret about the

contents of the coffin is also finally dicovered: it holds the actors' dreams, their feelings. Javoršek suggests that plays are now produced in such a way that players do not show their emotions, they are not like real people, their feelings have turned into stones, and this is why they cannot cry for Hecuba. In the final two scenes two groups of actors both wish »to possess« Hecuba, and the playwright's message is that they should all »love Hecuba«) even if they cannot love each other, for this is the only way which will help the theatre to remain alive, to show »a mirror to life«, although in real life each of them is his own personality and not »Hamlet, Gertrude or Romeo«. (1.1.14) A young actress praises Shakespeare's fine use of language, whereas, on the other hand, she often finds language which is used in modern plays »vulgar, blasphemic«, which modern Slovene playwrights »turn into manure«. (1.3; 29) The actors hope that the »play« which they have produced will give them a cleansing effect, catharsis. They return into »the real world« but at the same time accept the theatrical world as a part of the universal world and they quote Jacques in Shakespeare's comedy *As You Like It,* namely, that »All the world 's a stage, / And all the men and women morely players« (2.7.139-140), and that thus life is both humourous and melancholy.

In his »tomfoolery in two acts with an epilogue« *The Country of Firemen*, which is printed in this trilogy under the title *Krute igre* (Cruel Plays), Javoršek uses poetry and prose and he wishes the play to be a kind of modern morality play. The world of light and the world of darkness are intertwined and therefore – as the Choir points out – »The time is out of joint« (Javoršek 1977: 122; cf. *Hamlet*, 1.5.188). But Javoršek's firemen do not wish to see the reality, they just like »to eat and to drink«. They play with fire, which can bring people either redemption or destruction, it can bring them freedom, but it can also turn them primarily to sensuality. This point is enacted in *The Country of Firemen* as a play within a play, it is a parody of the well known scene in Ivan Cankar's play *Pohujšanje v dolini Šentflorjanski* (Scandal in the Valley of St. Florian) in which the central scene is a love scene between the artist, Peter, and his beloved, Jacinta, who is the symbol of beauty (see Jurak 2010: 22-24). The actors perform this scene as a dumb-show, but they play in a double game and make fun of Peter and Jacinta. One of the female characters, a fire-raiser dislikes the scene and refers to it as a »mousetrap scene« (*Hamlet* 3.2.236) and as in *Hamlet* also in Javoršek's »morality« the nature of different characters is subsequently revealed. But the fire brigade desides that the fire which could also bring light to people should be extinguished and the leader of the fire brigade commands: »Extinguish all the light! All the candles! All the lights!« (Javoršek 1975: 149). This means that unlike in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* the truth about the lives of characters shown in Javoršek's play would never be revealed. Such a negative view is also accepted by the ordinary people, represented by the Chorus, which laments that the world is speeding »into the night, into nothingness, that it is overcome by the darkness of the universe, so that a star can hardly be seen« (Javoršek 1975: 122). But after the »Winter season«, after the Deluge, the Choir remembers that a long time ago people stole fire, which brought to them the Spring season, the birth of the world, and the birth of Love (*ibid.* 163-170). With this poetic imagery Javoršek concludes the play with an optimistic ending in which he indicates that fire-raisers will be overcome by people who do not use fire as a means of destruction but as the instigation of light and love.

2.3. IVAN MRAK

Among Slovene artists of the twentieth century Ivan Mrak (1906-1986) holds a somewhat unique position: he saw himself as a kind of a prophet for younger artists, who did not wish to belong to any particular group, and who wished to be financially independent from middle-class or bourgeois supporters. In his adolescence he had a homesexual experience, he left school, ran away from home and attempted to commit suicide. At the age of nineteen he met Karla Bulovec, a painter, who was eleven years older than Ivan and who became his wife. His father, a publican, turned against his son although he allowed his son and Karla to live in his house. Their life was not easy because they depended on uncertain income from writing and painting. Mrak openly admitted his homosexual propensities at the time when homosexuality was still prohibited by law, which contributed to his fame of an eccentric person. He established a coterie of friends to whom he read (and performed) his plays, which were very rarely acted. But his friends were occasionally so thrilled by his plays that they even flattered him how he surpassed Shakespeare's art with his writing.[5] Such flattery did not contribute to his critical self-awareness and therefore his works show his artistic weaknesses he otherwise might have avoided or overcome. A large number of his plays have remained in a manuscript form and have not been either published or performed.

Besides plays Ivan Mrak also wrote short stories, essays, poems, which were published in various magazines. In his plays he very often treated lives of great historical personages, and they are often referred to as »hymnical tragedies«. Because Mrak left school as a teenager, he had to supplement his lack if knowledge by reading various classical and philosophical works. The editor of Mrak's work, Goran Schmidt,[6] also included in his selected edition of Mrak's work parts of Mrak's diaries which shed light on his work and his ideas. Schmidt defines the themes of Mrak's hymnical tragedies as the dramatist's erotic laudation of death in which the opposition Eros – Thanatos becomes the prime mover of his plays. Mrak wrote a number of heroic tragedies on well known historical figures (e.g. on Marat, Mirabeau, Robespierre, Herod etc.). However, it is hard to say whether Mrak may have known various works in which the same theme was treated by foreign authors as he dealt with them in his hymnical tragedies. Such authors are, for example, Algernon Charles Swinburne, with his play *Mary Stuart* (1881); John Drinkwater (e.g. *Abraham Lincoln,* 1918, *Mary Stuart*, 1921, *Robert E. Lee*, 1923); Alred Tennyson and his historical plays (*Queen Mary*, 1875, *Becket*, 1884). Such choice of themes, which were also treated by Mrak, may only be incidental, however, Mrak's portrayal of Abraham Lincoln as a statesman of vision and high ideals resembles in a number of ways Drinkwater's presentation.

Mrak meditates in his diary about several characters from Shakespeare's plays (e.g. *Hamlet*, *Timon of Athens, Macbeth* etc.). It is very likely that as a regular theatre-goer he also saw a number of Shakespeare's plays which were produced by the Slovene National Theatre (Drama) in Ljubljana, either before or after the Second World War.[7] Besides,

[5] *Ivan Mrak. Izbrano delo*, 1998: 212.

[6] See: *Ivan Mrak. Izbrano delo: Proza, drame dnevniki*. Ed. Goran Schmidt. Kondor 283. Ljubljana: Mladinska knjiga, 1998.

[7] See: *Repertoar slovenskih gledališč,* 1967.

Schiller's tragedy *Mary Stuart* was also produced by Drama in 1922, and Ferdinand Bruckner's *Elisabeth von England* (w. in 1930) was performed in Ljubljana in 1955. These plays my have had some influence on Mrak's dramatic creativity: on his choice of themes, on his pregnant poetic language, and on his monologues.

One of his best-known plays is the tragedy *Abraham Lincoln*, which he wrote between 1933-36 (it was first performed in 1937 by the then amateur group of actors known as Šentjakobsko theatre in Ljubljana; the play was also published in 1991, after Mrak's death). In his play Mrak concentrates on Lincoln's final years of life, on his decision to run for the presidency of the United States against the wish of his wife, on Lincoln's struggle to abolish racial inequality in America, and on some minor events accompanying Lincoln's assassination. Mrak did not stick to some the historical facts (e.g. his opponent, senator Stephen A. Douglas, was no longer alive at the time of Lincoln's death). As Malina Schmidt Snoj asserts the play during which Lincoln was shot was not Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* but a farcical comedy *Our American Cousin* (Schmidt Snoj 2010: 464). With such changes Mrak obviously wished to intensify the action of his play. Further, Mrak's characters do not have the psychological complexity of Shakespeare's heroes, but they are rather linear. Mrak is primarily interested in their ethical dilemmas, in the essence of their lives, as he had himself declared a number of times.

Mrak partly modelled his play *Abraham Lincoln* on the first three acts of Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar.* So, for example, Lincoln's wife Mary tries to persuade her husband not to go to the Senate, because she has had bad dreams; this is just like Caesar's wife Calphurnia, who had also had bad dreams and begs Caesar to stay at home (2.2.3). The scene in which Mark Antony praises Caesar, who brought »many captives home to Rome, / Whose ransoms did the general coffers fill« (3.2.89-90), may have influenced Mrak's presentation of his hero when Lincoln tells General Grant that he intends to give to the losing side four hundred million dollars. Mrak points out the difference between acting and reality in various statements made by the actor John Booth, who killed Lincoln. Booth wishes »to become active in life«, to perform his »call«, and with his attitude to acting he resembles Shakespeare's Hamlet. In Mrak's play the role of John Booth can also be compared with the role of Brutus in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar.* Booth sees Lincoln as a tyrant and he believes that he is going to perform (the role) of a new Brutus (»Odigral bom novega Bruta.«, 115). In the final scene of Mrak's tragedy the relationship between Senator Douglas and his wife can be linked with Shakespeare's presentation of the relationship between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth, with the scene in which Macbeth sees the ghost of the dead Banquo and cannot act soundly (3.4). Mrak's Senator Douglas says that he cannot accept the president's function but his wife Mary tries to excuse her husband's unusual behaviour before their guests with her explanation that Lincoln's death had shocked him (126). At the very end of Mrak's play Lincoln's wife Mary falls into a kind of grotesque-tragic state, which reminds us of some of Shakespeare's heroes (e.g. King Lear, Othello) who cannot accept the truth that their beloved are dead. Mary says: »Dead? Who is dead? Ha…ha..Be quiet, he is asleep … he is only asleep. Be careful not to wake him up .. he is so tired …Oh, Lincoln, do you see our little house, our garden, the fields …Our children and the two of us …Oh, how happy I am.« (Mrak 2000: 126). Such examples prove that Shakespeare's influence on Mrak's development of action and characters in his play was relevant although still limited to minor elements.

In Mrak's play *Marija Tudor* (Mary Tudor) the author deals with the final attempt of his heroine to change the reforming enthusiasm of her predecessors for the Church of England and by bringing the country back to Roman Catholicism. Mrak's belief in Christianity is not based on his belief in the official Church, although he did believe in virtues preached by Christianity. Such a view is also represented by Walter Harrison, the leader of the English expedition to the South Pole, who is the hero of Mrak's play *Heroji Južnega tečaja* (The Heroes of the Southern Pole; Mrak 2000:43). Unlike English playwrights who deal with a number of events from her life Mrak concentrates on Mary's last day of life during which a number of incidents happen which contribute to the change of the heroine's vision of her past life. As Mrak reports in his diary, he was acquainted with some other versions of Mary's life,[8] although such references seem to be rather questionable.

Mrak completed his text about Mary Tudor in 1949, but the play was only performed by the Slovene National Theatre in Ljubljana in 1966. Mrak mentions in his diary that Mary's misanthropic feelings can be compared with those of Shakespeare's hero in *Timon of Athens* and he believes that such, morally negative characters, full of outbursts showing their hatred of mankind (although they are also enriched with »Shakespeare's divine impetus of his pathos«), also show the person's lack a positive relationship with the universe, their lack of harmony with the universe (e.g. Hamlet is, according to Mrak, faced with eternal nothingness because the material world and his societal position do not satisfy him). It is only after Mary's self-recognition of her faults, just before her confrontation with death, that she can accept some universal power as the cause of man's existence which gives meaning to man's life, and that she can accept death as a part of man's life. It is only after the death of the archbishop, Thomas Cranmer, when she realizes that he was led to accept his death because he had a firm belief in the rightness of his desicion. This is the moment when she experiences the catharsis and when she finds the peace of her mind. Mary resembles some of Shakespeare's greatest tragic figures who see their mistakes after it is too late for them to correct them. Josip Vidmar, the most important Slovene theatre critic at the time when Mrak's play was produced, justly noticed that Mrak did not create in this play a relevant antagonist to the heroine (Mrak 1998: 270), what cannot be said about Shakespeare's greatest tragic heroes. Because Mrak decided only to present in his play(s) man's essential features, his heroes are also rather flat if compared with Shakespeare's personages; their language is not diversified and Mrak's plots are rather thin. Therefore we can see that those of Mrak's friends who compared the artistic value of this play with Shakespeare's work, did please him but they did not contribute to his critical self-evaluation.

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[8] Mrak mentions in the diary that in January 1949 he read Henderson's (?) *Mary Tudor* and that he was most interested in the schism between Catholicism and Protestantism (Mrak 1998: 198). –It is possible that the acceptance of Mrak's hymnic tragedy for production at the SNG Drama was also influenced by John Osborne's play *Luther*, which was also staged by the same company in 1964 (four years after its original production in London, in 1961). It is generally believed though that Josip Vidmar had an important role in the above mentioned decision.

3.1. DOMINIK SMOLE

Shakespeare's metaphoric language and his treatment of ethical problems also influenced Dominik Smole (1929-1992). In the thirteen plays written by Smole, one of the greatest post-Second-World-War Slovene dramatists, there are only a few elements that link his plays with Shakespeare's works. In one of his early plays *Krst pri Savici* (Baptism at the Savica River, printed and performed in 1969) there may be some resemblances between the main hero, Črtomir, and some of Shakespeare's characters. Črtomir, who is a pagan, has many doubts about his decision to accept the Christian religion and about his relation with his beloved, Bogomila. Smole used partly for the plot of this play a well-known Slovene myth which had been used by the greatest Slovene poet, France Prešeren in his epic poem of the same title, but he expounded on it by adding problems related to national and religious themes.

Some minor parallels can also be observed in one of Smole's best plays, *Antigona* (Antigone, writ. in 1959, perform. in 1960 and print. in 1961), for which Smole used as the source the classical version written by Sophocles (he also knew Jean Anouillh's version). When the play was first performed on April 8, 1960, by an ad hoc theatre company called Oder 57 (The Stage 1957), this was not only an important theatrical achievement because of fine acting and excellent direction of the play by Franci Križaj, but also because the audience was aware of the hidden meaning of Smole's play. With its political implication the plot of the play reminded the audience of the murder of more than ten thousand of Slovene White guard soldiers and their families and their tragic destiny: they had fled to Austria because many of them were afraid of the possible Communist regime, but they were returned by the British authorities to Yugoslavia after the end of the War. In May and in June 1945 most of these refugees were massacred by the Yugoslav army, thrown in caves, in abandoned coal shafts, or burried in trenches all over Slovenia. The excavation of their bones was only allowed by the new political regime after 1990, whereas until the 1980s this was a taboo topic not mentioned or spoken about in Slovenia, or in Yugoslavia.[9] These victims were not allowed to have a publicly known grave.

The parallel between the theme of Sophocles's *Antigone* and Smole's play is obvious: Creon, king of Thebes, ordered that particularly the body of Polyneices, who had fought against Creon, should be forbidden burial on pain of death, but his sister Antigone insists on performing the funeral rites for her brother. But Antigone nevertheless carries out her decision and then she is immured. In Smole's play the search for the body of Polyneices is not finished and when the Page announces that the body of Polyneices has been found the play ends with the order of Tiresias that the Page should be captured so that the truth would not become publicly known. Although Smole's plot is based on Sophocles' play there are also some echoes which might be related to Shakespeare's plays.

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[9] A few Slovene victims who had been shot and thrown in the caves had survived these massacres and they secretely migrated to Argentina and to the USA where they published their reports about this Communist crime. A historical accountt was also published by John Corsellis and Marcus Ferrar (*Slovenia 1945, Memories of Death and Survival After.* London: I. B. Tauris, 2005).

So, for example, the Page describes Antigone's melancholic mood with the following description: »She lies in bed, staring at the ceiling /on which/ a brave bird /is painted/, whose wings are light and free«, 107; the Page has noticed the changed personality of the heroine, which reminds us of Ophelia's description of Hamlet's mental state: »O, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown /… Th'observed of all observers, quite, quite down /..that noble and most sovereign reason ..out of tune and harsh« …3.1.153-164). Creon, in Smole's *Antigone,* rebukes his daughter Ismene for holding the mirror in such a way that she can be seen in such light which is stronger than reality. He complains that she is distorting reality, she is »o'erdoing« her own image and she does not hold »the mirror up to (her) nature« (cf. *Hamlet* 3.2.21-22). Further on Antigone asks herself: »Where am I and who am I?« (l. 1564), which are the same type of Cartesian questions bothering King Lear (»Who is it that can tell me who I am«, *King Lear* 1.4.230; »Where am I?«, *ibid.* 4.7.52). Vasja Predan, Slovene theatre critic, suggests that Antigona asks herself such questions which also cross Hamlet's mind (Schmidt 2009: 277), but there seems to be a closer resemblance with King Lear.

After the Second World War both of the above mentioned Shakespeare's tragedies as well as Sophocles' *Antigone* were performed at the Slovene National Theatre in Ljubljana and so it is possible that Smole (as a regular visitor of the theatre) could see these plays performed, that he remembered these scenes and used some of the elements in his own play. However, such a supposition is of a rather speculative nature, without sufficient material proof and I am rather inclined to accept suggestions made by Goran Schmidt in his essay on Smole (2009: 174), namely, that Smole was especially influenced when writing his plays by Shakespeare's rich diction, by his metaphoric language, his use of Chorus and his blank verse. Even if we accept Smole's opinion that in *Antigona* there is no obvious and valid system of values (Hofman 1978: 390), his persuasion is also that even if the world is polarized between good and evil, good is always »right and winning«. This view brings Smole very close to Shakespeare's ontological concept of historical reality. This can be true only, as Smole adds (*ibid.* 391), if dramatic genre is concise, characters complete and verse »finished«, and if the work is in a harmonious composition with the intention of the author's message. These suggestions would undoubtedly be supported also by the English poet and dramatist, Thomas Stearns Eliot (see e.g. his essay »Poetry and Drama«).

3.2. MIRKO ZUPANČIČ

Among Slovene theatre historians and dramatists the name of Mirko Zupančič (1925-) is relatively unknown although he has written several interesting interpretations about Shakespeare's plays as well as eight plays. In an early play *Rombino, žalostni klovn* (publ. in 1960 and first performed by Mestno gledališče ljubljansko / The Municipal Theatre in Ljubljana on April 2, 1960) Zupančič contrasts the freedom of world of the arts and the modern, mechanized world. Rombino, a travelling actor, traditionally known in Italy as Arlecchino, searches for Columbina, the symbol of art who would bring him love and happiness. She can be linked with Shakespeare's Miranda in *The Tempest* and Rombino both with Prospero and Ariel in the same play. Zupančič must have had in mind also Ivan Cankar's play *Pohujšanje v dolini Šentflorjanski* (Scandal in the Valley

of St. Florian, see Jurak 2009: 22-24), because like Jacinta in Cankar's play Columbina is also condemned by the Old Man as one of the biggest sinners of all times (1960: 72). Zupančič also uses the play within a play and a group of travelling actors (like Shakespare in *Hamlet*). When Rombino is imprisoned he is guarded by the soldiers Bum and Dum, who are drawn like Atheneian workmen (e.g. like Bottom) in Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* although Zupančič's play is not a comedy but a sad picture of »a brave new world«. In *The Tempest* Prospero explains to Ferdinand that the illusions which art can produce (»These our actors / (As I foretold you) were all spirits, and / Are melted into air, into thin air«, 4.1.148-150) are only temporary, »just a play«. However, in Prospero's remark, which is expressed later on in the same monologue, Prospero compares the two worlds, the world of the arts and the world of life outside the play:

> We are such stuff
> As dreams are made on; and our little life
> Is rounded with a sleep. (4.1.156-158)

In the translation prepared by Oton Župančič:

> Iz take smo
> snovi kot sanje in drobno to življenje
> obkroženo je s spanjem.

These lines served as a title of several theatrical performances in Slovenia (*Iz take smo snovi*) in which dramatists and theatre directors prepared the collage of passages selected from works written by various authors (not only Shakespeare), and Mirko Zupančič's version was performed in Mestno gledališče ljubljansko on September 29, 1977. Besides passages from Shakespeare Zupančič included in this production also references to several Slovene authors (e.g. Linhart, Prešeren, Jurčič, Erjavec, Kreft etc.). Zupančič's motto in this performance was that our life is also a reflection of the theatre, of the arts, even more, of the nation's culture.

Mirko Zupančič was primarily interested in enriching Slovene dramatic works with Shakespeare's poetic language and with correlating ancient myths with their Renaissance adaptations as well as with their application in modern times. His play *Elektrino maščevanje* (Electra's Revenge, first perf. by the Mestno gledališče ljubljansko / The Ljubljana City Theatre on 27 Sept. 1988) is mainly based on the ancient Greek theme of Electra and her brother Orestes. Zupančič pays a lot of attention to Orestes, to his understanding of the meaning of life, particularly as regards the murder performed by his mother Clytemnestra of her husband Agamemnon and the role of her paramour Aegistus and his search for power. Zupančič links this theme with Hamlet's revenge of his father's death: Clytemnestra's role is attributed to Queen Gertrude, Aegistus' deeds to King Claudius and Orestes is given the function of Hamlet in Shakespeare's tragedy. However, Zupančič's hero does not just wish to follow the demands of the Ghost of his dead father to perform the revenge, but he wishes to actively participate in this game, to lead it (Zupančič 1997: 18). Orestes wishes to get to know reasons which led his mother to Agamemnon's murder. He cannot believe that it was only lust and her wish to gain power. She regrets her deed and she would be happy to die by the hand of Orestes, because »he will not kill her, but murder murder« (*ibid.* 34). She is aware that after one

has committed murder, this represents also the loss of one's humanity (just as Macbeth knows this after he had killed King Duncan). The responsibility for one's deeds is no longer transferred to the gods, but to an individual and his decisions. Orestes rightly estimates that »to rule and to love, or, when Aegistus decides to pardon« this shows his empty pride, his arrogance. Orestes does not kill his mother, but he commits suicide, and Electra believes that the greatest punishment for her mother's deeds is that she remains alive and suffers (*ibid.* 39). In Zupančič's play death is the ultimate criterion of man's life and Malina Schmidt Snoj (2010: 396-398) persuasively links Zupančič's play with the philosophy of the absurd according to which man is »sentenced« to the Sisyphean task of being himself responsible for his own acts. Among other similarities between Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and Zupančič's tragedy are the appearance of the ghost, the general atmosphere of fear and uncertainty in society, debauchery in Mycenae, Aegistus' constant warnings that the state is in danger of foreign attack (although there are no reasons for such assumptions); they do not only resemble the atmosphere presented in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* but are also significant for Yugoslavia after WWII.

In Mirko Zupančič's works some minor parallels between Shakespeare's plays and the works of this Slovene dramatist may also be found in his comedy *Čarobnice* (Magic Women). The play is actually based on *Lysistrata,* a comedy by Aristophanes, in which the women take over the situation in Athens, where »men wish to have power, but do not know how to rule the country, … and they prepare laws, but do not respect them« (Zupančič 1997: 49). In Zupančič's version the women of Athens meet on the eve of St. Valentine's day and they realise that life has become only a play and male – female relations have been turned into a commercialized bargain. The women wish to outwit their men and the playwright ends this »battle« with the call of Athenean women to oblige their men to sexual passivity: »Zdržati. Pripravljen biti. To je vse.« (1997: 60) This decision (»To endure, to be ready. This is all.«) is an ironic version of Hamlet's meditation before his duel with Laertes (»If it be now, 'tis not to come…the readiness is all«, 5.2.217-220). Instead of a serious decision between life and death in modern times we face the question how women use sex for their own advantage. Women in Zupančič's comedy are shown in a negative light (e.g. one of them, Sostrata, would make her husband drink his own gall; Uršula would burn her husband's hair; Greta would lock him together with rats in the cellar); they are more like the Weird Sisters in *Macbeth* (cf. 3.5.7) than like pleasant, godly creatures in Shakespeare's comedies. Their anger is not completely unjustified not only because men do not know how to rule the country and because they bring home young girls from another country, but also because men often abuse women, e.g. Norica (Nonny) sings a song about St. Valentine's day (1997: 46-48; 60-61), her birthday, when she was raped by a nobleman. This pastiche resembles Ophelia's songs in *Hamlet* (4.5) and Norica's songs end the play thus indicating the playwright's doubt about the value of love and marriage in the future.

3.3. GREGOR STRNIŠA

Gregor Strniša (1930-1987) represents with his poetry and plays one of the high points of modern Slovene literature. He graduated at the University of Ljubljana in Eng-

lish and in German. Among his plays his indebtedness to Shakespeare is most clearly seen in his play *Ljdožerci* (w. in 1972, prod. on Jan. 10, 1977, at the Mestno gledališče ljubljansko / Ljubljana City Theatre. The English title of the play is Cannibals.)[10] Strniša indicated the main source for this play in the motto of the play in which he quotes two lines from Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* (the play was written in 1592/93) and which run in the original as follows:

> And welcome, all; although the cheer be poor,
> 'Twill fill your stomachs; please you eat of it. (5.3.28-29)

and in Slovene translation by Oton Župančič:

> Zdravi, vi vsi! Čeprav je obed bolj skromen
> Ne bo nobeden lačen. Prosim, jejte!

Shakespeare was himself indebted for the plot of this play to Seneca's play *Thyestes* for cannibalism, and to Ovid's *Metamorphoses* for the tragic tale of Philomel. Strniša did not borrow the plot of Shakespeare's play but he wished to shows in his play similarities between man's nature as shown in the above mentioned classical works and the contemporary, twentieth century European man and society. Both of them abound in atrocities, but whereas there is some hope in Shakespeare's play that new society might be ethically higher we cannot find such hope in Strniša's play.

Strniša's play also has a prologue and an epilogue (which Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* does not have) in which the theme and plot of the play are given allegorical dimensions. Strniša's play ends as the Dance of Death performed by characters of his play and by Death who leads the procession and who tells his followers they should not be afraid of Him. They are then seated at the table so reminding us of the biblical scene of the Apostles having the last supper. The Prior of the church reminds his »visitors« that they should remember two axioms about man's life, »the forgiveness of sins« and that there is »the eternal life«. In this old medieval motif all people are shown as equal, but only in death. The plot of the play is set in »Križanke« (the Church of the Holy Rood, which was built in 1714/15) in Ljubljana and which belonged to the Teutonic Knights Order. The action in *Ljudožerci* takes place before the end of the Second World War. Due to the fighting between the occupying forces, the Germans and the Italians, and the partisans, two families seek refuge in the church where the Prior allows them to stay. Besides the Prior the protagonists are: Pajot, who carries out many murders in the crypt of this church, including that of his own wife and their three daughters, and his »friend« Falac, who is Pajot's aid as a cook and who prepares the meat of dead people as their own food as well as for sale. But Pajot also kills his »friend« Falac before the end of the war, because he is afraid that Falac might tell the new revolutionary authorities about his crimes.

The plot of the play includes various incidents, which show the complete loss of moral norms at the time of war: ordinary people (like Pajot and Falac) become heartless killers; people live in constant fear and are ready to betray their closest relatives and

[10] Titles of Slovene theatres in English translation have been changed several times in the annual reports of the Slovenski gledališki muzej (Slovene thatre museum), therefore it is best to rely on the original Slovene name of the theatre.

friends in order to preserve their own lives; everybody envies his neighbour's luck and is jealous of him; women have sexual relations (including foreign soldiers who have occupied Slovenia). Only Marija, one of Pajac's daughters, has preserved high ethical standards and avoids cannibalism, even when confronted with death from starvation (58). Some of the representatives of the future rulers (shown in the play as the undercover fighters) are females and they are also shown as extremely cruel human beings. There are very few morally positive characters in Strniša's play, among them are the Prior and his priests who had blocked with their bodies the passage between the aisle in the church and the crypt where a young wounded woman (she was a member of the Slovene resistance movement) was hiding from the Italian soldiers. The woman escapes but the priests have to pay for their help with their lives. As the Prior says they did not give her over to the Italian soldiers because they are »God's soldiers« (24).

The paralles between Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* and Gregor Strniša's *Ljudožerci* can be seen not only in the nature of their »heroes« but also in individual cruelties which are performed. Shakespeare's play begins with Titus Andronicus's victory against the Goths. He brings back with him Queen Tamora and her three sons.The eldest among them is sacrificied by the sons of Titus to the spirit of their brother who was killed in the war. Titus is chosen Emperor of the Romans but he renounces his position in favour of the late Emperor's son. Titus marries Tamora, who soon betrays him with her lover Aaron, a Moor. Tamora wants to revenge herself on Titus for the death of her son and her sons ravish Titus's daughter Lavinia and cut off her hands and tongue so that she would not be able to tell people about their crime. A number of other cruelties are performed in the play by both sides: so, for example, in a struggle between Bassianus, the Emperor's brother, Titus kills his own youngest son who supported Bassinus in his claim for Lavinia; Bassanius is killed by Tamora's sons and his body is thrown into a cave; in order to save his sons Titus chops off his hand and sends it to Aaron in ransom, but he receives it back from Aaron together with the heads of his two sons. Titus discovers who has ravished Lavinia and prepares a plot to revenge himself: simulating a reconciliation with Tamora and Aaron. He prepares a meal with the pie made of Tamora's sons who had been captured. After Tamora has eaten her sons' flesh, Titus first kills Lavinia and then he also kills Tamora, whose body will be thrown »to beasts and birds of prey« (5.3.198), and Aaron is sentenced to be set breast-deep in the earth. Titus is also killed »for this accurséd deed« (5.3.64) by the Emperor Saturnius, and then a new Emperor is elected by the Romans, the new »gracious governer« Lucius (5.3.146) the son of Marcus Andronicus, brother to Titus, whose hands are not covered with blood.

The motto in Strniša's play refers to the final »feast« in *Titus Andronicus* when Tamora eats her sons' flesh. In Strniša's play the flesh of Pajot's victims, including his wife, Marija, and his three daughters, who were killed by Pajot, are also eaten by people who are hiding in the church, but Pajot had also sold the meat to other people. Tamora, whose son was killed by Titus' sons, decides »to massacre them all«, (1.1.450), to kill the members of Titus's family. She is one of the most cruel villains in the Elizabethan revenge tragedy, and – like the Pajot's family – one of cannibals. Strniša includes into this grotesque allegory a ballad about »a young lad who had eaten another lad« (*Ljudožerci* 76-77). The plot of this ballad refers to two White guard soldiers who fled to Austria but who were ruturned to Slovenia by the British army and then killed by the Yugoslav

army. However, these two young lads, who were supposedly killed and thrown into a cave (see also the second paragraph on Dominik Smole's plays, above), remained alive. One of them who ate the meat of his dead companions climbed out of the cave, but he was caught by the soldiers and then hanged. The other boy, whose conscience does not allow him to eat human flesh, and who only quenched his thirst by drops of water which gathered on plants growing in the grave, succeeds to escape from the cave, »only to return to the world / to tell the peoples / how a boy ate another boy, / because there is a deep hole in the world« (*ibid.* 77). Strniša also suggests that (unlike in Shakespeare's play) the hands of the new rulers are not clean, and they need people like Pajot for their own purposes (*ibid.* 135). Pajot says that he is fed up with killing »human bodies«, therefore his future aim is to extinguish »their lights, their hopes«.(136) It is evident that the »new society« which will gain the power after the War will not be based on humanistic values. The images of water and blood in Strniša's play symbolize Christ's sacrificial death as a ransom for mankind. However, in Strniša's play his characters no longer accept Christian values, their only value is power.

Strniša's play clearly suggests the playwright's belief that mankind has not really experienced a new renaissance and that meaningless death rules the world, God has been substituted by violence, by the animalistic cruelty, which makes man devour his (and God's) substance. Marcus Andronicus in Shakespeare's play even suggests that gods are pleased with man's killings, with his death, and he meditates : »O, why should nature build so foul a den / Unless the gods delight in tragedies?« (4.1.60). The same kind of disbelief in God's love of man is seen in *King Lear* after the Duke of Cornwall orders his servant to blind the Earl of Gloucester, who laments: »As flies to wanton boys are we to th'gods; / They kill us for their sport.« (4.1.216). In *Titus Andronicus* also Aaron's mind is preoccupied with revenge (»Vengeance is in my heart, death in my hand, / Blood and revenge are hammering in my head« (*Titus Andronicus*, 2.3.38—39). But when Marcus Antonius strikes the dish with a knife and kills a fly, Titus disapproves of any killing, even of killing a fly, Titus is enraged: »out on thee, murderer! Thou kill'st my heart; / ..A deed of death done on the innocent / Becomes not Titus' brother ..«, but when Marcus apologizes and says »Pardon me, sir; it was a black ill-favoured fly, / Like to the empress' Moor. Thefore I killed him« (3.2.52-70), Titus himself becomes obssessed with the revenge and killing, and thus reveals the true nature of his character.

The German Major in Strniša's play parodies »the new version« of the Ten Commandments: »Thou shalt steal. / Thou shalt covet thy neighbour's house; / Thou shalt covet thy neighbour's wife; / Thou shalt kill thy neighbour – / But do not covet thy neighbour's flesh.«. The Major's norms in life are in complete opposition to the teaching of Moses in the *Holy Bible* (*Exodus* 20.13-17), which were also accepted by Christ. The »new rules« which are accepted by Strniša's heroes show a complete devaluation of man's life, his moral norms and his belief in the meaning of man's existence. Falac and Tenente even find an ironic, rather grotesque correlative to their nihilistic attitudes in the metaphoric language of a dialogue between lovers: »Falac: A lad says to his girlfriend: I would like to eat you! / Tenente: I shall devour you, says the girl.« (100). These are farcical, grotesque comments on the meaning of the Word (cf. *The New Testament*, John 1.1: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word

was God. Not only Falac and Tenente but also other characters in Strniša's play, deny *Logos*, the divine wisdom, God's incarnation in man, his angelic side, his Deity. They are typical representatives of nihilism, completely denying man's spirituality.[11] In critical situation, such as war, the worst side of human nature becomes completely predominant regardless of the period when this occurs. We may reject such a negative ending with which Strniša concludes his play by quoting examples of actions of people who have shown compassion to victims and sacrificed their lives for them; however, we cannot deny that such bestial cruelty is still an inherent part of human nature; it is here and it happens now, regardless if people are aware of it or not.

3.4. VENO TAUFER

One of the best modern Slovene poets and translators is Veno Taufer (1933-). Slovene critic and dramaturge Tomaž Toporišič finds in Veno Taufer's play *Odisej in sin ali svet in dom* (Odysseus and His Son, or the World and One's Home, 1990), traces of Shakespeare's late »romantic plays«, particularly of *The Winter's Tale* and *The Tempest* (Taufer 1990: 81). Toporišič does not think that Taufer's motto to his play »tragical-comical-historical-pastoral« is used accidentally. These concepts are a selection of the long list of attributes used by Polonius when he comes to tell Hamlet that the actors have come to Elsinore (*Hamlet* 2.2.400-407). In the critic's opinion such apparent diversity of qualifications is used because Homer's epic poem contains such elements in its motifs and themes and in Taufer's play these symbolic references denote the genre and the poetic nature of his play. It should also be pointed out that in Taufer's play the hero is shown as a ruthless, barbaric person, whereas Shakespeare concludes the final scenes of his »romances« with feelings showing forgiveness, reconciliation, and peace among all parties involved. It is also possible to compare Hamlet's search for the truth about his father's fate and that of the Greek hero, Telemach whereas Gertrude's quick marriage with Claudius does not follow Penelope's endeavours to delay the marriage with one of her suitors, who behave as drunkards who may be paralleled with drunken men present at the feast celebrating Gertrude's marriage, who behave as »drunken swine« (1.4.19-20). Tiresias in Taufer's play is the father figure, »full of high sentence«, who forells the hero's return home, if he acts wisely »in pain, in distress, in famine, if he can resist the greed« (Taufer 1990: 30). Anticlea, the mother of Odysseus, tells her son that he should remember everything what he has seen or heard (»Zapomni si vse, kar si videl / in slišal . In drugim povej.« (*ibid.* 33), just like dying Hamlet asks Horatio he should »tell his story« ..How these things came about« (5.2.340-384). There are some minor similarities between Shakespeare's plays and Taufer's *Odysseus* although Taufer's main sourse of inspiration was definitely the Greek myth.

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[11] Such characters may also be found in English and American plays, which belong to the Theatre of Cruelty and have also been performed in Slovenia by the 1970s. – There is also similarity between Major's treatment of Tenente as if he were a dog, with the relationship between Pozzo and Lucky in Samuel Beckett's play *Waiting for Godot* (1956).

3.5. DUŠAN JOVANOVIĆ

One of the most prolific Slovene dramatists after WWII is a playwright and theatre director Dušan Jovanović (1939-). It is not surprising that we may find in his works many allusions to British and French dramatists, because he first graduated in these languages and then also as a theatre director at the University of Ljubljana.

Already in one of his first published plays *Norci* (Madmen), which was written and first published in 1963, one of the characters, Vojko, paraphrases Hamlet's question regarding the main issue of man's life (»To be, or not to be, that is the question«, *Hamlet* 3.1.56), by asking himself whether a group of young students should oppose the new rulers or not.[12] Likewise, the Fifth Madmen's symbolic »call for light« (Jovanović 1970:28) echoes Claudius's »Give me some light-» (*Hamlet* 3.2.269) and Zorči's rhetorical question (»Where is here man, his pride«, (Jovanović 1970:48) may have been inspired by Hamlet's meditation »What a piece of work is a man …« (*Hamlet* 2.2.307-312). Although these and some other echoes[13] which may be found in *Norci* only have a rather minor importance for the whole play they are indicative as a general tendency of artistic inspiration in Jovanović's plays.

One of the most disturbing works written by Jovanović is his ludistic play *Igrajte tumor v glavi in onesnaženje zraka* (Play Tumour in the Head and the Air-pollution), which was written in 1971, published in 1972 and first performed at the Slovensko ljudsko gledališče in Celje on Jan. 9, 1976. One of the main themes of this play is the antagonism between the supporters of »the traditional theatre« and an avant-garde group of actors. The theatre critic and theatre historian Andrej Inkret points out in his article on Jovanović that the dramatist defends the autonomous nature of the theatre with self-sufficient values of dramatic literature sceptical of any conventional, a priori, ideological or aethetic values (»Everything is real and at the same time nothing is believable. Everything is the theatre, and nothing is true.« Inkret 1972: 405). We do not know whether the actors are really mad or if they only perform madness. The Director, Dular, says, for instance, that the performance is a lie, an awful lie (*ibid.* 193), whereas Hamlet considers the actors as »the abstract and brief chronicles of the time«, they represent the essence of life and they »hold as' twere the mirror up to nature« (3.2.20). Jovanović's play begins in the office of Chief Editor of the Slovene daily newspaper who reports about the incident which took place in the theatre after the performance of Shakespeare's *Richard the Second.* The mentioning of this play may not be incidental, because the subject-matter of this history play refers to the period in which the English rulers failed in performing their moral, comunal and governmental responsibilities, and Jovanović may have implicitly compared the social and political situation in Richard's England and in the Slovenia (and possibly also in Yugoslavia) of the early 1970s. Besides, »the riots« take place in the theatre called »Slavija«, which is the name of the building where the secret police was located in Ljubljana.

There is another passage in the play in which Jovanović indirectly refers to Shakepeare's *Hamlet.* The journalists discuss whether they should take flowers to their

[12] Vojko says: »Ali ima ta nori aktivist prav ali nima? To je tu vprašanje, ...« (1970: 20).

[13] The scene in which students interrogate and terrify their land-owner (1970: 16-17) was possibly structured on Stanley Webber's interrogation in Harold Pinter's *The Birthday Party* in Act 2.

colleague who is in the theatre and apparently pregnant (Jovanović 1981: 185). So, for example, Vesna does not think that they should send her lilies of the valley, because they are given to those who are getting ready to depart; the First Actor ironically suggests that lilacs are not suitable either, because Ida is pregnant; and the Second Journalist meditates on the significance of the colour carnations have: (»red carnations« signify pure love, »rosy carnations«, the attachment of lovers for each other, and »yellow carnations« signify a complete rejection of the person. This scene resembles the scene in *Hamlet* (4.5.174-185) in which Ophelia presents flowers to the King, the Queen, and Laertes; with this act she symbolically defines the nature of their characters. Jovanović does not refer in the play to the possibility that Ophelia was actually pregnant. The Doctor denies Ida's pregnancy and attributes it to her imagination; he refers to it as »hysterical pregnancy«, suggested by Director Dular to see if Albee's prescription really works (»Ida's child is fiction. She is artifically blown up. Hysterical. Dular is using Albee's prescription. Under Polansky's suggestion.« Jovanović 1981: 202) This explanation obviously suggests that the Director used the same kind of a situation which had been suggested by Edward Albee in his play *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* when Honey admits that her pregnancy was a fake (Act 2). Imagery in Jovanović's play shows that some scenes and characters include allusions to Shakespeare's plays.

Jovanović's play *Viktor ali dan mladosti* (Viktor or the Day of Youth) was first performed by the Mestno gledališče ljubljansko on 6 Oct. 1989. It is an improvisation on Roger Vitrac's play *Victor ou les enfants au pouvoir* (1930). The work of this French dramatist, who is one of the main representatives of Dadaism and Surrealism, became popular in Central Europe in the 1960s and its technique as well as the author's view upon the world are close to ludism, the artistic and philosophical trend which was quite popular in Slovenia in this period. It is possible that when Jovanović was writing this play he also had in mind an anonymous Italian play from the 16th century, a typical work of commedia dell'arte, which is based on a number of unexpected turns and mistaken identities. In Jovanović's version the play is a farce on political and social circumstances in Slovenia (and inYugoslavia) when the political élite more and more openly accepted the bourgeois way of life although it pretended that it was basically still oriented towards Communism and its values. Tito's birthday was officially celebrated on the 25th of May and the play is set on May 25, 1987 (seven years after Tito's death). The subtitle of the play is an ironic version of the slogan used by the Yugoslav government after the Second World War (»Tujega nočemo, svojega ne damo!«: We do not wish foreign (territory), but we shall not give away what is ours), particularly in connection with the border issue of the Slovene Littoral (the Trieste region). However, the Yugoslav government had to accept the decision, which did not wholly satisfy its demands. Jovanović makes fun of this slogan with his subtitle to the play: We wish what belongs to others, and we are ready to give what is ours.

The events in this play are seen through the eyes of an eleven years old boy. Viktor has namely noticed that his father is having sexual relations with their servant girl as well as with his neighbour's wife. This may be a modern parody of the relation between Claudius and Gertrude in *Hamlet.* The sentence structure of Viktor's remarks is based on Hamlet's manner of speaking, it is full of witticisms and paradoxes. So, for example, when Viktor is reprimanded by his father for the kind of languages he uses, Viktor

answers: »Words, words, words!« (*Viktor* 196); this answer was used by Hamlet when Polonius asked him what he was reading (*Hamlet* 2.2.191-192). One of the characters in Jovanović's play, the Admiral, sees in Viktor's remarks »a dangerous foreign influence«, which may result in the destruction of the political system (cf. »Something is rotten in the state of Denmark«, *ibid.* 215); such a statement was made by Marcellus in *Hamlet* (1.4.90). When Viktor is apparently dying (he has stomach problems), he again mumbles Hamlet's words, »To die, to sleep – / No more, perchance to dream« (*ibid.* 237), what is again an ironic application of Hamlet's meditation about life and death (3.1.60-69). When King Claudius prays and asks God to forgive him his sins and he uses the following metaphor: »O, my offence is rank, it smells to heaven..«, 3.3.36), Viktor links the image of the smell with the appearance of Ida, a »friend« of the family, a person known for its farting (Ida Smrtuljček, 237). Viktor's mother asks her son's forgiveness after she had slapped him, because »he was a naughty boy« (238), but Hamlet's serious condemnation of his mother's behaviour (3.4) is ridiculed in Jovanović's play by her promise to Viktor that she will go »to a nunnery«, which is actually Hamlet's advice to Ophelia (3.1.142) after she had betrayed him and allowed to be manipulated by her father and the King to spy on Hamlet. There are some other minor allusions to Shakespeare's works in this play: for example, when Viktor asks his father »to put out the light« (*ibid.* 240) the symbolism of this image in *Othello* (5.2.7) refers to his intention to kill Desdemona, or when Viktor says that he would »give his horse for darkness« (*ibid.*) the playwright's joke is in the point that Viktor is in trouble because of his stomach problems (even if they seem to him to be extremely serious) whereas the calls made by King Richard the Third (5.4.7, 13) actually denote the fateful reality, Richard's death. In Jovanović's play references made to Shakespeare's plays are given ironical connotations: something what used to be meant seriously has been degraded into a caricature, a degraded world of values even though this world is seen from a child's perspective.

3.6. VINKO MÖDERNDORFER

Vinko Möderndorfer (1958-) is a well-known Slovene author, who has published a number of collections of poems, as well as prose works and plays. In addition, he has also successfully directed several plays in theatres, as well as radio plays for children and adults. His play *Hamlet in Ofelija* (Hamlet and Ophelia) was first performed at the Little Stage of the Slovene National Theatre (SNG) in Ljubljana on October 14, 1994, and it was published in the theatre-bill for the premiére (!994/95, 74.2) by this theatre. Although the playwright suggests in his description of dramatis personae that Damjan is not Hamlet and that Barbara is not Ophelia the play is thematically closely linked with Shakespeare's *Hamlet.* The author's subtitle to the play is just as important: he states that the play is »a small theatrical travesty for a great actor and for two ordinary young people.« Another character who appears in this play is named »Duh« (the Ghost), who has just acted in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* as the Ghost of his dead father. Möderndorfer adds that this actor is »very old«, whereas Damjan is young« and Barbara »is very, very young«.The dramatist's suggestions about the age of his characters also indicate differences in their views on the art of the theatre, what is one of the main themes of

this play. As Blaž Lukan pointed out in his article »Gledališče kot mistifikacija« (The Theatre as Mistification) Möderndorfer deals in this play with the basic dilemma of the theatre, its difference between appearance and reality, between illusion and factual life (1994: 4). Characters in *Hamlet and Ophelia* do not only represent various philosophical (artistic) views on this issue but also different perceptions of the four individuals who appear on the stage. We see that the choice od names of characters for the title of the play is not incidental but also symbolical.

The setting of the play is the basement storage room of a theatre which Damjan and Barbara have chosen as a hide-out after they have both committed crimes: Damjan wished to rob the petrol station but the attendant would not give him the money and he beat him and left him for dead. Barbara, who worked at a hair-dressers shop stole the daily income and ran away. They find the shelter in the storage-room of a theatre where Damjan used to work as a stage-hand. Damjan is angry because he did not get the money, but at first they seem to be relived of their previous tension, they play with the objects they find in the cellar of the theatre, they think they should make love. When Damjan sees among the props stored in the basement a human skull he starts to make jokes about it. The scene reminds us of the scene when Hamlet returns to Danemark at the time when two Clowns (the grave-diggers) dig a hole for Ophelia's burial (*Hamlet* 5.1.). The difference between Hamlet's sympathetic remarks about the skull of the court's jester (»Alas, poor Yorick! I knew him, Horatio—a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy. He has borne me on his back a thousand times, and now how abhorred in my imagination it is! …« 5.1.178-190), his personal, emotional approach to the skull of his dead servant, the King' jester, and between Damjan's action, is completely opposite. For Damjan the skull is just an object, a toy, used in the theatre to create an illusion of life.

The appearance of the old Actor after he had acted in *Hamlet* as a Ghost of Hamlet's father brings the story of this play to another level. Barbara remembers how well this Actor played in Chekhow's *Three Sisters.* He is drunk now but he still remembers lines from various plays and he recites them to Damjan and Barbara. But he also tells them how disappointed he is with his profession because fellow-actors do not give him the praise they ought to. He believes that he should play the King (i.e. Claudius) and not the Ghost. He feels that his life has been an illusion, a mimicry, that he had not experienced »real life«, it was all a pretence.

3.7. EVALD FLISAR

Among Evald Flisar's works his most obvious reference to Shakespeare's plays is his two-act play *Hamlet in Jaz* (Hamlet and I), which was published in Slovenia by *Sodobnost* (66.10, Oct. 2002: 1340-1388),[14] a review for literature and humanities. The play has a subtitle *A Comedy With a Russian Roulette*; a genre which basically differs from Shakespeare's *The Tragedy of Hamlet Prince of Denmark.* Evald Flisar (1945-) lived a number of years in England and several of his plays have been produced abroad.

[14] When I quote Shakespeare's text I use John Dover Wilson's text of Shakespeare's plays and my reference to Evald Flisar's text refers to the number of the page in *Sodobnost.*

The plot of Flisar's play develops in the attic of an old house (in Ljubljana). The owner of this apartment is an old, retired actor Bonifacij (he is referred to in the play as »I« but also as the »Actor« or as »Hamlet«) who has apparently put an advertisement in the newspaper in which he expressed his wish to spend a few pleasant hours with a young woman before his departure. Maja, a prostitute, was sent to this place by her pimp, David. When she comes the apartment is empty but soon the Actor appears. He does not seem to be interested in Maja's sexual activities but he tells her that he needs a secretary to sort out his documents. Soon after this »introduction« David comes to the attic, saying that he got worried what might happen to Maja. Rather unexpectedly another visitor arrives, Marko, who is employed by the state and is taking the census of the population. During the debate which follows the Actor starts playing with a revolver, telling his visitors how tired he is of life, but he occasionally also threatens them with his weapon. He also tells them that he wishes to get married to prevent the Insurance company from getting his money. As the play develops the Actor increases the sum of his insurance policy from ten to fifty million dollars. David suggests that Maja should become the Actor's wife and get the money when he dies. However, Marko also notes suggestively that he has a seventeen-year-old daughter who would suit the Actor better, because »he does not need so much a masseuse, but a companion, a person who is kind, polite, knowledgeable, who would be willing to make sacrifices, who would be obedient etc.«. He telephones his daughter Lila to come immediately to the Actor's apartment where she would get a birthday present and he tells her to bring fresh violets. In the meantime the Actor occasionally terrifies his visitors, and also mentions that he has »breast cancer«.

