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Vacuum Ecology: J.G. Ballard and Jeff VanderMeer

Edita Jerončić, Brian Willems

Abstract:

J.G. Ballard's novel *The Drought* (1965) reimagines an ecological dystopia into a strategy for how to live through the catastrophe of the Anthropocene. We suggest the term "vacuum ecology" for a literary strategy which represents a way to live in our current ecological crisis. Ballard describes how a near-total emptiness of time and space is one way to respond to a global ecological catastrophe. Using Ballard's novel as a guide, our concept of vacuum ecology is developed along with the work of Jason Moore, Roy Scranton and others. In *The Drought*, the concept of modulation is suggested as the mechanism for change. At the end of the essay, Jeff VanderMeer's *Anihilation* (2014), along with Catherine Malabou's notion of destructive plasticity, is seen as challenging the idea of modulation with a strategy of intermingling. In short, both texts foreground the possibility of new kinds of change when concepts of time and space are questioned. This has consequences for the different beings we must become in order to live in the Anthropocene.

Keywords: ecology, Anthropocene, J.G. Ballard, Jeff VanderMeer, modulation, plasticity

1. DYING IN THE ANTHROPOCENE

Dystopian fiction often represents the future as a wasteland (Wolfe 125). However, J.G. Ballard's novel *The Drought* (1965) reconfigures the trope of the wasteland into a strategy for how to live through the horrors of human-induced climate change. Under the rubric of the *vacuum*, Ballard describes how a near-total emptiness of time and space is one way to respond to a global ecological catastrophe. Using Ballard's novel as a guide, our concept of *vacuum ecology* is developed along with a number of current ideas in eco-criticism. In *The Drought*, the concept of modulation is suggested as the mechanism for change. At the end of the essay, Jeff VanderMeer's *Annihilation* (2014) challenges the idea of modulation with a strategy of plasticity. In short, both texts foreground the possibility of new kinds of change when concepts of time and space are questioned. This change is necessary for life in our current age of ecological collapse.

Our current age of ecological ruin has been termed the Anthropocene by chemist Paul Crutzen (winner of the Nobel Prize in 1995 for work on the ozone layer). He suggests this term would replace the name for our current geological epoch, the Holocene (cf. Willems 30-2). Crutzen develops this term in order to name "the current epoch in which humans and our societies have become a global geophysical force" (Steffen, Crutzen and McNeill 614). Humans affect the earth on a global scale, and the consequences of human-action are becoming irreparable. Crutzen sees the Anthropocene starting in 1800 with the rise of industrialization in the Western world. More specifically, an increase of CO₂ in the atmosphere is the main sign of humanity's influence on the planet. A rise of around 25 ppm of atmospheric CO₂ from 1800 to 1945 is taken as the start of the Anthropocene because this rise is a sign of human intervention (rather than natural CO₂ release) which exceeds the margins of error for such studies (616).

However, starting the Anthropocene in 1800 is problematic because it suggests that the current state of the environment can be fixed if we just go back to pre-1800 conditions. Instead, what needs to be addressed is the kind of thinking that has been behind an Anthropocenic relationship to the environment. Jason Moore makes a similar argument in *Capitalism and the Web of Life*, saying that starting the Anthropocene with the rise of the use of steam and coal "makes for an easy story. Easy, because it does not challenge the naturalized inequalities, alienation, and violence inscribed in modernity's strategic relations of power and production. It is an easy story to tell because it does not ask us to think about these relations *at all*" (Moore 170). In other words, limiting the problem to the effects of industrialization limits solutions to alternative to the same effects, rather than finding solutions in different ways of thinking about the world: "to locate the origins of the modern world with the steam engine and the coal pit is to prioritize shutting

down the steam engines and the coal pits (and their twenty-first century alternatives)” (172). Moore alternatively starts the Anthropocene in 1450, with the rise of capitalism rather than industrialization (182–27). This new date foregrounds strategies of “global conquest, endless commodification, and relentless rationalization” which, instead of focusing on coal and steam, can “prioritize the relations of power, capital, and nature that rendered fossil capitalism so deadly in the first place.” In other words, “Shut down a coal plant, and you can slow global warming for a day; shut down the relations that made the coal plant, and you can stop it for good” (172).