In Act Two the Actor begins to play with his visitors a kind of a blind man's buff. He sees that they do not really care for him and that they are only after his money. Therefore he arranges for them »a mousetrap scene«, in which Lila must beat her father and Maja kiss him. He believes that the only way to overcome death is to commit suicide, »by inventing the reality«. Everybody present should take a chance if they play the Roussian roulette. They try their luck after one another, and the revolver does not fire, but when it is Lila's turn, she does not aim at herself but at her father, and shoots him. Although she had previously accused her father of molesting her, she is sorry about her deed. After this experience Maja realizes that she can be independent and that she does not need David. Maja and David leave, the Actor and Lila remain embraced. They are two lonely people who need each other.

In terms of atmosphere of this play and given the rather sinister character of the protagonist (and partly also of the other two male figures), the play ends with an open ending. Evald Flisar's play resembles in many ways Harold Pinter's plays and belongs to the genre of »dark comedy«. The Actor, »I« (can be also explained as »the Eye«, »the Observer«) mentions in the play that he is »a crossbreed« of Shakespeare, Beckett and Pirandello (2002:1349), but Flisar's greatest debt is definitely to Shakespeare's *Hamlet.*[15]

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[15] Evald Flisar (1945-) is the author of several dozens of plays and prose works. He lived for a number of years in England and in different Asian countries, where a number of his works have been translated and also staged. – Flisar's »debt« to Pirandello is primarily in the structure of the play, particularly in the Actor's frequent doubt whether they are actually playing a game (out of which they could step, or is everything part or real life) and so partly also in the very nature of his characters..

Its mixture of serious, comic, tragic, and grotesque elements may puzzle the audience, but the realistic framework of the play offers the public a link with the everyday reality.

The Actor arranges in the »Mousetrap scene« a competititon between Maja and Lila, which should also show their feelings for him, their obedience: Lila must beat her father Marko, and Maja must kiss him passionately. This game results in a draw, and at this moment the Actor tells them that the only way to beat Death is by committing suicide, by »inventing the reality«. When they play the Russian roulette, the Actor also takes the role of the Ghost of Hamlet's father, who commands the situation. The tension grows because Maja realizes that David only exploits her and Lila blames her father for his false behaviour towards her (Lila had lost her mother in childhood). When Lila kills her father the »charade« ends; Maja and David leave the old Actor and Lila alone in the atic. Freud's interpretation of child – parent relationship, which is in many cases that of exchanged love and hatred, was probably in Flisar's mind when he wrote this scene.

During one of the discussions among the four characters the Actor tells his visitors that when he was a boy he once played with his father's revolver but luckily, nothing happened. Since then he has always heard two voices: »To be, or not to be«. This famous line from *Hamlet* (3.1.56) has always reminded him of a possibility either to remain alive or to end his miserable – but occasionally also happy – life (1359). Contrarily, Maja tells the group that she has adapted the criterion into »To love or not to love.« (1348) The Actor repeats Hamlet's question in the play several times, thus indicating the basic dilemma of his life. He definitely feels humiliated among other actors, because he must always play the minor role of the Ghost of Hamlet's father, whereas he would like to be one of the major actors in this tragedy and play the King, Claudius. In some scenes the Actor resembles Hamlet, and he tells his visitors that people sometimes think that he is mad. In Shakespeare's *Hamlet* there are quite a few references to the hero's madness and about possible causes for it. When Ophelia tells her father, Polonius, that she had »repelled Hamlet's letters and denied / His access to me« (2.1.106-107), Polonius thinks that maybe this had made Hamlet »Mad for thy love ?« (2.1.82), and he quickly makes a conclusion: »That hath made him mad« (*ibid.* 107). In his mannerless way he reports the news to the King and the Queen: »I will be brief – your noble son is mad.« (2.2.92). But when Hamlet teases Polonius and replies to his question, »What do you read my lord?«, Hamlet answers: »Words, words, words.« Polonius must realize that »Though this be madness, yet there is method in it.« (2.2.192-205) The Actor in Flisar's play tells David that some people do not believe that he is really mad and that they think that he, like Hamlet, only pretends to be mad (Flisar 1987: 1351). But when the Actor aims the revolver at David's head and recites: »The time is out of joint, O curséd spite / That ever I was born to set it right«, which are also Hamlet's words after his father had asked him to revenge his foul murder (1.5.188-189), the Actor's intention is not quie clear: does he mean this seriously or does he only play. The Actor also tells his visitors that he cannot find »a persuasive end« and that he is not sure about the answer to the following question: Do we live in reality or is everything an illusion of the world? Are we only Players in some game, and improvise reality? (1350) This question is quite relevant in Flisar's play, because both David and Marko are amateur players, and Maja is a theatre fan. Flisar also includes in the Actor's remarks about acting several extracts from *Hamlet* (2.2 and 3.2), especially Hamlet's greetings and his instructions to Players

who have come to Elsinore. The Actor receives Marko in his shabby apartment with his greeting »Welcome to Elsinore« (1355).

The Actor advises Lila not to believe anybody, not even himself, because »I am myself indifferent .. very proud .. revengeful.«, and tells her to go to a nunnery. He asks Lila »Where is your father?«, the same question which Hamlet asks Ophelia, and then he tells her: »Let the doors be shut upon him that he may play the fool no where but in's own house«. (3.1) These references indicate the paralles between Ophelia's obedience to her father, Polonius, and his manipulation with her, and, on the other side, the unsound, false relationship between Marko and his daughter Lila (Marko may even have a pedophilic feelings towards his daughter). Just like Hamlet the Actor also denies that he has given any presents to Lila (1364). Hamlet says to Ophelia: »No, not I, / I never gave you aught« (3.1.95-96), and the Actor repeats his statement. Lila's father Marko scolds her for bringing withered violets, which the Actor throws away (1364). In *Hamlet* Ophelia cannot give violets to Queen Gertrude because »they had all withered« (4.5). Violets symbolize faithfulness and as John Dover Wilson explains Ophelia's situation: she gives Queen Gertrude rue, which should symbolize her sorrow and repentance (*Hamlet*, p.226). In both cases, in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and in Flisar's play flower's indicate the person's nature, her/his moral values.

The Actor's demand that Maja's pimp, David, should undress himself may be interpreted from different points of view (1353). First of all, David uses Maja as a prostitute who has to undress herself before her customers and the Actor's demand may be his revenge on David's immorality, particularly because Dwavid hesitates to do this. Secondly, this demand may have a symbolic connotation, David must »discover« his true self not only to Maja but to all who are present; and thirdly, the Actor's demand may show that he has homoerotic inclinations.

When Marko arrives upon the scene the Actor greets him with words Hamlet uses when he expresses his welcome to the actors who have come to Elsinore (2.2.373; 1355). When Marko tells the Actor that he is an amateur actor, the Actor responds: »Are not we all?«, and then he tells him, »..how people saw the air too much with their hands« .. and »do not suit the action to the word«, how »we o're step .. the modesty of nature and the purpose of playing…(3.2.1-22). He also quotes Polonius and his praise of the group. The Actor is rather egocentric and he believes that he will join the common lot when he returns to dust, which is a parallel with Hamlet's meditation about Alexander the Great (5.1.197-206; 1356).

In both plays the Mouse-trap scene represents one of the dramatic climaxes: Hamlet discovers in it King's guilty conscience (3.2) and the Actor tries to see the loyalty of his companions (1360). This is also the moment when the Actor intends to see their views on life and death. The Actor himself also accepts the role of the Ghost of Hamlet's father so that the whole passage simultaneously deals with his revenge and his »o'erlasting question« of man's life and death. The Actor meditates about this topic by quoting from Hamlet's monologue, »Whether 't is nobler in the mind to suffer / The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, Or to take arms against a sea of troubles, / And by opposing end them,« (3.1.57-60; 1374).

After Lila had killed her father she embraces his dead body, she cries and tells everybody that she really loved him, that she did not wish to kill him, the Actor com-

ments this scene with Hamlet's words, which Hamlet uses after he has seen the Mousetrap scene and is persuaded about Claudius' crime: »'Tis now the very witching time of night, / When churchyards yawn, and hell itself breathes out / Contagion to this world: now could I drink hot blood, / And do such bitter business as the day / Would quake to look on..« (3.2.391-395). But he defend's Lila's action saying that actors continuously break the rules, because »..we live in an illusion that nothing is real that everything is temporary, valid only until the next performance« (1388). Flisar ends the play as a tragic-comedy, with an open but still relatively happy ending. When Lila asks theActor how they are going to survive in life, the Actor answers her: »With a smile«.

In the Afterword to the play Aleksandra Schuller presents her interpretation of Flisar's play »Njegov Hamlet in jaz« (His Hamlet and myself«; *ibid.* 1389-1398). She mentions that Lila also raises the question whether Hamlet's spirit has been revenged. The Actor tells Lila that this will never happen, because »too heavy burden was laid on too weak shoulders«. Hamlet namely regrets that he had been chosen for this task: »The time is out of joint, O curséd spite, / That ever I was born to set it right!« (1.5.187-178). The critic concludes that Flisar's »Hamlet« has achieved a *surprise*, which was not given to Shakespeare's hero and that everything what counts in life – in spite of everything that has been done and experienced in life – is man's renewal of his hope and love (1398). William Shakespeare would have probably agreed with this conclusion, because even after many murders, which occur in his tragedies, there is always a slight hope for better future.

4.0. CONCLUSION

The research has shown that a number of Slovene playwrights were also inspired by Shakespeare's plays in the period between 1930-2010. This is the period in which several productions of plays written by foreign dramatists, who made in their works allusions to Shakespeare's works or adapted them, were produced in Slovene theatres. A short list of adaptations by Slovene authors and theatre directors is included in the Introductory chapter. It varies from simple shortenings of Shakespeare's texts to transformations in puppet plays, musicals (revues), parodies, and even to a stand-up comedy of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*.

Although it is possible to surmise that quite a few important Slovene dramatists not only knew Shakespeare's plays but that they were also inspired by them, they are not included in this presentation unless such an assertion could be based on specific evidence. Authors, who are dealt with individually, included in their plays diverse thematic and poetic elements from Shakespeare's plays, which clearly show their debt to this great playwright. However, the level and the frequency of their allusions and borrowings differ quite strongly. It is also important to stress that in plays written by Slovene dramatists before the 1980s, such references were mostly made according to the original semantic meaning represented by Shakespeare, whereas more recent examples are often used as controversial statements, ironic references or parodies of the original text. There can hardly be any doubt that due to the artistic greatness and the spiritual and ethical value of Shakespeare's plays a direct or indirect influence will also be present in new plays

written by Slovene playwrights in the future.

However, one basic question still remains open: can we believe in a better future of mankind if we remember Seneca's *Thyestes*, Sophocles's *Antigone*, William Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus*, Dominik Smole's *Antigone* and Gregor Strniša's *Ljudožerci* (Cannibals)? But let us be optimistic and hope that people will be like like Miranda and will be pleasantly – even if somewhat naively – surprised and exclaim together with her:

> O wonder!
> How many goodly creatures are there here!
> How beauteous mankind is! O brave new world,
> That has such people in 't!
>
> William Shakespeare, *The Tempest* (5.1.181-183)

Is it too much to hope that the mankind will share Miranda's optimism? Did not Prospero leave Caliban on an uninhibited island? Or, is he still with us?

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BEN-HUR IN SLOVENIAN: TRANSLATIONS OF AN AMERICAN NOVEL ABOUT MULTICULTURAL ISSUES

Darja Mazi Leskovar

Abstract

The 19th century American bestseller Lew Wallace's *Ben–Hur: A Tale of the Christ* (1880) ranks among those novels that have been translated several times into Slovenian. The translations appear to be of particular interest for research from the multicultural perspective since they do testify not only to the bridging of the gap between the Slovenian and American cultures from 1899 on but also to shifts in the familiarity of the targeted Slovenian audience with the cultures of the Near East and with the Judeo–Christian tradition. By highlighting the domestication and foreignization translation procedures, applied to make the adaptations of the novel accessible to the target audience, the study focuses on the changing translation zones and overlapping spaces created between the Slovenian culture and the cultures described in the novel. The article furthermore stresses the differences between the translations as far as the targeted readers are concerned, since the epic ranks among double audience books.

Key words: Lew Wallace, translations of the American novel *Ben Hur* into Slovenian, multicultural issues, Judeo-Christian tradition, adaptations of the bestseller, changing translation zones, domestication and foreignization translation procedures, double audience.

INTRODUCTION

The novel *Ben-Hur: A Tale of the Christ* was first published in Slovenian translation in 1899, 19 years after its publication in the USA. Despite this time-lapse, the novel was the third work of American fiction to be translated into Slovenian and to address adult and younger readers alike. It followed the publications of Benjamin Franklin's Poor Richard's Almanach, published in Slovenian as Prava pot k dobrimu stanu, ali ena beseda ob pravim času in 1812 and Harriet Beecher - Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin. According to literary history, Wallace's novel was an instant success and its popularity shortly established in the whole English speaking cultural area: in two decades thirty-six English-language editions were published. At the threshold of the twentieth century Ben–Hur[1] was translated into twenty languages[2]. It has entered the USA literary reposi-

[1] The shortened form of the title will be used for practical reasons.
[2] Amy Lifson, in *Humanities*.

tory since from its first publication it has never been out of print. Until the publication of Margaret Mitchell's novel Gone with the Wind (1936), it even outsold every book except The Bible. Ben–Hur occupied the top bestseller position again in the 1960s, after the release of the blockbuster film with the same title. This book made Lewis Lew Wallace (1827 – 1905) a celebrity, even though he made his reputation also as a politician, general and a governor. Today he is the only novelist honoured in the National Statuary Hall of the U.S.A. Capitol[3] and he has been remembered for his historical novels and above all *Ben-Hur: A Tale of the Christ.*

This novel has an exceptional position in the culture of American media. It overcame the suspicion of fiction that still prevailed in the late nineteenth century. It also helped the American audience to become theatre friendlier. Film adaptations of the novel (1907, 1925, 1959 and 2003) did not diminish the popularity of the book. The 1959 movie has even an exceptional position in the history of the film since it won 11 Academy Awards, a feat equalled only by *Titanic* (1997) and *The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King* (2003) (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ben-Hur_(novel).

ON ADAPTATION, DOUBLE AUDIENCE PHENOMENON, DOMESTICATION AND FOREIGNIZATION

The story about Ben-Hur was published five times in Slovenian: in 1899, 1908, 1931, 1974 and in 1997.

In this paper the term 'adaptation' will be used in relation to all Slovenian translations of *Ben–Hur*, since, according to contemporary translation theories, all translations are adaptations as they try to adapt the original to the target language and to the cultural context of targeted readers (Anderman and Rogers: 2003). In the case of translations of *Ben–Hur,* the source cultural context is characterized by two aspects: the American context of the author and his source audience and the cultural context of the story. The chronotope of the novel is the ancient Middle East, the historic background which witnessed the clashes of cultures, particularly the confrontations between Jewish culture, the Roman culture and Christianity. Even though issues of culture and ideology are central to most of the analysis of literature, they are particularly relevant to books dealing with encounters between cultures and those which present the environments where different traditions meet. Such books tend to be especially popular with readers when authors make them feel personally involved with the topic concerned. Such involvement can help readers establish a personal bond with the fictional matter dealing with politics and religion and the setting of the historical cradle of both Judaism and Christianity and the atmosphere and tone which reveal the author's own personal engagement with the issues elaborated in the book. Despite the generally accepted view that the combination of facts and fiction has a "considerable past in the history of Anglo-American literature" (Flis 2010: 2), each literary work subsumes the possibility of uncovering new aspects of the interplay between the facts known from cultural history and the fictional elements. In

[3] http://www.neh.gov/news/humanities/2009-11/BenHur.html

the case of translations, the very different cultural contexts of the source and the target readers may add a new complexity to the understanding of the interplay between facts and fiction. Therefore the specific case of the translations of *Ben–Hur* into Slovenian appears to be especially interesting.

In several world classics, the borders between adult and children's literature have been blurred. Particularly prose texts are relatively frequently ranked among double audience literature which includes two types of books: those written with teenage or even younger readers in mind and which are read by adults as well, and literary works published for adults but discovered by younger readers. *Ben–Hur* can also be considered a double audience book, originally written for adults but attracting also younger readers. Literary criticism classifies such books as 'crossover literature' (Falconer: 557–573). When such books are translated, the translation strategies of domestication and foreignization are particularly important. Foreignization strategy, the effort to keep so many culturally specific elements of the original as possible, is related to the philosophic issues discussed by Russian philosopher and linguist Mikhail Bakhtin (Baker: 1998). The idea of foreignization finds its counterpart in domestication, the opposite concept, the aim of which is to adapt the text coming from another tradition to the cultural context of the target readers. The American translation scholar Lawrence Venuti considers foreignization and domestication as key translation strategies. For him domestication is the ideological reconstruction "of the foreign text in accordance with values, beliefs and representations that pre-exist in the target language" (Venuti, 1993: 209); as Saglia claims, domestication can occur when there is the possibility to create "overlapping spaces" that enable translation and rewriting" (Saglia, 2002: 96).

Even though the frequency of intercultural contacts normally increases the number of overlapping spaces, their creation depends also on other factors, for example on the prevalent ideology of the target culture and its compatibility with the ideas inspiring the original. In cases of reduced compatibility, particular authors or books can "fall into disgrace". *Ben Hur* is one of such books. It was issued in various epochs of Slovenian socio-political history, from the Austrian-Hungarian Empire to the independent Republic of Slovenia. The research will thus also highlight the correlation between socio-political reality and the changing translation zones as revealed by the five translations. The study of foreignization and domestication strategies will focus on proper names, names of persons and geographical names since these may be considered as relevant indicators of intercultural contacts producing overlapping semantic spaces.

THE FIRST TRANSLATIONS

The 1899 translation of *Ben-Hur* and the 1908 translation were both published in the A-H- Empire. They were based on the 1888 authorized edition in two volumes that was published in Leipzig by Bernhard Tauchnitz.[4] Both translations can thus testify to a similar cultural and socio-political context, characterised, first of all by the importance of Christian religion in public and private life and also by the vitality and importance

[4] The book was published in the Collection of *British authors* (indented by the author of this article)

of the bordering regions of Slovenian national territory for the cultural life of the entire nation. Gorica, the cultural centre of the central western part, was one of the places where printing industry was developed and the first two translations of *Ben-Hur* were published there. The second translation is based on the first one and there can be found only a few minor linguistic emendations performed by Ivo Šorli. The only real novelty, introduced by the second translator is that he changed Wallace's name Lewis into Ludvig which is the German form of the name. Consequently the analysis of the first translation is essential for the study of the translation as a mirror of the translation zones connecting the Slovenian socio-cultural context at the threshold of the 20th century with the context of this American epic.

THE 1899 TRANSLATION

The novel was first translated by Peter Miklavc who entitled the book *Ben-Hur: roman iz časov Kristusovih/A novel from the time of Christ* which is an adaption of the original title. The domestication procedure is thus obvious already on the front page: the replacement of the term 'tale' with 'novel' shows that the latter literary term was expected to attract a much more demanding public than the term 'tale'. Additionally, the author's first name, Lewis was changed into Ludvik, a name familiar to Slovenians. On the cover page there is also the information "Translated into Slovenian by Podravski" so that the work is immediately indicated to be a translation, which at the end of 19th century was not always the case.

The Slovenian translation starts with the text itself; there is no preface or introduction to the novel to explain the cultural background of the novel. It can be thus presumed that the average targeted reader was expected to be sufficiently informed about the classical and Judeo-Christian traditions to understand the story. On the other hand, the translator explains a few terms that are considered today as part of the basic (international) vocabulary mainly derived from the classical languages. For example, on page 4 the term 'horizont' (Eng. horizon) is followed by the Slovenian synonym 'obzorje' in the brackets. On page 6, the term 'tunika' (Eng. tunic) is explained with a footnote, occurring on the same page. It tells the reader that this is a piece of clothing worn in ancient Rome. Domestication with explanation in the text is more frequent. It normally clarifies the terms belonging to other cultural zones, particularly the Arab world. The term 'kufiyeh' which the author explains for his American readers in brackets as "the kerchief of the head is at this day called by the children of the desert" (p. 3), is presented in the translation as a "scarf the inhabitants of the desert wear on the head," again in brackets. However, since the translation is an adaptation also as far as the length of the novel is concerned, some extensive explanation is shortened. The start of Chapter II is a good example of the applied adaptation and domestication strategy.

It reads in the original (p.6):

> He wore the *kamis,*[5] a white cotton shirt, tight-sleeved, open in front, extending to the ankles and embroidered down the collar and breast, over

[5] Indented in the original.

> which was thrown a brown woollen cloak, now, as in all probability it was then, called the *aba*, an outer garment with long skirt and short sleeves, lined inside with stuff of mixed cotton and silk, edged all round with a margin of clouded yellow. His feet were protected by sandals, attached by thongs of soft leather. A sash held the *kamis* to his waist.

In the Slovenian translation the same passage reads (5):

> Popotnik je imel na sebi "kamis" – belo srajco z ozkimi rokavi, odprto na prsih široko od spodaj, vezano na vratu in prsih; zvrhu je nosily črn volnen plašč, imenovan "abba", s kratkimi rokavi, podvlečen s svilo in obrobljen z zlatom. Na nogah je imel opanke.

It can be noticed that in the original text the explanation of the term 'kamis' is part of the sentence where the term appears for the first time; however, in the translation the shorter explanation is given after the dash, following the term itself. This difference in punctuation indicates that the translator has tried to follow the original closely, even though he has also used the freedom to shape sentences according to the needs of the Slovenian language. Despite the shortening of the text, the translator keeps all the parts in which Wallace tried to bring the foreign world with its realia nearer to American readers, since they were essential also for the Slovenian readers. In addition, when he considers that the foreignization is too pronounced for an average targeted reader of the translation, he introduces additional explanative material, as has been already shown with the examples 'horizon' and 'tunic.'

The translator translates only the tale. He omits the introductory thought of Count Gabalis, claiming that in every instance natural causes should be sought, and only in cases when this is not possible should divine explanations be looked for. Nor are the quotations from literature that introduce each chapter in the original translated. As the original, also the Slovenian text is divided into eight books, each of which contains several chapters. The chapters of the story are shortened and adapted, according to the translator's interpretation of the importance of individual chapters. Thus the Second chapter of the First Book, relates the second and the third chapter of the original, in which the three Magi, Balthasar from Egypt, Gaspar, from Greece and Melchior from India, meet and in which, by telling each other stories, they realize they have been brought together by their determination to find the place where the saviour of the mankind will be born. Another instance of change is where the fifth, sixth and seventh chapters of the Fourth Book are retold together in the fifth chapter of the Slovenian adaptation. Only a few passages are left out altogether, for instance, the song of Ben Hur's sister Tirzah in the sixth chapter of the Second Book. Also the Egyptian elegy from the seventeenth chapter of the Fourth Book cannot be found in the Slovenian translation. On the other hand, examples can be found where the translator expands the original text. In the seventh chapter of the Second Book, the sentence "The Lord help him" (158) is rendered with "Naj mu pomaga Bog Izraelov, Bog Abrahamov in Jakobov/May he be helped by the God of Israel, the God of Abraham and Jacob" (40). The most obvious extension, however, is the introduction of titles given to most of the chapters. For instance, 'Ben-Hur in Messala'/Ben-Hur and Messala, or 'Znovič Jeruzalem/Jeruzalem again.

Despite all abbreviations, the Slovenian translation conveys the essence of the story in which the narrative of Judah Ben-Hur intertwines with the stages in the life of Jesus Christ. Ben-Hur, a Jewish prince is accused of trying to murder the Roman procurator. Without trial he is sent to work as a slave on a Roman galley, his mother and sister are imprisoned and the family property is confiscated. However, Ben-Hur manages to regain his freedom and he returns home to find his family and to take revenge on Messala, the person who is responsible for their misfortunes. After a few encounters with Jesus, Ben-Hur starts reflecting about the Saviour in other terms than those of traditional Judaism, even though he follows those who challenge Romans and talk about the great Jewish kingdom. Particularly after Jesus miraculously heals his mother and sister from leprosity, he is more and more inspired by the great Rabby and eventually becomes his follower. As a Christian, he abandons the idea of vengeance and is willing to help others to live according to their faith.

Foreignization and domestication of the text can be revealed through translation of proper personal and geographical names. Geographical names known from the classical tradition and the Biblical world were translated according to the already established forms, generally accepted in the target cultural context which was the context of Christian society. So, Judea became Judeja, Nazareth became Nazaret, Bethlehem was turned into Betlehem. Galilee was rendered as Galileja, Thessaly got the Slovenized form Tesalija and Jericho was changed into Jeriha. Some of the changes in names seem to be connected with the rules guiding Slovenian pronunciation, as it is the case of Mecca which was changed into Mekka: the letter 'k' indicates in Slovenian the sound /k/, thus the same pronunciation as it is required for the letter 'c' in the English name of the holy Muslim town.

Also with personal names the author followed various domestication and foreignization strategies. A few names remained unchanged, as Messala, the name of Judah's childhood friend who turned into a most malicious enemy, Simonides, the name of Judah's advisor and father-in-law. Other names were changed following the principles presented when discussing changes in geographical names. Names related to Christian tradition were given Slovenian domesticated equivalents. So Joseph and Mary became Jožef and Marija. Names which are also known in Slovenian, were given their Slovenian form, i.e. Esther became Estera. Domestication of some names occurred on the spelling level: the name of Judah's sister Tirzah was written without the final 'h'. A similar change occurred in the case of Balthasar which was therefore domesticated into Baltazar.

The balance between domestication and foreignization strategies in the field of geographical and personal names thus contributes to the accessibility of the text for the targeted readers at the start of the 20th century.

THE 1931 TRANSLATION

The 1931 translation was published in the time of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in Ljubljana, the centre of the part of Slovenian territory which was part of Yugoslavia. This was the period in which classical education was appreciated and in which the basic knowledge related to Judeo-Christian tradition was expected to be a constituent part of general education.

The translator, Griša Koritnik, wrote the author's name in its original form: Lewis Wallace. Ben-Hur was presented as *'Povest iz Kristusovih časov'/A Tale from the time of Christ*. He did not translate only the three introductory texts, but also the three introductory texts which should reveal the author's attitude to his work: the Cont Gabalis'a advice about following the example of the wise, Jean Paul F. Fichter's ideas about the positive impact of the repetition of the known old stories which reveal pleasant thoughts and also Milton's hymn about Christ's birth. This translation brings the entire text of the original since it includes also all quotations from literature with which Walles introduces the individual books constituting the novel of *Ben-Hur*. As the quotations are taken from British and American literature, this can be viewed as a proof that the degree of familiarity of the targeted Slovenian audience with the English speaking cultural context was sufficient to present the readers with the quotations from renowned literary masterpieces. The Second book was thus introduced with a translation of the citation from Lord Byron's *Childe Harold*, and the Third with a quote from Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* (Act IV., Sc.XIII.). Also the Slovenian translation introduces Book Seven with the quote of Thomas Bailey Aldrich, the American poet and novelist and Book Four with the quotation from Schiller's *Don Carlos* (Act IV., Sc. XV). Shiller's quote certainly created the impression about the universality of this theme among non-English speaking cultures.

The layout of the novel is respected: the text is divided into two volumes each of which is further divided into Books consisting of several chapters. The degree of domestication of the text is much more restricted than in the previous translations. Several terms explained in the footnotes are related to the Jewish religious tradition, as for example the terms 'hasan' and 'tora' (p. 55). Others are a sign of the translator's desire to make the content of the narrative understandable to his contemporaries: there is, for instance the clarification of the value of Roman silver coin in dinars, the monetary unit used by the readers in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia (p. 39). The principle of domestication of names, explained in the section discussing the 1899 translation, is also respected in this translation. The domesticated names that were introduced into a Slovenian cultural context with the 1899 translation, keep their form in this translation. Still, foreignization is diminished by the elimination of the double consonant in the name Messala. The spelling 'Mesala' is slovenized, though the name itself remains foreign as far as targeted readers are concerned.

THE 1974 TRANSLATION

The 1931 translation was used as the basic text for the 1974 adaptation which also retains the same title: *Ben-Hur Povest is Kristusovih časov/A Tale from the time of Christ.* The text of Griša Koritnik was adapted by Jože Podbrezar and published by Mohorjeva Družba in Celje. This adaptation was published in the midst of a period characterised by communist and socialist ideology and its antireligious propaganda. Its special feature is the inclusion of concluding remarks entitled *O knjigi in pisatelju/On the book and the author*.

The accompanying text explains that this adaptation was published because there was a continuing audience demand for the novel which is such a success with American audiences: the only comparable instances are those of the attention given to Beecher-Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and the works of Walter Scott and Charles Dickens. The successful dramatisations of the bestseller are also listed. What is particularly important from the perspective of the current study is the information that *Ben-Hur* influenced Sienkiewicz's *Quo vadis* (1894-1896), a novel popular with generations of Slovenian readers. Moreover, the commentary gives a short but effective analysis of the features of the critics' opinion of the style, including the drawbacks, such as sentimentality and pomposity. It underlines the black-white characterisation which goes in line with the intention of the book to present the struggle between good and evil, a fight that is finally won by the good. The reasons for such an ideology in the narrative are to be found in the author's life. Wallace's aim was to put a stop at Anti-Semitism and to pinpoint the true Christian values. However, this commentary presents Lewis Wallace above all as a fighter who protected law and order as well as the rights of the oppressed, something which was an important piece of information in the 1970s, when the Yugoslav governing elite featured the communist-socialist regime as the supporter of the oppressed all around the world. Consequently the idea of the envisaged victory of the oppressed is also stressed. Since the book was published by the only publishing house which printed Christian-oriented texts, it can be presumed that this socio-cultural commentary was not only necessary but also welcomed by the public authorities.

The text had to be newly adapted, as language changes and the forty year lapse demands some adaptation towards the contemporary ways of expression as well as to the characteristics and expectations of the new reading audiences. From the point of view of layout this translation distances itself from the previous one since, first, the explanatory notes appear only at the end of the narrative, and second, because the chapters are indicated only with numbers, expressed in words. These changes make the text more mature-reader oriented. The new translation thus meets the changes that had occurred in the taste and interests of the targeted adult-reader. Some passages that would presumably not be particularly interesting for the presumed 1970 audience have been therefore left out. In particular the detailed descriptions, for example of buildings and palaces, were shortened considerably. Also a few longer discussions which slow down the action of the narrative have been either deleted or shortened. As a result, readers who presumably had less classical and theological background than the audience addressed by the previous translations would find more accessible a literary work which in its original form presents a series of demanding theological, historical and philosophical issues. This adaptation thus responded to the needs of the new reading public and it has since then been keeping alive the interest of Slovenian readers.

THE 1997 TRANSLATION

The 1997 translation of *Ben-Hur*, a translation of the adaptation of Wallace's novel written by the American writer Anne de Graaf, was published in the new socio-political context, created by the founding of the Republic of Slovenia. The book, which is a

picture book, was published by Mohorjeva Družba and translated by Marko Dobravec. The English adaptation has the same title as Wallace's original: *Ben-Hur A Tale of the Christ*. The Slovene title is *Ben-Hur Zgodba iz Kristusovih časov*. On the cover itself it is also stated that the story is retold by Anne de Graaf for today's children. The same information is given on the Slovenian cover, thus classifying the book as reading for children

The book starts with an introductory page provided by the Slovenian editor. The introductory commentary gives the basic information on the novel and its author. It stresses that the book was an immediate success and that Lewis Wallace held various important positions in American public and political life. As an advocate of those who were denied human rights, he is said to have mirrored his own turbulent times in the story of a young man who had to experience humiliation but who was strong enough to preserve his pride and dignity and finally to admit that Jesus is the Redeemer. The introduction also brings the chronology of Slovenian translations. It is stressed that the first adaptation was published as early as 1899. The passage concludes with the introduction of Anne de Graaf who is presented as a children's literature author whose aim was to tell the classical story in simple contemporary language so that it could successfully address modern children.

The text of the narrative consists of 28 adapted chapters, each of which has a title. The chapters of the story are shortened, according to the translator's interpretation of the importance of individual passages of the text for the child reader. Thus, for example, the second chapter, entitled 'Kralj vseh kraljev/King of kings', talks about the encounters of the Three Magi with Herod and Jesus, the baby-boy. The fifth chapter, Ob vodnjaku/At the fountain, describes the first encounter between Jesus and Ben-Hur, both teenagers. The seventh chapter, 'Bitka na morju/Sea battle' tells why the famous Roman, Quintus Arrius, adopted the main hero as a young man. The final chapter, 'Božji načrt/God's plan', presents Ben-Hur hurrying to be near Jesus after he was arrested, as well as the crucifixion and the changes in the life of those who believed that Jesus was the Lord. The layout of the story is also adapted to the child reader: the text is rendered in short paragraphs and most of the narrative is advanced through dialogue. Compared to names used in previous Slovenian translation, domestication strategy is even more strictly applied: the name of Simonides is domesticated into Simonid and Balthasar is slovenized into Boltežar. The latter name is rather familiar to children since it is connected with Slovenian folk traditions in which children play an important role.

This picture-book is lavishly illustrated with the original colour illustrations of Willem Zijlstra. The artist presents selected scenes described in the text and therefore contributes essentially to the understanding of the storyline and the message of the story. Particularly valuable are the illustrations showing cultural aspects related to Roman and Jewish traditions, as for instance the image of the galley and of Jerusalem, both of which might otherwise have been difficult for targeted readers to imagine. The picture-book format opens up a new perspective on narrative within the Slovenian cultural context, while at the same time remains of interest to both young readers and the larger reading public: research proves that picture-books have given rise to an expanded reading audience (Nikolajeva and Scott: 2001). Other research shows that the so called 'classics' tend frequently to change their position and audience (Beckett: 2002).

CONCLUSION

This survey of translations of *Ben-Hur* into Slovenian reveals that of five translations, four are uncovering time-specific attitudes related to the culture of the USA and issues connected with multiculturalism. Since they were issued in four different socio-political contexts, they testify not only to their audiences' increasing familiarity with the English-speaking cultures but also to a shift in familiarity with the Middle East and the Judeo-Christian tradition. The latter has been strongly influenced by the cultural and ideological policies of each of the particular government systems towards religion as well as by the secularisation tendencies typical of the Central and West European contexts. The application of domestication and foreignization translation strategies with reference to names of persons and places furthermore proves that the domestication principle has increasingly gained ground. Even though literary theory holds that *Ben-Hur* is a cross-over fiction, audiences of the first four Slovenian translations have not been specified. It can be presumed that the narrative was read by readers from teen-age or young adulthood onwards. Conversely, the 1997 translation aims at children. At the end of the twentieth century, the novel has thus gained a new position in the Slovenian cultural history.

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FAULKNER'S SOUTHERN BELLE – MYTH OR REALITY?

Nataša Intihar Klančar

Abstract

The article deals with heroines of William Faulkner's novels *Light in August*, *Absalom, Absalom!, The Sound and the Fury, The Unvanquished, The Town* and his short story "A Rose for Emily." The Southern belle features as a recurring character in Faulkner's fiction, her fragility, modesty, weakness yet strength, beauty, sincerity, generous nature, status and her fall from innocence comprise her central characteristics. Confronted with various expectations of Southern society and with the hardships of war, the belle is faced with many obstacles and challenges.

Faulkner's heroines face a wide array of problems that prevent them from being and/or remaining a Southern belle. Let us name a few: Lena's inappropriate social status, Joanna's wrong roots, Mrs. Hightower's inability to fulfill her duties as the minister's wife, Ellen's miserable marriage, Judith's sad love life, Rosa's feelings of inferiority and humiliation, Mrs. Compson's failure as a mother, Caddy's weak rebellion against male convention, Drusilla's male characteristics, Linda's unrequited love and Emily's dark secret, to name a few.

Through these characters and their destinies Faulkner shows a decaying South whose position has changed considerably over the years. Can the Southern belle save it? Can she save herself?

Key words: William Faulkner, Southern belle, myth, Southern literature

The term Southern belle (derived from the French word *belle*, 'beautiful') is an archetype for a young woman of the American Old South's upper class. The ideal of the Southern belle evolved in the 1930s and it combined positive characteristics and described a perfect daughter, sister, mother, wife and life companion. Typical Southern beauty was not her only distinction, she was accompanied by other virtues as well, the most prominent being devotion to her family and husband, modesty, respect of ancestors, fragility and tenderness.

The image of a perfect woman combines fragility and weakness on one and a certain amount of bravery, persistence and emotional strength to overcome daily problems on the other side. As Anne Goodwyn Jones states in *The Encyclopedia of Southern Culture* the jobs and duties of a Southern lady are

> satisfying her husband, raising the children, meeting the demands of the family's social position, and sustaining the ideals of the South. Her

> strength in manners and morals is contingent, however, upon her submission to the source – God, the patriarchal church and her husband – and upon her staying out of the public life, where she might interfere in their formulation. (1527, 1528)

The description of a Southern belle would incorporate characteristics such as: the belle is a privileged white girl at the glamorous and exciting period between being a daughter and becoming a wife. She is the fragile, dewy, just-opened bloom of the southern female: flirtatious but sexually innocent, bright but not deep, beautiful as a statue or painting or porcelain but like each risky to touch. She "epitomize[s] Southern hospitality, cultivation of beauty and a flirtatious yet chaste demeanor" (Wikipedia: 2011).

The Southern belle was thus a woman put on the pedestal and as a true beauty she had to be protected by the men, especially from their sexual advances, harasses and maybe even attacks. Sexual relations before getting married were not approved of by the society, nor were there any sorts of affairs that the ladies could have engaged into. The story itself was quite different, to be sure, depending largely on the ones referred to – be it men (married or single) or women. Men's affairs and sexual conquest in a way contributed to their image of masculinity. Similar double standards were applied to racial relations. Victorian society strongly disapproved of a relationship between a white woman and a black man, whereas white men often indulged into relationships with white women, most commonly with their maids and slaves.

The image of the Southern belle finds its origin in the patriarchally organized society where beside a strong man there was a fragile and helpless woman whose role was to empower the man's feeling of confidence, strength and domination. In contrast to this a typical woman of the South (see above) was not inactive. On the contrary: she devoted her time to developing various skills that helped her take better care of the children and improve her housework activities. Moreover, those from lower and middle classes took to manual labor as well.

During the Civil War the expectations towards women changed considerably. It should be mentioned, though, that it was also the time they were living in that contributed to the change of their image. Magical and superior characteristics previously applied to them started to fade away and behind a gentle and beautiful face the reality of war constructed a woman, whose priorities lay with taking care of her husband and children, the wounded, running the plantations, education and the like. They became hard-working, responsible and more independent.

The South is at the core of William Faulkner's interest and he managed to research various characters in his work. His heroines differ from each other a great deal but when looked at in detail they share many similarities. The Southern belle etiquette can be attributed to them all but in various shapes and forms. Living in the South had a strong impact on their lives, they had to overcome many difficulties and face many challenges.

In Faulkner's *Light in August* from 1932 we meet Lena Grove, who at first sight might not seem a typical Southern belle for when we meet her she is an outcast whose connection with nature grows by the minute. Let us try to analyze her a bit closer to see where and to what quantity the elements of the beauty lie in her. Next in line is Joanna

Burden, whose attempts to be accepted as a Southerner fail miserably for she is nevertheless seen as a Northerner. Mrs. Gail Hightower, McEachern, Amistad and Hines are minor characters but they also contribute to the story itself.

Lena's simplicity presents the main factor that prevents her from getting a wider insight into aristocracy and its life. The greatness stands hidden for her, but Faulkner nevertheless manages to include some signs that might hint at her wanting to be a part of high society. The only reference connected to her childhood shows Lena as a little girl, riding a carriage to town along with her father. Before climbing up she takes her shoes off, when they arrive to the town, she puts them back on again and walks a bit away from the carriage, making her father think she is worried about her shoes. The real reason, though, lies in the fact that she would like to be seen as a lady with urban origins rather than rural. This elevated style, the way she speaks and behaves comes to the upfront again when she feeds. Despite her blue dress being faded, Faulkner is attentive enough to notice the color of her hat brim matches the dress. But it is not only the clothes that show her wish to belong to high circles; it is also her behavior, shown in the way she talks to the Armistids: well-mannered although her choice of words is simple. She expresses praise and cannot stop thanking good people for their helpfulness and kindness, knowing she has neither the money nor the means to actually do it. The above-mentioned characteristics point to Lena's wish of being a lady – or at least look like one.

Unfortunately, though, her wishes and dreams do not come true due to her behavior and "wrong" roots that push her away from civilization. Her social position prevents her from becoming one of those lucky ladies who do not have to work for their survival and whose chores include taking care of maids or slaves, taking part in social gatherings and/or church ordeals. Together with her inappropriate social status, there is another obstacle, namely her attitude towards men, both towards Lucas Brown and towards her own brother. She lives with his family for many years, looks after his children, helps in his house and thus does not see her brother as the provider of his family. She finds it easy to leave his house and goes after her lover. It should be noted, though (as Faulkner notices too) that neither does her brother feel the need to protect Lena, take care of her or even try to keep her in his house. It was her wrong-doing that was responsible for her status. She betrayed her family and disgraced its name and almost brought it upon her to have to leave. Last but not least: she presented yet another hungry member to be fed.

Leaving home is a serious and difficult step she takes but she manages to find the courage and will needed to defend herself from the accusing society. Her way is taken with a mission: a mission to find her soul mate, to marry and take the traditional role of a woman in a marriage. Strong wishes aside, she turns Byron down at first, showing her fear of becoming clung to one man after marriage and lose the freedom she has been enjoying. She takes a personal decision to prolong her single days a bit more and to enjoy her time as a young individual with her own wishes, thoughts and ideas.

Joanna Burden, on the contrary, is quite a different character. She suffers no financial shortage and has all the characteristics of a Southern lady. One persisting problem in her life is presented by the fact that she cannot escape her roots. While true Southern belles can boast a long list of eminent predecessors, Joanna has none and her family appears an intruder in Jefferson. Her grandfather was a puritan from New Hampshire

and did not leave a mark that would count in the South. Geographically speaking Joanna is born in the South but the society sees a Yankee in her.

However, she has many characteristics that pertain to Southern belles, such as: a high level of independence, courage, family pride she takes in, a dedication and understanding of male members of her family. Her grandfather, stepbrother and father are all deceased but still exercise strong influence on her decisions and her way of life. It is because of them that she gives up her role as a wife and a mother and rather takes a more active role in the struggle for the blacks' and for their ideas, principles and rights.

Compared to Lena's and Joanna's social status, Mrs. McEachern and Mrs. Armistid fall somewhere in the middle between the two. They are both wives of independent farmers whom they are committed and devoted to. It can be seen from Faulkner's descriptions that living in a marriage did not make Mrs. Armistid a submissive and obedient wife but she managed to remain an independent and stubborn woman who fights for her place and does not submit to her husband. Mrs. McEachern, on the other hand, has lost her independence and self-confidence through many years of marriage. Her strong husband and his different view of the world has taken its toll on her. Thus she remains far from the image of a fragile Southern belle whose strong and determined character lies within her.

Mrs. Armistid stands in her sharp contrast, she enjoys her husband's approval, is free to be religiously active, is known for her generosity and good manners and is at the same time a devoted wife, a loving and caring mother, a good housewife, a perfect personification of the ideal of the Southern Belle. She is s great woman from all angles. The only odd moment of doubt is arisen by the fact that her dominance outshadows her quiet and indecisive husband completely.

The image of a perfect wife has a major influence on Gail Hightower's wife. As a daughter of a distinguished professor Mrs. Hightower has spent her life in high society. She is educated, well-mannered and knows the society's expectations and demands in detail. She lives surrounded by a strictly limited circle of her father's friends and acquaintances, while marrying Hightower satisfies her wish to create her own life, removed from her parents.

Sadly enough, her decision to marry soon proves to be the wrong one for it does not open any opportunities she had been longing for. Prior to their wedding she is known for her loyalty and helping hand. She helps her husband-to-be get the long awaited job in Jefferson. This is what he has always wanted but is now unfortunately unable to amply repay her efforts. In the end Mrs. Hightower becomes a victim of her husband's church society and is unable to meet its expectations. The society demands loyalty, honesty, humility, sincerity, it expects an active involvement in church life, and expects her to be a perfect housewife and wife with all the qualities pertaining to the two titles. The burden society has placed on her shoulders is heavy to carry but she does not despair. Her independence is put to the test, yet she does not – in opposition to Mrs. McEachern – give in to the increasing pressure and to the patriarchal society. Her rebellion is shown through her sudden many trips to Memphis which remain unexplained till the novel's end. She fails to fulfill her duties as the minister's wife and shows no interest in her husband's services and sermons. To get a better and clearer understanding of her obligations, she is sent to a sanatorium but after her return does not change a bit and

miserably ends her existence by committing suicide which at the time seems the only solution for her miserable life.

A very similar set of expectations and demands is put upon Mrs. Atkins and Bobby Allen but neither can express such rebellion as Mrs. Hightower. Each rebels in her own way, though. Bobby Allen defies her traditionally accepted role of a woman and wife by becoming a prostitute, while Mrs. Atkins seeks sexual satisfaction outside her marriage. Mrs. Atkins is another example of a character that has to fight for their position. She is in strong opposition to her husband's irrational behavior supported by religiously fanatic demands. When their grandson is born, she decides to protect him from his grandfather who is responsible for the boy's unmarried mother's death. Her struggle is everlasting and difficult.

And such is also Thomas Sutpen from *Absalom, Absalom!* (1951). His idea of a distinguished, magnificent and respected family goes terribly wrong and ends in failure. He is nevertheless constantly accompanied by an array of Southern belles: his second wife Ellen, daughter Judith and his sister-in-law (and almost his third wife) Rosa.

Ellen has a solid Southern belle basis: she was raised in a proper way, comes from a respected family and is admired by society. Her sister Rosa sees a strong woman in her and it is exactly this strength that helps her survive her wedding day fiasco. Her pre-arranged marriage is difficult to handle but her decision is firm: she will respect her husband no matter what. Her fellow villagers boycott her wedding, there is great sadness inside her, and she is struggling not to break down. Faulkner is sarcastic about wedding day preparations and feelings: "Maybe women are even less complex than that and to them any wedding is better than no wedding and a big wedding with a villain preferable to a small one with a saint" (Faulkner 1987: 61).

As a wife she follows the patriarchally oriented Southern society and accepts her husband's outbursts of anger, physical violence and cheating with slaves, the product of which are his illegal children. The shocking part is that Ellen takes one of them and raises her as her own child. She is always obedient and does not dare to contradict her husband. She only does it ones: when she sees her daughter missing, goes looking for her and finds her in the barn where she can see Thomas fighting and their son looking in order to see what it takes to become a real man, as his father believes. Her reaction is spontaneous and filled with fear for her daughter's well-being, for her innocence and purity. At the same time it is an expression of her devoted motherhood.

The readers follow her transition from a fearful and worried young wife to another period during which she glows and lives like a true Southern belle. Southern society loves her, accepts her and her children as their own and shows them respect accordingly. It looks as if it could not get any better. But Rosa feels there is more to this story:

> If she had had the fortitude to bear sorrow and trouble, [she] might have reason to actual stardom in the role of the matriarch, arbitrating from the fireside corner of a crone the pride and destiny of the family, instead of turning at the last to the youngest member of it and asking her to protect the others. (83)

Ellen Coldfield Sutpen is a Southern belle whose life is a rollercoaster ride. She has many characteristics pertaining to the ideal of the Southern belle but they are not

enough. Despite being an understanding and obeying daughter, a devoted wife, a loving mother and a church devotee this does not assure her longtime happiness. The tragedy of her life is balanced alongside the story of the South's past. Antebellum South found praise for (outside) image, family pride and society's well-being, all put way ahead of the woman's feelings and happiness.

Her daughter Judith Sutpen is another character who symbolically points at the struggle and sacrifice of a Southern belle during the Civil War. Idyllic youth filled with love, tenderness and attention are followed by the cruelty of war when she is suddenly faced with a completely different situation. She is the one who has to take care of the house, she has to learn the housework and various skills to be able to survive. There is neither hesitation nor self-pity in her behavior. If her life in the Antebellum South was dull and empty, it is now filled with new responsibilities and duties, and is as such varied and full of challenges.

There is power inside her that comes to the prominence after the murder of her fiancé and her brother Charles flees to escape the punishment and she is left alone. Strength, dignity and courage stand hand in hand to help her survive the hardships of war and personal loss. Moreover, she is strong enough to welcome Charles's son and her octoroon mistress in her house. On top of it all, she even accepts their son Charles Etienne as if he were her own. The love she gives is by all means way bigger and deeper than the one shown from Mrs. Compson in Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury* (1929) seen below. The situation changes completely when her dad returns from war. Then a sudden transformation takes place – transformation that makes her a timid, shy and scared woman whose position is again controlled by the patriarchal Southern society and it expectations.

Rosa Coldfield is another example of a Southern belle. She is an educated woman who at first lives with her father and spends quite some time writing poetry. During the war she moves to her brother-in-law's house where she lives with her niece. She is faced with an indecent proposal when offered to marry him but beforehand having a sexual intercourse to prove her being able to bear his babies. She turns him down, of course, and is left deeply hurt and humiliated. Her life changes considerably, she never seems to find happiness again. She returns to a collapsing house where her feelings of shame, sadness, weariness and despair multiply. She is unable to find balance in her life, her future looks gloom and she is aware of this. The misery grows as years go by and she is stigmatized forever.

Moreover, her Aunt who used to take care of the housekeeping escapes one day and thus leaves Rosa alone. She needs to learn how to do the housework in order to survive. She is only successful at it for she leaves all the financial matters to her father due to her inability to see the importance of money. Life has played a trick on her and Faulkner reveals her bitter life story page by page. When her father dies, she has to live by other citizens' friendly donations and somehow she manages to live a decent life.

It should be noted, though, that Rosa does everything she can to retain the image of a proper lady and behaves accordingly. She is unable to meet the expectations of a patriarchal society completely because she does not marry. But she does submit to its demands and is perfectly aware of her position as an unmarried woman in the South. What is more, she even accepts its help in a silent way for acknowledging it openly

would be a loud and outspoken critique of her late father's inability to provide for her appropriately. The Coldfields' position in Southern society would be hurt and therefore she does everything she can not to comment on the subject. Her dignified behavior and her concern for the respect of her family name place her among Southern belles.

Out of the three heroines from the novel *The Sound and the Fury* (1929), only two can compete to find themselves among the Southern belles, while Dilsey does not fulfill the race criterion and must be ruled out immediately, the two remaining being Mrs. Compson and Caddy. The former is ready to do almost everything to become and remain a true woman of the South. She does have a special attitude towards it, though. Her understanding of the belle's characteristics is limited and she shares the opinion that her frailty and weakness are the only necessary qualities that enable her to belong to this group. She casts aside other much more important issues, such as a complete devotion to both, her husband and to the patriarchal system. Needless to say, she shows neither love nor affection for her children.

She is not a good wife and she fails as a mother. Her feelings and emotions are strictly limited to one side of her family, namely the Bascombs, whereas the Compsons do not deserve her time. She does not equate family with either love or protection but rather with blood and reputation. Thus she shows absolutely no affection for her children but idolizes Jason because she sees a Bascomb in him. She is a weak shallow woman obsessed with herself and her family's social position.

She spends most of her time in her bedroom, yelling useless and pathetic comments to Dilsey. She keeps complaining about her health and feels sorry for herself. She in a way symbolically represents the Compsons' decaying house which is off the beaten social path. Mrs. Compson is far from an image of an ideal Southern belle for her obsession with her own self moves her away from the society and the reality of the world. All her (possibly) good qualities fade away and are hidden to the reader to either feel or see. She is unable to continue the expected pattern from her ancestors because she cannot adapt to the constantly changing modern world but rather sticks to her vision of the world and her role in it.

As the complete antithesis to her mother, Caddy is strong, compassionate, tender and independent. Faulkner adored her and she was his heart's darling and one of his favorite characters which he often pointed out in interviews. She is the epitome of beauty and Southern elegance, and she is strong enough to escape the traps of the past through her purity, innocence and simplicity. She acts according to the topic: she is chatty and lively when her brother Benjy is the subject of the talk but is quiet and shy when her fate is in the focus point. She does not want to have her feelings and emotions out in the public eye and so tries to keep her position in society.

She does fail considerably, though, because of her sexual advances at men. She sees how Victorian society managed to disfigure her mother's character and personality and deep inside knows she will not follow her way. She seeks many sexual relationships in her adolescence, which is frowned upon by society and by her family too. When she defies the convention to assert her selfhood, all male members show openly their disapproval: her father finds comfort in alcohol abuse, Quentin insults Dalton Ames, then begs her not to marry Herbert Head and as a culmination of everything commits suicide. Benjy responds by howling and shouting. Disapproval is shown by Jason as well

– both towards Caddy and towards her daughter whom she uses to avenge her sister's sins. Caddy becomes a fallen woman who is not allowed to visit her parental home and the very mention of her name is forbidden by her mother.

Caddy's weakness is shown in her passive approval of and agreement with the pre-arranged marriage and reaches its highest point when she gives up her right as a mother, believing she is not good enough to raise her own daughter. At the same time her surrender is a result of her low self-esteem, accompanied by low self-respect. Needless to say, her patched-together marriage occurs to hide the fact that she is pregnant. She does not find happiness or respect in her married life. She feels "ashamed of herself as a natural woman with emotional and sexual desires" (Tao 2000: 1).

She could have reached the belle ideal and met everyone's expectations but it is Southern society that prevents her from it. She is a loser in her rebellion against male convention. When her feelings are at stake, the society does not hesitate to point out how inappropriate they are. Her family does not help either and so love is lost for her. If she had had one more chance, I am sure she could have led a better, fulfilled life where she would be recognized as a loving mother and devoted wife.

Drusilla from *The Unvanquished* is quite a different character who adopts many male characteristics. Her wish to fight in the civil war makes her opt for male clothes and cuts her hair. Moreover: her behavior and rhetoric change accordingly. Her wish comes true when during the battle she rides alongside her future husband, John Sartoris. She possesses courage and fearlessness that prevail in her personality. After the war the two marry and John eventually manages to persuade her to become more feminine again. Nevertheless, she remains unfeminine and brave inside. The reader gets the feeling that it is a man by John's side and not his wife, for they are treated equally and share the same characteristics.

"The Odor of Verbena" is the most prominent story of the novel. It focuses on Drusilla's loss of her husband and her life afterwards. She wants to take his authoritative role and act according to the code of honor, still very much present in 1874. She hands her stepson Bayard two guns, kisses him goodbye and expects him to avenge his father's death. When he silently refuses to do so, Drusilla is left devastated and shocked for it is the first time her authoritative attitude has not met her expectations. The feeling of her own unimportance and frailty push her into hysterics, she flees town way before Bayard returns from the duel where he had gone unarmed.

Drusilla is unable to grasp the extension of Bayard's dilemma. Drusilla and the Southern society on one hand, his knowing that yet another victim would not make things better on the other. At the age of 17 he had already committed crime when he and his friend shot a man who was trying to rob his father. The deed has provided him with neither satisfaction nor relief.

The devastating year of Drusilla's life affect her enormously, both the war and her husband's death are tragic events that force her to do her best and show her courage, devotion and act according to the code of honor. Despite her strong personality, she is shown as a torn and destroyed person in the end, filled with despair and disappointment. Her courage is commented on by Faulkner, she rides "in man's clothes and with her hair cut short like any other member of [Sartoris'] troop, across Georgia and both Carolinas in front of Sherman's army" (Faulkner 1959: 167). She does, however, show

her gentle side when she leaves a verbena on Bayard's pillow. The verbena is a symbol of courage, "that odor which she said you could smell alone above the smell of horses" (Faulkner 1959: 167). By doing so she shows her agreement with his reaction and her approval of his courage and honor.

Drusilla's impulsiveness and her strength of character do not put her into the Southern belle category. Historians did approve of brave and fearless women of the South, but there were not many who rode by the side of the Confederacy for sure. Many positive characteristics of the belle define her personality but there are numerous she does not possess. She is by no means feminine and gentle. She accepts her husband's dresses merely as a gift and by wearing them shows her respect and love for him. She is quite aggressive in her reactions towards her stepson's decisions. A true lady would accept him as he is and not object. In the end she escapes his decision rather than accepts it.

Aunt Jenny, on the contrary, understands his nephew's dilemma. She shows a calm poise, her composure, sincerity and obedience fit into the Southern belle description perfectly. She knows Bayard well enough to see the extension of his distress after his father's death. Traumatic feelings he is faced with have a history and she is strongly aware of it. Jenny offers him a different, more realistic view of the world. It is not so much about the advice or support she gives but more about the knowledge that she will always be there for him, no matter what.

Linda from Faulkner's novel *The Town* (1957) is an example of a rather untypical Southern belle. Being an illegitimate daughter of Eula Varner and her lover, life puts various tests and challenges along her way. Her mother's miserable love life ends in suicide, commented on by V. K. Ratliff: "She loved, had the capacity to love, to give and to take it. Only she tried twice and failed twice not just to find somebody strong enough to deserve it but even brave enough to accept it" (Faulkner 1957: 150). After her mother's death Linda departs for New York where she marries a Jewish communist, they fight in the Spanish war where she loses both her husband and her hearing. Her wish to stop the racial segregation at school is another turning point in her life, showing her uniqueness and rebellion.

After her return from war she finds a job in Jefferson and support in Gavin who had been in love with her mother Eula but Flem led her away from him. Now Gavin is falling in love with Linda who knows that these kinds of feelings were the ones she had been waiting for all her life: "I know now I've never really had anybody but you. I've never really even needed anybody else" (Faulkner 1957: 420). And she is exactly like her mother: "needing, fated to need, to find something competent enough, strong enough [...] to take what she had to give; and at the same time doomed to fail" (Faulkner 1957: 233). Unfortunately, Linda remains alone and miserable for Gavin marries another woman – a widow.

Last but not least, there is Emily from Faulkner's short story entitled "A Rose for Emily" from 1954. She seems a true Southern belle at first: during her youth she is a girl her father is proud of. Her innocence, sweetness, purity, tenderness and frailty point at her belle-like status. Sadly though, some of her actions show another side of her personality and the expectations of the Southern society are not met at all.

After her father's death Emily leads a solitary life, not showing any feelings of sadness, sorrow or regret. She fails miserably when she finds out Homer has no inten-

tions whatsoever to marry her. She hides her feelings and becomes a different person. She decides to take control of her life. She does not answer the pharmacist's question about why she is buying poison. Her little victory is shown in the fact that he sells her arsenic without asking any further questions.

Her strength of character and behaving according to the Southern belle code is displayed at an unpleasant topic of tax payment. She manages to persuade all the city notabilities that she will not pay them. She rejects the seniors and the mayor and sends out a clear message that says she will not submit to their wishes and commands. The society feels that "Miss Emily had been a tradition, a duty, and a care; a sort of hereditary obligation upon the town" (Faulkner 1954: 489).

She is left alone and her image is characterized "with a vague resemblance to those angels in colored church windows–sort of tragic and serene" (Faulkner 1954: 493). The money her father had left her, slowly but steadily melts away and therefore she is forced to earn some, which she does by teaching porcelain painting. Southern society does want to get involved and help her through her rough times but she will not let them. They feel the need to offer a helping hand after the loss of her father. Moreover, they share the opinion that her father's death should not affect her in the way to accept Homer who is below her aristocratic status. It is exactly this group of people who start questioning her health, making parallels with her aunt's poor mental state.

When looked at in detail, Emily's true nature springs out: there is a manipulative woman hidden behind a perfect Southern belle image. She is devising new schemes behind the locked door: "She passed from generation to generation–dear, inescapable, impervious, tranquil, and perverse" (Faulkner 1954: 496). It is with utmost thoughtfulness and accuracy that she has been poisoning Homer, her lover. Thus her moral strength is questioned and sapped. She is driven by her motives and she lives by the self-made rules which are not controlled by the society at all.

She finds refuge behind the Southern code of honor and pride where her mean behavior is hidden and her image of a perfect Southern belle safe. She takes her secret to the grave, leaving the Southern society with the idea that she has been one of the last remaining jewels of the South. Reality is different, of course, but it is only the reader who knows it (besides Faulkner and Emily, of course). Emily has failed miserably at the test of purity and perfection and there are many reasons for it, the most prominent being the role of her father. By being highly possessive towards her, he isolated her from the rest of the world and therefore made it impossible for her to either love or be loved. As a consequence Emily chose to live in isolation. Maybe some of the reasons for her fall may lie in her genetic predisposition as well: her aunt's problems.

The reasons for her behavior lie in Emily herself, as well as in her relatives and in the society which affects a person through its expectations, demands and actions. Catastrophic results ruin certain characters and affect their lives in ways they did not even dare to think about. It is via Emily and other heroines that Faulkner wanted to show criticism of the antebellum Southern society that interfered with women's lives and destinies. The social stereotype of a perfect woman of the South in his works is confronted with difficulties and often disappointment and failure.

As already mentioned Faulkner's female characters do not come across as perfect representatives of the South but it can be held true that they come close to them with

some personality characteristics and behavior. The decaying Southern society is shown through Faulkner's heroines. Despite many positive and worthy qualities that praise the ideal image of a woman, these same qualities can have a dual effect and at the same time destroy them and push them in despair, disappointment and weakness that eventually ends in a tragic and sad conclusion. Social norms, unreal and unattainable wishes, demands and expectations that women cannot meet nor fulfill, bring unwanted consequences not only for the woman herself but also for her closer and wider society.

The patriarchal Southern society and its idolizing the perfect Southern belle does much damage to these women who cannot meet all the expectations and fail to act out their role as a perfect belle. They carry in them many qualities that help them live, survive and keep a position in the then society. Their signifying features include pride, a strong will, the appropriate upbringing, good manners, education, a sense of morality and religious activity. Trying hard to confront all the challenges of the changing society they may suffer considerably and many end up miserable, broken, forgotten and lost.

Faulkner's novels unveil "the anguish and suffering of women in the South and expose the role of the patriarchal society and culture in constricting, defining, shaping and controlling the [belles] (Tao 2000: 2). We experience different types of women that shed light on different aspects of the novels and have different roles. They are in fact hints, all in their own manner, of the changing and decaying South.

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LOUIS ADAMIC’S EARLY DAYS: TRANSLATOR OF CROATIAN LITERATURE

Jerneja Petrič

Abstract

The article analyzes Louis Adamic’s early translation phase that included, apart from his translations from Slovenian, also Croatian literature. His translations had a double function: to help him improve his English and to promote him as a writer. He randomly chose some Croatian short stories which he partly translated and partly adapted. He also did his best to introduce the authors to the American readers. The stories were published in American magazines but Adamic’s repeated effort to publish a book of Yugoslav translations sadly failed. In spite of this, he was an important groundbreaker in the field paving the way for other translators who followed in his wake.

Key words: Louis Adamic, his translations from Croatian literature

Although a Slovenian by birth, Louis Adamic was fascinated with the idea of being a member of a large family of Slavic nations of which several were joined together in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, his native land. In his 1934 book *The Native’s Return* he explained this as follows,

> Slovenia, or Carniola, to which I devote the foregoing chapters, is my old country in the narrow, intimate sense. Yugoslavia, within which Slovenia is but one-twelfth part, is my old country (since 1918) in a broader, less intimate way: for the other eleven-twelfths are rather unlike my native province. (…) But all the provinces have also a great deal in common. Indeed, their similarities are more fundamental than their divergencies. The people inhabiting them are all South Slavs (Yugoslavs, yugo meaning “south”). The language of Slovenia, for example, is very similar to the Serbo-Croatian used through the rest of Yugoslavia.[1] (108)

In 1921, less than a decade after his immigration to the States, Adamic began to publish translations of Slovenian, Croatian and Bohemian short stories in American newspapers and magazines. Aside from numerous Slovenian authors, he also translated

[1] Adamic bowed to the then popular compound Serbo-Croatian as basically one language.

some Croatian ones: Milan Ogrizović, Ivan Krnic, Mirko Jurkić, Vladimir Nazor, Iso Velikanović, S.H. (not identified) and a Slovenian-Croatian author Zofka Kveder.

Listed below are Adamic's translations of Croatian literature; the English title and publishing data come first followed by the title and the publishing information regarding the source text:

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Vladimir Nazor, "Angelo the Stonecutter", *The Living Age* CCCXXIII (November 29, 1924), 483-488.["Klesar Angelo", *Priče iz djetinjstva*, Zagreb 1924. 156-176.]

Iso Velikanović, "The Old Fogies' Club", *The Living Age* CCCXXIV (January 31, 1925), 260-265. ["Klupoderski klub", *Srijemske priče*. "Savremeni hrvatski pisci" št. 34, Zagreb, 1915. 65-75.]

S.H. (not identified), "At the Tailor's Dance", *The Living Age*, CCCXII (June 24, 1922), 786-90. ["Ples kot pukovnijskog krojača", *Naši noviji humoristi I*, "Humoristična knjižnica", Zagreb, 1917. 34-43.]

While visiting his native land for the first time after nineteen years, Adamic was interviewed for the *Slovenec* (May 18, 1932) where he spoke about his translation activity in the early twenties: translating from Slovenian and Croatian helped him improve his English. Once he felt confident enough to do so, he began to write his own stories and articles. The translations from Croatian literature were practically all published by

[2] Translation data: Henry A. Christian. *Louis Adamic: A Checklist*. Oberlin: Kent State UP, 1971. Source of texts' data: Jerneja Petrič. *Louis Adamič kot literarni kritik*. M.A. thesis. University of Ljubljana, 1978. pp 3-7.

The Living Age, a magazine that would publish only short texts, between 1500 and 4000 words, preferably somewhere in between these numbers. They were expected to be of high artistic quality but not too melancholic as suggested to Adamic by the literary editor of *The Living Age*, John Blakeless (in a letter dated December 21, 1921). Although Adamic observed Blakeless' demand concerning the formal artistic quality of the stories, his primary criterion was nevertheless thematic, for he gave priority to stories dealing with social themes. Adamic was fascinated with stories dealing with man's struggle for survival ("Udovica"), the psychology of characters ("Među dva svijeta"), artists ("Klesar Angelo"), and he obviously loved satire and plain humor in the stories targeting the inefficacy of Yugoslav bureaucracy ("U redarstvenom odsjeku", "Klupoderski klub", "Ples kod pukovnijskog krojača").

Adamic's choice of Croatian stories was random; it reflects his lack of knowledge in this area. With the exception of Vladimir Nazor, whose realistic story belongs among his best work (*Priče iz djetinjstva*), and Zofka Kveder, a naturalist, whose literary career spans two nations, Adamic selected minor authors whose works were originally published by minor local papers and magazines. Milan Ogrizović (1877-1923), a Serb on his father's side and a Croatian by conviction, was probably the best known among them. Professor of classical languages at the University of Zagreb as well as a secondary school teacher, he worked for the Croatian National Theatre in Zagreb as a proofreader and dramaturge. He wrote poetry, short stories (*Humorističke pripovijesti*, 1910), plays (*Hasanaginica*, 1909) and essays. Iso Velikanović (1869 – 1940) was a Croatian poet, prose writer and dramatist who also translated from Russian, French, English, Spanish and German literatures. His work ranks as unpretentious and humorous (*Osmica* (1901), *Srijemske priče* (1915), etc. Ivan Krnic (1878 – 1939), a lawyer by profession, was a politician and author of poems, short stories, comedies and nonfiction. His work was partly published by magazines – sometimes under the pseudonym of Mihael Gorski – or gathered in short story collections (*Ljubavna priča*, 1901; *Ljudi obični i neobični*, 1905; *Nuzgredni život*, 1909 and *Jedrina*, 1916); he also published three comedies. Mirko Jurkić was a writer and translator of English juvenile and adult literature. Although he published a number of literary works (*Iz Završja: crte i priče iz zapadne Bosne*, 1917; *Dubrovačka legenda*, 1928; *Životna škola Hrvatskog Radiše*, 1940; *Tri potepuha*, 1959 (poems for children) and *Slikovnica Nasradin Hodža*, 1961), his reputation rests mainly with his translation and editorial work.

The Living Age required a brief introduction to the author which was not always easy. Adamic scraped up as much information as he could, but was often at a loss as to what to say. This is why some of the introductions range from non-committal to purely speculative, e.g. "Milan Ogrizović is a popular Croatian writer who is particularly happy in his humorous studies of life in the Balkans. 'Two Churches' is one of a group of his tales published in Agram"(April 22, 1922: 232). When another story, "Betwixt Two Worlds", appeared in *The Living Age* less than half a year later, Adamic did not want to repeat himself and wrote, "Milan Ogrizović is a popular Croatian writer, whose humorous stories are widely read among his countrymen; but he is capable of something more than humor. In this autobiographical study, taken from his collection of sketches, *Tajna vrata* (Secret Doors), he searches the heart of youth" (September 2, 1922: 600). "The Old Fogies' Club" was introduced by "From *Srijemske Priče* (Stories from Sryem)"

and then, in brackets, "Iso Velikanovich is a Yugoslav writer who specializes in the life of the Croatian village. The volume from which this story is taken is devoted entirely to life in the Balkan version of the genus 'small town'" (January 31, 1925: 260). The editor and Adamic seem to have reached a mutual understanding regarding such brief and elusive openings; in any case, Adamic used the same formula over and over again. "Betwixt Two Worlds" was introduced with, "Mirko Jurkić is a young Yugoslav writer whose tales of Balkan life are very popular in his country. His portraits of the queer characters that abound in Bosnia are considered his best work. This story is from his Zavrsje, a collection of short stories of western Bosnia" (October 28, 1922: 315). Adamic seems to have mused on these vague pieces, for later on he rephrased some of them, trying to put in a little more substance and maybe tone down an overly harsh statement like the one about the queer characters abounding in Bosnia. Mirko Jurkić thus becomes "a young Bosnian writer. He writes of his native Bosnia, which he knows best, putting into his stories queer characters like the old woman whom the people called Ugly, in the following little tale" (Typescript note, unpublished). S.H. and Ivan Krnic were introduced very briefly, the former with, "This lively tale is taken from *Our New Humorists*, a collection of humorous stories and sketches that recently appeared at Agram" (*The Living Age*, June 24, 1922: 786) and the latter, "Ivan Krnic is a Croatian story-writer well known in his own country. The story translated here appears in a collection of his shorter tales and sketches" (July 15, 1922: 167). Adamic felt a little more comfortable with Zofka Kveder; we may assume that he had learned about this writer at school, "This story originally appeared in the writer's *Tales of the Balkan War*, issued by the Contemporary Writers (Savremeni Pisci), Agram, 1913. Zofka Kveder is a Slovenian novelist. Most of her writings have appeared in that language, but she has written quite a number of short stories in Czech, Serbo-Croatian, and German. She is a feminist and Yugoslavia's foremost woman writer" (August 26, 1922: 541).

Adamic's translations were free. Even when translating from Slovenian, his mother tongue, he frequently chose the path of adaptation. His rendering of Ivan Cankar's story "Ob zori" ("At Dawn") therefore comes with a subtitle "Freely Translated". Adamic's knowledge of Croatian must have been very deficient; like most Slovenians, he had frequently heard it in his youth as it was the official language in Yugoslavia. However, he was not quite fifteen years old when he emigrated, which means that he presumably relied on more or less passive knowledge of basic Croatian that did not include Croatian dialects such as those used by Jurkić. His deficient language skills did not go by unnoticed no matter how benevolently his translations may have been regarded.

In the fall of 1922 Adamic received a grateful letter written by Dr. Ivan Krnic whose story "U redarstvenom odsjeku" Adamic had translated. Krnic took the trouble to write the first part of his letter in English,

> My dear Sir,
> I am informed by the Editor of "The Living Age", that you have had the kindness to translate my story "U redarstvenom odsjeku" (:In the Department of public Ordre:) which appeared in this magazine some months ago.
> I am very thankful to you and I am very pleased to read this story in an so (here Krnic made a handwritten sign to revert the word order) excel-

> lent English translation. I believe that you know completely the Croatian; and the little differencies are made with the only purpose to bring this story closer to American sense and taste. It's the case with the "službeni štap", which will say the "official stick", and which you did translate as "official paper". I am quite distant of being angry with that. (Delnice, October 23, 1922).[3]

Krnic proceeds in Croatian to inform Adamic of the kindness of *The Living Age* editor who had sent him some further issues of the magazine containing Adamic's work. It seems, however, that Krnic was not quite in the clear regarding Adamic's nationality,

> Dopustite, da svoju ličnu hvalu proširim na cijelu hrvatsku literaturu, pa da Vam se toplo zahvalim za taj trud i toliko korisno nastojanje, da upoznate Anglo-sasku Ameriku s hrvatskom književnošću. Nema sumnje, da će Amerikanski sugradjani ljepšim okom gledati naše Hrvate, koji žive u Americi, nego što je bio slučaj do sada.
> No svakako bi trebalo, da se ovaj Vaš toliko zaslužni rad u domovini bolje upozna, pa Vas lijepo molim, da imate dobrotu saopćiti mi, koje ste stvari do sada preveli i gdje su prevodi objelodanjeni, a možda da me i inače upoznate s vašim životom i literarnim radom, da i naš svijet ovdje sazna za ovako odlična i zaslužna Hrvata u velikom svijetu.
> Mene bi osobito veselilo, kad biste mi koji od svojih prevoda mogli poslati, a ako Vam je možda poznato, da ima još koji Hrvat Amerikanski književnik, da me i na njega upozorite, kako bi se i njemu izrekla zaslužna hvala.[4] (Ibid.)

A comparison of Adamic's translations and the source texts, be it Slovenian, Croatian or Czech, discloses a principle Adamic justified in a footnote in his posthumous book *The Eagle and the Roots.* In a passage where he spoke about the court trial involving Josip Broz and fifteen other persons accused of plotting a bomb attack, Adamic allowed for a degree of poetic license that seemed to be strangely at odds with his zeal to give a truthful account of the verbal exchange between the judge and the accused,

> This and the ensuing exchanges between the judge and the accused are not literal translations. The subjective qualities of the Serbo-Croatian language are so different from those of the English language that a literal translation of words spoken in a tense moment like this would be false. Taking

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[3] This and further quotations are from Adamic letters preserved in the archives of Princeton University Library.

[4] Allow me to extend my personal thanks to the whole Croatian literature, and to thank you most warmly for your effort as well as your useful enterprise to make Anglo-Saxon America acquainted with Croatian literature. There is no doubt the American co-citizens will be more tolerant towards our citizens who live in America than they used to be. Anyway, your so very rewarding work should be better known in the homeland, therefore I beg of you to be so kind as to let me know about your translations so far and where they have been published and maybe to otherwise familiarize me with your life and work so that our world here gets to know such an excellent and praiseworthy Croatian in the big world. Personally, I would appreciate it if you could mail me some of your translations as well as call my attention to any other Croatian American writer whom you might know in order to be thanked properly.

> the liberties of a novelist, almost (believing that novelists often approach truth more closely than most historians), I try to give the altercation in self-interpretative equivalents. (*The Eagle and the Roots* 330)

It is possible to claim that Adamic developed and consistently used the technique of adaptation throughout his translation work. Unable to cope with the intricacies of source language he frequently resorted to stiff, everyday words and expressions, thus making his style uneventful and predictable. When a sentence or even a whole passage appeared too difficult he simply omitted it. Now and then he expanded the translation with words or even sentences not to be found in the source text. To add color, however, he loved to include "untranslatable" words in the original (such as "kula"or "beg"), explaining them in a footnote. Adamic was never completely satisfied with his work. Driven by his own ambition and prompted by the editors, he frequently revised his work. Victor Clark, the editor of *The Living Age* would not allow him to go beyond a limit of 5000 words at the most; if too long, the story was simply shortened by the editor without consulting the translator, as seen from a brief note sent by Clark to Adamic on February 2, 1923. Adamic revised his translations even after they had already been published. So, for example, he deleted the whole final passage from Mirko Jurkić's "Betwixt Two Worlds"; likewise he crossed out a passage from Kveder's "The Widow". It appears his later revisions were done with the purpose to improve the style and with no consideration whatsoever for the source text.

Adamic planned to have his translations published in a book of translations. When Emanuel Haldeman-Julius, the editor of the socialist weekly *Appeal to Reason*, announced his plan to publish 1000 new pocket-series books, Adamic grabbed the opportunity and sent him a letter dated June 1, 1922:

> I have recently translated into English a dozen or more Yugoslav (Slovenian and Croatian) short stories for *The Living Age*, Boston; *World Fiction*, New York; *Overland Monthly*, San Francisco; and one or two other publications. Most of these magazines demand more or less cheerful stories, thereby keeping me from translating some of the best Yugoslav literature, which is surely above the mediocre stuff produced by any nation. Now I see a possibility in your series. Could you use Yugoslav literature? If so, any particular kind?[5]

Suspecting Haldeman-Julius knew next to nothing about Yugoslav literature, Adamic felt obliged to explain, "Broadly speaking, Yugoslav literature is a cross of Russian and French type of literature, held together by varied individual characteristics." And to make the idea even more palatable he added, "I know that no Yugoslav writer would object to translation of his work into English: in fact, Yugoslavs desire very much to acquaint Americans with their literature; but some American editors require that I secure permission from the author, if he is alive, to translate his stuff." Evidently, Adamic wished to avoid that time-consuming procedure, for he continued, "Do you require that? So far as I know, none of Yugoslav literature is copyrighted" (Ibid.). Haldeman-Julius' reaction met with Adamic's expectations, and he quickly assembled

[5] Henry A. Christian, *Selected Letters of Louis Adamic.* Unpublished typescript.

some Slovene and Croatian short story collections, newspapers and magazines to set the process in motion. Unfortunately, Haldeman-Julius only published Adamic's tiny book of proverbs titled *Yugoslav proverbs* (1923). Although his idea had been rejected by Vanguard Press, Golden Book and Harper & Brothers, Adamic did not give up. The Adamic manuscript collection at Princeton contains two packages, each of them a manuscript book of translated stories and other material. The first version, originating somewhere in mid-twenties, contains a couple of Croatian stories. "In the Department of Public Order" by Krnic was included in the first section of the book-to-be whereas the second one, titled "Moods and Vignettes", contained "The Montenegrin Widow" (Kveder; a revised translation) and "The Stonecutter" (Nazor; also revised by Adamic). Adamic submitted the manuscript with the tentative title *Modern Jugoslav Masterpieces* to at least two publishers; the Viking Press that rejected it on February 6, 1926 and the Macmillan Company. M.A. Best, an editor of the former, wrote that – despite positive reviews – the company did not wish to take the risk of publishing yet another short story collection. According to him, the market showed little interest in translated stories. After reading the manuscript, James Whithall from the Macmillan Company tersely replied (February 3, 1926) that they were not interested either.

After so many critics shook their heads, Adamic temporarily gave up; but not for long. He tried again in the thirties. Letters to be found in his manuscript collection show proof of his repeated attempts to have the book published. After his rise to prominence following the publication of *The Native's Return* (1934), Adamic became more confident and persistent. By then he saw it as his fate to sit down and revise his ill-fated book. He devised an entirely new concept: his book of translations would also contain other people's translations as well as his original work. Thus renewed, the manuscript was sent to a young emerging publisher Arthur Whipple, who promised to publish *Tales from Yugoslavia*; however, for reasons unknown, he did not keep the promise. The so-called Whipple manuscript survived but has been tampered with; it contains critical articles and multiple versions of one and the same story, meaning that no one can say what the book's content was really like. However, we are pretty confident it contained the following Croatian stories: "Betwixt Two Worlds" (Jurkić; Adamic used the published *Living Age* version - albeit a revised one – adding a brief introduction), "Angelo the Stonecutter" (Nazor, the *The Living Age* version), "At the Tailor's Dance" (S.H., *The Living Age* version), "In the Department of Public Order" (Krnic, *The Living Age* version), "The Montenegrin Widow" (Kveder, *The Living Age* version), "The Religion of My Boyhood" (Ogrizović, *The Living Age* version) and "The Old Fogies' Club" (Velikanović, *The Living Age* version). Whipple notified Adamic in a letter dated September 20, 1935 that he had received Part One of his new book and liked it.

The Manuscript Division of the National and University Library in Ljubljana holds a brief typescript allegedly from the year 1937 (Henry Christian's estimate) containing notes to a selection of short stories. The manuscript titled "Preface" consists of brief notes in English; included are all the abovementioned Croatian stories, whereby two titles were changed: Jurkić's "Betwixt Two Worldws" became "Ugly" and Ogrizović's "The Religion of My Boyhood" turned into "God". A new story was added, Dinko Šimunović's "The Orphan" ("Sirota"). The story was translated by Ivan Mladineo, a journalist and collaborator of Foreign Language Information Service whom Adamic

knew well and corresponded with. In a Translator's note on the first page of his translation, Mladineo briefly introduced the author as "a native of the section of Yugoslavia which he (i.e. Šimunović) describes in this story. So is the World-famous sculptor, Ivan Meštrović" (Typescript, Princeton University Library). He proceeded with a short account of the story itself:

> The story deals with the country and the people of the Dinaric Alps of Northern Dalmatia. The time of the narrative is the immediate pre-war period, when that country was a part of the Habsburg Empire. The policy of the Austrian Government favored the Italians all along the eastern Adriatic shore at the expense of the native population. (Ibid.)

Mladineo asked Adamic to read, comment and proofread the translation. Adamic willingly obliged. He revised the text meticulously; however, we do not know if he compared the translation with the source text or not. His criticism began with the title, "Orphan is an inadequate translation of *sirota*. 'Poor thing' would be better; but still better, I think, would be *sirota* in the original, with an explanation in the text, when first used that it means 'orphan: poor thing, poor one'" (Ibid.).

Beneath the title Adamic penciled an overall assessment of Mladineo's translation:

> Translation, on the whole, is very good; maybe a bit too literal. So far as publication goes in U.S., it's chances are very slim. I can't think of any magazine that would take it now, for several reasons:
> almost no translations accepted,
> Too long,
> the style of the narrative is a bit cumbersome for the taste of American editors, who are used to defter technique –
> LA (Ibid.)

Adamic's remark "too literal" is consistent with his preference for "self-interpretive equivalents" over a faithful translation. The orthographical error and Adamic's inconsistent use of capitals are to be ascribed to his infamous workaholic lifestyle – the notes were evidently hastily scribbled on the title page after Adamic had finished proofreading.

Adamic's translation phase came to a standstill after so many failed attempts to publish a book of translations. Although he was deeply pained by the editors' unwillingness to accept what he considered the best of Yugoslav literature, he was a fast learner when it came to understanding the rules of the capitalist book market. After the success of *The Native's Return*, he was ready to deal with new challenges; the political turmoil in Europe set him thinking about the destiny of his native land – the immigrants who were moving uncertainly to a new culture prompted him to write about the melting pot and he gradually surrendered to the urge to engage himself politically.

Nevertheless, Adamic's translation phase is not without value. He was a true groundbreaker in the field, the first ever Slovenian immigrant to translate into English not just from his mother tongue but also other Slavic languages, including Croatian. Adamic paved the way for other translators. In 1938 Anton J. Klančar listed in *Cankarjev Glasnik* some post-Adamic Slovenian American translators of Ivan Cankar's work into

English (128-130). Adamic did everything in his power to popularize the cultures of his native land in America. When Ivan Mladineo voiced his disappointment in a letter with the rigidity of the Yugoslav authorities when a quick visit of a major American music critic was to be arranged, he added, "You will appreciate my disappointment. Yugoslavia needs any favorable publicity it may get" (July 7, 1932). In reply, Adamic agreed, "…such lack of co-operation on the part of big officials is unfortunate and worse" (July 24, 1932).[6]

Adamic's translations need to be contemplated from another angle as well; pondering the seething melting pot, as he called America, Adamic was aware of the growing rate of Americanization on the one hand and of the shrinking of the first generation that could still speak their mother tongue on the other. As immigration gave way to ethnicity and the emotional connection to the Old World was ebbing, Adamic's translations kept it alive a little while longer.

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INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIAN AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND THE QUESTION OF GENRE: AN ANALYSIS OF SCHOLARLY DISCOURSE

Oliver Haag

Abstract

This article is concerned with the different genre applications to Indigenous Australian autobiographies. Scholarship has not employed a consistent genre designation for this literature. This article identifies the reasons for a particular genre choice in scholarship and draws on interviews with scholars and authors to test their motivation for either adopting or rejecting the term 'autobiography' for Indigenous life narratives.

Keywords: Indigenous Australian autobiography; life writing; genre; scholarly discourse

Autobiography ranks among the most frequently employed genres of Indigenous literature (Cooper et al. 11); there are many reasons for this popularity. First and foremost is the proximity between autobiography and history that provides the possibility of re-connecting with the past and re-telling history. Significantly, as John Joseph Healy remarks, nearly all Indigenous writing is permeated with history (82-83). Much of this stems from the authors' desire to re-write Australian history, which is considered to have excluded and/or misrepresented Indigenous experience (Heiss *Dhuuluu-Yala* 35-36).

However, the autobiography is seen not only as an enticing format for conveying history, but also as a highly problematic category: many scholars suggest that the term autobiography not be applied in the context of Indigenous literature. This article identifies and considers the different forms assigned to Indigenous autobiographies in scholarly discourse. Drawing from a wide-ranging collection of qualitative in-depth interviews, it examines the genre choices made by authors and scholars.

THE CRITIQUE OF THE AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL GENRE

An autobiography is commonly defined as a text in which the names of the author, narrator, and protagonist are identical (Lejeune 26), thus a written description [*graphia*] of one person's life [*bios*] as written by her- or himself [*autos*]. Moreover, the autobio-

graphical genre offers immediate opportunities to convey history—a central concern of many Indigenous authors. It thus appears to be an apt classification for referring to Indigenous life narratives, and the term 'autobiography' is indeed often employed in scholarship (e.g., Rowse; Watson 12-17, 21, 38; Brewster Aboriginal Women's Autobiography; Read, Peters-Little, and Haebich; Haag). Usually, these authors understand autobiography as an umbrella term for both self-authored and recorded Indigenous life stories.

However, the term is also fiercely criticized when applied to Indigenous literature. In the scholarly literature on Indigenous Australian autobiography, I detect three major points of contention: i) the concept of individualism (e.g., Cooper 5-8; Hamilton 129; Robertson 49); ii) the contexts of production (e.g., Shaw 76); and less frequently, iii) the element of writing (e.g., Zierott 39).

The main point of contention is the definition of individualism according to which the autobiography presupposes the idea of an individualized person re-considering and reflecting on his or her life through the process of writing—hence, to know oneself through the act of writing (Gusdorf 129; Weintraub xiii). Joan Newman, for example, perceives autobiography as a genre that is tied to such individualism: "[T]here are some paradoxes and conflicts between traditional Aboriginal concepts of identity and those implied by the choice of autobiography, a product of Western, European culture." (68). Other specialists in Indigenous Studies have advanced similar arguments (e.g., Michaels 173; Attwood 305, 307; Rühl 17-19; Jones "Indigenous Life Stories" 209-210). Narogin, for one, identifies the autobiography with solitary individualism, a form of what he calls 'the battler' genre: "It is an individualized story, and the concerns of the Aboriginal community are of secondary importance" (149). Aileen Moreton-Robinson employs more theory when she calls Indigenous autobiographies 'life writings' or 'life herstories', since the Indigenous autobiographical self was not in any sense individualistic, but rather relational, communal, and connected to others through spirituality and place (1).

The element of individualism makes up the bulk of critique; other reasons are mentioned less frequently. For instance, the contexts of production pose a concern to some scholars in their genre designation. After all, collaborations between Indigenous story-tellers and usually non-Indigenous editors and transcribers constitute 38% of the body of published Indigenous autobiography (Haag 8). Often, scholars have employed special terms to refer to such collaborations. Most often, the terms 'oral history' and 'life history' are used to designate such stories, which are usually recorded before being edited and published. However, the use and meanings of these terms are not always consistent, but differ according to disciplinary focus. For example, some scholars consider life history—in contrast to the autobiography—a story that is written by a person other than the narrator (Angrosino 3; Geiger 336; Rühl 23-24). Yet at other times, life history is defined as the story of an entire life, in contrast to a life story that is regarded as an account of one or more episodes in a whole life (Brettel 224, 227). Bruce Shaw, in contrast, contends that in the context of Indigenous Australia, life history covered both autobiography and biography:

> 'Life history' is a relatively new term used to cover biographies and autobiographies written by non-Western informants in collaboration

> with anthropologists...[Life histories] emphasise the importance of the teller's sociocultural milieu, they focus on the perspectives of one unique individual, they have a time depth so that a personal history reveals also matters relevant to a region's or group's local history, and they relate that local history from the point of view of the indigenous narrators. (76)

This definition not only suggests that a collaborative autobiography—or life history—is shaped by both narrator and editor, but also that life history is a form of ethnographic method. Thus, as can be see, the different connotations between the respective genre designations can bear considerably different meanings.

The third major area of contention in scholarship is somewhat related to the concerns surrounding collaborative work. It applies to the form of writing that is implicit in autobiography ('*graphein*'). In the light of the many orally narrated Indigenous autobiographies, the term 'autobiography', the argument runs, is misleading:

> From the Indigenous perspective, the most appropriate terms to describe Aboriginal autobiographical accounts appear to be 'life-(hi)story' and 'life writing'. These terms allow for written as well as oral resources and distance themselves from the traditional Western notion of autobiographical narratives. (Zierott 39)

Quite apart from the fact that 'life *writing*' as a designation for 'oral resources' appears to be oxymoronic, the critique of the application of the term 'autobiography' to Indigenous literature exhibits two broad forms: it is argued, on the one hand, that orality is a firm element of the written stories that, in most instances, are replete with dialogue, as well as with idiomatic expressions of direct speech. On the other hand, many stories are first recorded electronically before being transcribed. Thus, it is felt that the term 'autobiography' does not adequately represent the Indigenous life writings.

As can be seen, the elements of individualism forming a single author-narrator-protagonist, the collaborative processes of production, and the component of the writing form the basic points of critique of assigning the term 'autobiography' to Indigenous literature. Many of these criticisms, particularly regarding individualism, exhibit parallels to critiques of the autobiographical genre in feminist and minority discourses elsewhere (e.g., Blackburn 133-134). In this respect, then, these criticisms are not uniquely 'Australian'.

Furthermore, there are other genres used in the scholarship on Indigenous autobiography. I have identified more than ten different genre designations. Yet, aside from the instances previously described, the employment of 'alternative' terms to autobiography is often ill-defined, with the reasons for the respective genre choices being hardly expounded, if at all.

Anne Brewster, for example, uses 'auto-ethnography', along with other terms, to refer to autobiographies ("Aboriginal life writing and globalisation"). Unfortunately, Brewster does not further elaborate on the deeper meanings attached to this term. In a loose sense, it signifies either an autobiographical ethnography or an ethnography conducted by persons with an 'insider status' (Reed-Danahay 1-9). The term 'history' is also used; particularly in historical research, where Indigenous autobiographies are

treated as forms of Indigenous and/or oral history (e.g., McGrath 373, 394; van Toorn 2). This genre classification reflects a central characteristic of Indigenous modes of history in which the narrator or historian is often part of the history (Ryan 56-57). Interestingly, while many Australian historians use this term to designate Indigenous autobiographies, European specialists in Indigenous autobiography seem to be critical of the application of the term 'history' to this genre (e.g., Rühl; Zierott). Their argument is that autobiography cannot be taken as history, since it is based on subjective and unverifiable memories, and thus does not rely on verifiable factual evidence such as cross-references and source material (Rühl 20). This difference in genre interpretation between European and Australian readers arises mainly because European scholars hardly take the specificities of *Indigenous* history into account.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND THE CHOICE OF GENRE

It is evident, then, that scholarship on Indigenous autobiography has not deployed a consistent designation for this genre of Indigenous literature. There are differences both in the disciplinary and national backgrounds of particular scholars (i.e., the interpretation of Indigenous autobiographies as historical documents is roundly criticized by European scholars). Although the term 'autobiography' is used by many researchers in the field, others employ alternative terms—most commonly 'history' to highlight the historical dimension of Indigenous autobiographies and 'life history' and/or 'life writing' so as to evade the concepts of an individualized identity and/or to differentiate between single and joint productions.

This plurality of genre assignation can occasionally cause confusion among readers. For example, a German student to whom I spoke after a lecture regarded this complexity of genre assignment as merely a matter of personal preference evinced by individual scholars; and an Indigenous academic confessed to me during a conference dinner that white academics had nothing better to do than grapple with what he considered unimportant questions. While I do not think this question unimportant, I think it worth further scrutinizing the respective genre designations. In this article, I analyse personal interviews that I conducted with Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australian researchers in Indigenous Studies or a closely related field, which also included Indigenous writers. The interviews are part of a broader research project on the production of Indigenous autobiographies that was published in 2008 (Haag). As part of these interviews, all respondents were asked if 'autobiography' is an appropriate term to refer to published Indigenous life narratives, or why they prefer an alternative genre designation. The present article engages with the interviewees' consideration of genre—not discussed in the 2008 publication—and presents direct quotations from a selection of transcripts.

Indigenous writer Anita Heiss does not regard the question of genre as important. To her, genres are yet another constraint on grasping the pith of Indigenous writings, that is, an expression of cultural survival and rewriting of what she terms the white misrepresentations of Australian history:

> I think again it's the labelling; it's about boxing people into certain genres. And quite frankly, it's for academic purposes...And if it is a matter of what genre it is - whether it's theatre, or poetry, or autobiography, or whatever, fiction - all our books have common themes of survival, oppression, the ongoing cultural genocide of one government after the next. It tends to maintain or reclaim identity and language. So it doesn't even matter what genre it's in. (Heiss, Personal interview)

Having published across several different genres, Heiss suggests in her interview that genre is only of relevance to academics and publishers, while the contents of Indigenous literature were basically the same, that is, political and historical re-writing. This reaction is suggestive of the (autobiographical) genre being seen as a site of re-writing and resistance, hence evincing the claim that it disrespects and trespasses genre borders and readers' conventions. From this perspective, genre is not irrelevant, but—precisely because it is being disrespected and trespassed—a crucial element of distancing Indigenous literature from western forms. In this sense, the 'disrespecting' of genre functions as a means of 'literary disobedience' and makes the question of genre (or 'non-genre') a political and hence imperative issue.

In a very similar fashion, Melissa Lucashenko, an Indigenous novelist, does not ponder over genre assignations, although she is clear about classifying her own writing:

> I call my books novels. *Steam Pigs* is semi-autobiographical, but to me there is no question that they are novels. Certainly they are novels with a strong historical flavour. And I think that's true of a lot of social realist books...But I think generally you can assign a genre if that's important. I don't know if it's important to do that or not. To me it's not. But to all the whites in the bookstore, maybe it is. (Lucashenko, Personal interview)

This answer is very similar to that of Heiss, although probably less outright 'radical'. This author also sees her writing as either correcting or establishing history, but nonetheless chooses to write in fiction because fiction allows more literary freedom and flexibility. Similarly to Heiss, this respondent does not take readers' perceptions into account, even though genre is actually a cultural and literary guide that is determined and recognized by both reader and author. Here, too, genre is seen as being imposed by white booksellers, hence a category to be 'disrespected'.

To Ruby Langford Ginibi, probably the most prolific Indigenous author of autobiography, the question of genre is of considerable concern:

> They are autobiography [sic] because they are stories and they tell about our lives. But they are also history, too. Because they are memories of place...It is from our personal survival, of the first people of this land. And they can't deny that, because we have a shared history. White Australia has a Black history. I mean, you can't compare now 216 years of colonial history in this country since 1788 and the last carbon dating of my people being on this continent for…and it's not 40,000 years - it was 120,000

> years. Greek and Roman civilizations: 2,000 years. (Langford Ginibi, Personal interview).

This respondent stresses with vigour the historical value of her autobiographies, emphasizing throughout the interview her non-fictional genre choice and—without my having mentioned the word 'novel'—insisting on her books being recognized as 'autobiography' and 'history' yet not 'novel', for they were what she termed the "truth" (Langford Ginibi, Personal interview). In this instance, genre is not 'disrespected', but chosen deliberately. It was the autobiography and not the novel (or any fictional genre) that was regarded as the most appropriate form in which to re-write both Australian and European history.

Jackie Huggins, co-author of her mother's auto/biography, defines her mother's book, *Auntie Rita* (1994), as biography (and partly autobiography) because it conveys an Indigenous history; at the same time, she criticizes (Mudrooroo) Narogin's critique of the autobiography as a battler genre that presupposes a form of western individualism:

> [The autobiography] is not a totally European concept. We had always told stories about our lives, you know. And what's that? I mean that's autobiographical, surely. And we've told stories about other people's lives, that's a story of our folklore, you know, about our great warriors and great people who come over. It's just been recently that that has been transformed into a written literature. And I don't think that anyone has ever had a monopoly on writing people's lives, and knowing about them, or documenting it and putting that down. (Huggins, Personal interview)

To this author, history was important in her choice of genre. Huggins regards her book as conveying the life story and experiences of an individual person, as well as the regional/national history that this personal story reflects, thus as both personal and Australian history. The autobiographical genre was considered a vital means of imparting such history, with the element of individualism not being considered a universal category defining the autobiography.