This is where Ballard’s work comes in: it posits a new set of relations to the world, and to the self, in the midst of ecological collapse. This is similar to the work of Roy Scranton, who argues that there is actually a need to learn how to die in the Anthropocene, meaning that we are going to need “a new conceptual understanding of reality, and a new relationship to the deep polyglot traditions of human culture that carbon-based capitalism has vitiated through commodification and assimilation” (Scranton 19). In other words, our old relations to time and space need to “die” in order for new relations to form. There are different ways to respond to this call for a new relationship to the world in the Anthropocene. In *The Mushroom at the End of World* (2015), Anna Tsing argues for the need of interconnectedness in the ruins of the environment (cf. also Maver), and in *The Great Derangement* (2017), Amitav Ghosh specifies the “as if” available to literature for imagining new possibilities (Ghosh 128–9). However, Ballard takes a different track. In *The Drought*, Ballard argues that the kind of “death” of the old self that Scranton calls for is actually a new way of life. Leaving behind the past ways of relating to the planet makes room for new relations to arise. One way for this “death” of the old self to take place is through a representation of the vacuum, meaning a removal from the destructive notions of time and space that led to the Anthropocene.

2. BALLARD’S VACUUM

Ballard’s *The Drought* is the British title of what was called *The Burning World* (1964) when published in America. It is a science fiction novel set in the Anthropocene. It is one of his first four novels, all dealing with ecological catastrophes. The global disaster described in *The Drought* is reflected not only in the environment, but in the characters’ personal lives as well. Empty landscapes are mirrored by the lack of connection between people and where they live. This reflects how Ballard is not particularly interested in the outer space of science fiction, but mainly the fluctuations in “inner space” (Ballard 1996: 197) demanded by radical changes to the environment.

Throughout *The Drought* we see how different characters deal with the unknown situation of learning to live in a dried-out landscape. As Rob Latham argues, Ballard “appears fundamentally uninterested either in explaining the disasters ... or in depicting valiant efforts to fend off their ravages. Instead, the protagonists struggle towards a private accommodation with the cataclysms, a psychic attunement to their radical reorderings of the environment” (Latham 106). In *The Drought*, some characters refuse to cope with the problem, ignoring it and dwelling in their memories. Just as bad, some of the characters dream of a better future “with a wild misanthropic hope” (Ballard 1968: 47). All such characters are lost in their illusions and they eventually punished with death. Other characters, however, come to terms with the new world of the drought. These characters survive because they accept where they are instead of getting lost in nostalgia for the past or hope for the future. The way they survive is by having no hope for change. This removal from hope takes place through a vacuum of space and time. Yet, instead of being just a bleak acceptance of the present, it will be argued below that this is an ecological stance toward the future.

The novel tells the story of a global drought with no end in sight. People panic, head to the oceans, but only find more chaos. At the beginning of the novel, Dr Charles Ransom lives on a river in a houseboat. As the river dries up, Ransom’s boat and the domestic life it contains lose their meaning. This loss is described in terms of a vacuum:

The house reflected this domestic and personal vacuum. The neutral furniture and decorations were as anonymous and free of associations as those of a motel - indeed, Ransom realized, they had been unconsciously selected for just this reason. In a sense the house was a perfect model of a spatio-temporal vacuum, inserted into the continuum of his life by the private alternate universe in the houseboat on the river. Walking about the house he felt more like a forgotten visitor than its owner, a shadowy and ever more evasive double of himself. (28-29)

Ransom’s home is a mirror of the drought outside. The river used to link one part of the country to another, until it dried up, isolating the different parts it previously connected: “With the death of the river, so would vanish any contact between those stranded on the drained floor” (11). In a similar way, Ransom’s home now feels like a motel because there are no connections between the furniture, decorations and the history of the occupants. This lack of connection is why the trope of the vacuum is used, indicating the difference between life before the drought, which is one of life, home and continuity, and life after the drought, which is one of shadows, evasiveness and lack of association. Although, as D. Harlan Wilson has argued, Ransom “always” thought of his life as a disaster, both

before the drought and after (Wilson 51), Ransom is sure that this change is important, for everyone “would soon literally be an island in an archipelago drained of time” (Ballard 1968: 12).