It becomes evident that the Indigenous authors under study are divided over their genre choice and the importance of assigning Indigenous literature to various genres. The evaluation of the interviews shows that all Indigenous respondents regard history as crucial to the Indigenous autobiography but, at the same time, they are divided over the relation between history and genre: there is one group of respondents that considers genre important, and which took a conscious decision to write in the autobiographical genre. In this instance, the conveying of history was a fundamental decision in shaping their writing as autobiography. The other group regards the question of genre as irrelevant. These authors identify their writing in a more literary sense, yet without considering it of less historical value. However, even though respondents in this group deem genre classification unimportant, genre is regarded as a white imposition, thus either indirectly or directly worthy of 'disobedience'. Thus, here too, the genre is at least indirectly decisive when authors use it to convey (personal) history through a non-conventional (e.g., fictional) form and thus to disrespect given genre boundaries and 'confuse' white academics, booksellers, and/or readers.

Moreover, in contrast to the concerns raised in scholarship, none of the Indigenous authors I interviewed grapple with the term 'autobiography' as such. None show any desire to substitute it for 'life writing', 'auto-ethnography', or 'life history'. It can therefore be reasoned that the differences within particular life writing genres are not of relevance to Indigenous authors, but that these authors are keen to treat Indigenous autobiographies as either a historical genre, or at least a genre that imparts a strong historical (counter) message. Thus, the differences between the respective life writing genres are not deemed important to those authors who chose to publish in the autobiographical genre.

The interviews with non-Indigenous respondents show a different result. Evidently, as scholars of Indigenous autobiography, they stand on the 'other' side of the mutual process of determining and recognizing genre and thus have different priorities from those of authors. Most interviewees, including those involved in the collaboration/editing of Indigenous autobiographies, consider the 'autobiography' an appropriate classification for Indigenous literature. As historian Peter Read, for one, says:

> Autobiographies, I think so, yeah. What else would that be? I mean, obviously, some people were helped more than others to write it. Ruby Langford was, I think, helped a right deal by her editor. And I believe that Sally Morgan was too. And I think you could call them autobiographies. (Read, Personal interview)

Read employs the term 'autobiography' in order to refer to Indigenous life stories, and deems the genre apposite for describing both single and jointly authored books. The reference to the editing process reflects the issue of the co/production processes described in scholarship. Read here sees the autobiography as an adequate 'umbrella' genre to understand the different productions of Indigenous autobiographies, yet draws a line between single and joint productions, on the one hand, and semi/fictional work, on the other hand. As history, fiction to him has a weaker status as a historical source. Thus, reading intentions are important to the classification of genre; or put another way, genre ordains the way an Indigenous autobiography is read and analysed by historians. In this case, it is the fiction/non-fiction divide and not the process of editing and collaboration that exerts an influence on the choice of autobiography as a genre.

Gillian Cowlishaw, co-author and editor of Tex and Nellie Camfoo's autobiography *Love against the Law* (2000), has this to say:

> And autobiography is, well, what else would I call it? I suppose people would call it oral history. I didn't think of it as oral history at all. I thought of it as Nellie and Tex having told me about their lives, so with a very particular intention in Tex' case at least. (Cowlishaw, Personal interview)

For Cowlishaw, neither the collaboration nor her personal impact on the editing of the autobiography disqualified the book as autobiography, because the editor's interpretation was kept to a low level. In the book itself, a few explanations of the story's socio-historical context are included, which, however, are placed in especially detached squares clearly separated from the main text. This respondent is thus aware of the considerable differences between 'autobiography' and 'oral history', in which life narratives

are rather used as sources for academic history texts. Both genres indicate a completely different content and story. Cowlishaw's choice of genre was thus propelled by the idea of affording a sovereign narration of her Indigenous collaborators.

Jennifer Jones, author of a PhD thesis on Indigenous women's autobiographies, is one of the few respondents who actually grapple with the term 'autobiography':

> It's a choice, I suppose. In my thesis, I called them 'autobiographies' throughout, because I started there, and it was too late to go and change it. But I tend to use the term 'life writing' more now. It is more in use now than 'autobiography' because it's difficult to separate the term 'autobiography' from that idea of a singular, main author writing in a corrective way about their achievements...'Life writing' might accept that it's multiple authors or multiple lives, which is much more in key with an Indigenous project which mingles several authors at different levels. (Jones, Personal interview)

This respondent clearly favours the genre of 'life writing', which she sees as breaking with the western concept of an individualized identity. The genre interpretation of 'life writing' evades a confinement of the Indigenous autobiography to western structures of identity. Her genre choice, which mirrors a literary rather than historical concern, is also central to the understanding of and analytical approach to the conception of identity in Indigenous literature. For Jones, the use of the term 'life writing' makes visible the close relations in the identity of different protagonists and the influences these protagonists exert on the 'autobiographic' self.

Lastly, Linda Westphalen, also author of a doctoral thesis on Indigenous women's autobiographies, opted for the genre of 'life history', as this genre reflected both the concepts of an Indigenous identity and the historical information that stems from Indigenous autobiographies:

> I made a conscious decision in my thesis not to call them autobiographies, because I think that suggests that their genesis comes from a European perspective, which I don't think is actually the case. The point of my thesis was that Indigenous life histories have their genealogy in discourse from Dreaming, rather than from European sources....The other reason that I would call them life histories rather than autobiographies is that the women themselves call them histories. (Westphalen, Personal interview)

While not completely negating the European influences on published Indigenous autobiographies, this respondent endeavours to elucidate the stories' strong, yet often erased Indigenous background. Apart from distinct idiomatic styles, Westphalen advances three major arguments indicating that Indigenous autobiographies emanate from the discourse of the Dreaming (see also Westphalen "Deadly Lives" 12-13, 73, 227-228). First, autobiographies have the same underlying *intentions* as Dreamings: education, connecting people with each other and their lands, and identification with the past (78-84, 105). Second, just as Dreamings are stories of the *creation* of landscape, so were the authors (re)creating landscape in a colonized space. Thus, the self-creation, how an author has survived invasion as an Indigenous person, evinced a parallel to creation

stories (29-31). Third, the process of storytelling could be considered a form of *journey*, thus resembling creation movements (85-88). These journeys could be either real movements, as in the frequent theme of reuniting with the ancestral lands, or virtual movements, in the sense that both reader and author undertake a journey through story-telling (22). Westphalen thus tries to establish continuity between contemporary forms of autobiography and ancient/pre-contact forms of story-telling. The genre choice is in this case a prerequisite for construing what I call a sovereign tradition of Indigenous autobiography.

As has become evident, authors and scholars have different priorities. To scholars, the genre constitutes the first step to further interpreting and analysing an Indigenous text. Depending on the respective genre definition, genre is seen as vital to understanding Indigenous autobiographies as i) either historical or literary texts; ii) self or joint productions; and iii) products of European or Indigenous origin. It is, furthermore, conspicuous that the comments in the interviews do not fully reflect the previously described concerns in published scholarship. None of Australian scholars that I interviewed grappled with the form of writing. The prerequisite of individualism, too, has been far less intensely discussed than is the case in printed scholarship. In contrast, many scholars recognized the relation between production process and genre designation. In this case, genre designation is far from a mere preference for applying a particular genre, but rather signifies the extent of interpretation and thus alteration of the original narrations. However, there seems to be at least broad agreement to treat 'joint productions' equally as autobiography. Thus, while the Australian scholars under study seem to be aware of collaboration, most do not argue for adopting specific genre terms to refer to such collaborative work.

The issue of cultural continuity is also closely connected to genre and was raised in the interviews rather than in printed scholarship. As the interviews suggest, the genre is often perceived as quintessentially European, whereas the Indigenous autobiography as a narrative practice—as opposed to a literary genre—may describe a sovereign tradition, as a few respondents suggest. In fact, a few interviewees (both authors and scholars) are keen to underline that autobiography was not a purely European brainchild. Here, genre designations are deployed as a means to establish an Indigenous tradition of autobiography. Genre, in other words, is a central vehicle for creating continuity. In the interviews, I identify the following major reasons for adopting or rejecting a particular genre denomination for Indigenous autobiography:

- Highlighting historical content
- Highlighting literary content
- Telling the "truth" and rewriting history
- Allowing sovereign narrations of the Indigenous narrator in cases of collaboration
- Differentiating between fiction and non-fiction
- Rendering visible the relationality of Indigenous identity and selfhood
- Establishing/inventing continuity and tradition
- Claiming difference

Thus, overall, how a genre is classified is of extreme relevance to the understanding of Indigenous literature. History, identity, and cultural continuity are all firmly connected

with autobiography. It is the question of genre that determines the analytical approach to identity and autobiographical/literary selfhood. It is the question of genre that signifies the extent of editorial and analytical intrusion into a text. It is the question of genre that casts light on the historicity of a text. And finally, it is the question of genre that makes possible aspirations to what I am tempted to term 'Indigenous literary nationalism', the invention of a pristine literary tradition.

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THE TRUE VOICE OF A CANADIAN EXPATRIATE: MAVIS GALLANT, *HOME TRUTHS* (1981)

Aleksander Kustec

Abstract

Mavis Gallant is a typical contemporary Canadian short story writer, who has strongly contributed to the formation and the proliferation of the contemporary Canadian short story. Her short story collection *Home Truths* (1981) is a good example of the exploration of time. Gallant has said on several occasions that she is not particularly interested in discovering typical Canadian elements, but she wishes, above all, to convey *the truth*. She does not get deeply engaged in the psychological development of her characters, but is interested in specific situations, in reconstructing the state of mind and heart, therefore, we find her writing on the edge of imagination and reality. *Home Truths* is about identity, alienation, and the importance of memory. These issues still are, 30 years after the publication of this collection, a matter of great concern among Canadians *at home* and *abroad*.

Key words: Mavis Gallant, criticism and interpretation, studies in Canadian literature, contemporary Canadian short story, Canadian identity, alienation, expatriatism, Canadian literary canon.

Born Mavis de Trafford Young, on 11 August 1922 in Montreal, Mavis Gallant is among the finest and most challenging of contemporary Canadian short story writers. John Metcalf believes she should be classified as a Canadian Classic.[1] In spite of her achievements and being held in high estimation in international literary circles, Gallant was neglected as writer in Canada year after year.

The reasons for being overlooked should be linked to Gallant's decision to leave Canada and live in Europe, mostly in Paris, and write primarily about Europe, Europeans and Americans in English. Most of her stories were not published in Canadian newspapers and journals, but in the USA, e.g. in *The New Yorker*. Ignored for too long, Gallant was finally given well-deserved recognition in Canada for her achievements for the collection of short stories *Home Truths* (HT), by being awarded the Governor General's Literary Award for the year 1981. Following this exceptional triumph, the attitude of Canadians to her literary work changed completely. The Canadian newspaper *The Globe and Mail* wrote: "Mavis Gallant writes some of the most superbly crafted and perceptive stories of our time" and the most popular Canadian weekly magazine

[1] Cf. Metcalf, *Canadian Classics* (1993).

Maclean's wrote: "Probably the finest collection of short stories published this year in Canada - or anywhere else".

The collection HT[2] consists of sixteen short stories, which are divided into three groups:

> 1. At Home: "Thank You for the Lovely Tea", "Jorinda and Jorindel", "Saturday", Up North", "Orphans' Progress" and "The Prodigal Parent".
> 2. Canadians Abroad: "In the Tunnel", "The Ice Wagon Going Down the Street", "Bonaventure" and "Virus X".
> 3. Linnet Muir: "In Youth Is Pleasure", "Between Zero and One", "Varieties of Exile", "Voices Lost in Snow", "The Doctor" and "With Capital T".

An important characteristic of the short stories in HT is that they are different by theme. Gallant uses various narrative techniques. On principle, she does not use autobiographic material, e.g. as Alice Munro and Clark Blaise do in their stories. The "Linnet Muir" stories are an exception. Linnet Muir is a heroine, whom Gallant describes as an inaccurate portrait of herself: "quite another person, but it would be untrue to say I invented everything" (HT, xxii). Gallant wishes to lose herself deeper into her characters by whatever means necessary. She is especially interested in individuals, who are different from her, i.e. disappointed, married housewives, bachelors, hard-working mothers, lady's maids, prisoners of war, etc. Most of the stories address the question of alienation. In the stories, which are rich with detail, Gallant pictures reality in a way that is unfamiliar, rather unknown, even extraordinary, to say the least, to Canadians. There is no outburst of emotions, but the stories are a genuine reflection of the cruelty of life. In Gallant's prose, love is not possible and it has no credibility.

Gallant is passionately interested in politics. As readers, we need to know a lot about European history and geography to be able to understand her characters. Her stories take us to Germany, Paris, southern France, Italy, Spain, Switzerland, England and Eastern Europe. As a result, the characters in Gallant's stories are almost always travellers or guests, expatriates, foreigners, or feel as if they were foreigners in a metaphoric sense.

The collection HT is a good reflection of time and truth. Gallant deals with stories about the past, which she narrates for a purpose to be able to comprehend which they were misunderstood. To get to know the typical characteristics of Canada and the people that live in this region is not Gallant's primary interest, the author wishes to share with us her understanding of the truth. Gallant does not get deeply engaged in the psychology and development of her characters or even in the plot. She is interested in the specific situations and especially in the reconstruction of the heart and soul. Therefore, she always stays close to the line between the worlds of imagination and reality. It is a fact that Gallant wishes to search for answers to all "her" problems. She is constantly asking herself rhetorical questions, the answers being absorbed in her deep thoughts.

Gallant deals with views on childhood in "Thank You for the Lovely Tea", the first short story in the first group of short stories "At Home" in HT. Children play an

[2] Gallant, Mavis. *Home Truths: Selected Canadian Stories.* Macmillan, 1981. Toronto: Stoddart, 1992. Further references to this book are noted in the text.

important role in Gallant's prose, or as she says: "Children are regularly abused and ill-treated and some of them die of their wounds."[3] Children should be given more attention is the main message of this short story. "Life is Hell" (HT, 2) is written by the protagonist Ruth Cook on the school bench in girls' school in hope to cause a conflict situation. Instead, she receives praise from her Art's teacher, Mrs. Fischer.

Ruth is a common and plain girl, who does not show any special interest for what is happening around her: "a placid girl, to all appearances - plump, lazy, rather Latin in looks, with glossy blue-black hair, which she brushed into drooping ringlets" (HT, 7). Mrs. Holland is too spontaneous and emotional, as Ruth asserts (HT, 3), determined by a third-person narrator, and continues: "Emotion meant "being America"; it meant placing yourself unarmed in the hands of the enemy." [...] "Emotion was worse than bad taste; it was calamitous" (HT, 3).

Mrs. Holland goes to school many times to pick up Ruth and they spend the rest of the afternoon together. This time they are joined by two schoolmates, May Watson, lost in her world of dreams, and shameful Helen McDonnell. Ruth does not understand the relationship between her father and Mrs. Holland: "There was innocence, a lack of prudence, in her references to the situation; she said things that made shame and caution fill Mrs. Holland's" (HT, 10). Mrs. Holland invites them to tea, where we see them chatting and getting to know each other. The afternoon passes by, they return to school, where the principal thanks Mrs. Holland for her patience: "The headmistress sensed that things were out of hand, but she had no desire to be involved" (HT, 16).

In "Jorinda and Jorindel", the children remain in the centre of interest. The story is filled with small events and details about the 8-year-old Irmgard and the way she was kidnapped, her cousin Bradley, Germain (Irmgard's *bonne d'enfant*), and Mrs. Bloodworth who has come up to Canada for a party – she came up for just one weekend and never went away. As most of Gallant's stories in the first group of short stories "At Home" in HT, this one takes place in Montreal, the town of Gallant's childhood.

The short story "Saturday" is a story about language and one literary character, Gérard. Gérard lives in a world, which is interviewed with dreams and nightmares, out of which he sees no last resort. His father is an odd fellow like his younger brother Léopold, and his mother is disappointed, her marriage not being a happy one, believing that she was married against her will:

> She is French-Canadian, whether she likes it or not. They see at the heart of her a sacrificial mother; her education has removed her in degree only from the ignorant, tiresome, moralizing mother, given to mysterious female surgery, subjugated by miracles, a source of infinite love. (HT, 38)

Her negative attitude towards English is illustrated very skillfully in the following section:

> If it had been a dream, then why in English? Dreaming in English made him feel powerless, as if his mind were dying, ill-fed from the soil. They spoke English at home, but he, Gérard, tried to dream in French. He read French; he went to French movies; he tried to speak it with his little brother;

[3] Gallant, *Paris Notebooks: Essays & Reviews:* 130.

> and yet his mind made fun of him and sent up to the surface "Elizabeth Barrett." (HT, 33)

As Gallant states in the "Introduction" to HT, Gérard's hatred towards English is "blind and irrational. Deprived of the all-important first language, he is intellectually maimed. The most his mind can do is to hobble along. Like every story in this collection, "Saturday" needs to be read against its own time - the Montreal of about 1960". (HT, xviii) The story ends with Léopold's birthday party, attended by his five sisters (Sharon, Marilyn, Cary, Gary in Gail). All his sisters left home early and got married too early.

In "Saturday", Gallant does not only speak about language, she wishes to accent her anticlericalism:

> The family had not deserted French for social betterment, or for business reasons, but on the matter of belief that set them apart. His mother wanted English to be freedom, at least from the Church. There were no public secular schools, but that was only part of it. Church and language were inextricably enmeshed, and you had to leave the language if you wanted your children brought up some other way. That was how it was. It was simple, and as complex, as that. (HT, 33)

In the short story "Orphans' Progress", the main topic is the contrast between the internal and the external, between emotions and public opinion, between the intimate experience and reality, which is conceptualised by society – the society, which uses language to force on us its norms and standards. While social pressure is introduced gradually, the image of the orphan girl as a material institution disappears.

Memory is, as Gallant ascertains, "something that cannot be subsidized or ordained" (HT, xv). In "Orphans' Progress", the symbiosis of language and memory is present. The Collier girls are brutally taken away from their incompetent French-Canadian mother, who they "'loved without knowing what the word implied' (HT, 56). They are sent to their father's mother in Ontario, where they live for a long period of time and learn to use the Ontario dialect in their speech. They spoke French and English with their mother, but when they return to their relatives in Québec, they are faced with a new reality. Their relatives will not listen to them, unless they use French:

> Language was black, until they forgot their English. Until they spoke French, nothing but French, the family pretended not to understand them, and stared as if they were peering in the dark. They very soon forgot their English. (HT, 60)

The only word, which the youngest child Mildred cannot forget is "Mummy" (HT, 61), until she is punished for using it. The children are parted and the youngest is adopted by a distant relative. The reader sees them as they later meet in life and have nothing to say to each other. The memories of childhood (the room above the garage, the bed, etc.) have remained, but not the language. The children have forgotten their mother tongue, the language that meant so much to them. As Anice Kulyk Keefer determines rightfully, "as Gallant develops the issue in this story, language

is a more complex and emotional affair than the political question of French versus English".[4]

In "The Prodigal Parent" the in-depth thought, which Gallant once wrote in *Paris Notebooks: Essays & Reviews* (1986), takes front stage: "All lives are interesting; no one life is more interesting than another. Its fascination depends on how much is revealed, and in what manner."[5] In the first-person narrative, the reader observes the mother visiting her daughter Rhoda, who bought a new house after her divorce on Vancouver Island in British Columbia, Canada's most western province. This is a short story about "the world of women", about the complex communication and relationship between mother and daughter, about the good and the bad, and about men and their role in the universe. Their conversations, which are full of confrontations, were always like this – "collisions" (HT, 66), Gallant says. "The Prodigal Parent" is the last short story in the first group of short stories in HT.

In the second group of short stories in HT, the reader deals with short stories that speak about young Canadians, who wander around the European continent. However, it is Gallant's primary interest to show "North American varieties of innocence over against European versions of experience".[6]

"In the Tunnel" is a short story about Sarah, sent by her father to Grenoble "to learn about French civilization - actually to get her away from a man he always pretended to think was called Professor Downcast" (HT, 72-73). We see Sarah's father as "her only antagonist [...] who had not touched her self-confidence" (HT, 79). Sarah later meets a man, an Englishman, by the name of Roy Cooper, who is an inspector of prisons in Asia and twice her age. They start seeing each other almost each day:

> They seemed to Sarah to be moving toward each other without ever quite touching; then she thought they were travelling in the same direction, but still apart. They could not turn back, for there was nothing to go back to. (HT, 76-77)

Sarah quickly learns about the bitterness of love. Roy rents a cottage from two English expatriates, who are absurdly limited individuals, and invites Sarah to join them. Through Sarah's visualisation of events we learn about the characteristics of these people who "have carefully shut themselves off from any real contact with the world or with others",[7] and forms an opinion of Roy, who was "a bachelor because of the selfishness of men, and the looseness and availability of young women" (HT, 87), and later adds: "Nothing was wrong except that he was cruel, lunatic, Fascist - No, not even that. Nothing was wrong except that he did not love her. That was all" (HT, 101).

In "The Ice Wagon Going Down the Street", the third-person narrator tells us a story about expatriates and their unpleasant experiences in Europe. The family Frazier, who spent part of their life in Paris, Geneva, Sri Lanka and Hong Kong, are now residing in Toronto, Canada, and reminiscing about the times living abroad. This is how Peter sees the life of a Canadian in a foreign country, i.e. in Switzerland:

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[4] Keefer, *Reading Mavis Gallant* (1989): 15.
[5] Gallant, *Paris Notebooks: Essays & Reviews* (1986): 142.
[6] Besner, *The Light of Imagination: Mavis Gallant's Fiction* (1988): 122.
[7] Besner, *The Light of Imagination: Mavis Gallant's Fiction* (1988): 122.

> "I'll tell you one thing about us," said Peter. "We pay everything twice." (HT, 128)

The family returned to Toronto, because Peter could not find an adequate job, which would have an aristocratic Canadian background. Agnes Brusen is the opposite of Peter. She is young, successful and very ambitious, but disappointed with her personal life. At a party organised by Mike Burleigh, Peter's friend, she gets drunk and meets Peter. Peter is asked to escort her home. In front of her apartment, she asks Peter to follow her upstairs, but he declines, because he has a wife (Sheilah) and two daughters (Sandra in Lucille). Agnes is a victim of society and life is a cruel game:

> She said, "I'm from a big family. I'm not used to being alone. I'm not a suicidal person, but I could have done something after that party, just not to see any more, or think or listen or expect anything. What can I think when I see these people? All my life I heard, Educated people don't do this, educated people don't do that. And now I'm here, and you're all educated people, and you're nothing but pigs. You're educated and you drink and do everything wrong and you know what you're doing, and that makes you worse than pigs." (HT, 131-132)

Gallant wishes to let the reader know that these people are completely lost in this world and have created an invented perception of loneliness. They have become totally alienated living abroad and are vegetating on their memories, trying to avoid the reality of today. In "Bonaventure" Gallant returns to Montreux in Switzerland, where the 21-year-old Douglas Ramsay, who was awarded a fellowship, is studying music. Ramsay is asking himself questions about his identity:

> He was besieged, he was invaded, by his mother's account of the day he was conceived; and his father confirmed her version of history, telling him <u>why</u>. He had never been able to fling in their faces "Why did you have me?" for they told him before he could reason, before he was ready to think. He was their marvel. (HT, 135)

He lives with the Mosers and gets into heated conversations about arts with Catherine, the conductor's widow. He believes that with the support of arts one can keep away from one's past and run away from time. With the use of irony, Gallant demonstrates to the reader that this can be done, but only temporarily.

Gallant continues with her portrayal of Canadians who left for the continent after the war in "Virus X", the last story in the second group of short stories in HT. Lottie Benz, a student of Sociology, residing in Paris with the intention of putting up "a show for her own country, which is Canada" (HT, 174). In Paris, she meets Vero Rodno, a Ukrainian Canadian, who is living between Paris and Rome. Although we can notice that Vera is a disturbing factor in Lottie's life, acting as a virus, it is important to her to have lunch and dinner together regularly.

Gallant reveals her thoughts on the question of identity:

> That's the strength of Canada, that it hasn't been a melting pot. Everybody knows that. The point is, I'm [Lottie, n. A. K.] taking it as a good

> thing. Alsace is an example in an older civilization. [...] "The Poles paint traditional Easter eggs. Right? They stop doing it in the States after one generation, two at most. In Canada they never stop. Now do you see?" (HT, 178)
>
> Toward the end of the night, he [Kevin, n. A. K.] began bemoaning his own Canadian problems of national identity, which Lottie thought a sign of weakness in a man. (HT, 181)
>
> "I don't see why a Canadian should have any trouble," said Lottie. "He's only sort of Canadian," said Vera. "If you ask me, I don't think he should have a passport. I mean, he sort of picks on the place." "You can't be sort of Canadian. If he is, he doesn't have to be in trouble anywhere." (HT, 190)
>
> "I know all that," said Lottie, in her slowest voice, "I'm only trying to say that if there are people here who don't want to belong to France, then my proposition doesn't hold water. The idea is, these people are supposed to be loyal but still keep their national characteristics." "There aren't many. Just a couple of nuts." "There mustn't even be one." "It's your own fault for inventing something and then trying to stick people in it." (HT, 194-195)
>
> "I always felt I had less right to be Canadian than you, even though we've been there longer," Vera said. "I've never understood that coldness. I know you aren't English, but it's all the same. You can be a piece of ice when you want to. When you walked into the restaurant that day in Paris. I felt cold to the bone" (HT, 210)

It is very clear to the reader how Gallant wishes to share with us her great effort in finding an answer to the question of Canadian national identity, if possible at all.[8] Lottie cannot live the life she is living anymore. She is fed up with Vera and needs to return to Canada: "There was no sense to what she was doing. She would never do it again. That was the first of many changes" (HT, 216).

The last group of short stories in HT include the "Linnet Muir" stories. Linnet Muir, beyond comparison in Gallant's prose, is a woman who is independent and fights for each and every triumph in her life. We could say that Linnet's views are parallel to Gallant's observations and inspection of life,[9] or as Gallant says in her "Introduction" to HT:

> The character I called Linnet Muir is not an exact reflection. I saw her as quite another person, but it would be untrue to say that I invented everything. I can vouch for the city: my Montreal is as accurate as memory can make it. I looked nothing up, feeling that if I made a mistake with street name it had to stand. Memory can spell a name wrong and still convey the truth. (HT, xxii)

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[8] Cf. Kustec, »The Contemporary Canadian Short Story« in *Essays on Australian and Canadian Literature. Eseji o avstralski in kanadski književnosti*. Edited by Mirko Jurak and Igor Maver (2000): 193-202.

[9] Hancock, "An Interview with Mavis Gallant", Canadian Fiction Magazine 28 (1978): 28.

Among all the literary characters in HT, Linnet is the best reporter of her memories. Firstly, in "In Youth Is Pleasure", she returns to Montreal from New York and the reader learns from the first-person narrator all about Linnet's childhood. In her first 15 years, Linnet lost her interest for her mother, who did not play an important role in her life. We learn about Linnet's reason for not answering her mother's letter: "It was not rejection or anything so violent as dislike but a simple indifference I cannot account for. It was much the way I would be later with men I fell out of love with" (HT, 218). Linnet's disappointment is evident, backed by her emotional outcry.

Childhood is a world without sentimental associations for Gallant. When she describes the relationship between child(ren) and parents, parenthood represents supremacy over the weak and vulnerable. In the stories about Linnet, Gallant wishes to communicate "the reality of childhood as this writer envisions it: the devastating effect our relations with adults can have on our lives if we do not work ourselves free of our need for our parents".[10]

At the age of 18 Linnet not only became economically independent from her family but also emotionally: "I was solely responsible for my economic survival and [...] no living person felt any duty toward me" (HT, 219). She is constantly managing and arranging matters, trying to get things into order: "The past, the part I would rather not have lived, became small and remote, a dark pinpoint" (HT, 225). Linnet recalls things to her mind from the past with the intention to "free herself of it".[11]

She starts from scratch to be able to learn more about herself. This is how Linnet describes her first days:

> [...] there was almost no such thing as a "Canadian." You were Canadian-born, and a British subject, too, and you had a third label with no consular reality. [...] In Canada you were also whatever your father happened to be, which in my case was English. (HT, 220)

When she returns from Montreal, Linnet walks around frustrated from one father's friend to another to find out more about her father's death: "My father's death had been kept from me. I did not know its exact circumstances or even the date" (HT, 228). Unfortunately, she cannot get a straight answer. Linnet wishes to exorcize her father from her mind, because this is the only way she will achieve redemption and personal freedom, and get rid of the trauma and tyrannies from her childhood, or as she says: "the prison of childhood itself" (HT, 225).

"There was a space of life I used to call "between Zero and One" and then came a long mystery" (HT, 238), says Linnet, when she is contemplating about men and women in this world. She believes that men "came up to their wall, their terminal point, quite a long way after One" (HT, 238). She recalls the time of war, when she was as a 19-year-old listening to the Canadian national radio about how the allies were losing on all fronts in Europe. We see her preparing in a shameful way for an interview. At the time, Linnet was not too self-confident: "My only commercial asset was that I knew French, but French was of no professional use to anyone in Canada then - not even to French Canadians; one might as well have been fluent in Pushtu" (HT, 243). This was

[10] Keefer, *Reading Mavis Gallant* (1989): 98.
[11] Besner, *The Light of Imagination: Mavis Gallant's Fiction* (1988): 117.

the time when Linnet showed her first interest for "sexual curiosity, sexual resentment, and sexual fear that the presence of a woman can create where she is not wanted" (HT, 244). Her thinking agrees with the atmosphere in Montreal of that time. Montreal was a town shrouded in mystery and "sustained by belief in magic" (HT, 245). Linnet got a job in a dull office, gaining enlivenment with the arrival of the 32-year-old Mrs. Ireland. They start talking about various topics, but are particularly interested in chatting about men. Linnet understands men as human beings, who do not criticize their wives and do not speak a lot, but possess something magic within. If a woman gets married, she becomes "a watershed that transformed sweet cheerful, affectionate girls into, well, their own mother" (HT, 259).

Linnet gets acquainted with war refugees, who fled to Montreal. She red their minds like a book, from the beginning to the end (HT, 261). Similarly as Alice Munro's Rose in *Who Do You Think You Are?* (1978), Linnet in moments when she not knowing how to solve a situation vanishes into her world of imagination and writing. She does not think about refugees, but only writes stories about them. Her actions are not without reason, Linnet is fully aware that she is, figuratively, also a type of refugee. If she wishes to find out more about herself, she needs to see, e.g. what "an Austrian might see" (HT, 261). In "Voices Lost in Snow" Linnet returns to her childhood. She remembers going with her father on visits to his friends: "What was he doing alone with a child? Where was his wife?" (HT, 285). This is a story in which Gallant indirectly speaks about the dominance of parents, who tyrannize and neglect their children. In addition, it is also a story about Linnet's complicated relationship with her father.

In the last two stories, "The Doctor" and "With a Capital T", the reader observes Linnet drifting through her memory back to her early mature years. This is a time, when

> I had longed for emancipation and independence, but I was learning that women's autonomy is like a small inheritance paid out a penny at a time. In a journal I kept I scrupulously noted everything that came into my head about this, and about God, and about politics. I took it for granted that our victory over Fascism would be followed by sunburst of revolution - I thought that was what the war was about. I wondered if going to work for the capitalist press was entirely moral. "Whatever happens," I wrote, "it will be the Truth, nothing half-hearted, the Truth with a Capital T." (HT, 318)

Linnet continues her search. Her strong will to be completely emancipated and to become independent is not only the heart of the matter in the extract, but also of Linnet Muir's complete cycle. Whenever Gallant's characters are not capable of direct articulation, it is "Memory" and "History" that intertwine with "Voice" and "Imagination". When Linnet is capable of articulating Truth that is when she can complete the long journey home "from exile into identity".[12]

Mavis Gallant accompanies the collection HT with a very attention-grabbing and thorough "Introduction", which she wrote in Paris in July 1981. Although Gallant,

[12] Besner, *The Light of Imagination: Mavis Gallant's Fiction* (1988): 139.

fluently bilingual in English and French, has lived in Europe for many years, she still thinks and writes only in English, and could not even imagine writing in any other language

> for it seems to me inextricably bound to English syntax, to the sound, resonance, and ambiguities of English vocabulary. If I were to write in French, not only would I put things differently, but I would never set out to say the same things. Words have an association that the primary, dictionary definitions cannot provide, and that are all translations usually offer. (HT, xviii)

This is evident in Gallant's writing and the reader is strongly aware of this. Gallant will substitute a French phrase or entire sentence for an English equivalent if she needs to. She belongs to the group of writers who do not reread their own work unless they really have to. When writing, Gallant is convinced that "every line has been read and rewritten and read again to the point of glut".[13] Gallant wishes to tell us that we need to be careful not to get too close when reading (her) stories, because, as a result, the stories will become too distant for us to comprehend. Therefore, it is important for the reader to preserve a balance.

For Gallant, content, meaning, intention and form must make up a whole. There must be a justified reason for writing a short story. Literature is a matter of life and death, and, as a result, the writer's style is "the distillation of a lifetime of reading and listening, of selection and rejection. But if it is not a true voice, it is nothing".[14] In writing it is the "author's thumbprint, his mark", and cannot be copied, duplicated, reproduced or replicated:

> Style is inseparable from structure, part of the conformation of whatever the author has to say. What he says – this is what fiction is about – is that something is taking place and that nothing lasts. Against the sustained tick of a watch, fiction takes the measure of a life, a season, a look exchanged, the turning point, desire as brief as a dream, the grief and terror that after childhood we cease to express. The life, the look, the grief are without permanence. The watch continues to tick where the story stops.[15]

In the "Introduction" to HT the reader also learns about Gallant's attitude towards literature and particular life situations and issues, which have become a part of Canadian reality and are still real today 30 years after the publication of HT. The "Introduction" gives us guidelines and indicates the flow of Gallant's writing. Gallant calls to our attention the problems of Canadian writers, who are expatriates (HT, xii). She reminds us that Canadian newspapers are inclined to using the term "expatriot" (HT, xii) instead of term "expatriate". It is expected that Canadian artists will "paint" only Canadian, but she also criticizes very strongly the Canadian readers, who are not interested in her "style or structure or content or imagination or control of subject and form" (HT, xii), but only her "concealed intentions" (HT, xii).

[13] Cf. Gallant, "What Is Style?" in *Making It New*. Edited by John Metcalf (1982): 72.
[14] Cf. Gallant, "What Is Style?" in *Making It New*. Edited by John Metcalf (1982) 75-76.
[15] Cf. Gallant, "What Is Style?" in *Making It New*. Edited by John Metcalf (1982): 72.

Regarding the question of Canadian identity, Gallant is very firm in her justification:

> I am constantly assured that Canadians no longer know what they are, or what to be Canadian should mean; for want of a satisfactory definition, a national identity has been mislaid. the most polite thing I can say about this is that I don't believe it. A Canadian who did not know what it was to be Canadian would not know anything else: he would have to be told his own name. (HT, xiii)

The writer, like any other artist, says Gallant in a liberal and humanist tone, "owes no more and no less to his compatriots than to people at large" (HT, xiii). Echoing Northrop Frye,[16] she accepts as true that the writer should be loyal only to his imagination.

Gallant reminds the non-Canadian reader with a sense of irony that Canada is "one of few countries that confers citizenship by birth" and it is pertinent to believe that "a national character automatically attaches itself to a birth certificate" (HT, xv). Gallant assumes that "a Canadian is someone who has a logical reason to think he is one" (HT, xiii), and expresses her frustration with her fellow Canadians due to their narrowness and appeals to them to separate "the national sense of self" from nationalism, which Gallant rejects completely, and patriotism.

Acknowledging the fact that Mavis Gallant has lived most of her life in Europe, she has always argued that she was never anything else, nor did it come to her mind to be anything else, but Canadian. Today she is rightfully considered a Canadian Classic, the *greatest* living Canadian short story writer, and the true voice of Canadian expatriates.

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[16] Cf. Kustec, "Northrop Frye on Literary Criticism, Identity and Canadian Literature during His Visit to Slovenia in 1990« in *Canada 2000: Identity and Transformation*" (2000): 120.

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF INDIAN ENGLISH POST-COLONIAL WOMEN'S PROSE

Tina Grobin

Abstract

Indian English post-colonial women's prose has seen many a change in the last sixty years since the pioneering writers gave voice to the Indian women. By breaking away from the burden of the colonial past and the traditional limitations of Indian society, the writers carved out a place for a distinct female identity in the Indian English literary sphere. The more recent women's prose addresses a wide range of universal issues of human experience, usually closely interwoven with the colourful heritage of the Indian subcontinent. As such it has become a highly acclaimed and internationally recognized global voice of contemporary India and the Indian diaspora.

Key words: post-colonial literature, Indian English women's prose, the treatment of subject matter

The spread of the European colonial hegemony over the territories of Africa, South Asia, Australia, New Zealand, the Caribbean and elsewhere had a major impact on the political, economic and cultural structure of the contemporary societies. In fact, colonialism influenced “more than three-quarters of the people living in the world today” (Ashcroft and Griffiths and Tiffin, 1). The second half of the twentieth century saw the subjugated nations wage an uphill battle of claiming back their essence and re-establishing their broken identities in the context of the newly gained independence from colonial empires. The legacy of colonial rule became the subject of research of the post-colonial theory. The main preoccupations of postcolonialism are therefore the influences of imperial hegemony on the indigenous population, the process of decolonization and its consequences, the issues of identity and the language(s) and the reestablishment of the social and political roles in the framework of globalization or, according to Boehmer, “restorative history” (Boehmer 186). Post-colonial literary production played an important role in the process of national rebuilding since it enabled people to make their voice heard. The following paragraphs discuss the development of the Indian English post-colonial women's prose, with the intention to highlight its role and importance in the process of defining women's social, historical and political roles in modern India.

The term Indian English post-colonial literature includes literary achievements of Indian authors in the homeland who write in English, and the literary voices of the Indian diaspora. The beginnings of Indian literary creativity in English date back to the period of the British imperial subjugation of the continent. It was especially the novel that achieved prominence and recognition with the emergence of authors Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao and R. K. Narayan who, at the turn of the twentieth century, set out on the literary path paved by their predecessor, a poet, philosopher and novelist Rabindranath Tagore. The socio-political changes brought about by the independence in 1947 resulted in the rise of women writers who could, empowered by a hint of approaching changes of attitudes towards the traditional role of Indian women, finally give voice to their illustration of the Indian experience. The authors to break new ground were Kamala Markandaya, Nayantara Sahgal, Ruth Prawer Jhabvala and Anita Desai. They were followed by Shashi Deshpande, Manju Kapur, and the representatives of the Indian diaspora Bharati Mukherjee and Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni. By addressing a number of topical issues and by perfecting the style of literary expression, they laid the ground for the prominent contemporary representatives of the Indian English literature, including Arundhati Roy, Anita Nair, Kiran Desai, Githa Hariharan and Jhumpa Lahiri, who can finally compete on equal terms with their male counterparts, for instance Salman Rushdie, Amit Chaudhuri, Vikas Swarup and Vikram Chandra.

To understand the true nature of Indian English women's literature, it is deemed essential to draw on some historical background, with respect to the specific social status of women in India. Shriwadkar points out that the roots of gender issues date back to the period as early as the ancient Hindu civilization where the gap between men and women could already be traced in literature. To support her claim, the author argues that the infamous Hindu epic poem Ramayana, which defined the ideal image of a woman as a quiet, loyal, virtuous, pure and suffering servant, whose role was to satisfy the needs of a man (embodied in the role of Rama, the protagonist, portrayed as the epitome of virtue) and her family, undoubtedly promoted the idea of female submissiveness and sacrifice, which was further developed by other myths and legends that had an important teaching role in ancient India (Shriwadkar 49). The archetype of the ideal woman and her prescribed roles of a daughter, wife and mother became deeply rooted in cultural tradition, and it soon became established as a social norm that the woman's main role was to serve her husband and raise (preferably male) children, or as Bumiller puts it, "be the mother of a hundred sons" (Bumiller 10). This gave rise to double standards in treating men and women and led to gender discrimination. In the society organised on gender principles women became perceived as the "other" sex, the term later used by Simone de Beauvoir in reference to women's inequality. Given the challenging social position of women, it is not surprising that the predominant theme of the women's prose is the Indian woman in relation to the patriarchal, tradition-bound society and the struggle to overcome its constraints. In the aftermath of the uncertain post-independence period the early prose focused on issues such as economic hardship, poverty and the clash between the rural and the urban middle-class society, addressed the concerns of the emerging post-colonial generation in relation to the burden of the British legacy and captured the suffering and sacrifice of the downtrodden Indian women, to name a few of the recurring topics of Kamala Markandaya, Nayantara Sahgal and Ruth Prawer

Jhabvala's novels. Despite the relative simplicity of the vocabulary and the narrative, the early literary production represented a breakthrough in the further development of the women's writing and it offered a valuable insight into the reality of Indian women of that time.

As a result of the country witnessing a rapid development in the field of socio-political, economic and cultural contexts, the women's writing began to break with tradition. Globalisation and the increased exposure to intercultural dialogue brought about changes in the existing social structures, challenged the traditional concepts, values and the way of life, and finally began to question the untouchable issue of gender roles. It became possible to start redefining the social position of women and the impact of social changes reflected in literature. Empowered by the transforming social environment, women writers began to break away from the British culture and the traditional social limits in order to establish a distinct identity of their own, which resulted in the emergence of new themes and fresh approaches to their application. In the light of transforming the traditional women's roles, one of the central motifs of the women's writing of the late sixties, the seventies and the eighties became the clash of traditional and modern values, which ultimately led to an identity crisis of the protagonists. As Seshadri points out, the Indian woman now finds herself in the position where she experiences the need to claim an individual identity but is limited by the remaining restrictions of her social position imposed on women by the traditional society (Seshadri 49). It should be observed at this point that the changes in the attitudes towards women took effect rather slowly and in the beginning they addressed a limited part of the society (i.e. the educated upper classes). The author explains that the primary concern of the protagonist is her personal conflict "between her will to disinherit the dominant tradition and her resistance to do so" (49) as the protagonist is still heavily influenced by the traditional norms and other social boundaries. In order to resolve the personal conflict that stands in the way of her liberation, the protagonist is sent on a quest of self-discovery and reclaiming selfhood. According to Seshadri, the process of establishing an individual identity denotes tackling the inner conflict of the "divided loyalties" (154) and dealing with the discouraging and often hostile social environment at the same time. Let us now look at how the authors carved out the space for the female identity.

To begin with, the protagonist who set out on the identity quest in order to deal with her personal conflict was equipped with the ability of a psychoanalytic insight, which enabled the psychological development of the fictional character. One of the first multi-layered protagonists to step on the path of self-searching was Anita Desai's Maya in *Cry, the Peacock*. The theme of the personal conflict enabled Desai and other contemporaries to relate their protagonists to the universal issues of experiencing loneliness, isolation, fear, doubt and guilt, which resulted in the authenticity of the protagonists. What is more, the conflict forced the protagonist to embark on a spiritual quest in order to break free from the limitations of the tradition, recognize her true identity and make way for expressing it. The means that the writers employed to liberate the protagonists was the element of mobility and personal growth. The protagonists had to abandon their roles within their families and their immediate environment in order to break with the old patterns of behaviour and venture beyond the recognized social norms and traditions, often by leaving their life behind, and, more importantly, they had to achieve a higher

level in the process of personal growth. The extent to which the protagonists were successful in walking the path of upward mobility and personal growth, however, remains a subject of great variety.

Rama Mehta's protagonist of the 1977 novel *Inside the* Haveli, for instance, embodies one of the lowest degrees of female mobility. The protagonist is introduced as a fairly open-minded urban girl who is married off in the traditional environment of rural Rajasthan where she is entrapped by the restrictions of the institution of orthodox purdah, denied social contacts, personal freedom and is reduced to a role of a silenced and defeated wife and mother. Mehta symbolically strengthens the element of female immobility through the protagonist's regression from a fairy independent to a totally submissive role and with the final act of the protagonist succumbing to the pressure of the tradition and embracing her destiny to remain repressed, passing on the message to the next generations of women. Vrinda Nabar, who has published widely on post-colonial and women's issues, argues that Mehta should have questioned the institution of purdah instead of glorifying it (Nabar 41). As such, Mehta's novel was a painful reminder that the inferiority of women was still an issue deeply rooted in Indian psyche and far from being resolved.

On the other hand, writers generally strived to move the social boundaries and they portrayed the protagonists who demanded independence and a voice of their own. Manju Kapur created two powerful protagonists, Astha in *A Married Woman* (2003) and Virmati in *Difficult Daughters* (1988) that challenged the conventional social norms by insisting on pursuing artistic and academic careers, taking part in the political sphere, traditionally the domain of men, and defying the traditional role of a wife by violating the sanctity of marriage with getting involved in a lesbian relationship (Astha) and eloping with a married man (Virmati). The non-conformity of Kapur's protagonists facilitated their upward mobility on the identity scale and enabled them to uphold the remote idea of individual freedom. However, they failed to realize their full potential, despite the fact that they stepped in places female protagonists had not ventured before. Astha lacked the strength to carry on with the indicated path of emancipation and returned to, as summarized by her husband, "what [she] know[s] best, the home, children, teaching" (116), and Virmati failed, too. Kapur hinted at the possibility of expanding the female space with the third generation of her women characters in *Difficult Daughters*. Namely, the last chapter ends with the story of Virmati's daughter Ida, who decides to set out in on a path of self-discovery and personal growth after a failed marriage.

Yet a higher level of female mobility is achieved by the protagonist of Anita Desai's novel *Where Shall We Go This Summer* (1982). Sita is depicted as a dissatisfied, middle aged pregnant mother and wife who leaves her husband and two children and moves to the island where she had spent her childhood in order to put together the broken fragments of her identity. The physical retreat from her marriage enables the protagonist to make more space for her individuality and establish communication with her inner self in order to be able to recognize her own needs. In fact, the motif of communication is presented as the central element which develops throughout the narrative and facilitates the protagonist's personal growth. At first Sita voices her dissatisfaction and demands change by abandoning her family, a way of a silent protest, but gradually she learns to communicate and make her voice heard, which is the ultimate level reached on the path

of her self-development. After a thorough self-searching, Sita comes to terms with her past and accepts her role within the society deciding that her place is with the family. Seshadri explains that Sita emerges from her personal conflict as a winner because the fact that she chose to rebel made it legitimate to make peace with her fate and embrace her old life with alterations as the only suitable choice for her (Seshadri 91). Despite the fact that Sita's journey is cyclic, she manages to secure some changes to her life. Nevertheless, the bitter taste of settling for the compromise instead of choosing complete freedom persists.

Another writer to demand change in the social position of women is Shashi Deshpande. Deshpande is one among a few internationally acclaimed women authors who remain based in the homeland. On her three decades long literary path, she has strived to give women the voice to stand up for themselves and empower them to claim independence and equality. She says that her role is to promote women's writing and advance its equal representation and evaluation in the literary mainstream where it still remains looked down upon by some critics who, according to Deshpande, still have not "learnt to deal with writing by women as just writing, whether it's good or bad".[1] Her novels portray protagonists who dare to step on the path of liberation but are usually impeded by the hostile social environment and their personal inhibitions to break with the tradition. In the end, the protagonist emerges from her personal conflict stronger, she moved upwards in terms of individual freedom and she is geared up for her newly defined life, however still within the accepted social limits. There are no happy endings with Deshpande but the reader feels the boundaries of women's freedom have been moved forward and are going to be dealt with further in the future.

The Dark Holds No Terrors (1980) introduces a highly mobile, educated and financially independent protagonist who is trapped in a vicious circle of having to justify and defend her freedom against the traditional society. Sarita's mission is to redefine her broken identity which is a result of a dissatisfying marriage to a physically and mentally abusive husband as well as a consequence of her constant inner battles with guilt and the feelings of insufficiency caused by the expectations of the environment. As an educated woman and the family breadwinner, she experiences a lot of pressure from the patriarchal society. Despite creating a protagonist who develops to the point of being equal to a man in all respects, Deshpande illustrates how Sarita completely loses her own identity in the process of proving herself, becoming terrified of "not existing. No, worse. Of being just a ventriloquist's dummy, that smiles, laughs, and talks only because of the ventriloquist" (22). In order to face her inner battle, she isolates herself from her husband and children by moving back to her parents' home where she seeks the answers about the meaningfulness of her existence and tries to find the path back to herself.

According to Seshadri, Sarita is the first protagonist "to move in places untrodden by fictional heroines" (Seshadri 103). Not only does Deshpande provide an utterly powerful and highly independent protagonist, she also takes the issue of a personal conflict from the individual to the collective level. Namely, through the symbolism employed in the roles of the male characters, the violent and abusive husband and the

[1] De, Aditi. (2003, 28 August). Breaking that Long Silence. *The Hindu*. Retrieved from http://www.hinduonnet.com

passive and impotent father, the author points the finger at the (patriarchal) society which does not allow women to express themselves or develop their potential and is incapable of providing support. The conflicts on the individual and collective levels are finally resolved through the powerful element of communication. The key to Sarita's redemption is to establish a monologue with herself to recognize her needs, and a dialogue with her environment to find the way to communicate her needs to her surroundings. By realizing that she has the power to be responsible for her life, Sarita can redefine her identity and embrace her new self. This achieved, the final chapter disappoints in lacking the determination to clearly signal the beginning of a new life for Sarita. As Surendran points out, the protagonist's fulfilment is never definite but is rendered only as a possibility at the end of the novel (Surendran 112).

Another milestone in women's prose was the publication of Arundhati Roy's debut novel *The God of Small Things* in 1997. In terms of defining female identity, Roy creates highly mobile and independent female characters, perhaps the most accomplished fictional characters in that respect so far. What is more, Roy subtly sets the recurrent theme of the Indian woman and the society against other topical issues of the Indian as well as global community. Similarly to Desai, Deshpande and Kapur, who treat the theme of female identity within a cultural, historical and political setting, ranging from the partition of India (Desai's *Clear Light of Day*, Kapur's *Difficult Daughters*), Hindu-Muslim conflicts (Kapur's *A Married Woman*, Deshpande's *That Long Silence*) to the clash between the Eastern and Western cultures (Desai's *Fasting, Feasting*), Roy questions issues such as the institution of caste, gender bias, social discrimination, class conflicts, Indian history, culture and politics, corruption, (physical and mental) violence, sexual abuse and incest. The plot revolves around the lives of Ammu and her twins and it shifts back and forth from 1969 to 1993. Ammu is depicted as a rebellious daughter of a violent father and a long-suffering mother, who seeks refuge in an unhappy marriage to an abusive alcoholic whom she divorces and later initiates a relationship with a member of the lowest caste, the Untouchables. The fate of Ammu, her children and her lover within Roy's biased and immoral society is determined by 'small things' as suggested in the title itself. It is the human fears, prejudice, malice, immorality and injustice that destroy the lives of Ammu, who dies at thirty-one years of age because of poverty, her lover Velutha, who becomes a scapegoat and is brutally murdered by the police on the basis of false allegations, her son Estha, who goes numb as a consequence of abuse, guilt and the stress of separation from his family, and her daughter Rahel, who returns to India after a failed marriage in the USA and tries to scrape together the lives of herself and her twin brother Estha. The novel reads like a pessimistic illustration of a contemporary society which is ridden with injustice and human suffering. Or as Nishant puts it, "[w]ishing for one day, a single moment, that is free from suffering, boundaries and prejudice to last for a lifetime is a dream inverted and ultimately defeated in Arundhati Roy's first novel The God of Small Things".[2] As such, the novel is easily related to and along with Roy's rich language and a unique narrating technique, the treatment of universal themes of human existence set within the Indian context enables the novel to address a wide international readership, a trend that is starting to prevail in the field of

[2] Nishant, Shulin. (2001, 4 June). Arundhati Roy's The God of Small Things. *Postcolonialweb.org.* Retrieved from http://www.scholars.nus.edu.sg

most recent contemporary Indian English women's prose with authors such as Jhumpa Lahiri, Anita Nair, Kiran Desai and many other prolific representatives of the Indian literary voice. The open ending of Roy's novel signals the idea that the future may have the answers to the burning questions women have been addressing through literature. It is now in the hands of the new generation of writers to carry the women's voice further afield, a mission they definitely seem to be well suited to accomplishing.

CONCLUSION

Indian English post-colonial women writers Arundhati Roy, Githa Hariharan, Shashi Deshpande, Anita Desai, Manju Kapur, Anita Nair and the voices of Indian diaspora Jhumpa Lahiri, Bharati Mukherjee, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, and most recently Kiran Desai, the daughter of Anita, have managed to carve out their spaces next to the prominent male writers of the contemporary post-colonial Indian English literary canon, including Salman Rushdie, Amitav Ghosh, Vikram Seth, Rohinton Mistry, Amit Chaudhauri, Shashi Tharoor, Vikram Chandra, and others. The paper examines the process that the women's prose underwent in order to become the voice of the contemporary Indian experience. Given the specific social situation of women in India, the predominant theme of the women's prose is the illustration of the Indian woman in relation to the (hostile) society. The early variations on the theme portrayed the hardships of a struggling Indian female within the patriarchal, tradition-bound society, set in the wider context of the emerging post-colonial India trying to come to terms with its turbulent past. Despite the occasional stylistic weaknesses, the early novels provided an important insight in the lives of Indian women around the time of India's independence. Against a backdrop of rapid social changes the recurring theme was further developed by writers addressing a number of topical issues concerning women and their role in the society. They questioned the existing social norms and they pushed back the boundaries of the traditional role of women by giving their protagonists a sense of personal identity and a voice of their own. The central element of defining the women's role was skilfully interwoven with other relevant themes of the Indian reality, such as family relations, religious tensions, history, culture, politics and social discrimination, which gave credibility to women's writing and created literary space for women's voices. The writers empowered women, granted them identity, mobility and the freedom of expression which they had been denied before. For this reason, the late twentieth century women's literature made a significant contribution to the change of attitudes towards the position of women in the Indian society and literature, and as such it holds an important place in the development of women's writing. The issue of the status of Indian women remains controversial even at the turn of the twenty-first century and it continues to serve as a recurrent motif of the most recent women's fiction, however, it is employed alongside a wide range of globally related themes introduced by writers in order to account for the phenomena of the modern society. Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*, for instance, addresses a set of universal issues of human experience. Roy tackles the questions of caste, race, gender inequality, (sexual, mental and physical) abuse, corruption and (domestic) violence within a socially and politi-

cally in-depth framework, and she does it with a powerful poignancy that the earlier prose by women but seldom witnessed. Furthermore, Kiran Desai ventures even further afield with her novels *The Inheritance of Loss* and *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard* to explore the complex problems of globalism, class, the divide between the rich and the poor, racial questions, immigration issues, alienation and loneliness, which are skilfully knitted in the multi-layered narrative, whereas Jhumpa Lahiri's *Unaccustomed Earth, The Namesake* and *Interpreter of Maladies* address the present-day multicultural society and its predicaments, such as the clash of cultures, the generation gap and the theme of identity in the light of the immigration context. Finally, contemporary prose by women has excelled in the field of literary style, employing rich, eloquent language and colourful, detailed narrative. The novels convey strong emotion and provide a penetrating, deeply intimate insight into the most acute concerns of the present-day society. The acuity, depth and sincere originality have won Indian women writers praise and great international acclaim. In a nutshell, Indian women writers have succeeded in raising their voices over the last six decades and have heralded an era of equal opportunities with a bright future ahead of them.

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MODAL STRUCTURE IN KURT VONNEGUT'S *SLAUGHTERHOUSE-FIVE*

Monika Kavalir

Abstract

The article analyses modal structure (tense, polarity) in Kurt Vonnegut's novel *Slaughterhouse-Five* within the framework of Systemic-Functional Grammar. The analysis of the Mood element shows the prevailing pattern to be past positive; the use of present tenses embodies Vonnegut's specific non-linear concept of time. Similarly, the absence of negative polarity builds the deterministic belief that pervades the novel.

Key words: modal structure, Kurt Vonnegut, *Slaughterhouse-Five*, systematic functional grammar, linguistics, stylistic, literary analysis.

INTRODUCTION

Even if good literature opens up the space for personal interpretation and there are, in a way, as many readings of a piece of writing as there are readers, most literary works will leave the reader with some typical impressions. One can be quite certain that the hero is more or less heroic, the heroine capricious, vivacious, or caustic – despite the fact that they are never described as such. How do these meanings come about? What exactly is the mechanism that allows actions to speak louder than words? Attempting to contribute a part of the answer to these questions, the paper takes a close look at modal structure (tense and polarity) in Kurt Vonnegut's novel *Slaughterhouse-Five* within the framework of Systemic-Functional Grammar (Halliday 1998, Halliday and Matthiessen 2004).

KURT VONNEGUT AND *SLAUGHTERHOUSE-FIVE*

Kurt Vonnegut Jr. (1922–2007) was an American author who began with science fiction and then wrote his "famous book about Dresden" (Vonnegut 2000: 3). Published in 1969, *Slaughterhouse-Five* "was something of a literary 'event'" (Harris 1971: 52). Vonnegut finally managed to write this book after 25 years and 5,000 pages. On this subject he said (in Amis 1990: 137): "I always thought, if I could ever get something down about Dresden, that would be *it*. After *Slaughterhouse-Five* I'd already done much more than I ever expected to do with my life."

It seems that critics agree, calling it a "masterly novel" (Tanner 1971: 200); Vonnegut himself was described by Graham Greene as "one of the best living American writers" (in Allan 1988: 57). Nevertheless, the success of this book is inextricably tied to the Zeitgeist: the anti-war sentiment present in the United States embraced Vonnegut's novel as "deconstruct[ing] the binary framing of America's 'good war', offering a 'Vietnamized' version, full of discontinuities, fragmented bodies, and multiple shades of gray" (Jarvis 2003: 96). It should be noted, however, that critical acclaim was much more difficult to achieve as the critics at first tried to discard Vonnegut as just another science-fiction writer and the awareness of the seriousness of Vonnegut's inquiries took a long time to grow (cf. Tanner 1971: 181).[1]

Slaughterhouse-Five or The Children's Crusade is based on Vonnegut's experience in the Second World War, when he was a prisoner of war in Dresden and saw its destruction – the bombing by the Allies.[2] Still this is not an autobiographic work, the hero is Billy Pilgrim. Billy is unstuck in time and moves spasmodically from event to event through his life in random sequence. The central line of the novel is his war experience, which culminates in the bombing of Dresden and is interrupted by other events in his life, be it his childhood, peaceful life as an optometrist, or his abduction on the planet Tralfamadore.

Possibly the main characteristic of the novel, which also bothered the critics tremendously, is its seeming simplicity. It appears that the author wanted to get the message across so badly that he had to spell it out, and did that more than once. Two prominent topics are fatalism and the structure of time. Billy's prayer is for God to grant him the serenity to accept the things he cannot change, courage to change the things he can, and wisdom always to tell the difference – accompanied by Vonnegut's (2000: 44) commentary: "Among the things Billy Pilgrim could not change were the past, the present, and the future." This does not leave much space for free will and for action, as Vonnegut (2000: 119) points out again: "There are almost no characters in this story, and almost no dramatic confrontations, because most of the people in it are so sick and so much the listless playthings of enormous forces." This is connected to the powerful idea of the structure of time – we are all "bugs in amber" (Vonnegut 2000: 62), any moment is structured, has always been and always will be (cf. Vonnegut 2000: 84).

There is dissension among the critics, however. Is this really fatalism or is it anti-fatalism? Vonnegut scholars split into two opposite camps, many of them speaking against the above understanding of the book (cf. Cacicedo 2005, Broer 1994, Tanner 1971). To this issue is linked the question of the alleged anti-war sentiment of the novel, which juxtaposes pacifistic statements with the belief there will always be wars. In the case of Vonnegut, there has been significant interpretative interference by the author, who enjoyed discussing his work. His statements vary considerably and could probably substantiate very different theories; at some point he even disclaimed everything he had ever said (Allan 1988: 77).

[1] Vonnegut is supposedly also "our era's most frequently banned author" (Klinkowitz 1998: 2).

[2] The "success" of the air raid was kept secret for a long time, and when it was revealed, it was presented as probably the greatest massacre of the Second World War. The number of estimated victims was 135,000, by far surpassing Hiroshima. The work of David Irving, who published this information, was later discredited, and today the estimates range from 25,000 to 40,000 victims – the actual data are still very much in dispute (Rigney 2009: 9-11; cf. the lively discussions on the article "Bombing of Dresden in World War Two", Wikipedia).

GRAMMATICAL COMPLEXITY AND THEMATIC STRUCTURE

Kavalir (2006) is an analysis of the grammatical complexity and thematic structure of the novel using the framework of Systemic-Functional Grammar. The examination of the grammatical (non-)complexity of the novel exposes the great simplicity of style as evident in the low number of long clause complexes. When compared to an excerpt from Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist*, Vonnegut's complexes do not deviate noticeably in the hierarchical relationships within the complex, but mainly in their length. Vonnegut's language is thus in no way impoverished, embodying instead the Tralfamadorian concept of literature, where sentences, paragraphs and subchapters imitate separate clusters of symbols to produce a mosaic effect. The decision to renounce logical relations between clauses is especially manifest in the war scenes and entails the abandonment of logic appropriate to the unspeakableness of the book's main event.

The study of the novel's thematic structure shows its main character Billy Pilgrim to be rather insignificant, readily yielding his place as the Theme to others. A victim of outer forces, he does not develop but serves more to keep the novel together. The choice of the Theme when recounting the bombing of Dresden unmasks the book's fatalism: people are not very important and in any case cannot change anything because everything that happens must happen; this idea of determinism leaves room only for resignation. Apart from the very few circumstances that act as the Theme and the conventional inversion in reporting clauses, the only noteworthy example of a marked Theme is in *So it goes* (and *And so on*), yet through frequent use this catch-phrase loses its markedness and becomes a mannerism.

MODAL STRUCTURE IN CHAPTER 8

While Kavalir (2006) provides some noteworthy insights into the novel and the way some of its most noticeable traits are constructed, many meanings quite obvious to the reader remain unexplainable. The hypothesis explored here is that at least some of them can be attributed to grammatical levels other than complexity and thematic structure. With this aim in mind, an attempt at a functional grammar analysis is carried out on Chapter 8 of the novel, which comprises 4,533 words. The choice of this particular chapter hinges on the fact that it includes the most important event in the novel, the bombing of Dresden.

According to Halliday (1998) and Halliday and Matthiessen (2004), a clause is made up of three distinct structures combined into one: transitivity structure (ideational component: clause as representation), modal structure (interpersonal component: clause as exchange), and thematic structure (textual component: clause as message). Modal structure refers to the clause organized as "an interactive event involving speaker, or writer, and audience" (Halliday 1998: 68). The Mood element mainly consists of two parts, the Subject and the Finite operator. The Residue consists of three kinds of functional elements, Predicator, Complement and Adjunct. Finiteness combines the specification of polarity with the specification of temporal or modal reference to the speech event and the Subject specifies the entity in respect of which the assertion is

claimed to have validity; the Mood element therefore "carries the burden of the clause as an interactive event" (Halliday 1998: 77).

Table 1 shows the distribution of finite verbal operators in Chapter 8 of *Slaughterhouse-Five* across the two types, temporal and modal operators (embedded clauses are excluded). Absolute numbers are shown for both ways in which operators relate propositions to their context, via primary tense (Past; Present; Future) and modality, which can be Low – e.g. *snakes couldn't help being snakes* (Vonnegut 2000: 119); Median – e.g. *I should know* (Vonnegut 2000: 124); or High – e.g. *I have to ask* (Vonnegut 2000: 124). The operators are also analysed in terms of positive and negative polarity.

Temporal operators				
	Past	Present	Future	Total
Positive	396	74	9	479
Negative	11	2	0	13
Total	*407*	*76*	*9*	*492*
Modal operators				
	Low	Median	High	Total
Positive	15	6	3	24
Negative	6	0	0	6
Total	*21*	*6*	*3*	*30*

Table 1 Temporal and modal operators in Slaughterhouse-Five, Chapter 8

When it comes to the structure of Mood and Residue, the prevailing tense-cum-polarity pattern here is past positive. If only the Finite element (and the Mood Adjunct *not* where appropriate) is taken as the criterion, 396 clauses feature a past positive pattern, representing 76% of all clauses with a Finite (522). There are 76 clauses where the Finite element is realized by a present temporal operator, and 54 of these occur in speech, as part of dialogue (cf. Table 2).

Speech	54
So it goes	*10*
Comments	3
Other	9
Total	*76*

Table 2 Present operators in context

Of the remaining 22 examples of present tenses, 10 are instances of the catch-phrase *So it goes*. 2 such choices constitute a general comment about war and the novel, and there is also a narrative remark (*Here is what they sang*); these three can be seen as interventions by the author. This leaves 9 examples of present tenses, which do not seem warranted in their environment. Given the past context in which it occurs, this passage (Vonnegut 2000: 120-121) deserves to be reproduced here together with the analysis in Figure 1:

> 'Father,' she said, 'what are we going to *do* with you?' And so on. 'You know who I could just kill?' she asked.
> '*Who* could you kill?' said Billy.
> 'That Kilgore Trout.'
> Kilgore Trout was and is a science-fiction writer, of course. Billy has not only read dozens of books by Trout – he has also become Trout's friend, to the extent that anyone can become a friend of Trout, who is a bitter man.
> ***
> Trout lives in a rented basement in Ilium, about two miles from Billy's nice white home. He himself has no idea how many novels he has written – possibly seventy-five of the things. Not one of them has made money. So Trout keeps body and soul together as a circulation man for the *Ilium Gazette*, manages newspaper delivery boys, bullies and flatters and cheats little kids.

	'Father, < > what		are	we	going to *do* with you?'		
Present positive	Vocat	Compl/WH-	Fin	Subj	Pred	Adj	
	< she	said, >					
Past positive	Subj	'(past)' Fin	'say' Pred				
	And so on.						
	'You	know					
	Subj	Pred					
	who	I	could	just	kill?'		
Low positive	Compl/WH-	Subj	Fin	Mood Adj	Pred		
	she	asked.					
Past positive	Subj	'(past)' Fin	'ask' Pred				
	'Who	could	you	kill?'			
Low positive	Compl/WH-	Fin	Subj	Pred			
	said	Billy.					
Past positive	'(past)' Fin	'say' Pred	Subj				
	'That Kilgore Trout.'						
	Compl						
	Kilgore Trout	was and is	a science-fiction writer, of course.				
Past/present positive	Subj	'(past/pr)' Fin	'be' Pred	Compl	Mood Adj		
	Billy	has	not only read	dozens of books by Trout -			
Present positive	Subj	Fin	Pred	Compl			
	he	has	also	become Trout's friend,	to the extent [that anyone can become a friend of Trout, who is a bitter man].		
Present positive	Subj	Fin	Conj Adj	Pred	Compl	Adj	
	Trout	lives	in a rented basement in Ilium, about two miles from Billy's nice white home.				
Present positive	Subj	'(pr)' Fin	'live' Pred	Adj			
	He himself	has	no idea [how many novels he has written – possibly seventy-five of the things].				

Present positive	Subj	'(pr)' Fin	'have' Pred	Compl			
	Not one of them	has	made	money.			
Present positive	Subj	Fin	Pred	Compl			
	So Trout		keeps	body and soul	together	as a circulation man for the *Ilium Gazette*,	
Present positive	Subj	'(pr)' Fin	'keep' Pred	Compl	Compl	Adj	
	manages		newspaper delivery boys,				
Present positive	'(pr)' Fin	'manage' Pred	Compl				
	bullies and flatters and cheats			little kids.			
Present positive	'(pr)' Fin	'bully, flatter, cheat' Pred	Compl				

Figure 1 Analysis of extract from Chapter 8

The story then continues with *Billy met him for the first time in 1964* and goes on with the narrative strictly in the past time sphere. What is the function of this surprising insertion? A possible answer would be that it serves to reinforce by means of tense and thus Mood selection the specific idea of time presented in this book. If we take a look at the first occurrences of present tenses in this chapter, the Present Indefinite and the Present Perfect Indefinite in *Kilgore Trout was and is a science-fiction writer, of course. Billy has not only read dozens of books by Trout – he has also become Trout's friend*, they appear out of place because the point of reference is seemingly the moment when Billy talks to his daughter – and Billy *had* read dozens of books by Trout already before that moment, and *had* become Trout's friend. The contrast is heightened by the fact that on the very same page the usual sequence of tenses is observed later on (Vonnegut 2000: 121):

> And then the newspaper girl held up her hand. 'Mr Trout–' she said, 'if I win, can I take my sister, too?'
> 'Hell no,' said Kilgore Trout. 'You think money grows on *trees*?'
>
> Trout, incidentally, had written a book about a money tree.

It is in instances like this that we can capture at least a part of that mysterious elusiveness of style that is "literariness": "the […] ways Vonnegut gets our wires crossed and holds incongruous discourses together are his own and make for that aesthetic surplus value" (Rigney 2009: 13). In this passage, the point of reference temporarily moves to "a sort of eternal present" (Tanner 1971: 197). For Billy "[a]ll moments, past, present, and future, always have existed, always will exist" (Vonnegut 2000: 19) because he is "spastic in time" and "has no control over where he is going next" (Vonnegut 2000: 17). Billy discovers it is only an illusion that one moment follows another one, and that once a moment is gone, it is gone forever (cf. Harris 1971: 70).",[3,4]

[3] This idea is strongly reminiscent of Baruch Spinoza's concept of time but Vonnegut could not have been under his influence, as the following comment from Allan (1988: 13) testifies: "Philosophy does interest [Vonnegut] in an amateur way. A friend told him that he had hit upon Spinoza's theory of time by accident in *Slaughterhouse-Five*."

[4] Tanner (1971: 195) comments that through the integration in *Slaughterhouse-Five* of scenes and characters from Vonnegut's previous novels, Billy Pilgrim not only slips backwards and forward in time, "he is also astray in Vonnegut's own fictions".

"Everything always is" (Tanner 1971: 197) and this authorizes Vonnegut to use a tense such as the Present Perfect wherever he may feel like using it – or whenever he may feel the need to remind the reader of his concept of time. A prime example is the introductory scene with Billy Pilgrim when he states (Vonnegut 2000: 17): "Billy has gone to sleep a senile widower and awakened on his wedding day. He has walked through a door in 1955 and come out another one in 1941. He has gone back through that door to find himself in 1963." And also: "*I, Billy Pilgrim*, the tape begins, *will die, have died, and always will die on February thirteenth, 1976*" (Vonnegut 2000: 103).

Vonnegut's frequent use of *now* presents a problem for the analysis. This particular item can either be used as an adverb pointing to a Location in time (Adjunct in the modal structure), or as a Conjunctive Adjunct with a textual function, locating "the clause in time with respect to the preceding textual environment" (Halliday 1998: 84). Although the two functions seem far apart, this novel shows they can actually sometimes be conflated. When Vonnegut uses *now* at the beginning of a new subchapter in a sentence like *Now the party was in progress* (Vonnegut 2000: 124), there are two possible interpretations: to understand it as a continuation of the preceding events, or as grounding this particular happening independently of what precedes and follows it, whereby every event is a special time loop[5]. The latter interpretation is in line with the idea of non-linearity of time.

In Systemic Functional Linguistics, what is selected is just as important as what is *not* selected. Only 19 clauses in Chapter 8 feature negative polarity. This represents less than 4% of all clauses with a Finite, and establishes positive polarity as the absolute norm. An even greater uniformity can be seen in the 119 clauses which deal with the bombing of Dresden and its immediate consequences: only one of these clauses features negative polarity. This is again a striking embodiment of the novel's message: "Man cannot alter his destiny of his own volition; everything that happens must happen, and man is powerless to change it" (Holland 1995: 54). What follows from this impossibility of denial is that the proper response to life is one of resigned acceptance; according to Harris (1971: 69), this is the main idea emerging from *Slaughterhouse-Five*. This sincere deterministic belief has inevitable consequences for the way in which war is seen: it is beyond control, but that is all right: "[The destruction of Dresden] was all right […] *Everything* is all right, and everybody has to do exactly what he does" (Vonnegut 2000: 144-145).

The topic of resignation to fate is again linked to Billy's perception of time: fatalistically, Billy becomes "completely quiescent, calmly accepting everything that happens as happening exactly as it ought to" (Tanner 1971: 198), since "[n]othing can be done to change it because each moment is structured in its own particular way – it always has been and always will be" (Holland 1995: 42). Furthermore, this strong fatalist impression does not speak for *Slaughterhouse-Five*'s being an anti-war novel: "With his

[5] Cf. the following description of the author's creative method (Allan 1988: 69, 48-49): "My books are essentially mosaics, thousands and thousands of tiny little chips all glued together, and each chip is this thing I learned to do – this thing I learned to make as a child – which is a little joke. […] I find sections of my book constructed like jokes and then they're not very long and I suddenly realize the joke is told, and that it'd spoil the joke if I were to go past. The tag line is where the joke paid off and so I'll make a row of dots across the page to indicate that something's ended and I'll begin again and it'll essentially build as another joke."

new vision, Billy does not protest about the Vietnam war, nor shudder about the effects of the bombing" (Tanner 1971: 198).

CONCLUSION

An analysis of the type attempted here can only reveal a small part of the whole picture, and even at the level of language there are many more elements to *Slaughterhouse-Five* than have been discussed here. "[T]he language of texts cannot be adequately explored by focusing only on one particular feature of organization such as grammar or phonology […] The way language is patterned in such contexts involves attention to the organization of language beyond grammar, that is beyond such relatively small units of language as the sentence and towards larger units of organization" (Carter and Nash 1994: 2).

Nevertheless, the method applied provides some interesting insights into how this particular novel functions, and how it builds up its unique style. Modal structure in *Slaughterhouse-Five* (Chapter 8) evidences the prominence of past positive Mood. The cases of present tenses point to the exceptional understanding of time in *Slaughterhouse-Five*: it is an illusion that one moment follows another, and all moments exist simultaneously in the present, past and future. The relative lack of negative operators is linked to the novel's recurrent fatalism; it derives from the fact that people cannot change their destiny. The analysis thus shows how grammar develops some of the topics in *Slaughterhouse-Five* such as fatalism and the problem of time. It seems that these themes are so clearly expressed through structure that there might be a point to criticism of exaggerated straightforwardness in the form of Vonnegut's authorial metatextual commentaries.

The contribution linguistic analyses of literary works such as the one presented here make is to provide a form of disciplinary knowledge that can be tested, debated and built upon; without linguistics, the study of literature all too often remains a series of personal preferences (Hasan 1985: 104; cf. Lukin and Webster 2005: 419). Any interpretations and conclusions drawn from this can, however, only be partial as it is quite possible to claim that yes, the grammar of the book does suggest fatalism, but the novel as a whole has to be understood as a warning against the perils of fatalism (cf. Broer 1994: 86-87, 95) or as transcending it and thus "re-presenting the gospel message of Christ to the disciples" (Cacicedo 2005: 365). While a focus only on the grammar component of language cannot spell out all the secrets of Vonnegut's style, and even less all the meanings hidden – or at times laid out – in the book, the article shows that even a very limited microscopic view can in fact expose some of the mechanisms by which the novel achieves its effect on the reader.

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FRAUENFIGUREN IN HEINRICH BÖLLS WERKEN UND IHRE ROLLEN IN DER ERZÄHLSTRUKTUR

Zu Frauenfiguren in Heinrich Bölls Romanen *Billard um halb zehn, Ansichten eines Clowns, Gruppenbild mit Dame* und Erzählung *Die verlorene Ehre der Katharina Blum*

Kristina Jokić

Abstract

The following article presents female characters and their role in four important novels by Heinrich Böll. The central female characters, who are the subject of this research, are Johanna Fähmel from the novel *Billard um halb zehn* (1959), Marie Derkum (*Ansichten eines Clowns*, 1963), Leni Pfeiffer, the heroine of the novel *Gruppenbild mit Dame* (1971) and Katharina Blum from the novel *Die verlorene Ehre der Katharina Blum* (1974). Heinrich Böll's novels were often studied and analysed. However, in those studies very little attention was devoted to female characters. At first sight, they appear to be of lesser importance; however, their role in the narrative structure should not be neglected. Although some literature researchers including Dorothee Römhild and Evelyn T. Beck were very critical of them and labelled them as dependent, traditional and completely subordinate to men, this article is trying to prove the opposite. Female characters in Heinrich Böll's novels are very complex, and the society tends to be ambivalent about them. Still, the most important fact is that they affect the narrative structure both directly and indirectly, thus representing an indispensable element in Böll's novels.

Key words: four female figures in Heinrich Böll's novels

Heinrich Böll faszinierte schon seit jeher Literaturwissenschaftler/-innen mit seinen Helden, den Außenseitern, die sich gegen die Verlogenheit der Gesellschaft wehren und nach ihren Gefühlen handeln. Es gab viele Studien über seine Helden, während seine „Heldinnen" weniger untersucht worden sind, deswegen wird in diesem Artikel versucht, seine Frauenfiguren in seinen vier wohl bekanntesten Werken darzustellen.

Böll gibt den Frauen in seinen Werken eine bedeutende Rolle. In fast keinem seiner Werke ist die Frauenfigur unbedeutend oder entbehrlich. Obwohl Bölls Frauenfiguren oft von Literaturwissenschaftlerinnen wie u. a. Dorothee Römhild (1991) und Evelyn T. Beck (1983) kritisiert und als unselbstständig, den Männern untergeordnet und traditionell bezeichnet wurden, soll in diesem Artikel gerade das Gegenteil bewiesen werden. Es wird versucht, zu begründen, warum die Frauenfiguren für die Werke unentbehrlich sind und welche Rolle sie beim Handlungsablauf spielen. Im Mittelpunkt steht die These,

dass die Frauenfiguren in Bölls Werken vielschichtig und komplex aufgebaut sind und in ihrer Vielfältigkeit ambivalent wirken. Ihre Komplexität führt auch dazu, dass sie nicht typisiert werden können. Anhand einer kurzen Vorstellung der Frauenfiguren aus ausgewählten Werken Bölls soll gezeigt werden, dass seine Frauenfiguren charismatische und starke Persönlichkeiten sind, die einen großen Einfluss auf ihre Umgebung ausüben und eine bedeutende Rolle in der Erzählstruktur spielen.

JOHANNA FÄHMEL AUS *BILLARD UM HALB ZEHN*

Schon mit dem Roman *Billard um halb zehn* gelang es Heinrich Böll, ein Meisterwerk zu schaffen, das komplexe zwischenmenschliche Beziehungen darstellt. Obwohl in diesem Werk die zentrale Frauenfigur Johanna Fähmel, Heinrich Fähmels Frau, nicht im Mittelpunkt der Geschichte steht, spielt sie eine bedeutende Rolle in der Erzählstruktur, weswegen man sie getrost als die weibliche Hauptfigur bezeichnen könnte. Über Johanna erfährt man aus verschiedenen Perspektiven, sowie aus ihren eigenen Reflexionen und Erinnerungen. Sie stellt im Roman die Schutzpatronin der Lämmer, der Unschuldigen und Wehrlosen, dar und ist eine Hirtin, welche die Lämmer weidet und sich für sie einsetzt. Während frühere Frauenfiguren in Bölls Werken passiv bleiben, spielt Johanna eine aktive Rolle im Roman. Sie ergreift die Initiative und kämpft für Menschenrechte und gegen den durch den Büffel symbolisierten Nationalsozialismus. Für ihre Zeit stellt sie eine fortschrittliche, selbstständige, emanzipierte Frau dar, die sich nicht davor fürchtet, ihre Meinung öffentlich zu äußern. Sie rebelliert gegen ihre Umgebung und die Verlogenheit der Gesellschaft. Dass sie kein Lamm, sondern eine Rebellin, Kämpferin für das Gute ist, zeigt sich zum ersten Mal während des I. Weltkriegs, als sie öffentlich Kritik am Kaiser übt. Ihr Mann bewundert sie, da er nie so viel Mut aufbrachte wie sie: „Johanna sprach aus, was ich dachte; sie trank keinen Sekt, als wir beim Standortkommandanten eingeladen waren, aß nicht von dem Hasenpfeffer und wies alle Tänzer ab; sie sagte es laut: 'Der kaiserliche Narr' [...]" (Billard um halb zehn 2005:100). Ihr Kampfgeist zeigt sich auch, als sie im Dritten Reich gegen Judendeportationen kämpft, indem sie darauf besteht, mittransportiert zu werden. Sie ist eine entschlossene und selbstbewusste Frau, die genau weiß, was sie vom Leben will. Vor der Heirat wirft sie ein Auge auf Heinrich Fähmel und wartet sehnsuchtsvoll auf ihn, was das nächste Zitat bezeugt: „[I]ch liebte ihn, wartete jeden Tag auf die Minute, wenn er im großen Atelierfenster sichtbar wurde, blickte ihm nach, wenn er das Druckereitor verließ; ich schlich mich in die Chorprobe des Sängerbundes, beobachtete ihn" (ebda. 148). Als Heinrich um ihre Hand anhält, erfüllt sich ihr Wunsch und sie willigt ohne Bedenken in die Ehe ein: „Johanna war später augenzwinkernd hinzugekommen, hatte das Ja nicht gehaucht, sondern es deutlich ausgesprochen" (ebda. 131).

Ihr Leben ist stark von den beiden Kriegen geprägt, denn sie verliert in dieser Zeit zwei Brüder, drei Kinder und ihre Schwiegertochter. Vor allem kann sie den Verlust ihrer Kinder Heinrich und Otto nicht verkraften, weil sie vom Büffel beeinflusst gestorben sind. Es trifft sie hart, als sie einsieht, dass ihr Sohn Otto zum Büffel wird: „Und Otto war auf einmal nicht mehr Otto [...] Otto war nur noch Ottos Hülle, die rasch einen anderen Inhalt bekam; er hatte vom Sakrament des Büffels nicht nur gekostet, er war

damit geimpft worden“ (ebda. 150). Nach dessen Tod lässt sie sich in ein Sanatorium einliefern, um die Grausamkeiten des Krieges nicht mehr ertragen zu müssen. Sie fürchtet sich vor der schrecklichen Welt, seitdem sie ihre Familienmitglieder im Krieg verloren hat und bleibt fast siebzehn Jahre im Sanatorium, wo sie sich vor der Realität versteckt. Sie glaubt nicht mehr an das Gute im Menschen, was das nächste Zitat ausdrückt: „[’D] ie Welt ist böse, es gibt so wenig reine Herzen’ [...]“ (ebda. 176). Sie weigert sich, das Sanatorium zu verlassen, weil sie sich dort vor der Welt, in der es „keine Reinheit gibt“ sicher fühlt, was sie mit folgenden Worten ausdrückt: „[H]ier darfst du verrückt sein, ohne verprügelt zu werden, hier wird dir nicht kaltes Wasser über den Körper geschüttet, und ohne Einwilligung der Anverwandten bekommst du das spanische Hemd nicht angezogen“ (ebda. 165). Warum sie bevorzugt im Sanatorium zu leben, verrät sie ihrem Sohn Robert: „[I]ch will nicht ausgehn, will die Zeit nicht sehen und nicht täglich spüren müssen, daß das heimliche Lachen getötet worden ist, die verborgene Feder im verborgenen Uhrwerk zerbrochen“ (ebda.). Sie kann das Vergangene nicht vergessen und will sich der Gesellschaft nicht anpassen. Sie gesteht ihrem Sohn, dass sie nur noch Rache will: „Ich werde es tun, Robert, werde das Werkzeug des Herrn sein […] Rache für das Wort, das als letztes die unschuldigen Lippen meines Sohnes verließ. Hindenburg; das Wort, das auf dieser Erde von ihm blieb; ich muss es auslöschen“ (ebda. 162). Mit der Aussage: „Ich muss haben ein Gewehr, muss haben ein Gewehr.“ (ebda. 146), was letztlich nicht nur ihr Wunsch ist, sondern auch die Worte ihres früh verstorbenen Sohnes sind, zeigt sie ihren Hass gegenüber der Doppelmoral der Vertreter des Büffels und ihre Absicht, einen von ihnen zu töten. Im Sanatorium schmiedet sie jahrelang den Plan, sich eine Waffe zu besorgen und sich an einem Repräsentanten des Büffels zu rächen. Als sie am Geburtstag ihres Mannes das Sanatorium verlässt, erkennt sie den Büffel sofort und handelt. Sie ist nicht mehr passiv, sondern schießt bei der ersten Gelegenheit auf einen ehemaligen Nazi, genauer gesagt auf einen Minister, in welchem sie eine große Gefahr für die Zukunft sieht, verletzt ihn jedoch nicht tödlich. Durch diese Tat beeinflusst sie den Handlungsablauf, weswegen sie für den Roman unentbehrlich ist.

Johanna besitzt viele gute Eigenschaften: sie ist mutig, treu und gerecht. Sie hat jedoch einige Eigenschaften, die ihr schaden. Wegen ihres Eigensinns und ihrer Ideentreue vergisst sie fast die Bedürfnisse ihrer Familie, weswegen sie von ihrer Familie und Umgebung als ambivalent empfunden wird. Sie glaubt nämlich so fest an ihre Prinzipien, dass sie während des Krieges nichts Geschenktes annehmen will, denn sie sieht darin eine Art Bestechung seitens der Nationalsozialisten, was das folgende Zitat bezeugt: „[I]ß, was alle essen, zieh an, was alle anziehen, lies, was alle lesen; nimm nicht die Extrabutter, das Extrakleid, das Extragedicht, das dir den Büffel auf elegantere Weise anbietet. Voll ist ihre Rechte von Geschenken“ (ebda. 165). Johanna ist in ihren Anschauungen hartnäckig und bemerkt nicht, dass sie damit ihren Enkeln schadet. Ihre Enkel perzipieren sie als eine ambivalente Person. Im folgenden Beispiel kommt die ambivalente Empfindung Ruths ihrer Großmutter gegenüber zum Ausdruck. Sie hält Großmutters Taten nicht für richtig und führt einen inneren Kampf mit sich selbst:

> [I]ch will Großmutter nicht verstehen, ich will nicht, ihre Verrücktheit ist Lüge, sie hat uns nichts zu essen gegeben, und ich war froh, als sie weg war und wir was bekamen; mag sein, dass du recht hast, dass sie groß war und groß ist, aber ich will nichts von Größe wissen... (ebda. 273)

Johanna ist einerseits eine liebevolle Frau und Mutter, eine moralische Person, die ihren Einstellungen und Überzeugungen immer treu bleibt, eine starke Person, die während des Krieges aktiven Widerstand leistet. Andererseits ist sie aber auch eine verbitterte alte Frau, die sich nach den schrecklichen Erfahrungen der beiden Weltkriege nicht mehr in die Gesellschaft integrieren und das Vergangene nicht vergessen kann. Bei ihr entsteht der Prozess der Selbstentfremdung, weswegen sie nicht mehr fähig ist, zu lieben und sich um ihre Familie zu kümmern (Vgl. Kovács 1992:115). Dass sie auf ihre Mitmenschen ambivalent wirkt, bezeugt auch die doppelseitige Aussage von Jochen:

> Seine Mutter ist übergeschnappt, hatte zwei Brüder verloren, und drei Kinder waren ihr gestorben. Sie kam nicht drüber weg. Das war eine feine Frau. Eine von den Stillen, weißt du. Die aß nicht einen Krümel mehr, als es auf Lebensmittelkarten gab, nicht ´ne Bohne, und gab auch ihren Kindern nicht mehr. Verrückt. Sie schenkte alles weg, was sie extra bekam, und die bekam viel. [U]nd wie sie zum Güterbahnhof lief und drauf bestand, mit den Juden wegzufahren […] Sie sperrten sie ins Irrenhaus, aber ich glaub nicht, daß sie verrückt ist. Das ist eine Frau, wie du sie nur im Museum auf den alten Bildern sehen kannst. (Billard um halb zehn 2005:28-29)

Einerseits lobt er sie und beschreibt sie als eine feine, klassische und elegante Frau, die nur noch auf alten Gemälden zu sehen ist und die nie schwach war und sich bestechen ließ. Andererseits findet er sie ein wenig verrückt und fremd, weil sie ihre Kinder und Enkelkinder lieber hungern ließ, als ihnen das geschenkte Essen zu geben, wodurch sie ihrer Meinung nach ihre Prinzipien verraten würde.

Böll benutzt die Figur Johanna bewusst dazu, um die Nation vor einer Wiederholung des II. Weltkrieges zu warnen. Johanna ist auch die erste emanzipierte und selbstständige Frauenfigur in Bölls Werken, die sich für ein Leben nach ihrem Geschmack entscheidet. Sie ist nicht passiv, sondern sorgt am Ende des Romans für eine unerhörte Begebenheit im Handlungsablauf oder wie Volker Wehdeking (2000:180) es nennt - für einen „Knalleffekt", als sie einen „Büffel" anschießt. Durch diese Tat sorgt sie für Spannung und den Höhepunkt der Handlung, weswegen sie im Werk eine besondere Rolle einnimmt. Mit ihrer Tat bewirkt sie ein versöhnliches Ende, denn sie versöhnt sich mit der Vergangenheit und mit ihrer Familie.

MARIE DERKUM AUS *ANSICHTEN EINES CLOWNS*

Der Name Marie weckt in manchem Leser zuerst die Assoziation an die Heilige Maria. So wird auch Marie Derkum von Hans Schnier, dem Clown, am Anfang beschrieben. Hans Schnier, ein Agnostiker mit hohen moralischen Werten, verführt die streng katholische Marie und lebt fast sechs Jahre mit ihr in wilder Ehe. Aus seiner Perspektive erfährt man, dass sie anfangs ein natürliches, einfaches und naives Mädchen ist, das mit Selbstverständlichkeit eine Beziehung mit ihm eingeht und sich von der Gesellschaft nicht beeinflussen lässt. Marie tritt im Roman nicht aktiv auf, sie kommt nur in Schniers Erinnerungen und Rückblenden vor, jedoch ist sie für den Roman unentbehrlich, da sie eine große Rolle in der Erzählstruktur spielt. Sie spielt die wichtigste Rolle in Schniers Leben, deswegen kann sie als die weibliche Hauptfigur des Romans betrachtet werden,

was schon Johannes Wilhelm Schwarz (1968:82) feststellte. Sie übt auf Schnier einen großen Einfluss aus und wirkt auf ihn wie eine „femme fatale". Sie besitzt eine den „femmes fatales" ähnliche verführerische Kraft und einige Eigenschaften der „femme fatale", darunter auch Ambivalenz. Man kann sie jedoch nicht eindeutig diesem Frauentyp zuordnen, da sie ihre Anziehungskraft nicht direkt anwendet und ausnutzt, was charakteristisch für fatale Frauen ist.[1] Sie trägt zwar dazu bei, dass Hans wegen ihr leidet und scheitert, aber sie besitzt keine dämonischen Züge, mit denen sie Hans direkt zerstören würde. Schnier kann sie nicht vergessen und weil die Erinnerung an sie zu stark ist, kann er sich keiner anderen Frau nähern. Sie sorgt für seine Monogamie: „[E]s gibt nur eine Frau, mit der ich alles tun kann, was Männer mit Frauen tun: Marie, und seitdem sie von mir weggegangen ist, lebe ich wie ein Mönch leben sollte; nur: ich bin kein Mönch" (Ansichten eines Clowns 1970:16).

Marie liebt anfangs Schnier ohne Bedenken und ist mit ihm glücklich und zufrieden. Sie denkt nicht viel über ihr Leben nach, denn alles scheint ihr selbstverständlich. Erst nach mehreren Fehlgeburten und Auseinandersetzungen mit Hans beginnt sie an ihrer Liebe zu zweifeln und findet Zuflucht im Kreis der Katholiken (Vgl. Schwarz 1968:81-82). Solange Marie nicht an sich denkt und alle Wünsche und Bedürfnisse von Schnier akzeptiert und erfüllt, gibt es in ihrem gemeinsamen Leben keine Schwierigkeiten. Probleme tauchen erst dann auf, als sie beginnt, auch über ihre Wünsche zu sprechen. Sie will sich kirchlich trauen lassen und die Kinder katholisch erziehen, womit Schnier große Probleme hat. Allmählich geraten Marie und Hans wegen Meinungsverschiedenheiten in Streit und als Marie einsieht, dass Schnier nur an sich denkt, verliert sie den Glauben an ihn und schließt sich der Bonner Gesellschaft an, von der sie immer mehr beeinflusst wird. Die Gesellschaft flößt ihr eine falsche Moral ein und redet ihr die ganze Zeit implizit ein, dass sie mit Hans Schnier in Sünde lebt, weil sie nicht verheiratet sind. Marie beginnt an Schniers Liebe und seinen Worten zu zweifeln, denn er ist ja nur ein „Clown", der Menschen unterhält und nach der Arbeit selbst Unterhaltung braucht. Sie sieht in ihm jemanden, der sie braucht, um seine primären Bedürfnisse und Wünsche zu erfüllen, einen Egoisten, der nie ein normales Leben führen wird. Sie möchte ein Leben wie alle „anständigen" Frauen führen: sie wünscht sich einen liebevollen Ehemann, ein Haus, finanzielle Sicherheit und Kinder. So sieht das Leben einer anständigen Frau in den Augen der Bonner Gesellschaft aus, die immer mehr Einfluss auf Maries Denken und Verhaltensweise ausübt. Als Marie wieder von der Trauung und Kindererziehung spricht, kommt es zum Wendepunkt im Geschehen. Sie fordert von Hans eine Unterschrift, dass ihre zukünftigen Kinder katholisch erzogen werden, was Hans zunächst ablehnt, weil er sich von Marie bedroht fühlt. Marie erklärt ihm, dass die Lage, in der sie sich befindet, für sie anstrengend sei: „[S]ie weinte und sagte, ich verstünde eben nicht, was es für sie bedeute, in diesem Zustand zu leben und ohne die Aussicht, daß unsere Kinder christlich erzogen würden" (Ansichten eines Clowns 1970:73, 74). Als Hans am Ende in alle ihre Forderungen einwilligt, nur damit sie bei ihm bleibt, ist es schon zu spät, denn Marie empfindet seine Worte nur noch als Beleidigung: „Sie empfand es als Beleidigung, daß ich, um sie zu behalten, sogar katholisch werden wollte" (ebda. 74). Sie nimmt Hans nicht mehr ernst und entscheidet sich für die Ordnung: „Sie sagte, es ginge jetzt nicht

[1] Zur Problematik der Typisierung der Frauenfiguren in: Bettina Pohle (1998).

mehr um sie und um mich, sondern um die Ordnung“ (ebda. 75). Das heißt, dass sie ihn aus moralischen und religiösen Gründen verlassen wird, weil sie als Geliebte nicht mehr weiter leben und in die Gesellschaft integriert werden kann. Nach diesem Streit verlässt sie ihn und hinterlässt ihm einen Zettel mit der Begründung: „Ich muss den Weg gehen, den ich gehen muss“ (ebda. 79). Aus dieser Begründung wird deutlich, dass sie wegen des Drucks der Gesellschaft und aus moralischen Gründen ihr Leben ändern muss, was das Modalverb nur noch bestätigt. Das Modalverb der Notwendigkeit zeigt, dass sie so handeln muss, wie es in der Gesellschaft akzeptabel ist. Von diesem Tag an geht es mit dem erfolgreichen Clown bergab. Marie trägt dazu bei, dass Hans scheitert, obwohl man sie für seinen Misserfolg nicht direkt beschuldigen kann. Mit ihrem Entschluss, Hans zu verlassen, bewirkt sie, dass die Handlung einen anderen Lauf nimmt, weswegen sie für den Roman unentbehrlich ist. Ohne Marie ist Hans hilflos und beginnt seinen Kummer mit Alkohol zu verdrängen: „Es gibt ein vorübergehend wirksames Mittel: Alkohol – es gäbe eine dauerhafte Heilung: Marie […]“ (ebda. 9).

Als Marie Schnier verlässt, ist sie zum ersten Mal aktiv und egoistisch, da sie an sich selbst denkt. Die Tatsache, dass sie ihn verlässt, zeigt, dass sie komplexer ist, als Hans dachte. Sie will nicht mehr nur seine Geliebte, Partnerin beim Mensch-ärgere-dich-nicht und Hausfrau sein, sondern verlangt vom Leben etwas mehr. Weil sie sich bei ihm nicht mehr sicher fühlt, findet sie Zuflucht bei einem „braven“ Katholiken, der ihr ein normales Leben ermöglichen könnte. In diesem Zusammenhang soll erklärt werden, dass bei Marie keine Ansätze der Emanzipation zu spüren sind, denn sie ordnet sich den gesellschaftlichen Zwängen unter und handelt nicht nach ihren Gefühlen. Was in Marie vorgeht, weiß man jedoch nicht, da über sie durch den ganzen Roman nur aus Schniers Perspektive erzählt wird und man so nur seine subjektiven Meinungen erfährt. Die von Dorothee Römhild (1991:50) als „stumme Heldin“ bezeichnete Marie kommt nie wirklich zu Wort, trotzdem spielt sie eine bedeutende Rolle in der Erzählstruktur.

Marie stellt für Schnier eine wichtige Person dar, sie erscheint ihm als die ideale Frau, als eine Heilige. In ihr sieht er alles, was er im Leben nie hatte und was er braucht: sie ist zugleich seine Geliebte, die Mutter, die er „nie“ hatte, die „für den Krieg geopferte“ Schwester, die Traumfrau, die alle seine Wünsche erfüllen kann. Er projiziert all seine Wünsche auf sie und sieht in ihr genau das, was er sehen möchte. Was die Typisierung Maries angeht, stellt man fest, dass Marie keinem bestimmten Frauentyp zugeordnet werden kann. Dorothee Römhild (1991:43) sieht in Marie weder eine Hure noch eine Ehefrau und ordnet sie dem Typ der „barmherzigen Frauen“ zu, was nicht eindeutig zutrifft, weil Marie für Hans Liebe empfindet. Zwar erfüllt sie nach Schniers Ansichten anfangs die Funktion einer Heiligen, der Ehefrau, später die Funktion einer „femme fatale“ und am Ende einer Hure, jedoch entspricht sie keinem Frauentyp eindeutig und vereint zugleich alle diese Frauentypen in sich selbst.

Marie wirkt auf Hans ambivalent. Anfangs ist sie naiv und unschuldig; sie hält sich nicht an die „moralischen Vorschriften“ der Bonner Gesellschaft und handelt nach ihren Gefühlen. Später fällt sie jedoch unter den Einfluss der Gesellschaft. Als Hans in ihr Zimmer kommt, um sie zu verführen, hat er ein ambivalentes Gefühl – er fühlt zugleich Anziehungskraft und Fremdheit, was ihm ein wenig Angst macht: „[U]nd ich wusste auch bei ihr nicht, ob ich du oder Sie sagen sollte“ (Böll 1970:43). Obwohl Marie Hans nur oberflächlich kennt und mit ihm fast keinen Umgang hat, durchschaut

sie sofort seine Absichten (Römhild 1991:42). Als sie Hans noch duzt, ist für ihn die Sache entschieden.

Schniers Ansichten stellen Marie als eine Frau dar, die wegen des Drucks der katholischen Kirche und der verlogenen Gesellschaft Züpfner ohne Liebe heiratet, um ein von den Katholiken gelobtes Leben zu führen. Aus seiner Sicht wird Marie vor allem positiv gezeichnet, jedoch ist ihre Darstellung ambivalent, was von seiner Laune abhängt. Einerseits ist sie die Heilige, die reine und unschuldige Frau, andererseits die Hure, weil sie ihn verlassen hatte. Er liebt und begehrt sie die ganze Zeit, zugleich aber ekelt es ihn an, wenn er daran denkt, dass sie mit Züpfner zusammen ist. In den schlimmsten Momenten seiner Krise stempelt er sie als Hure und Verräterin ab: „Nichts, was ich mit ihr getan hatte, konnte sie doch mit ihm tun, ohne sich als Verräterin oder Hure vorzukommen" (Ansichten eines Clowns 1970:107). Und in einer anderen Variation heißt es*:* „[E]s ist Unzucht und Ehebruch, was sie begeht" (ebda. 94). Trotzdem phantasiert er stundenlang, dass sie mit Züpfner nicht glücklich ist und ihn verlässt und malt sich eine gemeinsame Zukunft mit ihr aus. Diese ambivalente Darstellung zeigt seinen inneren Kampf, da er Marie noch immer liebt und sehr darunter leidet, dass er sie verloren hat. Er glaubt noch immer an ihre Rückkehr, was bezeugt, dass sein Wunschbild von Marie noch nicht völlig zerstört ist (Vgl. Römhild 1991:41).

LENI PFEIFFER – *DIE „DAME IM GRUPPENBILD"*

Die meist untersuchte Frauenfigur aus Bölls Werken ist Leni Pfeiffer aus dem Roman *Gruppenbild mit Dame*. Mit der Figur Leni schuf Böll seine komplexeste und komplizierteste Frauenfigur und entwickelte seine Ästhetik des Humanen weiter. Leni ist von allen seinen Frauenfiguren die humanste, was in seinem Werk schon Heinz Ludwig Arnold festgestellt hat. Sie sei nach seinen Worten „wohl die menschlichste Person, die Böll je gezeichnet hat" (Arnold 1974:59). Sie vereint in sich alle Eigenschaften der Frauenfiguren aus Bölls früheren Werken. Ihre Reinheit, Natürlichkeit, Hilfsbereitschaft und Menschlichkeit machen sie zu einer Art Heiligen. Sie ignoriert alles, was mit Marktwirtschaft zu tun hat und was nicht zur Liebe und Religion gehört (Vgl. Kovács 1992:116). Sie ist nicht berechnend, denn sie plant nichts im Voraus, sondern handelt spontan und selbstverständlich (Vgl. Vogt 1987:116). Sie hilft Menschen in unangenehmen Situationen, ohne je etwas von ihnen zurückzufordern. Ihre reine Menschlichkeit zeigt sich, als sie den Kriegsgefangenen Boris in der Gärtnerei „zum Menschen erklärt" (Gruppenbild mit Dame 2007:218) – ihm seine Ehre wieder schenkt –und die jüdische Nonne Rahel während des II. Weltkriegs regelmäßig besucht, was für jene Zeit eine Kühnheit war. Leni interessiert sich nicht für Gesetze und Regeln, sondern handelt nach ihrem Gewissen, in ihrem Denken ist sie naiv und unschuldig wie ein Kind, was sie als eine Vorbildfigur der reinen Menschlichkeit auszeichnet.

Leni ist eine selbstbewusste Frau, die so handelt, wie sie es für richtig hält, was zeigt, dass sie eine emanzipierte Frau ist. Im Gegensatz zu den Frauen in ihrer Umgebung ist sie provokativ und selbstständig. Ihre Emanzipation zeigt sich in ihren ungewöhnlichen Hobbys und Ritualen, mit denen sie trotz mancher kritischer Bemerkung und Beschimpfung nie aufhört, sondern sie regelmäßig praktiziert und pflegt.

Zu ihren merkwürdigen Hobbys zählen ihre täglichen Begegnungen mit der Heiligen Maria im Fernsehschirm und das Sammeln der Abbildungen menschlicher Organe. Wegen ihrer Wandschmuck-Tafeln mit Geschlechtsorganen bekommt sie oft Ärger: „Es hat seinerzeit harte Auseinandersetzungen zwischen Leni und Marja über diese Tafeln gegeben, die Marja als unsittlich bezeichnete, aber Leni ist hart und hartnäckig geblieben“ (ebda. 20). Obwohl Leni glaubt, mit der Heiligen Maria ein inniges Verhältnis zu haben, geht sie nicht oft in die Kirche und betet eher selten: „Leni kennt zwei Gebete, die sie hin und wieder murmelt: das Vaterunser und das Ave-Maria. Sie hat kein Gebetbuch, geht nicht zur Kirche, glaubt daran, daß es im Weltraum ‘beseelte Wesen’ (Leni) gibt“ (ebda. 21). Sie empfindet außerdem großes Vergnügen am Frühstück, das ein Ritual für sie darstellt, denn sie muss jeden Tag dasselbe essen und vor allem legt sie großen Wert auf frische Brötchen. Ihre zahlreichen außergewöhnlichen Hobbys zeigen, dass sie für ihre Zeit sehr fortschrittlich ist, weshalb sie von ihren Mitmenschen nicht verstanden wird.

Ihre Emanzipation kommt auch im Fall ihrer starken Sinnlichkeit zum Vorschein. Sie schämt sich ihrer Gefühle nicht und handelt, wie ihr Herz es ihr befiehlt. Dies zeigt die Tatsache, dass sie dem politisch ausgegrenzten Soldaten Boris Kaffee anbietet und sich für ihn entscheidet, obwohl diese Entscheidung beide das Leben kosten könnte. Sie stellt eine mutige und emanzipierte Frau ohne Tabus dar, die sich wegen ihrer Leidenschaften, Bedürfnisse und Wünsche nicht schämt und diese auch verwirklicht. Der Verfasser von Lenis Lebenslauf stellt schon sehr schnell fest, dass ihr Leben von ihrer Sinnlichkeit bestimmt wird und nennt sie „ein verkanntes Genie der Sinnlichkeit“ (ebda. 37). Lenis Sinnlichkeit spielt im Roman eine bedeutende Rolle, weil sie als fühlende Person einen Gegensatz zur emotionellen Stumpfheit der Menschen darstellt. Sie ist wie eine Vorläuferin der Hippies, denn sie lebt für Liebe und Frieden und leistet mit ihrer Liebe und Sinnlichkeit einen instinktiven Widerstand gegen Krieg, Hass, Mechanisierung und Gefühllosigkeit der damaligen Gesellschaft.

Sie übt sowohl auf Frauen als auch auf Männer Faszination aus, insbesondere auf Männer. Sie hat eine Anziehungskraft, die Männer verrückt und Frauen neidisch macht. Ihr fehlt es nicht an Angeboten von Männern, jedoch ist sie die ganze Zeit nur Boris treu, der die Verwirklichung ihres Wunsches nach vollkommener Sinnlichkeit und Liebe darstellt, was bisher in ihrem Leben nur das „Heidekrauterlebnis“ (ebda. 361) erfüllte.

Leni ist eine charismatische Person, die mit ihrer Einzigartigkeit fasziniert und provoziert, weswegen sie von ihren Mitmenschen als ambivalent empfunden wird, was sich im folgenden Zitat ausdrückt: „Man wußte nie so genau, ob sie sehr tief ist oder sehr flach und es mag widersprüchlich klingen: ich glaube, sie ist beides, sehr tief und sehr flach, nur eins ist sie nicht und nie gewesen: ein Flittchen“ (ebda. 184-185). Sie ist eine mutige und unabhängige Frau, die in ihrer eigenen Welt lebt und sich wenig für die Gesellschaft interessiert, weswegen sie aus der Gesellschaft ausgeschlossen wird. Sozial gesehen gehört sie fast zum Abfall der Gesellschaft (Vgl. Bernsmeier 1997:114). So wie viele Figuren Bölls ist sie eine Außenseiterin, die sich an die Gesellschaft nicht anpasst, sondern so lebt, wie sie es für richtig hält und nicht so, wie es von ihr erwartet wird. So stellt sie das Gegenteil der verlogenen Gesellschaft dar, von der sie verurteilt wird. Einerseits fasziniert Leni mit ihrer Sinnlichkeit, Naivität und Spontaneität ihre

Mitmenschen derart, dass sie in ihr eine Art Heilige sehen, andererseits wirkt sie auf Menschen kühl, asozial und arrogant, was sich so stark manifestiert, dass sie zur Verführerin und Hure verurteilt wird. Lenis Darstellung im Roman als Heilige, Mutter, Hure und Verführerin führt zur Ambivalenz. Sie vereint in sich die Sünde und zugleich auch die Heiligkeit, was von den Menschen unterschiedlich rezipiert wird. Ambivalenz zeigt sich im folgenden Zitat, da der Verfasser in ihr sowohl eine gute Schauspielerin für die Heilige Maria als auch Magdalena sieht: „Sie hätte als Heilige (auch Magdalena) in einem Mysterienspiel auftreten [können]“ (Gruppenbild mit Dame 2007:59). Der Verfasser fühlt sich von Leni angezogen und doch kommt sie ihm fremd vor. Leni strömt zugleich Unschuld und Reinheit sowie eine starke erotische Anziehungskraft aus. Aufgrund ihrer Zurückhaltung und Verschwiegenheit wurde sie in der Pelzerschen Gärtnerei ironisch Dame genannt, da sie den Menschen schwer zugänglich war und sie oft als zu fein empfunden wurde. Lenis Ambivalenz kommt auch in Klementinas Wortspiel zum Ausdruck: „Ja, es gibt sie, und doch gibt es sie nicht.“ (ebda. 435). Klementina stellt fest, dass Leni in ihrer eigenen Welt lebt, in der sie selbst bestimmt, was richtig und falsch ist, und auf die gesellschaftlichen Normen und Regeln in der realen Welt verzichtet. Weil Leni die Welt als ambivalent empfindet – einerseits lebt sie gern in dieser Welt, denn es gibt Menschen, an denen sie sehr hängt, andererseits flüchtet sie sich in ihre eigene Welt, die ihr freundlicher erscheint – wirkt sie auch auf ihre Mitmenschen ambivalent.

TRINITÄT DES WEIBLICHEN

Im Roman *Gruppenbild mit Dame* verkörpern die Böllsche „Trinität des Weiblichen“ die wichtigsten Frauenfiguren im Roman: Leni, die Nonne Rahel und Margret Schlömer. Die Nonne Rahel, Lenis Freundin und Lehrerin, übernimmt anfangs die Rolle der Heiligen Maria. Sie lehrt Leni alles, was sie wissen möchte und hilft ihr, wenn sie Ratschläge braucht. Nach ihrem Tod widmet Leni Rahel eine Wandtafel mit deren Auge und nennt die Tafel „Teil der Netzhaut am linken Auge der Jungfrau Maria genannt Rahel“, was deutlich zeigt, dass sie Rahel respektierte und als eine Heilige betrachtete. Margret Schlömer, die „barmherzige Prostituierte“, ist Lenis vertraute Freundin. Sie übernimmt im Roman die Rolle der Magdalena, der Sünderin. Die Rolle der Eva übernimmt nach Theodore Ziolkowski (1975:126) Pelzers Frau, die mit ihrem Mann eine Gärtnerei besitzt. Später übernimmt die Figur der Eva Leni, die sich in einer Gruft mit Boris ein „Sowjetparadies“ macht und mit ihm in „Sünde“ lebt, da er ein politisch ausgegrenzter Mensch ist, den sie, wie Eva den Apfel, eigentlich meiden sollte. Leni ist eine sehr vielseitige Person, die keinem bestimmten Frauentyp zugeordnet werden kann. In ihr ist nicht nur die Figur der Maria präsent, sondern sie vereint in sich alle drei Figuren aus der Bibel, wobei vor allem die marianische Komponente zum Ausdruck kommt. Leni glaubt ein nahes Verhältnis zur Heiligen Maria zu haben und sie jeden Tag im Fernsehschirm zu sehen, als schon alle Nachbarn schlafen. Natürlich sieht sie im Fernseher ihre eigene Projektion, die sie für die „blonde Maria“ hält:

> [D]ie Metaphysik macht Leni nicht die geringsten Schwierigkeiten. Sie steht mit der Jungfrau Maria auf vertrautem Fuß, empfängt sie auf dem Fernsehschirm fast täglich, jedesmal wieder überrascht, daß auch Jungfrau Maria eine Blondine ist […] Leni und die Jungfrau Maria lächeln sich einfach an. (Gruppenbild mit Dame 2007:20)

Sie wünscht sich so stark eine Beziehung zur Heiligen Maria, dass sie ihre Präsenz überall sieht und fühlt, was dazu führt, dass sie unbewusst einige marianische Eigenschaften übernimmt. Lenis Name erinnert auf den ersten Blick eher an Magdalena, jedoch ist ihr richtiger Name Helene Maria und auch ihr Geburtstag fällt in die Feier von Mariä Himmelfahrt, was eine deutliche Beziehung zur Heiligen Maria darstellt (Vgl. Ziolkowski 1975:126). Als sie ihren Sohn in der Gärtnerei zur Welt bringt, erinnert die Geburt an die Krippenszene, denn alle Beteiligten richten aus alten Decken und Stroh ein Bett für das Kind her (ebda. 128). Leni erinnert mit Boris und ihrem Sohn an die heilige Familie: „[S]ie hätten sehen sollen, wie die beiden mit ihrem Söhnchen da hausten: wie die Heilige Familie […] die haben doch ein halbes Jahr wie Maria und Joseph miteinander gelebt“ (Gruppenbild mit Dame 2007:300). Als später Boris in amerikanischer Gefangenschaft umkommt, muss Leni allein mit ihrem Sohn leben, was wiederum an das Leben von Maria und Jesus erinnert. Die Figur der Magdalena stellt sie dar, als sie dem Türken Mehmet „Barmherzigkeit“ erweist.

Während von der „Trinität des Weiblichen“ nur im Werk *Gruppenbild mit Dame* die Rede ist, ist zu betonen, dass sie auch in *Ansichten eines Clowns* zum Ausdruck kommt, jedoch bildet Marie selbst die „Trinität des Weiblichen“. Anfangs verkörpert sie die Heilige Maria, sie ist natürlich, unschuldig und gläubig. Als sie Hans verlässt, erscheint sie ihm nicht mehr als die „Heilige“, sondern als Verräterin und Hure, was mit der Sünderin Magdalena verbunden werden kann. Die Figur der Eva wird durch Marie die ganze Zeit des Zusammenlebens mit Hans präsentiert. Sie lebt mit ihm in wilder Ehe, ist sozusagen wie Eva, die den verbotenen Apfel im Paradies kostet. Bei Marie symbolisiert der verbotene Apfel das Zusammenleben und das sexuelle Vergnügen, das sie mit Hans erlebt, was für die Katholiken eine Sünde ist, da sie mit ihm nicht verheiratet ist.

DIE „REINE“ KATHARINA IM KAMPF UM DIE VERLORENE EHRE

Katharina Blum, die Hauptakteurin der Erzählung *Die verlorene Ehre der Katharina Blum*, führt anfangs ein gewöhnliches Leben einer alleinstehenden Frau. Sie ist eine emanzipierte und selbstständige Frau, deren Leben routiniert ist, bis sie auf einer Party Ludwig Götten, einen lange gesuchten Kriminellen, kennenlernt, mit ihm eine Nacht verbringt und ihm zur Flucht vor der Polizei verhilft. Dadurch gerät sie in Untersuchungshaft und verliert in einer Zeitung ihre Ehre. Den größten Teil der Geschichte verbringt sie auf Vernehmungen, wo sie zum Opfer der Verspottung und Missachtung wird, was ein wichtiger Faktor in ihrer Selbstentwicklung ist.

Bei ihrer Vernehmung erklärt sie alles ausführlich, um nicht missverstanden zu werden. Sie besteht auf Genauigkeit sowie Objektivität und unterbricht die Vernehmung jedesmal, wenn ihre Worte anders interpretiert werden, weswegen sich die Vernehmung

verzögert. Sie ist eine entschlossene Frau, die auf ihren Rechten besteht. Solange alle Fehler im Protokoll nicht korrigiert werden, weigert sie sich, es zu unterschreiben, und zeigt damit ihre Selbstachtung:

> [S]ie würde kein Protokoll unterschreiben, in dem statt Zudringlichkeiten Zärtlichkeiten stehe. Der Unterschied sei für sie von entscheidender Bedeutung, und einer der Gründe, warum sie sich von ihrem Mann getrennt habe, hänge damit zusammen; der sei eben nie zärtlich, sondern immer zudringlich gewesen. (Die verlorene Ehre der Katharina Blum 2007:29)

Katharina versucht die ganze Zeit ihre Ehre zu bewahren, was ihr die „Männerwelt" unmöglich macht. Schon am Anfang macht Kommissar Beizmenne den entscheidenden Fehler, der ihn daran hindert, Katharinas Vertrauen zu gewinnen. Er bedient sich der Vulgärsprache, setzt Liebe mit Obszönitäten gleich und diskriminiert dadurch Frauen und somit auch Katharina (Vgl. Bellman, Hummel 1999:184). Katharina reagiert auf sein vulgäres Verhalten empfindlich und besteht auf dem Unterschied zwischen Zärtlichkeiten und Zudringlichkeiten. Sie möchte respektiert werden und lässt es nicht zu, dass jemand ihre Ehre beschmutzt. Sie ekelt sich vor unanständigen Männern, die sich überall wie zu Hause fühlen und liebt Professionalismus: „Als Beizmenne, der sich Kaffee und Brote schmecken ließ und mit geöffnetem Kragen und gelockerter Krawatte nicht nur väterlich wirkte, sondern wirklich väterlich wurde, bestand die Blum darauf, in ihre Zelle verbracht zu werden" (Katharina Blum 2007:27). Weil sich Beizmenne unprofessionell benimmt, zieht sich Katharina zurück und möchte nichts mehr aussagen. Im Laufe der Geschichte wird sie wegen des Drucks der Polizei und der Presse immer hilfloser und resignierter. Als sie keinen Ausgang aus ihrer Situation mehr sieht, arrangiert sie ein Treffen mit dem Journalisten Tötges, der für die Beschmutzung ihrer Ehre schuldig ist.

Katharina ist eine vielseitige Person, die eine große Anziehungskraft auf Männer ausübt und auf ihre Umgebung ambivalent wirkt. Schon sehr früh heiratet sie Wilhelm Brettloh, doch die Ehe dauert nicht lange. Sie sieht bald ein, dass er ihren Erwartungen nicht entspricht und lässt sich von ihm scheiden: „Schon nach einem halben Jahr empfand ich unüberwindliche Abneigung gegen meinen Mann" (ebda. 23).

Nach der Scheidung lebt sie allein und arbeitet bei den Blornas, die sie: „[a]ls in sexuellen Dingen äußerst empfindlich, fast prüde" (ebda. 19) bezeichnen. Trotz dieser Bemerkung besitzt Katharina eine magische Anziehungskraft. Schon als junge Frau wird sie von einem Arzt, bei dem sie arbeitet, belästigt. Sie verlässt den Job nach einem Jahr, „weil Herr Doktor immer häufiger zudringlich wurde und Frau Doktor das nicht leiden mochte. Mir war das widerwärtig" (ebda. 23). Katharina ist eine zurückgezogene Frau, die keine Annäherungen von fremden Männern duldet. Sie hasst zudringliche Männer, die sie nicht in Ruhe lassen, was auch der Grund für ihre Scheidung gewesen ist. Die ganze Zeit betont sie das Wort „Zärtlichkeit" und besteht auf dem Unterschied zwischen Zärtlichkeiten und Zudringlichkeiten, da andere Männer ihr gegenüber nur zudringlich waren. Auf Gesellschaftsabenden der Blornas wird sie mehrmals von zudringlichen Männern belästigt, weswegen sie später lieber in deren Küche bleibt. Unter ihnen ist auch Sträubleder, Blornas Kollege, der sich von Katharina stark angezogen fühlt. Als er

Blorna von seinen Gefühlen erzählt, entsteht zwischen ihnen eine angespannte Situation, was später zu Gewalttätigkeit führt, denn auch Blorna empfindet etwas für Katharina.

Katharina wirkt auf ihre Umgebung ambivalent, vor allem auf Männer. Einerseits zieht sie sie an, da sie mysteriös wirkt, andererseits fürchten sie sich vor ihrer Kälte und Strenge. So empfindet u. a. auch der Kommissar Beizmenne. Obwohl sie freundlich, ehrlich, hilfsbereit und fleißig ist, stört die Menschen ihre Objektivität und Zurückhaltung, weswegen sie nicht viel Kontakt zu ihren Mitmenschen hat. Manche empfinden sie wegen ihrer Zurückhaltung als eine kalte und arrogante Frau, die keine Gefühle kennt. Als ihre Mutter stirbt, zeigt sie ihre Gefühle nicht öffentlich, weshalb man sie verurteilt, dass sie um ihre Mutter nicht trauerte: „Es sieht ganz so aus, als sei Katharina bei der Nachricht vom Tode ihrer Mutter nicht gerade zusammengebrochen. Es scheint fast, als wäre sie erleichtert gewesen“ (ebda. 106).

Sie vergnügt sich sehr selten und hat fast keinen Umgang mit Männern, weswegen sie von Bekannten „Nonne“ (ebda. 53) genannt wird. Als sie jedoch Götten kennenlernt, verliebt sie sich sofort in ihn und ist bereit, für ihn alles aufzuopfern: „Mein Gott, er war es eben, der da kommen soll, und ich hätte ihn geheiratet und Kinder mit ihm gehabt – und wenn ich hätte warten müssen, jahrelang, bis er aus dem Kittchen wieder raus war“ (ebda. 59). Katharinas plötzliche Liebesgefühle für Götten sind darauf zurückzuführen, dass sie in ihrem Leben nur Arbeit kennt und keine Zeit für ihre Leidenschaften und ihr Liebesleben hat. Sie tanzt leidenschaftlich gern, jedoch gibt es nur wenige Gelegenheiten, wo sie tanzen kann. Wenn sie Zeit zum Nachdenken braucht, fährt sie mit ihrem Auto einfach los: „[I]ch bin manchmal einfach losgefahren, einfach los und drauflos, ohne Ziel, d. h. – irgendwie ergab sich ein Ziel“ (ebda. 48). Den Grund für ihre häufigen Autofahrten schildert sie auf der Vernehmung: „Es war wohl aus Angst: ich kenne so viele alleinstehende Frauen, die sich abends allein vor dem Fernseher betrinken“ (ebda. 50). Hier zeigt sich ihre menschliche Natur, ihre Einsamkeit und Angst, allein zu bleiben. Sie wünscht sich jemanden, bei dem sie sich geborgen fühlen könnte.

Ihr Name, der aus dem griechischem Wort „katharos“ (=“rein“) abgeleitet wird, deutet auf ihre Reinheit hin, als sie das erste Mal verhört wird. Sie ist naiv und unschuldig, wird jedoch in den Zeitschriften als eine Kriminelle dargestellt. In wenigen Tagen verliert sie durch die Presse ihre Ehre, denn man macht aus ihrer Geschichte eine Sensation und beschmutzt ihren Namen mit Bezeichnungen wie „Mörderbraut“ (ebda. 39) und „Räuberliebchen (ebda. 36). Weil die Zeitungen alle Aussagen verfälschen, bekommt man wenig objektive und reale Aussagen über Katharina. Vor allem der Journalist Tötges beschmutzt täglich durch falsche journalistische Nachrichten ihre Ehre und besucht im Krankenhaus sogar ihre Mutter, die er derart in Erregung versetzt, dass sie stirbt. Katharina verliert durch die Schreibereien der Zeitschriften ihre Ehre und als sie begreift, dass sie diese nicht wieder herstellen kann, nimmt sie die Gerechtigkeit in ihre Hände. Aus der apathischen Katharina wird eine kaltblütige Mörderin, die mit Tötges ein Interview vereinbart und ihn, nachdem er ihr gegenüber zudringlich gewesen ist, was für sie ein furchtbares Verbrechen darstellt, erschießt. Nach ihrer Tat stellt sie sich der Polizei und empfindet dabei keine Reue: „[S]ie selbst habe sich zwischen 12.15 und 19.00 in der Stadt umhergetrieben, um Reue zu finden, habe aber keine Reue gefunden; sie bitte außerdem um ihre Verhaftung, sie möchte gern dort sein, wo auch ihr ‘lieber Ludwig’ sei“ (ebda. 9).

Katharina verfügt über eine magische Anziehungskraft, die jedoch zerstörerisch auf ihre Umgebung wirkt. Sie passt sich der Gesellschaft und den moralischen Vorschriften nicht an, sondern handelt nach eigenem Gutdünken. Ihre Freunde, die ihr helfen und treu beistehen, werden von der Gesellschaft isoliert und sowohl psychisch als auch beruflich (materiell) ruiniert. Katharinas Zustand löst in ihren Freunden eine emotionelle Krise aus, deren Folgen auch Gewalttätigkeit und Aggressivität sind. Blorna wird auf einer Ausstellung gewalttätig gegenüber Sträubleder, und auch zwischen deren Frauen kommt es fast zu Handgreiflichkeiten: „Es kommt zu Gereiztheiten und Spannungen, schließlich Handgreiflichkeiten zwischen zwei sehr lange befreundeten Männern. Spitze Bemerkungen von deren Frauen. Abgewiesenes Mitleid, ja abgewiesene Liebe“ (ebda. 131). Die Blornas, die früher wohlhabend und in der Öffentlichkeit beliebt waren, bekommen wegen Katharina existenzielle Probleme und werden von allen gemieden. Blorna bekommt nur noch miese Verträge, muss sein Stadtbüro aufgeben und seine Villa verkaufen, da er in einer schlimmen finanziellen Krise ist. Er beginnt in Askese zu leben und vernachlässigt sich so sehr, dass er nicht einmal das Minimum an Körperpflege betreibt: „[E]in fröhlicher, weltoffener Mensch, der das Leben, das Reisen, Luxus liebt – vernachlässigt sich so sehr, daß er Körpergeruch ausströmt“ (ebda.). Blorna riskiert alles, als er Katharinas Anwalt wird. Den entscheidenden Fehler macht er aber, als er auf ihren Wunsch auch die Verteidigung von Götten übernimmt. Er macht alles, nur um bei ihr zu sein, denn er liebt sie: „Was wird aus Blorna, wenn er nicht mehr die Möglichkeit hat, Katharina zu besuchen und mit ihr […] Händchen zu halten. Kein Zweifel: er liebt sie, sie ihn nicht“ (ebda. 132). Von dem selbstbewussten, erfolgreichen Mann ohne Sorgen, bleibt nur noch ein Schatten dessen, was er einst im Leben war. Seine Frau sucht nach einer neuen Arbeit, denn sie ahnt, dass man sie entlassen wird und wäre bereit, auch unter ihr Niveau zu gehen. Else Woltersheim ist verbittert, nervös und wirkt etwas aggressiv. Bei ihr kann man „verstärkte gesellschaftsfeindliche Tendenzen feststellen“ (ebda. 128). Und es heißt auch, dass sich „ihre Aggressivität immer mehr gegen die Partygäste [wendet]“ (ebda.).

Mit dem Mord an Tötges sorgt Katharina für den Höhenpunkt der Handlung. Das Leben ihrer Freunde verändert sich drastisch und sie scheitern am Ende fast buchstäblich. Die Blornas verlieren ihr Ansehen, ihre perfekten Jobs, ihr luxuriöses Leben und durch die Presse ihre Ehre. Else Woltersheim kann nicht mehr lebenslustig und ohne Sorgen leben, so wie früher. Während sich alle Freunde von Katharina in einer Krise befinden und auf alle möglichen Probleme stoßen, ist Katharina glücklich, dass sie im Gefängnis in der Nähe ihres Ludwigs ist: „Sie ist keineswegs deprimiert, sondern irgendwie glücklich, weil sie ‘unter denselben Bedingungen wie mein lieber Ludwig’ lebt“ (ebda. 126). Im Gefängnis schmiedet sie Zukunftspläne für sich und Ludwig und vergisst dabei ihre Freunde, die ihr Leben für sie aufopfern.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Bölls Darstellung der Frauenfiguren wurde mehrmals stark kritisiert. Es wurde ihm vorgeworfen, dass seine Frauenfiguren nach einem traditionellen Muster gebildet seien und ihre Welt noch immer von den Männern bestimmt werde. Sie seien nicht

gleichberechtigt und selbstständig, was nicht zutrifft, denn bei einer ausführlichen Erforschung seiner Frauenfiguren kann festgestellt werden, dass diese eine bedeutende Rolle in der Erzählstruktur spielen und nicht so einfach aufgebaut sind, wie sie am Anfang scheinen. Es wird gerade das Gegenteil bewiesen, denn Böll integriert seine Frauenfiguren sehr geschickt in seine Werke, wodurch sie selbstverständlich und einfach wirken. Durch ihre Taten und Äußerungen, mit denen sie überraschen, provozieren oder sogar schocken, wird aber ersichtlich, dass sie komplex aufgebaute Figuren sind, die keinem bestimmten Frauentyp zugeordnet werden können. Sie sind keine typischen „femmes fatales", „femmes fragiles", Huren, Heiligen usw., sondern vereinen in sich mehrere Frauentypen – stellen einen gemischten Frauentyp dar.

Während bei Johanna Ansätze der Emanzipation vorkommen, ist bei Leni gar nicht zu bezweifeln, dass sie eine emanzipierte und selbstbewusste Frau darstellt, die ihren eigenen Wünschen folgt.

Bölls Frauenfiguren sind nicht nur Mütter, Hausfrauen und Wunschobjekte, sondern üben entweder einen direkten oder indirekten Einfluss auf die Handlung aus. Jede Frauenfigur sorgt für eine Begebenheit, die entweder zum Höhepunkt, Wendepunkt, Skandal oder zur Spannung führt, weswegen sie für Bölls Werke unentbehrlich sind.

Ihre Komplexität und Vielseitigkeit sind auch die Gründe, warum sie auf ihre Umgebung ambivalent, anziehend und mysteriös wirken. Sie üben auf ihre Mitmenschen einen großen Einfluss aus, faszinieren und ekeln sie zugleich an.

Zusammenfassend muss gesagt werden, dass Bölls Frauenfiguren nicht nur in die Küche, Kirche und ins Kinderzimmer gehören, sondern die Schlüsselrolle in der Erzählstruktur spielen. Letztendlich sind sie ein Mittel, mit dem der Autor meisterhaft die problematischen Themen in der Gesellschaft darstellt und von den Lesern eine eigene Meinung über die behandelte Problematik fördert.

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ELEMENTI DI ASTROLOGIA NEL *DECAMERON* CENSURATO DI LUIGI GROTO

Kristina Lazar

Abstract

The censored version of the *Decameron* by Luigi Groto, which was published in 1588, was already the third censorship of Boccaccio's masterpiece during the Counter-Reformation. As opposed to the other two censured versions, this one did not place emphasis on philological questions, but it tried above all to narratively fill the gaps created by expurgation; in some cases following the original plot and in the others changing it to such a degree that the novels remained barely recognizable. This article exposes some characteristics of Groto's mannerist style; especially the elements of astrology, which emerge in the expurgated parts of the text, and the way these elements function when inserted into Boccaccio's text.

Key words: Controriforma, censura libraria, *Decameron*, Giovanni Boccaccio, Luigi Grota, Astrologia

SFONDO STORICO DELLA VERSIONE GROTIANA

La versione censurata del *Decameron* a cura di Luigi Groto, che uscì nel 1588, era già la terza rassettatura del capolavoro boccacciano nell'arco di quindici anni (la versione dei Deputati era uscita nel 1573 e quella di Lionardo Salviati nel 1582). Anche se pubblicata come ultima, era stata scritta già parecchi anni prima, nel 1579, solo sei mesi dopo che il Groto ne aveva ricevuto l'incarico, e subito dopo mandata in Vaticano, dove in seguito fu smarrita (non si è appurato se casualmente o no). Solo nel 1584 fu ritrovato il libro a stampa sul quale il Groto aveva segnato i brani da espurgare, mentre del manoscritto che conteneva la nuova versione delle parti eliminate non si sa niente (Chiecchi 1984: 88-90). La questione ancor oggi non definitivamente risolta è quale sia dunque il testo pubblicato a Venezia nel 1588, se quello del manoscritto consegnato e poi smarrito[1] – oppure, come più probabile, uno nuovo, scritto nell'arco di un anno e mezzo prima della sua morte, avvenuta nel dicembre 1585. La rassettatura curata dal Groto fu infatti pubblicata postuma per iniziativa di Giovanni Sega, marito di Claudia Groto, cugina

[1] Questo però ci sembra poco probabile, visto che l'autore di solito ringraziava oltremodo per ogni favore, nelle sue lettere (Groto 2007), e in questo caso non dice niente a proposito.

ed erede di Luigi (Chiecchi 1984: 85). Questa è però solo una tra le questioni irrisolte che riguardano la censura grotiana. Assai significativa sembra la questione dello smarrimento della sua opera a Roma, che aperse la strada ad un nuovo incarico di rassettatura, stavolta assegnato ad un personaggio ben più influente del Groto, il futuro cruscante Salviati. Non sembra improbabile che Salviati avesse concorso lui stesso a ricevere questo prestigioso lavoro e, suffragato dal duca di Sora, figlio del pontefice Gregorio XII (Chiecchi 1984: 89), con l'aiuto di alte conoscenze abbia fatto sì che il manoscritto grotiano andasse perso.[2] A causa della mancanza di documenti, la vicenda probabilmente non si risolverà mai fino a fondo, ciononostante essa mostra alcuni fattori importanti concernenti la censura controriformista: l'antagonismo tra l'ambito toscano (i Deputati e il Salviati) e quello veneziano (il Groto), le questioni filologiche (lo scrupoloso lavoro filologico dei Deputati in opposizione alla versione grotiana, la quale tende a trascurare le questioni filologiche) e gli interessi degli editori, che ovviamente vedevano nelle pubblicazioni espurgate di un capolavoro come il *Decameron* una fonte di guadagno non insignificante.

Un'altra questione pertinente è come mai l'espurgazione di un'opera di tale importanza, dopo la proibizione della rassettatura dei Deputati, fosse affidata ad un letterato poco conosciuto fuori dall'ambito veneziano, che, in opposizione agli espurgatori fiorentini del 1573, non era competente in filologia. I Deputati, infatti, avevano eseguito sul *Decameron* un accurato lavoro filologico cercando di ricostruire la lezione originale del Boccaccio e ci riuscirono a tal punto che la loro versione passò per l'edizione più corretta fino a quel momento.[3] Il Groto, dall'altro lato, non mostrava affatto tali aspirazioni; al proposito è eloquente quanto afferma nella lettera di ringraziamento, rivolta al Padre Paolo della Mirandola, commissario della Santa Inquisizione a Venezia, da cui aveva ricevuto la licenza alla correzione: »vi si richiede più tosto bona volontà, che molta dottrina« (Groto 2007: 265*)*. Da questa affermazione si può già intuire, quale sarebbe stato l'obiettivo principale della sua rassettatura: non certo lo scrupolo filologico. La decisione del Sant'Uffizio di affidare il lavoro di espurgazione al Cieco D'Adria risulta ancora più sorprendente tenendo conto che questi fu per tutta la sua vita interessato alle scienze occulte come l'astrologia, la cabala e la predizione del futuro, la cui pratica, dopo il Concilio di Trento, diventò oggetto di persecuzione. Da giovane (nel 1567, a 26 anni) era stato anche processato per eresia. La sua colpa consisteva nel possesso di alcuni libri proibiti e per questa trasgressione ricevette l'ingiunzione di astenersi per sempre dall'insegnamento, punizione che lo ferì gravemente, visto che l'insegnamento era la sua fonte di guadagno (Mantese 1974: 50). Tra i libri proibiti posseduti dal Cieco spiccavano i *Colloquia* dell'Erasmo e le opere del Cornelio Agrippa: *De vanitate scientiarum*, *De occulta philosophia* e *De incertitudine et vanitate scientiarum* (Mantese 1974: 44, Rizzi 1987: 39-45).[4]

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[2] Eloquente, al proposito, la lettera del 10 dicembre 1580, indirizzata a Francesco I dei Medici, in cui dice: "Quanto al Boccaccio pare che ci fossero intrusi altri per intervenirci esso meco, ma resteranno esclusi et andrà innanzi l'ordine di V.A." (P.M. Brown: "I veri promotori della 'rassettatura' del Decameron nel 1582." *Giornale storico,* CXXXIV, 1975: 314, in: Tschiesche 1987: 243). Il testo non può alludere che all'opera del Groto.

[3] Le cartelle laurenziane conservano l'intera corrispondenza tra i deputati ed il Maestro di Palazzo, padre Maurique. Le lettere mostrano i loro dubbi e indicano i procedimenti e gli obiettivi seguiti, lasciando emergere che il criterio filologico fu d'importanza fondamentale (Cfr. Chiecchi 1984, Sorrentino 1935).

[4] L'Agrippa era stato più volte condannato dalla Chiesa a causa della sua dottrina e delle sue simpatie per il pensiero di Erasmo (Yates 1979: 44-56).

La versione del Groto fu quasi unanimamente riconosciuta come la più bizzarra e la più ardita tra le tre censure in questione; il che si può spiegare con l'ipotesi che per il Groto l'emendazione del *Decameron* sia stata soprattutto un'occasione per mostrare le sue doti inventive, cercando di riempire narrativamente le lacune prodotte dalla censura (un procedimento dal quale si erano invece astenuti Deputati). Le sue sostituzioni, infatti, non di rado si manifestano nella riscrittura di interi brani e talvolta essi appaiono anche senza riferimento al testo originale (cfr. Chiecchi 1984, Sorrentino 1935). È degno di nota però, dal punto di vista linguistico, la sua aderenza al contesto letterario veneziano, che lo spinge ad inserire nel testo dei brani non motivati dagli obiettivi della censura controriformista, ma piuttosto da personali obiettivi campanilistici. Così, ad esempio, espurga le parti in cui Boccaccio si burla dei veneziani e vi inserisce al loro posto delle valutazioni positive.[5] Questo antagonismo Firenze-Venezia è però interessante anche su un altro livello, ovvero quale edizione del *Decameron* prendere come più affidabile per eseguirvi poi gli emendamenti. Se i Deputati usarono come base del loro intervento espurgatorio l'edizione giuntina del 1527, che al momento dell'inizio del loro lavoro rappresentava l'edizione più corretta, il Groto sembra aver utilizzato un'altra edizione, quella a cura di Girolamo Ruscelli, che era uscita nel 1552 a Venezia (Tschiesche 1987: 250). Il Ruscelli, veneziano anche lui, era stato un caro amico del Groto ed è tra l'altro anche l'autore delle note ai margini dell'edizione da lui censurata. Tutti e due facevano parte dell'Accademia dei Pastori Fratteggiani che negli anni '60 si riunivano a Fratta Polesine; fra i partecipanti vi furono anche Lodovico Domenichi, traduttore dell'Agrippa, e Lodovico Dolce, riformatore del Boiardo (cfr. Tschiesche 1987: 83, Rizzi 1987: 39-40, Mantese 1974: 12).

Il Groto, in una lettera del 27 febbraio 1564, addirittura esalta – in uno stile ricco di iperboli – il Ruscelli come »nuovo Prisciano e nuovo Lorenzo Valla della nostra lingua volgare« (Tschiesche 1987: 246), il giudizio non è però troppo motivato: l'edizione a cura del Ruscelli era infatti poco corretta dal punto di vista filologico.

In base a queste informazioni – purtoppo i documenti che spieghino direttamente gli obiettivi del Groto in relazione alla sua espurgazione decameroniana non esistono – possiamo supporre che questi abbia letto e di conseguenza trattato il testo boccacciano piuttosto dal punto di vista della »favola« (in termini aristotelici) e non tanto dal punto di vista linguistico.

Malgrado le numerose (e del tutto pertinenti) critiche alla rassettatura grotiana, che la accusano di essere la versione più bizzarra e anche la più mutilata – Sorrentino la chiama addiritura »strazio balordo e ingiustificato dell'arte« e »opera da mattoide« (1935: 203) – l'edizione grotiana godette di un notevole successo ed ebbe più ristampe. È possibile dedurne che la sua opera, seppur priva di intenzioni filologiche, fosse in linea con il gusto del tempo: un gusto tendente all'eccesso e ricco di stravaganze che si afferma in un periodo storico pieno di paradossi. Basterebbe pensare al fatto che l'osservanza dei principi voluti dalla Riforma cattolica coesiste spesso con un vivo interesse per le scienze occulte ed esoteriche.

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[5] La novella su frate Alberto (IV/2).

2. RASSETTATURA GROTIANA DEL *DECAMERON*

Una domanda che a buon diritto si pone davanti alla rassettatura grotiana è se il lavoro del censore sia stato sorvegliato o no dagli organi dell'Inquisizione. In generale la risposta tende ad essere negativa. Diversamente dal lavoro dei Deputati, che è documentato da una vasta correspondenza con il Maestro del Sacro Palazzo Tommaso Maurique, per gli interventi del Groto non esistono materiali; gli unici documenti pervenutici sono le due lettere di ringraziamento del 18 e 20 gennaio del 1579, una rivolta al Padre Locatelli e l'altra, già menzionata, rivolta al Padre Paolo della Mirandola, in cui il Cieco afferma: »Io prometto d'oprare in guisa, che Iddio ne riceverà Gloria, la chiesa soddisfacimento, il maestro del sacro palazzo diletto, quello autor vita« (Groto 2007: 265). Questa promessa però non dice niente di preciso né sui modi e obiettivi della sua espurgazione, né sulle eventuali richieste del Sant'Uffizio. Sembra dunque che, una volta ricevuto l'incarico, il Groto abbia avuto mani libere di eseguire l'espurgazione a sua discrezione. Analizzando la sua opera d'espurgazione, si può constatare comunque che seguiva in linea massima la prassi più diffusa della censura controriformista, di eliminare rigorosamente qualsiasi riferimento ai rappresentanti della Chiesa cattolica, sostituendoli con i personaggi laici; allo stesso tempo lasciava intatti i brani immorali o lascivi che non toccavano gli ecclesiastici, in opposizione, ad esempio, al Saviati che badava anche all'aspetto morale, inserendo dei cambiamenti che rendevano le storie narrate meno lascive.[6]

La questione della sorveglianza del Groto ci sembra particolarmente importante anche perché questi aveva inserito nella sua versione emendata degli elementi che non solo non hanno niente a che fare con la politica della Controriforma, ma che sono talvolta addirittura in opposizione ad essa: oltre alle già menzionate intenzioni campanilistiche di difesa dell'ambiente veneziano. Ci riferiamo soprattutto agli elementi di astrologia e magia inseriti nei brani espurgati dell'opera boccacciana.

Questi elementi sono osservabili nella sua riscrittura di più novelle, ma qui ci limiteremo ai due casi più eclatanti: la novella di Massetto da Lamporecchio (III/1) e la novella di frate Puccio (III/4).[7]

2.1. La Novella su Massetto da Lamporecchio

La famosa novella che narra un caso di immoralità in un monastero femminile, immoralità cui non si sottrae nemmeno la badessa, fu ovviamente censurata in tutte le tre versioni. Nella versione dei Deputati la badessa è trasformata in una vedova che

[6] Trasformava ad esempio il ruolo di moglie in ruolo di vedova (Chiecchi 1984: 73).

[7] Groto ha rassettato 46 novelle, 18 delle quali hanno subito solo piccole sostituzioni (per lo più i cambiamenti rigurdano l'indentità dei personaggi) e 14 dei cambiamenti abbastanza estesi, fino al punto che le versioni originarie si rendono talvolta irriconoscibili. (Cfr. Chiecchi 1984: 93). Oltre che nelle novelle sopra menzionate, un richiamo all'astrologia emerge anche nella novella su Alibech (III/10), in cui alla ragazza viene insegnato come "incantare il tempo" da "un giovane per nome Rustico, che per più liberamente poter attendere alla Filosofia, e all'Astrologia, […] dal consortio humano fuggendo, […] quivi si riparava.", e nella novella su frate Cipolla (VI/10), in cui il protagonista parla degli alberi del Sole, che "favellano, e rispondono, come noi, e predican l'avenire".

teneva appresso di sé alcune »damigelle povere, et ben nate, et esercitarle in lavori, et ricami, et simiglianti opere femminili« (Chiecchi 1984: 52-53); il Salviati invece traspone la vicenda in Oriente e più precisamente in un serraglio presso Alessandria (Farinelli 2010: 9).

Anche Groto si serve di una trasposizione in un altro ambiente, e cioè in »un altissimo palagio nei boschi«, in cui è chiusa la Prencessa, figlia del Re di Sicilia (in sostituzione della badessa), insieme alle sue compagne (in sostituzione delle monache). Il Groto all'inizio espurga una riflessione boccacciana sulla natura delle monache:

> [… che credono troppo bene che] come ad una giovane è sopra il capo posta la benda bianca e indosso messole la nera cocolla, che ella piú non sia femina né più senta de' feminili appetiti se non come se di pietra l'avesse fatta divenire il farla monaca. (Boccaccio 1980: 328)

Vi inserisce al suo posto una riflessione più generale sulla natura di tutte le donne giovani:

> [… che credono troppo bene che] una giovane fragile, e delicata, sia di pietra contra gli amorosi appetiti. (Boccaccio 1612: 67)

Siccome il Massetto della versione grotiana non è più »un giovane lavoratore forte e robusto« (329) ma è trasformato in »un de' principali Signori della Toscana, e giovane« (67), si richiede anche l'omissione della riflessione boccacciana sui giovani lavoratori della terra, che nella versione censurata non aveva più fondamento:

> E similmente sono ancora di quegli assai che credono troppo bene che la zappa e la vanga e le grosse vivande e i disagi tolgano del tutto a' lavoratori della terra i concupiscibili appetiti e rendan loro d'intelletto e d'avedimento grossissimi. (Boccacio 1980: 329)

Per giustificare perché la figlia del Re dovesse essere chiusa in un luogo talmente solitario, il Groto introduce un'estesa spiegazione:

> Dunque belissime Donne, fù già un Re di Sicilia, che una figliuola generò senza più, e veggendola crescere di rare qualità del corpo, e dell'animo, e massimamente d'una singolar bellezza dotata, poi che di dodici anni pervenuta la vide, seco propose di d'intender qual ventura le sovrastasse, e con otto de' suoi principali baroni egli in persona cavalcò verso un Astrologo, che in quei boschi lungi dall'umana conversatione si dimorava, e per le cose da lui ne' tempi adietro predette, s'havea acquistato presso quei popoli grandissima fede. Perciò giunto il Re lo domandò di quel, perche domandare andato vi era, e per conclusione intese, che quantunque i cieli non isforzino, tanto nondimeno inclinano, che se la sua figliuola non fosse stata con diligenza guardata, ella sarebbe suta madre prima, che moglie. Gli otto baroni con Re venuti (ciascun de' quali una figliuola haveva altresì) domandarono e hebbero la stessa risposta, e tornatisi alla Città presero partito di provedervi. Fece dunque il Re in mezo ad alcuni

> solitari, ma dilettevoli boschi un altissimo palagio fondare, d'altissime, e fortissime mura cingendolo, e molto terreno abbracciando, in cui la Prencessa, e le compagne potessero diportarsi, e vietando sotto pena della testa a ciascuno huomo l'entrarvi, fuorche da un castaldo, e ad un giardiniere sì carichi d'anni, che ben sicuramente vi si poteano lasciare […] (Boccaccio 1612: 67)

In questa sostituzione sono degni di nota, anzitutto, a livello stilistico, l'allontanamento dalla concretezza e dal realismo tipici del Boccaccio. Nella novella in questione, per non compromettere il buon nome del monastero, i dati concreti sono meno presenti che in altre novelle, ma di solito, com'è noto, il Boccaccio ci fornisce non solo il nome preciso dei suoi personaggi, ma anche la provenienza, la professione, lo stato sociale e addirittura il quartiere in cui si vuole vivessero, cercando di localizzare quanto possibile gli avvenimenti in modo da »raccontarli come se questi fossero potuti accadere solamente una volta, in quel dato luogo e con quei dati protagonisti« (Jolles 2003: 104). Nell'inserzione del Groto abbiamo invece dei personaggi molto più indeterminati: "un Re di Sicilia", un Astrologo", "un de' principali Signori della Toscana", aspetto che trova corrispondenza con lo stile tipico delle fiabe, mirante a una decontestualizzazione dei fatti narrati (cfr. Jolles 2003: 126). Nella sua versione già l'inizio della novella – "fu già un Re di Sicilia" – presenta una formula tipicamente fiabesca e fiabesca è anche la trama, che prevede la visita dall'Astrologo, la sua predizione, lo sforzo del padre per evitare il compiersi del destino, il fallimento ineluttabile dell'impresa, visto che la predizione si avvera.

In realtà nell'Italia del Quattrocento l'evoluzione del gusto letterario aveva comportato negli scrittori una minore frequentazione della novella, un genere tendenzialmente basato sulla rappresentazione realistica dei fatti. Auerbach (1984: 36) afferma che si preferiva »non cercare più l'unione delle cose terrene nella prosa realistica, ma piuttosto confonderle fiabescamente nella poesia«; cominciavano dunque a fiorire i poemi cavallereschi di Pulci, Boiardo e infine Ariosto. La ripresa di un interesse per la novella avviene solo nel Cinquecento con i novellieri più noti, Matteo Bandello e Giraldi Cinzio. Anche quest'ultimo, nel suo *Discorso attorno al comporre dei romanzi* (1554), esalta il genere del poema cavalleresco e loda lo stile del Boiardo e dell'Ariosto. In Italia la prima raccolta di fiabe appare nel 1550, quando Giovanni Francesco Straparola pubblica le sue *Piacevoli notti*. Perciò possiamo ipotizzare che sia stato anche il gusto letterario dell'epoca a indurre Groto a inserire elementi fiabeschi dentro l'opera boccacciana, operazione comportante un effetto opposto a quello voluto dal Boccaccio, il quale tendeva invece, come noto, a una rappresentazione realistica delle vicende.

Non è da trascurare nemmeno la considerevole somiglianza di questa trama con quella di un'altra opera grotiana, la tragedia *Dalida,* pubblicata nel 1572 (Tschiesche 1984: 251). Essa narra una storia simile, e precisamente quella della una figlia di un Re che il padre rinchiude in un palazzo in mezzo ai boschi per »conservarle e la vita, e l'onore«. Anche in tal caso le precauzioni del padre non possono prevenire che il giovane (nipote e futuro assassino del padre della giovane) entri nel palazzo e di seguito nel cuore della figlia del Re:

> […] E tra le selve in un palagio
> La chiusi in compagnia d'altre Donzelle,
> A cui fuor, che l'uscir non mancasse altro.
> Ma si inganna quel padre, il quale stima
> L'onestà della figlia intatta, e salva,
> Per haverla rinchiusa in grembo à i marmi,
> E di ferro, e d'acciar cinta d'intorno,
> Quando ella in caste voglie il cuor non chiude. (Groto 1572: 10).

Analoghi sono dunque i personaggi (il Re e sua figlia, del tutto assenti nell'originale boccacciano) come pure l'elemento della preoccupazione paterna per la castità della figlia, proccupazione smisurata fino al punto di fargli prendere provvedimenti oltre modo severi, come quello di isolare la figlia da possibili contatti con l'esterno. La trama del Groto fu commentata anche dal Ruscelli, autore delle glosse in margine della versione grotiana, che però trovò problematico solo il fatto che »il Re consignasse per stanza alla figliuola un luogo così solitario senza custodia di persona, che di lei cura havesse« (Boccaccio 1612: 67).

Nel seguito il Groto tende a seguire il testo originale ed interviene soltanto per effettuare le sostituzioni dei personaggi già menzionati (monache – donzelle, Massetto – il giovane) e operare alcune omissioni che sono la conseguenza di tali sostituzioni (ad es. il passo in cui le monache discutono di aver promesso la verginità a Dio). Aggiunge però un elemento nuovo in relazione al giovane protagonista: se nella versione originale Massetto si fa muto per poter entrare nel monastero, a Groto ciò non basta – il suo protagonista non si fa solo muto, ma si tinge anche la barba e i capelli di bianco, ovviamente per sembrare più vecchio e di conseguenza meno attraente alle giovani donzelle (dato che, nella versione grotiana, non è più un semplice lavoratore ma un gran signore e di conseguenza più capace di suscitare fascino nelle giovani). Questa aggiunta, che dal punto di vista degli obiettivi della censura controriformista non era per niente necessaria, mostra lo sforzo del Groto di emendare il testo in modo tale che potesse risultare il più convincente possibile la logica dei fatti; voleva dunque, un protagonista e una trama convincenti, obiettivo che gli è in generale tristemente fallito, ma che nondimeno dimostra il suo approccio verso la letteratura e, in senso più stretto, verso i procedimenti della censura che, secondo lui, non avrebbe dovuto limitarsi all'eliminazione di passi incriminati, ma riempire narrativamente le lacune.

Un cambiamento rilevante avviene di nuovo verso la fine della novella, dove viene eliminato il colloquio tra Massetto e la badessa, oltre che nella conclusione che Groto rende più corta e sintetica:

> […rotto lo sciliguagnolo], con gran maraviglia di lei la fece accorta di ciò era infin all'hora avvenuto. In questo mezo il Re, e gli altri Baroni vollero saper dall'Astrologo se 'l reo influsso ancora passato fosse, e egli rispose, che era passato, ma che tanto ne era avvenuto, quanto ne havea predetto. Questo inteso, andarono tutti insieme al palagio, e trovate le figlie gravide, e udito di chi, lo fecero prendere, minacciandogli una acerbissima morte. Ma il giovane Signore veggendosi in tanto pericolo, e havendo compassion di se stesso, promise di sposar la Prencessa, e di far che altre ancora

> sarebbono da suoi baroni sposate, alche s'accordarono i padri, e così si fece, celebrandosi le nozze solenni, alle quali fu chiamato lo Astrologo, e egli vi venne motteggiando le giovani dolcemente, le quali hebbero più ventura, che senno. (Boccaccio 1612: 68-69)

Come succede anche in altri casi,[8] Groto sostituisce qui l'originale dialogo tra i protagonisti, che è un modo narrativo tipico per il Boccaccio in quanto permette ai personaggi di fare sfoggio di retorica e raggiungere così i loro obiettivi, con un passo di sole azioni. La conclusione della novella (in particolare le nozze del protagonista e dei suoi otto baroni), funzionerebbe molto meglio se facesse parte di una fiaba, mentre dentro a un testo boccacciano, che mira alla rappresentazione realistica dei fatti, risulta strana, inverosimile e poco convincente.

2.2. La novella su don Felice e frate Puccio

Un'altra novella in cui appare l'astrologia e l'arte di predire l'avvenire è la quarta novella della terza giornata; per fare una breve sintesi della versione censurata basti riferire il titolo emendato: »Felice insegna a Puccio come egli diverrà Astrologo, e indovino, facendo una sua arte; la quale Puccio facendo, Felice in questo mezzo con la moglie di lui si dà buon tempo« (Boccaccio 1612: 73).

Puccio dunque viene trasformato da un bizzocco che »usava molto la chiesa, […] diceva suoi paternostri, andava alle prediche, stava alle messe« (1980: 361) a un sempliciotto che »era vago di udire, e di raccontar le nove del mondo, […] ma sopra tutto dilettavasi di indovinare i successi avvenire, […] e perciò si vedea sempre con Lunari, con Pronostichi, con Tavole, e con Effemeridi in mano«; Felice, invece, viene trasformato da monaco a scolare che si finge »grandissimo conoscitor delle stelle« (1612: 73).

In questa novella le scienze occulte diventano una sostituzione per la penitenza che Puccio effettua per diventare beato; del resto anche il Salviati si era servito di una soluzione simile: nella sua versione Felice si finge alchimista e studioso di testi esoterici (Chiecchi 1984: 81). C'è una differenza fondamentale che distingue questa novella da quella precedentemente considerata. Nella novella su Massetto il ruolo dell'Astrologo viene preso sul serio, le sue predizioni (malgrado lo sforzo del padre di impedirlo) si realizzano, il che dà alla novella un carattere fiabesco, visto che tali avvenimenti di solito vengono narrati nelle fiabe nelle quali l'inverosimiglianza è attesa. Nella novella di Puccio l'astrologia ha invece una funzione completamente diversa: è usata sostanzialmente come mezzo per beffare il protagonista e non viene presentata come una scienza seria, veramente capace di predire l'avvenire. Nella versione originale la vicenda di Puccio viene commentata dal narratore con un'ironia eloquente: »assai persone sono che, mentre essi si sforzano d'andarne in Paradiso, senza avvedersene vi mandano altrui« (1980: 360) e Groto trasforma la frase con un'ironia per niente inferiore: »assai persone sono che, mentre essi si sforzano di veder le cose avvenire, le presenti non veggiono« (1612: 73).

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[8] Il caso più eclatante è la novella su Ser Ciappelletto, che viene privata della confessione e la lacuna viene riempita esclusivamente con gli elementi d'azione.

Questo passo è interessante perché mostra una posizione di un distacco ironico verso l'astrologia, una scienza che il Groto nella vita privata invece prendeva molto sul serio; tra l'altro scrisse una *Chiromantia* (inedita) e concepì anche una *Effemeride* con le previsioni dal 1583 al 1600 (Rizzi 1987: 47). Del resto anche le Accademie di cui faceva parte mostravano un vivo interesse per l'occulto, per le scienze ermetiche e cabalistiche, secondo una tendenza diffusa in tutto il Cinquecento (cfr. Yates 1979, Thorndike 1941). Sembra dunque che l'ironia sull'arte della predizione, nella novella censurata di Puccio, non presenti l'opinione personale del Groto, bensì nasca dalla trama stessa e ricalchi la battuta che appariva nell'originale. Non sfugge tuttavia che, dove il Groto sostituisce il passo con le istruzioni sul come fare penitenza con uno in cui dà istruzioni concrete su come imparare a predire l'avvenire, introduce anche alcune informazioni generali sull'astrologia, quasi per sottolienare la sua competenza in materia:

> […] si come di giorni, e di mesi è composto l'anno commune, così di anni communi è composto l'anno grande, ilquale a punto per tua grandissima ventura comincia questa medesima sera. Quest'anno grande non è già di tanti anni, quanti fin qui si dissero. Ma si è per prova trovato, esser solo di anni quaranta de nostri. Et si come anticamente (perchè hoggidì per la varietà de' tempi, questa regola è rimasa fallita) da' primi giorni di Gennaio si conoscevano, e pronosticavano gli effetti di tutti i Mesi di quell'anno, servendo un giorno ad un mese, così dalle prime quaranta notti di questo anno grande, che questa sera havrà il suo principio, si raccolgono tutti e publichi, e particolari effetti de gli anni quaranta a venire, i quali aviso, che ti sien per bastar tutto il rimanente della tua vita. Percioche le stelle minutamente osservate di notte in notte, vengono mostrando gli influssi di anno in anno […] (Boccaccio 1612: 74)

Girolamo Ruscelli nelle sue note al margine spiega il significato dell'espressione »anno grande« e scrive: »il nono Cielo co'l suo proprio moto si rivolge dall'Occidente in Oriente nello spazio d'anni trentasei mille secondo Tolomeo; ilqual corso di tempo è detto anno Platonico, ovvero anno grande.« (Boccaccio 1612: 74). Il passo grotiano accenna dunque al sistema solare geocentrico tolemaico. Si osservi *en passant* che un interesse particolare per gli studi astronomici di impostazione tolemaica lo coltivava anche Giovanni Maria Bonardo, amico di Groto e membro dell'Accademia dei Pastori Fratteggiani; questi era autore dell'opera *La grandezza, larghezza e distanza di tutte le sfere*, pubblicata a Venezia nel 1584, opera che alcuni studiosi credono fosse in realtà stata scritta prevalentemente dal Groto (Mazzetti 1987: 82, 92).

Tenendo conto, da una parte, dell'effettivo interesse del Groto per l'astrologia e l'arte di predire il futuro e, dall'altra, del fatto che questo brano è inserito in un testo che presenta una beffa, dobbiamo chiederci se l'effetto ironico non vada un poco contro le convinzioni del Groto e trovi un suo senso soprattutto nella sua ricerca di rispettare (almeno in questo caso) la logica narrativa boccacciana. La novella censurata viene dunque da lui conclusa con una battuta di ironia arguta su chi crede in questa scienza. Ed è un'ironia pari a quella boccacciana, fenomeno altrimenti raro nella sua rassettatura del *Decameron*:

> […] avvenne che dove frate Puccio faccendo penitenza si credette mettere in Paradiso, egli vi mise il monaco. (Boccaccio 1980: 367)
> […] avvenne che dove frate Puccio pensò di contemplar le corna della nova Luna nel Cielo, altri gliele pose sul capo. (Boccaccio 1612: 75)

E ancora nel passo conclusivo:

> E quando portò a Felice le cose ch'egli havea scritto, lo Scolare si dolse, affermandoli che non havea scritto bene, e che esso havea fatto meglio assai quelle notti giacendo in letto. (Boccaccio 1612: 75)

Da quest'ultima frase risulta in modo ancora più palese la portata della beffa giocata al povero Puccio: non solo lo scolaro »gli pose le corna sul capo«, ma anche tutta la sua fatica delle ultime quaranta notti gli risultò vana, visto che dai suoi appunti non avrebbe potuto predire l'avvenire. Qui il Groto, per quanto riguarda la portata della beffa, fa un passo ancora più avanti di Boccaccio: se il Puccio boccacciano non viene a sapere se la sua penitenza lo avrebbe portato in Paradiso e così alla fine della novella tutti i protagonisti sono contenti perché ognuno ha quello che voleva, il Puccio di Groto rimane profondamente deluso.

3. CONCLUSIONE

Cercando di inquadrare gli interventi relativi alla novella su frate Puccio nel contesto più generale delle operazioni effettuate dal Groto sul capolavoro di Boccaccio, occorre rilevare che questo rifacimento produce, malgrado le trasformazioni e sostituzioni subite, un effetto più o meno paragonabile a quello del testo originale, che è un fenomeno riscontrabile in ben poche novelle censurate dal Groto. Non di rado, infatti, questi interviene in maniera così radicale sul testo, che la trama originale viene completamente stravolta; in altri casi invece, pur cercando di seguire la trama originale, deforma e appiattisce gravemente, con le sue trasformazioni, il significato della novella, oltre a creare enormi dissonanze stilistiche poiché inserisce brani di gusto manierista che si scontrano con lo stile di Boccaccio. Come abbiamo visto nel caso della novella su Massetto da Lamporecchio, tali inserzioni provocano un effetto bizzarro a causa dell'incompatibilità tra due modi di narrare: l'uno verosimile e ironico e l'altro improntato al meraviglioso e al fiabesco e teso al moralismo (visto che tutte le donzelle, inclusa la Prencessa, alla fine vengono maritate per non vivere più nel peccato). Si tratta di una conclusione lontanissima da quella dell'originale, in cui il protagonista, con l'aiuto del proprio ingegno, riesce non solo a »adoperare bene la sua giovinezza«, ma anche ritornare a casa ricco e contento.

La novella del Puccio, invece, anche con le sostituzioni che presenta, è profondamente diversa: l'ironia boccacciana non viene diminuita, bensì trasformata in modo da ottenere un effetto paragonabile. Assai meno riuscite, ad esempio, risultano le sostituzioni nella novella di Alibec e Rustico (III/10), in cui alla ragazza viene insegnato come calmare la tempesta, e quelle nella novella di Martellino (II/1), in cui il protagonista finge di essere femmina – soluzioni che risultano molto bislacche e dove vanno perse

quasi completamente l'argutezza e l'ironia dell'originale. Forse è più che altro una felice coincidenza che l'astrologia risulti, nella novella su Puccio, come una felice alternativa alla tematica religiosa della versione originale (la previsione di premi e penitenze dopo la morte); tanto la dura penitenza che avrebbe dovuto portare il protagonista in Paradiso quanto la veglia fatta con l'intenzione di predire l'avvenire e ottenere pregi e fama funzionano infatti bene come mezzi attraverso cui burlarsi dell'ingenuità della gente semplice che crede di poter raggiungere in quaranta notti dei risultati che cambino la loro vita, terrena o oltremondana.

Difficile credere che il burlarsi dell'arte di predire il futuro fosse anche attitudine personale del censore, al quale invece questa disciplina stava molto al cuore. La ragione per cui aveva comunque deciso di usarlo come elemento narrativo, seguendo per una volta la trama del Boccaccio, sta forse altrove. La digressione in cui inseriva nozioni sull'anno grande platonico e sulle stelle dalle quali si sarebbe potuto, osservandole minutamente, predire gli eventi futuri, gli permetteva di mostrare i suoi interessi personali e di condividere il suo sapere con gli altri. Se si rimuove il contesto boccacciano in cui il richiamo alle previsioni astronomiche si riveste di beffa, quello che rimane è proprio l'intenzione, non ironica, di diffondere il suo sapere in materia.

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THE MYTHOLOGY OF THE DIVINE IN P. BEROALDO'S *COMMENTARIES* ON BOOK 11 OF APULEIUS' *METAMORPHOSES*

Sonja Weiss

Abstract

The article investigates Beroaldo's approach to the theological themes of Book 11 of Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* focusing on his interpretation of the figure of Isis, represented by Apuleius as the Moon goddess of many names. A symbol of Nature, Fortune and Fate, at the same time changeable and motionless, Isis is no less than the transcendent deity ruling the universe. In Beroaldo's commentaries, Antiquity not only coexists with Christianity but actually stimulates it, and their symbiosis is an edifying model proposed by Beroaldo to the audience of his readers and students.

Key wordes: Beroaldo, Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*.

1. *OMNESDEIETDEAE AD UNUM DEUM REFERUNTUR*: POLYTHEISM AS THE MANIFESTATION OF THE SINGLE DEITY.

The question that we will try to answer here is: How is Beroaldo's personal approach to the subject of Book 11 to be reconciled with the religious attitude of a professor and scholar faithful to Christian monotheism?When we speak of pagan polytheism, we should observe that a giant step towards monotheism had been made by Antiquity itself, partly in the philosophical domain with the Neo-Platonic monism in particular, and partly with the historical and cultural changes that had been at work since Hellenism. This period had been marked by a significant widening of geographical, political and cultural horizons of Greek Antiquity,which experienced, among other things, the addition of various religious cults, mostly from the Orient. Many of those cults claimed that they possessedthe secret of universal Truth, and that the divinity they worshipped was no less than the ultimate manifestation of all others. One of these was the ancient cult of the goddess Isis, to whom the long Egyptian tradition had always attributed the powers and characteristics of other gods.[1]No wonder, then, if the Isisof the *Metamorphoses* reveals herself to Lucius as "the supreme divinity, …, the uniform manifestation of all gods and goddesses (*deorumdearumquefacies*), …, whose single godhead is

[1] Griffiths, *The Isis-Book*, 144.

venerated all over the earth under manifold forms, varying rites, and changing names" (*Met.* 11.5; transl. by J. Lindsay). In these words, Beroaldorecognizes the expression of universal monotheism:"Here it is clearly shown that all gods and goddesses eventually return into one; he is the Maker of all things, who is venerated under different names of gods and goddesses, in poetic fictions as well as in philosophic arguments."(*ad* 11.5: *deorumdearumquefacies*) Similar conclusions are drawn on various other occasions (*ad* 11.6: *subterraneosemirotundo*and *ad* 11.29: *deismagnis*), which are usually accompanied by quotations from famous authors, pagan as well as Christian; in this particular case,Beroaldo could not have lent his words more credit than by quoting St. Augustine (*Civ. Dei* 7.28-29), who believes that all the names of the gods and heavenly bodies are various expressions of the existence of one single God.

The text of Apuleius, however, is more complex. The figure of the goddess of many names appears several times in Book 11. The *reginacaeli*, to whom miserable Lucius, turned into an ass, turns for help, is the Moon, rising from the sea at that very moment. Lucius calls her Ceres, Venus, Diana and Proserpina (11.2); in her answer, she reveals herself as the goddess of many names (among those already mentioned, she also appears under the names of Pessinuntia, Minerva, Hecate, Bellona and Rhamnusia);but her real name is Isis (11.5). There is a long religious tradition relating these cults to each other,[2] to which Beroaldo pays the serious attention of a professor of the history of religions.[3] According to this tradition, Isis is related to the moon and Osiris to the sun (*ad* 11.5: *reginamIsidem* and *ad* 11.27: *numinisreligionisque*); they represent the couple of the Great Gods (*di magni*) symbolizing the two principles, male and female. The connection of Isis with the moon goddess is specifically Greek, since the Egyptian tradition usually represents her with the attributes of the sun.[4] In this dualistic concept of the universe, an important role was played by the Middle Platonic philosophy, for it was itself heavily influenced by the Greek Pythagoreanism on the one hand and the Persian dualism (of the good and the evil principle) on the other.Plutarch is very explicit about the two antagonistic forces, one of which leads us towards what is right, while the other subjects us to the natural changes of the universe. These changes happen according to the law of Nature, which governs the terrestrial world together with the lunar one (*De Is. etOsir.* 369c-d).[5] Isis' relation to the female principle is found in Apuleius' text as well: Lucius mentions her "*female light"* (11.2), and there is also a connection with the cult of the Great Mother of the gods (11.5). Most importantly, however, Isis is repeatedly referred to as the principle – often pointedly female – of all things: "the Mother (*mater*) of the Stars,…, the Mistress (*domina*) of the Universe, (11.7) and of the elements (11.5);" sometimes with the neutral form *parens* (parent): *rerumnaturaeparens* (11.5), *temporumparens* (11.7).Beroaldo never tries to avoid this theological dualism: "The philosophers say there are only one God and one Goddess; they give the same name to the Moon, the same to Ceres, the same to Iuno and the same

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[2] Griffiths, *The Isis-Book,* 114-118 and 140-158.

[3] It is Krautter's view (*PhilologischeMethode*, 159)thatBeroaldo should be considered as the founder of the History of Religions, although there are some who find this title anachronistic (Fabrizio-Costa, *Autour de quelque notes,* 125).

[4] Griffiths, *The Isis-Book*, 125.

[5] For the connection between Isis and the moon, see *De Is. etOsir.* 372d.

to Proserpina"(*ad* 11.2: *Ceres alma*); instead, he traces it to still other sources, in this case Varro: "M. Varro and Augustine report that there are two gods and two principles of all things, which are heaven and earth. All deities and names are one with them." (*ad* 11.2: *reginacoeli*)In his work *The Divine Antiquities* (frr. 263 and 286), Varro actually relates the female terrestrial principle (*terra*) to the goddess Earth (*Tellus*), who can take also the names of other feminine deities, of whom one is Proserpina. He does not mention the moon, but its relation to the terrestrial world will be discussed later. Another passage from Varro, however, does identify the supreme deities of heaven and earthwith the Egyptian couple Serapis-Isis, who has a Latin counterpart in the couple Saturnus-Ops (*On the Latin Language* (5.57) quoted by Beroaldo in *ad* 11.29: *deismagnis*). These are the Great Gods (*di magni*), representing the two origins of all things. According to Varro, this concept does not at all attack the opinion of his ancestors, who believed in the existence of several goddesses, "because it is possible that something is at the same time one thing and having within itself several other things" *(Divine Antiquities*, fr. 268). Beroaldo fully agrees with these words, concluding that "names are many, God is one".

2. THE ANDROGYNOUS ARCHETYPE OF THE TRANSCENDENT DEITY

The duality of the male and female principles represents another challenge to the monotheistic concept of the universe. Explaining the meaning of the "female light" of Lucius' goddess, Beroaldo first relates the ancient opinion that "the light and the star of the Sun are masculine, while those of the Moon are feminine"(*ad* 11.2: *lucefoeminea*). This apportionment of roles is expected, but the next lines bring a new conception of it:"It is particularly observed that anyone who thinks that the Moon should be called by a feminine name and considered female is addicted to women and their slave; on the other hand, anyone who believes the moon to be a masculine deity is the master of his wife and tolerates no feminine intrigues. And so with the Egyptians, although they refer to the Moon as to a goddess and female, the Moon is mystically called a god. The Parthians also worshipped the Moon as a god of male gender. And there is a reason for that, for the ancients believed that all the gods were *arsenotheleis*, that is, male-females, as if the deities participated in both genders." He then relates some examples of the word *deus*poetically used of a goddess, although the reasons may be purely formal (metrical). He proceeds: "I have already related, by the authority of Philocorus, thatthe sacrifices offered to the Moon, which was believed to be Venus as well, were performed by men dressed as women and women dressed as men, since this deity was considered to be masculine as well as feminine. The divine Jerome relates that neither gender nor species should be observed in the things that are divine, for in our language the Holy Spirit is masculine, in Greek it is neutrum, and in Hebrew feminine." This passage from Beroaldo's text is worth relating *verbatim*, since it contains many characteristics of his general approach to the text (philological, ethnological, psychological and philosophical). First there is the unexpected psychological analysis of the two human conceptions of the Moon's gender. It probably aims to amuse the reader, but it

acquires considerable credibility from the general belief in the influence of the moon on the human body and disposition. A more serious testimony follows, arguing that the Egyptian mysteries treat the Moon as a male deity, as does the Parthian religious tradition. But the core of the argument lies in Beroaldo'sassertion that the gods of the ancients were all worshipped as entities participating in both genders (*masculofoemini*). Here we find the androgynous archetype which is attested in the ancient cosmologies (such as Orphic[6]); in the times of Apuleius, however, it was omnipresent in the Gnostic scriptures, which often feature androgynous pairs of the Eons, entities descended from the Pleroma (Fullness). It is not uncommon that the female pole of these entities is given its form by the male one (Irenaeus, *Adv. haer.* 1.1.1). The androgynous archetype is sometimes present at the very beginning of creation, as in the Gnostic tractate on the *TrimorphicProtennoia,* where the Primal Thought presents itself as an androgynous entity, the Father and the Mother, encompassing all things (*NHC* XIII 1.45). A similar notion is found in the Middle Platonic philosophical allegories: Plutarch, for example, gives a very clear explanation of the mystical concept of the Moon as an androgynous deity:"At the time of the new moon in the month of Phamenoth they celebrate a festival to which they give the name of 'Osiris's coming to the Moon,' and this marks the beginning of the spring. Thus they make the power of Osiris to be fixed in the Moon, and say that Isis, since she is generation,is associated with him. For this reason they also call the Moon the mother of the world, and they think that she has a nature both male and female, as she is receptive and made pregnant by the Sun, but she herself in turn emits and disseminates into the air generative principles."(*De Is. etOsir.* 368d; transl. by F.C. Babbitt) The androgynous archetype symbolizes the coincidence of the opposites which are implied in its duality; at the same time it symbolizes the transcendence of their antagonism, reestablishing the monistic conception of the universe. This is why it is congenial to Beroaldo, who tries to understand it by using what he repeatedly terms a mystical intuition (*mysticusintellectus*). In one of, according to Beroaldo, most beautiful prayers addressed to Lucius' patroness, he asserts that she "lights the Sun" (11.25). Since the lunar deity acquired many of its attributes from the fact that it is the moon which receives the light from the sun, Beroaldo admits some incorrectness of Lucius' assertion: his words could not be applied to the Moon unless they are understood *mysticointellectu:* "It is therefore necessary to restore all these things to the God who is above this world; he is the parent of all, bestowing blessings, supremely good, the greatest, unspeakable and unnameable. And it does not matter whether he is of masculine or of feminine gender, since it is the majestic power, and not the gender, that we should be looking for in the things that are divine."(*ad* 11.25: *luminassolem*) Beroaldo himself is deliberately inconsistent in naming Lucius' deity, for he calls it indiscriminately "Nature, mother of all", as well as "the supreme God and Maker" (*parentemrerumnaturam ac opificemdeumsummum*).

[6] About the androgynous archetypes in Orphism, see Brisson, *Sexual Ambivalence*, 85-101.

3. *NECNATURA SINE DEOEST: NECDEUS SINE NATURA*. THE CONCEPT OF DIVINE NATURE AND THE INFLUENCE OF THE STOIC PANTHEISM.

When she first appears to Lucius, Isis claims to be, among other things, the natural mother of all life (*rerumnaturaparens;* 11.5). Beroaldo corroborates this title with a lengthy quotation from Seneca: "'Nature,' says my opponent, 'gives me all this.' Do you not perceive when you say this that you merely speak of God under another name? For what is nature but God and divine reason, which pervades the universe and all its parts? You may address the author of our world by as many different titles as you please; (…) Therefore, most ungrateful of mortals, it is in vain that you declare yourself indebted, not to God, but to nature, because there can be no God without nature, nor any nature without God; they are both the same thing, differing only in their functions." (*De ben.* 4.7-8; transl. by A. Stewart)Beroaldo introduces this quotation with the assertion that "nature, by which everything comes into existence, received its name from 'giving birth' (*a nascendo*), which is believed to be none other than god" (*ad* 11.5: *rerumnaturaparens*). The concept of divine Nature adopted here byBeroaldo emerged when the process of generation (*physis*in Greek) began to merge with the invisible force presiding over this generation. It consequently led to a personification and deification of nature, which received a deep impact from the Stoic concept of nature as a divine art stemming from the supreme Craftsman – the Demiurge; a concept which the Stoics in their turn had inherited from Platonism. Although identified inStoicism with Zeus, it continued to appear as a goddess, to whom many prayers and hymns were dedicated, invoking her as "principle and origin of all things, Ancient mother of the world, Night, darkness and silence."(From a hymn to Nature, written by a freedman of the emperor Hadrian, Mesomedes, 2nd Cent.) or as »Nature, mother goddess of all things, mother of innumerable ruses, heavenly ancient fecund divinity, queen, who tames all and is never tamed, who governs all and sees all."(From an Orphic *Hymn to Nature,* 2nd Cent.)[7]The connection of divine Nature with Isis is probably also a consequence of the Stoic figure of Isis Panthea, who played an important part in forming the Greco-Roman figure of Aphrodite-Venus, symbolizing the force which supervises the generation of the world; the Apuleian invocation of Isis the Moon does, in fact, bear many resemblances to Lucretius' hymn to Venus introducing his poem *On Nature*. It has been observed that the representation of Isis as the creative principle assigns her functions beyond her presumable role in the early Egyptian tradition, although she does sometimes appear there as the ancient Mother of the gods.[8]Maybe the best illustration of her powers is found in Plutarch, who defines her as the female principle of Nature (*Ibid.* 372e), literally "the feminine of nature" (*to tesphyseosthely*), which implicitly confirms that the concept of nature was essentially androgynous, for it also involved Osiris "*coming to the Moon*"(see above *De Is. et Osir.* 368d). Beroaldo seems to adopt this notion, for he concludes the passage from Seneca with the observation "that we call the god or this goddess who we were speaking about by many names, although it does not matter whether we

[7] Both passages are quoted from Hadot, *TheVeilofIsis*, 27.
[8] Griffiths, *The Isis-Book,* 140.

refer to nature with feminine or masculine names, since all the gods, as I have briefly explained before, are *masculofoemini*".

The problem is that the transcending element of the androgynous archetype becomes somewhat lost in the symbolism of Nature bearing positively feminine traits. In the Egyptian religion the role of Nature was assumed by the goddess Neith of the city of Sais. Her figure blended very early with that of Isis, while in the Greek tradition her attributes were transferred to the ancient Arthemis of Ephesus. St. Jerome reports that she was not worshipped as the virgin patroness of the hunt, but as the deity with many breasts (*polymaston*) who nourishes all living things.[9]Macrobius offers a similar description of Isis (*Sat.* 1.20.18). The 16th century thinkers were well aware of the intertwining of the two goddess figures,and showed great interest in the process. The image of the Arthemis of Ephesus was a favourite motif of the Renaissance decorative arts, where it appears as an allegory of Nature: she is portrayed as a woman wearing a crown and a veil, and the lower part of her body is covered with a cloth adorned with animal images. These attributes allude to the prolific force of the feminine deity, symbolizing growth and birth. The feminine essence of Nature is emphasized also by Egyptian iconography, which connected its deity with the image of the vulture. This attribute is likewise brought up by Beroaldo, which is particularly interesting as this bird only begins to appear in allegorical representations in the late 16th and early 17thcenturies.[10] "Some of the most famous authors report that in the sacred, and consequently unknowable Egyptian letters, the vulture bears the meaning of the word 'nature'; this is due to the physical records which mention that there are no males to be found among these birds." (*ad* 11.24: *partim… animalium*) The bird, then, which does not need a male partner to reproduce is an appropriate symbol of Nature's fertility and proneness to generation.

4. NATURE, FORTUNE AND FATE

The concept of nature is etymologically connected with the notion of change, which originates in a lack of stability: *physis* denotes the act of generation, of birth, and, consequently, of the eternal beginning involving the eternal ending. This ambiguity is beautifully encompassed in a well-known aphorism of Heraclitus,who said that "nature loves to hide" (DK 22 B 123). These words have lately prompted interpretations that follow a less obvious, though no less correct meaning of the verb *krypto.*[11] Its meaning 'to cover (with earth)' was closely related to the notion of death, and Heraclitus' sentence can also be understood as: "What causes generation (*physis*) tends to cause death," or: "What comes into generation tends to die." Hadot argues that this interpretation agrees perfectly with Heraclitus' idea of a permanent generation and ending, which are present in the constitution of every single thing as the two antagonistic forces. Everything consists of the two opposite poles which tend to destroy each other; and yet they coexist,

[9] By the appearance of Christianity, the figures of the two goddesses had already merged. (Witt, *Isis in the Ancient World*, 145). Witt, p. 148, mentions that Christian tradition related the Mother of God to the moon goddess.

[10] Hadot, *The Veil of Isis*, 234.

[11] Hadot, *The Veil of Isis*, 7-10.

creating by this very coexistence the necessary conditions for the existence of the thing in which they are both comprehended. The message is that of a deep identification of life and death.

The idea of life and death, beginning and termination, as well as of infinite transformation was intimately connected with the characteristics of the moon and its phases, which representedthe mutability of nature. Beroaldo points out this feature of the lunar deity more than once: first he praises Apuleius' expression *incertalumina*(11.2, 'dim radiance'), which alludes to the waning light of the moon, depending on that of the sun; and later, when he refers to an attribute of the goddess of many names, to the *corona multiformis* (11.3), he says that "its mystical sense seems to refer to the multiple images of the moon, which never shines in the same form as the day before"(*ad* 11.3: *corona multiformis*). In the same way he interprets the many colours of her garments (*ad* 11.3:*albocandorelucida*). Consequently, this feature becomes characteristic of all the goddesses that were related to the moon: it also explains the name of Hecate (*hecaton* means 'hundred'), the goddess "of a hundred names".

In the passage quoted above (*De Is. etOsir.* 369d), Plutarch mentions the variability of the terrestrial world, which includes the moon as well. Beroaldo also brings up the connection between the moon and the earth (*ad* 11.1: *ipsiusregiprovidentia*), following the sentence of FirmicusMaternus(*Math.* 4.1.6): the dominance of the terrestrial world is attributed to the moon because of its vicinity, by which it works upon the living beings of the earth. This influence chiefly affects their bodily nature. In fact, according to Firmicus (and hence Beroaldo), the bodies of all terrestrial creatures weaken and strengthen together with the waning and waxing moon. That is why the lunar goddesses also preside over birth and life, and are at the same time queens of the dead (Proserpina, Isis). The law of nature according to which every beginning postulates an end involves two very different elements, which particularly seem to interest Beroaldo: the element of necessity and the one already mentioned, of instability. The first pertains to the nature of the law itself, the second to the nature of what this law regulates.Beroaldorelies on the authority of the Stoics, who "assign birth and death to Fate; what is between them, however, they subject to Fortune" (*ad* 11.6: *ultra statutafato*). In the passage quoted from Seneca, God is identified with Fate (*fatum*), but this is not the idea pursued by Beroaldo. He is more interested in what lies between and is, because of its variability, often unpredictable – Fortune. Beroaldo quotes Macrobius, who identifies the moon with fortune, "because it presides over bodies which are subject to random varieties" (*ad* 11.15: *fortunae, sedvidentis*). He moreover refers to the admonitions of Ambrosius, who uses the symbolic meaning of the ever-changing moon to observe that all human affairs must come to an end eventually. And he continues: "That is why people used to wear small signs of the moon sewn to their shoes – so they wouldn't take good fortune for granted." *(ad* 11.2: *solisambagibus*) But there is an important distinction that Beroaldo insists upon: the moon may be the symbol of capricious fortune, but Isis has the power to control it. There is no inconsistency in his distinction, if we consider the fact that the phases of the moon are no random phenomenon but adhere to an unequivocal law of nature. The fickleness of fortune must then primarily be attributed to human blindness, which fails to discern the natural order in it.A similar distinction is already acknowledged by Apuleius: to the blind Fortune that has tortured Lucius

he opposes another, identified with Isis: she, too, is Fortune, but the open-eyed one (*videns*). Beroaldo's commentary explicitly relates Isis to the *fortunavidens, bona et salutaris*, whose antithesis is represented by the evil Fortune, *mala fortuna.* He develops this idea by asserting that the *bona fortuna*"is the rewarder of the good men and does not favorize and promote the bad ones, as does the blind fortune" *(ad* 11.15: *fortunae, sedvidentis).*According to Beroaldo, then, it is Lucius' universal deity that metes out justice and order. The notion of justice is likewise present in the text of Apuleius, where the goddess presents herself as Rhamnusia, that is, Nemesis, the goddess of retribution who punishes injustices (see Apuleius, 11.5). Commenting on this epithet, Beroaldo explicitly describes Isis as the *premiatrixbonorum*. The idea is supported by the Egyptian tradition, which represented Isis as the Lawgiver (Isis-Ma'at),[12] and the *Aretalogy from Cyme* shows her as the one who "gave and ordained laws for men, which no one is able to change" (4)and who is called"the Lawgiver" (52). The same text reveals another power of the goddess, for Isis concludes: "I overcome Fate. Fate harkens to me."(55-56)[13]It is a faculty twice alluded to in Apuleius' text, firstly when Isis promises to Lucius that, if he decides to devote his life to her, he shall discover "that it is within my power to prolong your life beyond the limit set to it by Fate" (11.6). The second instance is found in Lucius' final prayer: "You can untwine the hopelessly tangled threads of the Fates." (11.25) Here we discover another aspect of the *bona Fortuna*, who has power over the inexorable destiny. Beroaldo invokes the philosophical tradition which considers fate as the unmovable boundaries of life: "The opinion of philosophers is that the arrangement of Fate sets for every mortal the limits of life, which one is not allowed to pass over. The law of Fate is said to be insurmountable and unavoidable." (*ad* 11.6: *ultra statutafato*) In Greek mythology, these limits are represented as the threads woven by the three Parcae, whom Plato calls the daughters of Necessity (*ananke*; see *ad* 11.25: *fatorum… licia*). The notion of necessity isprobably whatgives a negative colouring to Beroaldo's concept of fate, for the latter does not involve only the necessity of death, but also that of the evil Fortune mentioned above. And it is Isis who can "change for the better and twist back the threads of the Fates, and if they prepare something dire for mortals, she can transform it, by her divine will, into felicity"(*ibid.*). The pessimistic notion of necessity originatesin the Platonic connection of this concept with matter (*hyle*) and consequently with evil. Since Beroaldo avoids philosophical argumentation on principle, this origin is open to speculation, but the allusion to Plato and Plotinus certainly lends plausibility to the conjecture.

CONCLUSION

Although one of the fundamental studies insists on Beroaldo's philological and scholarly approach to the theological themes of Apuleius' Book 11,[14] the present article has sought to illuminate another aspect of his writing, which is, according to some schol-

[12] Ma'at was the goddess of justice, who contributed to the development of other similar images of Isis (Isis Dikaiosyne and Isis Thesmophoros); see Griffiths, *The Isis-Book,* 153.

[13] Transl. by F. C. Grant (quotedfrom *TheAncientMysteries*, 173-174.)

[14] Krautter, *FilologischeMetode*, 155.

ars, characteristic of his personal teaching and writing method. I believe that Beroaldo did not renounce this method even – or perhaps we should say particularly –when treating fundamental theological questions, which he considered a challenge, not only as an erudite and lettered man, but also as a teacher. It should be remembered that his commentaries faithfully reflect his elaborated teaching methods, aimed to satisfy the crowd of listeners who flocked to his lectures from all parts of Europe. When discussing theological themes, Beroaldo is not content with enumerating various sources and interpretations of different cults, yet he manages, whilereviewing them all,to remain discreetly faithful to his own Christian monotheism – discreetly because he never feels the need to reject or even attack pagan polytheism and anthropomorphism. The age of apologists had passed and they had done their work. The most illustrative is the case when Beroaldo quotes St. Augustine together with Varroas a source on the existence of two principal deities, heaven and earth (see above, p. 3): "M. Varro and St. Augustin report…" The truth is that it is Varro who reports it and St. Augustine who tries to confute his assertions. Yet Beroaldo omits to mention that, because it would spoil the substantial harmony of his commentary: he does not feel the need to fight old battles already won by others. Maybe the greatest attraction of his writing lies in his ability, typical of his time, to accept the past ideologies and to consider them not as a threat to the present one but as its enrichment. Lucius' final prayer to Isis could be, says Beroaldo, a model for every hymn or prayer dedicated to the Christian Virgin, for none of the existing texts can bear comparison to the elegance and erudition of Apuleius' words. It is true that Beroaldo primarily praises Apuleius' literary genius, but he is nevertheless moved by the religious piety of Lucius' *verba sancta etpura* (*ad* 11.25: *tuquidem sancta*). Nor does he hesitate to call the Holy Virgin "our goddess" (*dea nostra*), for he is convinced that she would readily answer anyone who addressed such a prayer to her, as Isis answered Lucius.

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IL SOGNO RACCONTATO NEL *FILOCOLO* DI GIOVANNI BOCCACCIO

Carmen F. Blanco Valdés

Abstract

The goal of this contribution is to isolate the narrative microtexts referred to dream or sight in such an emblematic work as Il Filocolo, the first great novel by Giovanni Boccaccio, by going into a deep analysis of some aspects like the spatial and temporal situation of the narrative time of the microtext and their subsequent interpretation in the macrotext. On the other hand, it will also be intended to show that the recurrent usage of this kind of microstories is one of the narrative resources used by Boccaccio for upgrading in literary terms the advance of such a long and complex novel; and, thus, it would be convenient to pay attention to the great game of internal references established between the oniric microtexts and the storytelling as a whole.

Key words: Boccaccio, narrativa, *Filocolo*, materia onirica, sagno e visione, microtesto, analisi testuale

In un articolo presentato al Convengo Internazionali di Studi a Banjaluka (Bosnia) su *Il sogno italiano* (18-19 giugno 2010) in cui centravo lo studio sull'analisi del miscrotesto del sogno in Giovanni Boccaccio (con particolare riguardo a *Il Filocolo*) da un punto di vista strutturale, si arrivò ad alcune considerazioni che vorrei adesso mettere a fuoco[1].

In primo luogo, il racconto di cio che possiamo denominare come "materia onirica" s'istaura nella letteratura medioevale come parte integrante di quella realtà cosicché sará assai frequente trovare dei microtesti dei sogni all'interno del macrotesto delle opere. In questo senso, a nostro giudizio, Giovanni Boccaccio diventa, all'interno della tradizione letteraria romanza, il modello letterartio del sogno come microtesto narrativo conferendogli grandi potenzialità produttive.

In secondo luogo, nel *Filocolo*, la maggior parte dei sogni e, soprattutto, le visioni sono profetiche nel senso che, oltre a servire per informare il lettore di ciò che avverrà posteriormente, motivano letterariamente il racconto, dato che questi microtesti si presentano come l'elemento da cui prende il via lo svolgersi delle azioni posteriori. In

[1] Cfr. Blanco Valdés, Carmen F. "Il microtesto del sogno in Giovanni Boccaccio". *Convengo Internazionali di Studi "Il sogno italiano"*, (Banjaluka, 18-20 giugno 2010). Rivista dell'Associazione degli italinisti nei Balcani. (2011). Numero monografico. In corso di stampa.

questo senso è straordinario, come adesso tenterò di dimostrare, il gioco letterario di riferimenti interni che s'istaura tra i sogni o le visioni e i futuri accadimenti, dimostrando, come poi si è evidenziato nelle sue opere posteriori, il ruolo di primaria importanza che hanno sia i sogni che le visioni nella vita della realtà letteraria creata dal poeta.

Infine, con una struttura narrativa organizzata lungo cinque libri e nella quale i due protagonisti principali, Florio e Biancifiore, si vedono costretti ad essere separati durante il secondo, terzo e quarto libro, l'immaginario narrativo boccacciano doveva trovare un modo di avviare la narrazione mantenendo i contatto la vita e le vicende dei protagonisti: e questo modo è costituito senza dubbio dall'espediente narrativo delle varie visioni e dei sogni che si raccontano, la maggior parte dei quali prende avvio o per invocazione diretta dei personaggi o per intervento diretto degli *iddii* che si fanno presenti durante il sonno.

L'intenzione di questo studio, come continuazione a quanto detto nel primo articolo, è innanzitutto quella di individuare i sogni e le visioni in una delle opere emblematiche del poeta certaldese qual è *Il Filocolo*, primo romanzo della letteratura italiana, approfondendo fondamentalmente aspetti come, da un lato, la situazione e il momento narrativo del microtesto del racconto del sogno o visione e, dall'altro, l'interpretabilità, se possibile, del sogno o visione all'interno del macrotesto narrativo.

La struttura narrativa di questo romanzo si svolge lungo cinque libri in cui il primo funziona come prologo all'azione e l'ultimo come epilogo. Lelio e Giulia, genitori di Biancifiore, vanno in pellegrinaggio verso il santuario dell'Apostolo Santiago per ringraziare del figlio che aspettano. Sono attaccati dal saraceno re Felice perché considerati nemici del suo regno. Lelio muore e Giulia viene fatta prigionera e condotta come serva alla corte del re. Florio e Biancifiore nascono lo stesso giorno, giorno della Pascua Fiorita (giustificazione dei nomi). S'innamorano mentre leggono il santo libro d'Ovidio. Quando i genitori di Florio sono informati dell'innamoramento, Florio e Biancifiore sono obbligati a separarsi, vicende che si raccontano lungo il secondo, terzo e quarto libro. I vari episodi in cui viene diviso questo lungo frammento narrativo sono i seguenti: 1.- Biancifiore viene falsamente accusata di tentato omicidio contro il re (Florio riesce a liberarla); 2.- I genitori fanno credere a Florio che Biancifiore ha trovato un nuevo amore nella persona di Fileno (Florio riesce a sapere la vertià dei fatti); 3.- Biancifiore viene venduta ai mercanti che la portano verso Alessandria (i genitori fanno credere a Florio che Biancifiore è morta, ma lui riesce a sapere la vertià, va a cercarla e la trova finalmente); 4.- Florio e Biancifiore si ritrovano finalmente e si sposano, però sono condotti alla morte per tradimento (Ascalion riesce a sapere le circostanze un cui si trovano e li libera). Nel quinto libro, che funziona come abbiamo detto di epilogo, si chiudono alcune delle storie che erano state interrote, tra cui quella di Fileno. Durante il viaggio di ritorno Biancifiore va a Roma dove scopre finalmente la verità del suo lignaggio e vuole ringraziare anche l'Apostolo Santiago portando a fine lo stesso viaggio che i suoi genitori non potessero fare, mentre Florio scopre la vera fede e si fa cristiano essendo coronato a Cordoba come re di un regno ormai cristiano.

La prima domanda che ci dobbiamo porre prima di inziare lo studio concreto dei particolari microtesti narrativi dei sogni in quest'opera è per quali ragioni Boccaccio usa con tanta insistenza questo motivo letterario (un totale di 13 nicrotesti), per poter successivamente arrivare a comprendere la loro funzionalità all'interno del macrotesto.

E la risposta più inmediata è che, come si vedrá di seguito, sono proprio i sogni o le visioni gli elementi letterari che servono per concatenare i vari episodi narrativi anteriormente descritti e soprattutto quelli che, nella maggior parte dei casi, offrono la soluzione alle varie azioni narrative; e cioè gli incaricati di snodare e chiarire in un determinanto momento l'azione perché la narrazione possa andare avanti.

Nel primo libro di questo romanzo, come abbiamo detto, si racconta la storia dei genitori di Biancifiore, Lelio e Giulia, romani, che vanno in pellegrinaggio al Santuario dell'Apostolo Santiago, nelle lontane coste di *Esperia*, per ringraziarlo del figlio da tanto tempo desiderato e che ora aspettano. Su istigazione del *miserabile re, il cui regno Acheronte circonda*, il re Felice, padre di Florio, viene falsamente informato che dei nemici cristiani si stanno dirigendo verso il suo regno per attaccarlo. Sul modello della *Farsalia* di Lucano si racconta la battaglia in cui Lelio muore e Giulia, incinta di Biancifiore, viene fatta prigionera. Questo è l'inizio che Boccaccio ha ideato per il suo romanzo. Però il motivo che mette in moto questa azione, e di conseguenza la narrazione nel suo complesso, è precisamente la *veduta visione* di Lelio: il Santo Apostolo che Lelio aveva invocato perché gli concedesse la grazia di avere un figlio facendogli in cambio il voto di visitare i suoi santi luoghi, si fa manifesto e: *per me ti manda a dire che il tuo priego è essaudito da Lui, e che, la prima volta che tu con la tua sposa onestamente ti congiungerai, veramente riceverai il dimandato dono. E queste parole dette, ad un'ora egli e'l sonno di Lelio si partirono* (Libro I, cap. V). Quando Giulia rimane incinta, allora Lelio capisce che quella visione si è compiuta nel reale e prende la decisione di mettersi in cammino da Roma fino a Santiago, ed è questo il motivo che, come abbiamo visto, dà il via a tutta l'azione posteriore.

L'ultima visione, posta in chiusura del V libro, in questo caso di Biancifiore, si riallaccia direttamente all'episodio della dura battaglia in cui muoiono Lelio e la sua compagnia e in cui Giulia viene fatta prigionera, a ulteriore dimostrazione di quel gioco di riferimenti interni a cui abbiamo prima accennato: *Entrati nei padiglioni costoro, e dopo alquanto datisi al sonno, a Biancifiore in fulvida luce un giovane di grazioso aspetto con una giovane bellissima accompagnato, di vermiglio vestiti, le apparvero* (Libro V. cap. 90). Con anteriorità a questa visione, Biancifiore e Florio, dopo che quest'ultimo viene incoronato a Cordoba come re di un regno ormai cristiano, vanno anch'essi in pellegrinaggio al santuario dell'Apostolo Santiago, quando per caso si trovano *in una profonda valle, la quale tutta d'ossa bianchissime biancheggiava*" (Libro, V, cap. 88). Florio e Biancifiore vengono informati che le ossa sono quelle rimaste dopo l'aspra battaglia in cui morì il padre di Biancifiore, ossa tutte mescolate tra le bestie, i cristiani e i saraceni. In questo contesto, i genitori di Biancifiore le si manifestano in visione, e come Lorenzo a Lisabetta nel *Decameron*, le mostrano esattamente non solo il luogo ma le ossa concrete a cui dovranno dare sacra sepoltura.

È all'interno del lungo macrotesto narrativo del secondo, terzo e quarto libro che si trova la maggior parte dei sogni o visioni, fatto che non ci deve stupire precisamente perchè il punto di vista del narratore, e di conseguenza la storia che si racconta, passa continuamente dall'ottica di Florio a quella di Biancifiore nel corso di questi tre lunghissimi libri.

Il secondo libro si apre con la narrazione dell'innamoramento dei due giovani per intervento diretto di Citerea che invia suo figlio a far innamorare i ragazzi mentre lei

addormenta il re Felice con un *soave sonno* durante il quale gli provoca una *mirabile visione* (Libro II, cap. 5). In effetti, dal momento in cui il loro innamoramento verrà manifestato alla corte del re, la vita dei due diventerà un inferno. In forma allegorica, la visione narra la durezza della vita che aspetta gli amanti, anche se, evidentemente, il re Felice –quantomeno i lettori– non è in grado ancora di dare una corretta interpretazione della visione: vede una *cerbia* bianca (Biancifiore) aiutata da un *leoncello* (Florio) perché viene aggredita da un *lupo* (il *senescalo*, [Libro II, cap. 28-36]: primo tentativo dei re contro la vita di Biancifiore e difesa fatta da Florio, [Libro II, cap. 59-70]); poi vede, venuti dal mare, due *girfalchi* (i mercanti a cui è stata venduta Biancifiore e che la portano verso Alessandria, [Libro III, cap. 41-45]) ed infine, dopo che questa cerva è stata inviata in Oriente, un *veltro* che la vuole anche aggredire (il *marsicalo* che vuole provacare la morte di Florio e Biancifiore per traizione, [Libro IV, cap. 79]).

In questo momento narrativo inizia la vera espressione artistica dello scrittore che lascerà spazio alla sua creazione letteraria. I giovani sono separati e mentre Florio è lontano dalla corte (sarà inviato dai genitori a Montorio prendendo a giustificazione la sua formazione intellettuale), Biancifiore viene accusata falsamente di tentato omicidio contro il re, con prove ideate dalla propria regina; in questo momento il lettore inizia a interpretare la visione avuta dal re Felice.

Nel secondo libro, in effetti, si narra l'accusa contro Biancifiore e la sua liberazione fatta da Florio stesso, che si presenta a lei travestito. I giovani, come detto, sono già stati separati. La narrazione passa alternativamente da Florio a Biancifiore e da Biancifiore a Florio, il quale si trova in una angoscia permanente per non poter vedere né sapere nulla di Biancifiore. Il tono profetico va in un continuo cescendo narrativo, così come la presenza insistente di un ambiente onirico, unica possibilità di Florio di poter veder attraverso l'immaginazione la sua innamorata, anche se è cosciente della fugacità di questi sogni: *posto che tu alcuna volta dormendo io, essendomi tu con benigno aspetto apparita, m'hai alquanto consolato, la qual consolazione in gravoso tormento s'è voltata, sì tosto com'io mi sveglio dal ingannevole sonno, pensando che veder non ti possa con gli occhi della fronte* (Libro II, cap. 41). In questa situazione di soliloquio, Florio invoca gli dei affinché gli concedano l'occasione di poterla vedere prima della propria morte e questi esaudiscono questo desiderio, giusto nel momento in cui: *soave sonno gli gravò la testa e, chiusi gli occhi, s'addormentò; e dormendo nuova e mirabile visione gli apparve* (Libro II, cap. 41). La dea Venere gli fa vedere con una esattezza cinematografica tutto ciò che è accaduto a Biancifiore nei capitoli precedente [Libro II, cap. 28-36], gli dà dei consigli per la difesa dell'amata e, come prova della sua presenza, gli lascia la spada con cui dovrà difenderla. Quando, *rompendosi il debole sonno, si destò* e vide nella destra mano la celestiale spada, *tutto stupefatto, conobbe essere vero ciò che veduto avea nella preterita visione*.

All'inizio del terzo libro Florio, liberata Biancifiore e seguendo il consiglio degli dei, ritornerà a Montorio, mentre lei verrà venduta a dei mercanti e inviata ad Alessandria, dove Florio andrà a cercarla, iniziando così la *enquête*, la *peregrinatio amoris*, che occupa la quasi totalità del quarto libro. In questo viaggio il nostro autore si trova, a nostro giudizio, molto a suo agio perché la narrazione del percorso gli offre lo spazio per sviluppare letterariamente tutta la sua immaginazione creativa e fantastica. Il viaggio è dunque una ricreazione letteraria che utilizza il movimento dell'eroe come motivo per

la narrazione dei fatti del protagonista, facilitando comtemporaneamente l'inserzione di storie parallele all'azione principale.

All'inizio del terzo libro, dunque, quando Florio si separa nuovamente da Biancifiore, Boccaccio farà uso di una nuova allegoria: Florio vede un bianco fiore tutto in mezzo alle spine dei *pruni* e capisce subito che si tratta della sua Biancifiore. A questo punto la storia improvvisamente ritorna a Biancifiore ed entra in scena l'enigmatica figura di Fileno che dà il via all'elemento narrativo della gelosia che si aggiunge a quello della storia amorosa. Fileno, non a conoscenza dell'amore tra Florio e Biancifiore, si ritrova per caso con il giovane principe e gli dichiara il grande amore che è nato tra lui e una bellisima giovane di nome Biancifiore; e come prova di questo grande amore gli mostra il velo dato da Biancifiore su ordine della regina e contro la volontà della giovane. Cominciano per Florio nuovamente le preocupazioni, tra le quali quella della gelosia. Prende così la decisione di porre fine alla sua miserabile vita. Era ridotto in tale stato che *né potea nel suo petto entrar sonno per la continua battaglia de' pensieri e degli abbondanti sospiri* (Libro III, cap. 2). In questa situazione di pianto doloroso invoca il *valoroso figliuolo di Citerea*. La dea Venere scende dal cielo e gli provoca un *soavissimo sonno nel quale una mirabile visione gli fu manifesta* (Libro III, cap. 19). In questa visione Florio vede l'Amore secondo un'iconografia classica con l'arco e due frecce: una d'oro e un'altra di piombo[2], con alla sua destra una *bellissima donna*, che Florio identifica subito con Biancifiore, e alla sua sinistra un mare tempestoso all'interno del quale una nave che procedeva *sanza niuno goberno*. Nella visione si stabilisce un dialogo a tre tra l'Amore, che gli promette che non lo lascerà perire; Biancifiore, che gli rinfaccia le accuse fatte contro di lei per l'amore nato tra lei e Fileno e gli dà, in segno di pace, un *ramo di verde ulivo*; e lo stesso Florio. Evidentemente questa visione profetica si riallaccia direttamente all'episodio del naufragio della nave che porta Florio e la sua compagnia alle porte di Partenope [Libro IV, cap. 7]. Allo stesso tempo però serve anche per avviare la narrazione, dato che, da una parte, impedisce che Florio ponga fine alla propria vita, come prima aveva deciso a causa della presunta infedilità di Biancifiore, e dall'altra offre l'opportunità a Biancifiore di chiarire la situazione creatasi con Fileno e la vicenda del velo consegnatogli.

All'interno di questo macrotesto, come abbiamo detto in precedenza, il personaggio di Fileno ricopre un ruolo fondamentale, offrendoci un'altra prova di quel gioco di interferenze interne, tanto care a Boccaccio in quest'opera. Giusto dopo la visione di Florio, la dea Diana, offesa per non essersi trovata nel corteo degli dei che Florio aveva ringraziato dopo la liberazione dell'amata Biancifiore, si dirige all'abitazione della *Gelosia* per ordinarle che si presenti davanti a Florio e, *aprendogli gli occhi* gli faccia *conoscere com'egli è ingannato* (Libro III, cap. 24). Come conseguenza Florio sfodera tutta la sua fierezza contro Fileno al quale desidera di dare la morte. Nuovamente Diana, mossa a compassione di Fileno, si manifesta e si dirige alle case del *Sonno riposatore, nascose sotto gli oscuri nuvoli, le quali in lontanissime parti stanno rimote, in una spelonca d'un cavato monte, nella quale Febo con i suoi raggi in niuna maniera può passare* (Libro III, cap. 28) per comandargli che si presenti a Fileno e gli faccia conoscere le insidie ordite contro di lui: *Mentre che i fatti le cose sinistre così per Fileno*

[2] Secondo un paso delle *Metamorfosi* di Ovidio (I, 468-471). Ovidio diceva che il dardo d'oro causava l'amore mentre quello di piombo l'allontanava.

trattavano, Fileno di tutte ignorante si stava pensando alla bellezza di Biancfiore, con sommo disio disiderando quella, quando subito sonno l'assalì, e, gli occhi gravati, sopra il suo letto riposandosi si addormentò (...) E così stando, subitamente uno di quelli uficiali in forma d'un caro suo amico gli parve che gli apparisse piangendo e correndo verso lui, e dicessegli: —O Fileno, che fai tu qui? Fuggiti, ch'io ti so dire che l'amore che tu hai portato a Biancifiore t'ha acquistata morte, (Libro III, cap. 30). Comincia allora un altro viaggio, quello dell'esilio di Fileno che alla fine lo porterà in un luogo nel quale, per l'angoscia e il pianto continuo, egli si trasformerà in una fonte *e così piangendo e gritando, tutto delle proprie lagrime si bagnava, baciando sovente il candido velo, sopra il quale per debolezza sovente cader si lasciava* (Libro III cap. 37). Questo luogo e questa stessa fonte saranno successivamente trovati da Florio durante il suo viaggio alla ricerca di Biancifiore, momento in cui Florio –già Filocolo– viene a conoscenza della storia di Fileno che parla atrraverso la voce che esce dalla fontana: *Era nel non conosciuto luogo davanti al vecchio tempio un pratello vestito di pallida erba per la fredda stagione, nel quale una fontana bellisima si vedea* (...) *Alla quale Filocolo, uscito dal tempio* (…) [Libro IV, cap. 2].

Gli interventi di Diana però non finiscono qui. Furiosa per non aver visto realizzata la vendetta contro gli amanti, si manifesta per la terza volta e in questa occasione lo farà davanti al re Felice, travestita da cacciatrice, per avvisarlo che il figlio desidera togliersi la vita per amore. Prende allora il via un altro episodio fondamentale di questo terzo libro: la decisione del re e della regina di vendere Biancifiore ai mercanti e l'inganno ordito contro Florio a cui fanno credere che Biancifiore sia morta.

Biancifiore si trova sulla nave e inizia il suo viaggio, che però non viene raccontato perché lo si farà attraverso le varie tappe e i vari incontri, pieni di mistero, che Florio avrà durante il suo. In un momento così cruciale della storia non poteva mancare la presenza di uno di questi microtesti: *e mentre che Biancifiore queste parole fra sé tacita pregando dicea, soave sonno sopravenutole* ... (Libro III, 53). Biancifiore prima di addomentarsi invoca sia la dea Venere, a cui chiede di poter vedere Florio prima di morire, che Diana, di cui si sente un devota fedele, per chiederle di poter *servare* la propria purezza per il suo innamorato. Entrambe le divinità si fanno presenti durante il sonno per conceder a Biancifiore i doni richiesti e le promettono che *tu sarai da Florio ricercata: e in quella parte nella quale più ti parrà impossibile di doverlo potere, avere o vedere, tel troverai nelle tue braccie ignudo*. Questo sonno si riallaccia al momento in cui Florio e Biancifiore si incontreranno definitivamente quasi alla fine del quarto libro: *Ma Filocolo, che per picciolo pertugio vide nella bella camera entrare Biancifiore, di pietà tale nel viso divenne*... [Libro IV, cap. 114]. Però la maestria narrativa dello scrittore non poteva lasciare questo momento così decisivo affidato esclusivamente alla mera narrazione dell'incontro definitivo. Boccaccio vuole dare al macrotesto un risalto particolare e perciò usa –a questo punto non ci dobbiamo stupire– l'espediente narrativo della visione, in questo caso di Glorizia, personaggio che ha accompagnato Biancifiore dall'inizio dell'opera.

Quasi alla fine del quarto libro si racconta, dunque, l'arrivo di Florio ad Alessandria. Una volta che Florio è riuscito a sapere dove si trova la sua Biancifiore, attraverso vari movimenti narrativi il protagonista riesce a introdursi segretamente nella torre dove Biancifiore è custodita. Erroneamente finisce nella stanza di Glorizia che si incarica di

prepare l'incontro definitivo. Biancifiore è disperata perché vede che le promesse fatte dalle dee in sonno, non si sono realizzate e considera, sconfortata, che *gl'iddii come gli uomini abbiano imparato a mentire*. A questo punto Glorizia poteva dichiarare semplicemte di aver incontrato Florio, però la maestria narrativa di Boccaccio fa sì che questa glielo comunichi attraverso il racconto di una visione, falsa, avuta la notte precedente. Boccaccio riesce dunque a creare nel lettore l'atmosfera per rendere le visioni più credibili che la stessa realtà dei fatti: *Di questo ti rendi certa: che egli vive e amati e cercati, e di qua entro ti trarrà sua, se non mi inganna l'opinione ch'io ho presa d'una nuova visione, che nel sonno di lui e di te questa notte m'apparve*" (Libro IV, cap. 113).

Ritornando alla narrazione principale, come abbiamo detto, dopo la separazione degli amanti, inizierà la *peregrinatio amoris* di Florio, che prenderà da allora il nome di Filocolo, la quale viene raccontata nel corso del quarto libro e all'interno della quale si trova il famoso episodio delle *Quistioni d'amore*, una delle parti del libro che, senza dubbio, hanno suscitato maggior interesse. Florio–Filocolo si trova a Napoli dove è sopravvissuto a una grande tempesta che ha quasi distrutto la nave che lo portava in cerca di Biancifiore [visione avuta, se rircordiamo, nel Libro III, cap. 18-19]. Lì, mentre aspetta disperato che il tempo migliori, facendo un giorno una passeggiata per la campagna napoletana, ascolta una dolce melodia che lo attira. Lui e la sua compagnia sono invitati a participare a questa gradevole festa nella quale si trova la stessa Fiammetta, che propone, per passare le ore più calde del giorno, che ognuno di loro presenti una questione d'amore che dovrà trovare risposta, gioco questo che si centra sulla logica oppositiva del *joc partit* di origine provenzale.

Questo quarto libro inizia con un'ambientazione misteriosa e piena di fatti prodigiosi: una soave voce comunica a Florio–Filocolo il percorso che dovrà compiere per trovare la sua innamorata. Tutto il racconto è pieno di sfumature premonitorie in cui le diverse tappe si disegnano attraverso vari indizi che lui trova per caso. In questo ambiente Florio–Filocolo ha una nuova e devastante visione che viene raccontanta a Ascalion, suo caro maestro, dallo stesso Florio retrospettivamente, cioè dopo il suo risveglio: *L'accidente della mia turbazione è questo, che nella passata notte io ho veduta la più nuova visione che mai alcuno vedesse, e in quella ho avuto gravissima noia nell'animo, veggendo le cose che io vedea* (Libro IV, cap. 12). Attraverso la visione di una povera e *bellissima fagiana* dietro la quale le stava uno *smeriglione* e che veniva attaccata da molti altri uccelli provenienti da tutte le parti del mondo, si raccontano in forma allegorica gli avvenimenti che si svolgeranno quasi alla fine del quarto libro, quando gli amanti, una volta che si sono rincontrati, sono scoperti dal *mariscalo* e sono inviati alla pira per metterli a morte [Libro IV, cap. 126-134]. Inoltre, questo concreto episodio della pira si riallaccia a sua volta a un'altra visione premonitoria, in questo caso di Ascalion, il maestro di Florio, che viene informato del pericolo in cui si trovano i due giovani proprio attraverso l'espediente narrativo della visione durante il sogno: *Ma ad Ascalion, quasi più sollecito della salute di Filocolo, entrato di tale stanze in varie imaginazioni, si rivolge per la mente le future cose, e dubitando forte non avvenissero, il tacito sonno con quieto passo gli entra nel petto; e levandolo da quelle, in sé tutto quanto il lega, e nuove e disusate cose gli dimostra, mentre seco il tiene* (Libro IV, cap. 136). Non è casuale, a questo punto, che sia precisamente Ascalion colui che ha avuto una visione e che dovrà confermare come vere le cose vedute. Ascalion è uno

dei personaggi fondamentali in quest'opera perché ricopre la figura dell'uomo saggio, del maestro. È l'interlocutore a cui Florio si rivolge sempre per raccontargli le varie visioni avute. Ascalion reagisce sempre allo stesso modo, non considerando come vere le visioni –come poi capiterà a Gabriotto e alla moglie di Talamo nel *Decameron*–. Queste sono alcune delle sue opinioni: *Non ti recare nella mente sì fatte cose, né dare speranza a' sogni, i quali per poco o per soperchio mangiare, o per imaginazione avuta davanti d'una cosa, sogliono le più volte avvenire, né mai però se ne vide uno vero* (Libro II, cap. 44: dopo la prima *nuova e mirabile visione* di Florio); *Manifesta cosa è che ciascuno uomo ne' suoi sonni vede mirabili cose e impossibili e strane, delle quali poi isviluppato si meraviglia, ma conoscendo i principii ove muovono, quelle senza alcun pensiero lascia andare; e però quelle cose che ne conti che vedute hai, sì come vane, nella loro vanità le lascia passare* (Libro IV, cap. 14, dopo la *piu nuova visione* di Florio).

Nel quinto e ultimo libro, dopo le ultime sventure appena raccontate, finalmente Florio si sposa con Biancifore e cominciano il viaggio di ritorno. E se il primo libro funzionava como prologo, quest'ultimo viene ad essere una specie di epilogo, dato che si chiuderanno molte di quelle vicende, strutturate in forma di piccole novelle, che erano stato interrotte durante il viaggio dell'eore, come quella di Fileno, Caleon o Idalogo.

In questo cammino verso la conclusione della storia, Florio avrà un incontro decisivo con frate Ilario, che gli mostrerà il cammino della vera fede. Dopo di che, quando arriveranno nuovamente alla corte del re Felice, questi darà le ultime istruzioni al figlio prima di morire. Alla sua morte Florio verrà incoronato a Cordoba nuovo re di un regno ormai cristiano e compirà il desiderio di visitare il santuario dell'Apostolo Santiago elemento questo che, se ricordiamo, aveva costituito il motivo scatenante di questo romanzo.

L'incontro di Florio con frate Ilario si verifica all'interno di un crescendo narrativo di grande maestria in cui la città di Roma assume il ruolo di protagonista; e lo farà anche attraverso una visione, in questo caso di Biancifiore. Il desiderio della giovane di poter visitare Roma, la sua città natale –anche se lei ancora non lo sa– si fa sempre più forte tanto che chiede che *Quello Iddio cui io adoro e in cui io spero, tosto me la faccia vedere*. E in questo momento *Biancifiore nel dilicato letto si diede al notturno riposo: la quale poi che de' gradi con che sale ebbe passati cinque, nel sonno furono da Biancifiore mirabili cose vedute* (Libro V, cap. 46). In questa visione le appare in forma allegorica la città di Roma *sospesa in cielo una donna di grazioso aspetto molto*, con da un lato l'Imperatore come simbolo del potere temporale: *egli era giovane e robusto e fiero ne' sembianti*, e dall'altro lato quello del potere religioso, il Papa: *le parea che fosse antico, e negli atti suoi modesto tanto*. La donna della visione le dice: *però viemmi a vedere sanza alcuno indugio: il tuo fattore vuole, e non sanza gran bene di te e del tuo marito*.

Il pellegrino Florio arriva finalmente a Roma e si trova con Ilario che gli domanda come è possibile che lui non conosca la *nostra legge*. Al che Florio risponde: *Male può servare persona la cosa che mai non li fu nota; forse se io questa vostra legge udissi o quello ch'io dovessi credere mi fosse mostrato, poria essere che, dannando la mia, seguirei questa, e con voi insieme del popolo di Dio diventerei* (Libro V, cap. 52). Frate Ilario gli risponde: *io la ti mostrerò tutta*. È questa la via che porterà alla conversione di

Florio, anche se il momento veramente iniziale di questo macrotesto narrativo si trova nel libro precedente, quando Florio ha la quinta e ultima delle sue visioni.

In effetti, nel quarto libro, dai capitoli 15 al 72 si svolge, come abbiamo detto, l'episodio delle questioni d'amore. Dopo di ché, nei capitoli inmediatamente successivi vediamo come il macrotesto ci introduce pianamente in una atmosfera di profonda riflessione e introspezione del protagonista. La novità riguardo a questa última visione di Florio è che non si tratta di un visione avuta durante il sogno perché il protagonista è sveglio: *Ma ritornato in Partenope, e con malinconia aspettando tempo, avenne che con grandissima malinconia un giorno in un suo giardino si rachiuse solo, e quivi con varii pensieri s'incominciò in se medesimo a dolere, e dolendosi, in nuove cose di pensiero in pensiero il portò la fantasia, portandogli davanti agli occhi, che il loro potere aveano nella mente racconto, nuove e inusitate cose* (Libro IV, cap. 74). All'interno di un contesto allegorico e di chiara ispirazione critiana[3], Florio vede una nave sulla quale si trovano sette donne –come sette sono i doni dello Spirito Santo–, quattro delle quali lui riesce a riconosce: *e già d'averle altre fiate vedute e loro contezza avuta si ricordava*, –le quattro virtù cardinali–: Prudenza, Giustizia, Fortezza e Temperanza—; mentre che non riesce a sapere chi siano le altre tre, perché, evidentemente, lui ancora non ha mai sentito parlare di loro: *Ma le altre tre, che molto più belle gli pareano (...) né quelle per rimirarle in niuno modo conoscere potea.* Si tratta delle tre virtù teologali: —Fede, Speranza e Carità— che le sono presentate dalla propria Biancifiore a cui egli indetifica tra le sette donne. In questa particolare visione appare anche un uomo *di grandissima eccellenza e autorità* che gli racconta molte cose su quelle tre donne che lui non conosce, e finalmente anche *una luce mirabilissima, risplendente e grande* –rappresentazione della Gloria– come *donna bella e graziosa nel aspetto*.

Due sono le conseguenze che Florio impara finita questa particolare visione. La prima è che:*come questo era fatto, così gli parea aver multiplicata la vista, e meglio conoscere e le mondane cose e le divine che prima, e quelle amare ciacuna secondo il suo dovere*. La seconda e più importante per la narrazione del macrotesto è che *così sagliendo, gli parea passare infino nelle sante regioni degl'idii. E in quelle conoscere i virtuosi corpi e i loro moti e la loro grandezza e ogni loro potenza: quivi con ammirazione, inestimabile gloria gli parea vedere dalla faccia di Giove procedere a' riguardanti, della quale egli senza fine sentiva. E volendo dire: –Oh felice colui che a tanta gloria è eletto! – avenne che*…. Finisce la visione e si produce il trapasso alla realtà con la presenza in scena di Ascalion e Parmenione.

L'incontro con frate Illario, la riscoperta del vero lingaggio di Biancifiore e l'incoronamento di Florio sono degli episodi che si raccontano alla fine di questa storia, in cui il motivo fondamentale è, come abbiamo detto, la conversione di Florio alla vera fede –per la quale è stata decisiva la pseudovisione di Florio–; in modo tale che, quando lo scrittore conclude la narrazione in cui doveva dare dignità alla storia di Florio e Biancifiore, per mandato espresso della musa Fiammetta, il protagonista Florio si ritrova ad aver compiuto il suo itinerario di formazione come perfetto cavalliere –attraverso gli insegnamenti di Ascalion– e come perfetto amante –attraverso le conclusioni avute dalle tredici questioni d'amore–. Coronamento finale della sua formazione di uomo,

[3] Fino al punto che in opinioni dei critici tutto l'episodio è elaborato sul modello del Canto XXIX del Purgatorio dantesco.

amante, cavalliere è la conversione alla vera fede che lo farà anche un buon cristiano. Tutto ciò farà di lui il miglior re che al mondo si possa trovare.

Alla luce delle precedenti considerazioni, possiamo giungere ad una conclusione di grande interesse. Nonostante il *Filocolo* sia considerato, da parte di alcuni critici, un romanzo con una struttura eccessivamente dispersiva, un'opera di gioventù sicuramente erudita in cui, attraverso il procedimento della *contaminatio*, vengono coinvogliati elementi tratti sia dalla mitologia che da numerosi testi della classicità, ma priva di una originale ispirazione letteraria e di un accurato disegno narrativo prestabilito, tuttavia l'analisi dettagliata dei precisi e strettissimi richiami interni tra i sogni o le visioni e gli avvenimenti che realmente si succedono nella vicenda, ci fanno convinti che, al contrario, Boccaccio aveva sin dall'inizio un disegno chiaro e prestabilito della successione degli avvenimenti secondo una struttura perfettamente pianificata.

Le finalità dell'utilizzo dei microtesti di carattere onirico consistono, a mio parere, da una parte, come accennato in precedenza, nelle possibilità narrative che permettono un dialogo a distanza tra i vari protagonisti del romanzo, che non sarebbe stato possibile realizzare in modo diverso; dall'altra, senza dubbio, il gioco delle anticipazioni delle vicende, attraverso i sogni o le visioni, e il loro successivo disvelarsi nel prosieguo della trama, risponde alla volontà dell'autore di creare e mantenere un clima di mistero e di *suspense* che alimenti la curiosità del lettore per continuare a leggere un'opera così estesa.

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SUMMARIES IN SLOVENE – POVZETKI V SLOVENŠČINI

UDK 821.163.6–2.091«1930/2010«:821.111–2.091Shakespeare W.

Mirko Jurak

WLLIAM SHAKESPEARE IN SLOVENSKI DRAMATIKI (III): 1930 – 2010

V razpravi o vplivih in o odmevih Shakespearovih dram v delih slovenskih dramatikov, ki so nastala oziroma bila prvič uprizorjena v obdobju med leti 1930-2010, ugotavljamo, da je bilo teh primerov sorazmerno veliko. Pri tem velja še opozoriti, da so v tem obdobju slovenska gledališča (vključno z ad hoc skupinami in eksperimentalnimi gledališči) uprizorila tudi vrsto del tujih avtorjev, ki so se v svojih dramah zgledovali pri Shakespearu oziroma v njegovih umetninah črpali motive za svoje ustvarjanje. Tak vpliv opazimo tudi v raznih priredbah slovenskih avtorjev, ki jih omenjam v uvodnem delu te študije. Pri tem ne gre le za različne predelave, okrajšave ali za izbiro odlomkov iz različnih Shakespearovih dram v novo dramsko delo, temveč tudi za priredbe iz specifično dramskega, klasičnega žanra, v druge gledališke zvrsti, kot npr. v muzikal, v revijsko odrsko priredbo, v lutkovna dela itn. Nekatera tovrstna dela (predvsem iz zadnjih treh desetletij) so tu faktografsko navedena, niso pa detajlno obravnavana. Prav tako niso vključena dela tistih slovenskih dramatikov, pri katerih je Shakespearov vpliv morda posreden, nimamo pa zanj konkretnih vsebinskih ali dramsko-oblikovnih dokazov. Vendar lahko z gotovostjo trdimo, da so v obravnavanem obdobju mnogi slovenski dramatiki dobro poznali Shakespearove drame in da so te na njihovo ustvarjanje tudi posredno vplivale.

Med slovenskimi dramatiki, ki so v svoja dela vključili odlomke ali aluzije na Shakespearove drame, so v razpravi posebej predstavljeni naslednji avtorji: Matej Bor, Jože Javoršek, Ivan Mrak, Dominik Smole, Mirko Zupančič, Gregor Strniša, Veno Taufer, Dušan Jovanović, Vinko Möderndorfer in Evald Flisar. Podrobnosti o teh vplivih so razvidne pri analizi Shakespearovih vplivov v delih omenjenih avtorjev. Med značilnostmi, ki so v razpravi navedene, lahko ugotovimo tudi, da sta stopnja in pogostnost aluzij na Shakespearova dela oziroma citatov iz njegovih dram v slovenskih tekstih zelo različna. Medtem ko so bile do osemdestih let dvajsetega stoletja reference iz Shakespearovih dram

v veliki večini semantično enakovredne originalnemu tekstu, so bile od tega obdobja dalje pogosto uporabljene ali kot kontroverzne trditve kot tudi predstavljene v ironičnem podtonu ali kot parodije originalnega Shakespearovega teksta. Glede na izredno visoko duhovno, umetniško in etično vrednost Shakespearovih dram ni dvoma, da bodo tovrstni odmevi in vplivi prisotni v slovenski dramatiki tudi v bodoče.

UDK 81'255.4:821.111(73)-311.6Wallace L.=03=163.6

Darja Mazi – Leskovar

BEN HUR V SLOVENŠČINI: PREVODI AMERIŠKEGA ROMANA O VEČKULTURNIH VPRAŠANJIH

Roman *Ben-Hur* ameriškega pisatelja Lewisa Wallacea se uvršča med tista literarna dela, ki so bila večkrat prevedena v slovenščino in so zanimiva že zato, ker vsak posamezni prevod govori o stanju jezika in duha ter odprtosti za kulturo, ki ji pripada izvorno delo. Kadar se prevedeno besedilo ne nanaša le na eno kulturno izročilo, je za prevajalca dvojen izziv, saj priča o večkulturnih stikih in vsaj posredno razkriva pričakovan odnos ciljnih bralcev do predstavljenih medkulturnih vprašanj. Tako delo je *Ben-Hur*, saj se pripoved odvija na Bližnjem vzhodu, tako da prevodi ne pričajo le o tem, v kakšni meri naj bi bili ciljni slovenski bralci seznanjeni z ameriško kulturo in predvsem z njeno književnostjo, temveč tudi o njihovem poznavanju Bližnjega vzhoda in judovsko-krščanskega izročila. Študija prevodov iz let 1899, 1908, 1931, 1974 in 1997 osvetli prevode v časovni kulturno-politični perspektivi in prouči priredbe predvsem v luči domačitvene in potujitvene prevajalske strategije.

UDK 821.111(73)–31.09Faulkner W.

Nataša Intihar Klančar

FAULKNERJEVA“SOUTHERN BELLE” - MIT ALI RESNIČNOST?

Članek postavi pod drobnogled glavne junakinje Faulknerjevih romanov *Svetloba v avgustu*, *Absalom, Absalom!*, *Krik in bes*, *Nepremagljivi*, *Mesto* in njegove kratke zgodbe “A Rose for Emily.” Lik lepotice ameriškega Juga, ki ga v svoja dela vpelje Faukner, zaznamujejo krhkost, lepota, ustrežljivost, skromnost, odkritost, položaj v patriarhalni družbi in njihova izguba nedolžnosti. Družba Juga jih sooča z raznolikimi pričakovanji, normami in zahtevami, ki se jim tako ali drugače uklanjajo in jih bolj ali manj uspešno sprejemajo. Trpka leta vojne prinesejo številne prepreke in izzive, ki sooblikujejo njihove osebnosti in način življenja. Nove naloge in obveznosti se kopičijo, nekaterim se uspe vključiti v nov sistem, medtem ko ostale tega ne zmorejo in se zlomijo.

Faulknerjeve junakinje se soočajo s širokim naborom težav, ki jim otežkočajo biti in/ali ostati lepotica ameriškega Juga. Naj jih naštejemo le nekaj: Lenin neprimerni družbeni status, Joannine napačne korenine, nezmožnost gospe Hightower, da bi izpolnila svoje dolžnosti kot žena duhovnika, Ellenin bedni zakon, Judithino nesrečno ljubezensko življenje, Rosini občutki manjvrednosti in ponižanja, neuspeh gospe Compson v vlogi matere, Caddyjino mlačno uporništvo proti moški nadvladi, Drusilline karakteristike možače, Lindina neuslišana ljubezen in Emilyjina mračna skrivnost.

Preko svojih likov in njihovih usod Faulkner prikaže spreminjajoči se ameriški Jug, ki mu grozi propad. Ga lepotica Juga lahko reši? Lahko reši sebe?

UDK 81'255.4:929Adamič L.:821.163.42=03=111

Jerneja Petrič

ZGODNJE OBDOBJE LOUISA ADAMIČA: PREVAJALEC HRVAŠKE KNJIŽEVNOSTI

Članek se osredotoča na začetno obdobje Adamičevega književnega dela v ZDA. Da bi se izpopolnil v angleščini, je prevajal iz slovenske, hrvaške in še nekaterih književnosti. Z objavo prevodov v znanih ameriških revijah pa je želel tudi promovirati sebe kot obetajočega pisatelja. Adamičevo znanje hrvaščine je bilo skromno, zato ne preseneča, da je še bolj pogosto, kot je to počel pri prevodih iz slovenske književnosti, besedila adaptiral in se tako izognil prevajalskim zadregam, ki jim ni bil kos. Njegovi prevajalski poskusi niso ostali skriti, saj mdr. obstaja korespondenca z Ivanom Krnicom, ki je bil pisatelju ne glede na napake v njegovem delu globoko hvaležen za promocijo hrvaške književnosti v ZDA. Adamičevi zaporedni poskusi, da bi jugoslovanske prevode objavil v knjigi so propadli, ker v tistem času besedila niso bila zanimiva za ameriški trg. Adamič je slednjič doumel, da nima smisla vztrajati, zato se je pisateljsko povsem preusmeril. Njegovi prevodi pa vseeno ostajajo pomembni, saj je bil prvi, ki se je tega lotil v ZDA in je tako utrl pot vsem, ki so mu pozneje sledili. S prevajanjem je promoviral književnosti tedanje stare domovine in ohranjal vez med dvema svetovoma, ki jo je čas neusmiljeno načenjal.

UDK 81'42:821.111(94=99)–94.09

Oliver Haag

AVTOBIOGRAFIJA AVSTRALSKIH DOMORODCEV IN VPRAŠANJE ŽANRA: ANALIZA ZNANSTVENEGA DISKURZA

Članek se ukvarja z različnimi aplikacijami žanra v avstralskih domorodskih avtobiografijah. Znanstvena literatura namreč ne uporablja konsistentne oznake žanra za

tovrstno književnost. Članek identificira razloge za posebno izbiro žanra v znanstveni literaturi in se naslanja na intervjuje z raziskovalci kot tudi z avtorji, v katerih testira njihovo motivacijo za sprejetje ali zavrnitev termina 'avtobiografija' pri oznakah domorodskih življenjskih pripovedi.

UDK 821.111(71)–32.09Gallant M.

Aleksander Kustec

RESNIČNI GLAS KANADSKE IZSELJENKE – MAVIS GALANT: *HOME TRUTHS* (1981)

Mavis Gallant sodi med najboljše in najbolj zahtevne sodobne pisce. Kljub velikemu mednarodnemu ugledu, dosežkom in veličini, so jo do nedavnega v Kanadi leto za letom namerno ignorirali. Razloge je treba iskati v njeni odločitvi, da živi v Parizu, in ker je pisala večinoma o Evropi, Evropejcih in Američanih. Večino zgodb ni objavila v kanadskih časopisih in revijah, temveč v ZDA, in sicer v reviji *The New Yorker*. Kanadčani so ji končno izrekli zasluženo, toda predolgo prezrto priznanje za zbirko kratkih zgodb *Home Truths* (1981), za katero je prejela Governor General's Literary Award za leto 1981. Od takrat se je odnos kanadske javnosti do njenega dela popolnoma spremenil. Načelno ne uporablja avtobiografskega materiala, kot npr. Alice Munro in Clark Blaise, izjema je le niz kratkih zgodb Linnet Muir, ki sestavljajo tretji sklop v zbirki *Home Truths*. Linnet Muir, pravi Gallant, je junakinja, ki jo opiše kot nenatančno podobo samega sebe. Gallantova se ne poglablja v psihološki razvoj oseb ali v fabulo. Zanimajo jo specifične situacije in predvsem rekonstrukcija stanja duha in srca njenih junakov, zato se vselej giblje na meji med imaginarnostjo in resničnostjo.

Gallantova pospremi zbirko *Home Truths* z zelo zanimivim in izčrpnim uvodom, iz katerega izvemo marsikaj zanimivega o njenem odnosu do literature in do določenih problemskih vprašanj, ki so postali del kanadske realnosti. Uvod nakaže smernice in tokove njenega pisanja, zato ga je treba obravnavati ločeno od kratkih zgodb. Gallantova nas opozori na probleme kanadskih piscev, ki imajo predznak »izseljenec«. Izpostavi, da se kanadski bralci ne zanimajo za njen slog. temveč le za njene »prikrite namere«. Gallantova meni, da pisec, kot tudi vsi drugi umetniki, dolguje svojim rojakom le toliko, kakor dolguje drugim ljudem na tej zemeljski obli. Pisec mora biti lojalen le svoji imaginaciji. Prepričana je, da Kanadčani pravzaprav ne vedo več, kaj pomeni biti Kanadčan. Njena definicija je zelo preprosta: To je oseba, ki razumno misli, da je Kanadčan(-ka). Gallantova smatra sebe za pravo Kanadčanko. Njeni rojaki jo jezijo predvsem zaradi svoje ozkosti, zato jih posredno poziva, da enkrat za vselej začnejo razlikovati med nacionalno zavestjo, nacionalizmom in patriotizmom.

Zbirka *Home Truths* je dobro ogledalo časa. To so zgodbe o preteklosti, ki jih Gallantova upoveduje z namero, da bi dojela, zakaj so bile napačno razumljene. Spoznati

tipične značilnosti Kanade in ljudi, ki živijo v tem prostoru, ni njen primarni interes, avtorica nam želi predvsem sporočiti svoje razumevanje resnice.

UDK 821.111(540)–3–055.2.09«195/199«

Tina Grobin

RAZVOJ INDOANGLEŠKE POST-KOLONIALNE ŽENSKE PROZE

Začetki indoangleške post-kolonialne proze, ki nastaja pod peresom pisateljic v domovini in indijski diaspori, segajo v drugo polovico dvajsetega stoletja, ko so se na literarni zemljevid umestile avtorice Kamala Markandaya, Nayantara Sahgal, Ruth Prawer Jhabvala in Anita Desai. Prevladujoča tematika je prikaz indijske ženske v odnosu do (nenaklonjenega) družbenega okolja, ki je v zgodnji prozi umeščen v kontekst nastajajoče postkolonialne družbe in njenih dilem. V luči družbenih sprememb se lik indijske ženske poda na pot utiranja identitete in širjenja meja v dojemanju ženske družbene in literarne vloge, ter doživi razcvet v sodobnih delih indijske proze, ki v bogatem literarnem slogu ponudi bralcu pisano paleto aktualnih tem širšega družbenega pomena, ki se prepletajo z izročilom indijskega subkontinenta. Namen članka je prikazati razvoj na področju ženskega literarnega ustvarjanja in njegov pomen pri oblikovanju ženske družbene vloge. Članek se osredotoča na obdobje od začetkov pisanja avtoric pa nekje do poznih devetdesetih let prejšnjega stoletja, medtem ko si zadnje desetletje na področju ustvarjanja indijskih avtoric zasluži že samostojni članek.

UDK 81'42:821.111(73)–311.6.09Vonnegut K.

Monika Kavalir

MODALNA ZGRADBA V VONNEGUTOVEM ROMANU *KLAVNICA PET*

Članek obravnava mehanizme, s katerimi Kurt Vonnegut v romanu Klavnica pet skozi modalno zgradbo (slovnični čas, polarnost), ki je analizirana po načelih sistemsko-funkcijske slovnice, izgrajuje ključne teme besedila. Podrobna obravnava modalnih elementov v osmem poglavju romana (skupaj 4.533 besed) pokaže, da v besedilu prevladujejo pozitivne pretekle oblike (396 stavkov od 522). Med sedanjiškimi oblikami, ki se pojavljajo, je 9 nepričakovanih glede na sobesedilo in udejanjajo Vonnegutov koncept časa: ta ni linearen, temveč preteklost, sedanjost in prihodnost v vsakem trenutku soobstajajo. Prav tako je pomenonosna pozitivna polarnost stavkov; negativna polarnost se pojavlja samo v 19 izmed analiziranih stavkov, s čimer roman konceptualizira idejo fatalizma in vdanosti v usodo.

UDK 821.112.2–31.09Böll H.

Kristina Jokić

ŽENSKI LIKI V DELIH HEINRICHA BÖLLA IN NJIHOVA VLOGA V PRIPOVEDNI ZGRADBI

Članek predstavlja ženske like v štirih pomembnih delih nemškega nobelovca Heinricha Bölla. Osrednji ženski liki, ki so predmet raziskovanja, so Johanna Fähmel iz romana *Biljard ob pol desetih* (1959), Marija Derkum iz romana *Klovnovi pogledi* (1963), Leni Pfeiffer, glavna junakinja romana *Skupinska slika z gospo* (1971) in Katharina Blum iz novele *Izgubljena čast Katharine Blum* (1974). Delo pisatelja Heinricha Bölla je bilo nemalokrat raziskovano in analizirano, vendar pa so doslej kritiki ženskim likom v njegovih delih posvetili premalo pozornosti. Na prvi pogled tem likom ne pripišemo večjega pomena, vseeno pa ne smemo zanemariti njihove vloge v pripovedni zgradbi. Čeprav so bili s strani literarnih znanstvenic, med drugim tudi Dorothee Römhild in Evelyn T. Beck[1], večinoma kritizirani in označeni kot nesamostojni, tradicionalni in povsem moškim podrejeni, dokazuje ta članek prav nasprotno. Ženski liki v Böllovih delih so kompleksni in delujejo na okolico ambivalentno. Predvsem pa je pomembno dejstvo, da vplivajo tako posredno kot tudi neposredno na samo pripovedno zgradbo in predstavljajo nepogrešljivi del v Böllovi Književnosti.

UDK 821.131.1–32.09Groto L.:133.52:929Boccaccio G.

Kristina Lazar

ASTROLOGIJA V CENZURIRANEM *DEKAMERONU* LUIGIJA GROTA

Ko je leta 1588 izšla cenzurirana verzija *Dekamerona*, katere avtor je Luigi Groto, je to bila že tretja cenzura Boccaccieve mojstrovine v obdobju protireformacije. V nasprotju z drugima cenzuriranima verzijama v tej ni poudarka na filoloških vprašanjih, temveč je opazen predvsem poskus narativno zapolniti vrzeli, ki jih je povzročila ekspurgacija. Pri tem je Groto v nekaterih primerih sledil originalnemu zapletu, v drugih pa ga je spremenil do te mere, da je novele komajda mogoče prepoznati. Ta prispevek osvetljuje nekatere značilnosti Grotovega manierističnega sloga, predvsem elemente astrologije, ki se pojavljajo v cenzuriranih delih teksta, ter načine, kako ti elementi funkcionirajo znotraj Bocaccievega teksta.

[1] Dorothee Römhild: *Die Ehre der Frau ist unantastbar*. Das Bild der Frau im Werk Heinrich Bölls. Pfaffenweiler: Centaurus Verlag 1991 und Evelyn T. Beck: Ein Kommentar aus feministischer Sicht zu Bölls „Ansichten eines Clowns". In: dell'Agli, Anna Maria (Hrsg.): *Zu Heinrich Böll*. Interpretationen. Stuttgart: Klett 1983, S. 59-64.

Opomba k naslovu:

V italijanščini se naslov začenja z »Elementi di astrologia«, vendar mi v slovenščini naslov »Elementi astrologije« ni zvenel najbolje, ker ne gre za neke točno določene elemente, ampak bolj za to, da se astrologija pojavlja v cenzuriranih delih teksta (namesto česa drugega, kar je pač cenzor eliminiral) in tudi odigra določeno vlogo v noveli. Zato se mi je po premisleku zdelo bolje, da se začetek naslova poenostavi, kot je razvidno zgoraj. Predvidevam, da se morata naslova v tujem jeziku in v slovenščini ujemati – v tem primeru bi tudi italijanski naslov spremenila v »Astrologia nel *Decameron* censurato di Luigi Groto«.

UDK 821.124'04–95.09Beroaldo F.:821.124'02–3.09Apuleius L.

Sonja Weiss

MITOLOGIJA BOŽANSKEGA V BEROALDOVIH *KOMENTARJIH* K 11. KNJIGI APULEJEVIH *METAMORFOZ*

Članek skuša osvetliti Beroaldov pristop k teološkim temam 11. knjige Apulejevih Metamorfoz, kjer igra osrednjo vlogo lunarna boginja mnogih imen. Izida, ki je simbol narave ter muhaste, a po drugi strani neizprosne usode, predstavlja vse presegajoče božanstvo, ki vlada vesolju in se manifestira v številnih oblikah pod najrazličnejšimi imeni. Taisto božanstvo slavi tudi naš komentator; besedilo odraža njegovo navdušenje nad sožitjem antike in krščanstva, sožitjem, ki ga nevsiljivo ponuja za vzgled svojim bralcem in učencem.

UDK 821.131.1'04–39.09Boccaccio G.

Carmen F. Blanco Valdés

PRIPOVEDOVANJE SANJ O BOCCACCIOVEM *FILOCOLU*

Članek obravnava pripovedna mikrobesedila, ki zadevajo »sanje« ali »vizijo«, v emblematskem delu Giovannija Boccaccia *Il Filocolo,* njegovem prvem velikem romanu. Članek proučuje razne vidike, med drugim krajevno in časovno umeščenost mikrobesedil in njihovo poznejšo interpretacijo znotraj makrobesedila. Prikazuje, da je vztrajna raba tovrstnih mikropripovedi ena tistih pripovednih metod, s katerimi Boccaccio literarno potencira razvoj svojega obširnega in kompleksnega romana. Ukvarja se tudi z opredelitvijo čudovite igre notranjih povezav, ki se vzpostavljajo med oniričnimi mikrobesedili in celotno pripovednega tkiva.