This is not the only time that the trope of a vacuum makes a direct appearance in the novel. However, all the other direct references to a vacuum function in a similar manner: “his continued presence in the deserted town, his apparent acceptance of the silence and emptiness, in some way exposed the vacuum in their lives” (34); “Just as his own stratified personality reflected his preoccupation with the vacuums and drained years of his memory, so Lomax’s had been formed by his intense focus upon the immediate present, his crystallization on the razor’s edge of the momentary impulse” (40); and “During their journey to the south he had felt an increasing sense of vacuum, as if he was pointlessly following a vestigial instinct that no longer had any real meaning for him. The four people with him were becoming more and more shadowy, residues of themselves as notional as the empty river” (87). The idea of vacuum in all three examples has a similar function, which is to show Ransom’s loss of connection to the meaning of the past and to people around him. On the one hand the vacuum represents how Ransom has surrendered to his destiny. He has become so numb that he does not find any sense in trying to understand the environmental changes around him, nor does he attempt to fight them. This external vacuum of the drought also functions as a mirror of Ransom’s inner vacuum: the silence and emptiness of his life resemble the silence and emptiness of his house and of the whole environment. Thus the trope of the vacuum in *The Drought* represents an absence of time and space in the outer world as well as in Ransom’s inner space. Yet at the same time, the vacuum contains something positive. It actually provides an opportunity for change, for the new kind of thinking and acting that Scranton calls for in the quote above. The reason for the possibility for change has to do with the physical properties of vacuums themselves.

In *Humankind*, Timothy Morton describes how a vacuum can be used as a figure for change. Vacuums cannot be made perfectly, there is always some remnant of matter. However, a small object close to absolute zero in a vacuum starts to display some strange qualities, including a “profound ambiguity” (Morton 82) which is due to the superposition principle, which is “If a quantum can be in either of two states, then it can be in both states at the same time” (Hobson 187). Or, as Morton puts it, superposition is “where a weird overlap between two physical systems...can occur” (Morton 82). This overlap is not a mixture of two things, but rather two different things occurring at the same time (Hobson 187-8). This is why Morton uses the superposition principle as a figure for change: it indicates that an object is not just one thing, it can also be something else. What is essential for this discussion is that one way to observe this change is in a vacuum, for then an object shows its “shifty qualities: the way in which it is smeared into itself,

or vibrating and not-vibrating at the same time, or shimmering without being pushed in a mechanical way" (Morton 82).

In *The Drought*, Ransom is in a vacuum, which is represented by a lack of associations to both the past and those around him. And being in this vacuum demands change, it demands a profoundly ambiguous relationship to the concepts of time and space to which he had previously been accustomed (Willems 191-2). This new state of mind can be seen in how Ransom's way of thinking is contrasted to that of the zoo-keeper Catherine, who still has a hope for a better future. Ransom "crossed the bridge and turned left into a side-road. Sooner or later he would have to leave Catherine. Her barely conscious determination to stay on reminded him of his own first hopes of isolating himself among the wastes of the new desert, putting an end to time and its erosions. But now a very different kind of time was being imposed upon him" (Ballard 1968: 76-7). In a sense, in the words of Malcolm Miles, the novel is "a narrative of human endurance against a radically other, uncaring Nature" (Miles 81), but this is true only with an overly optimistic reading. The novel is really about "endurance" in that the tragic, unchanging time of the drought must not be ignored. This new kind of time of the drought is developed when Ransom reaches the beach, which initially offered the hope of a source of water during the drought but it is overcrowded and access to it is rigidly controlled. The beach is just a "zone of nothingness" (Ballard 1968: 133). On the beach "time was not absent but immobilized" (ibid.). The relationships of the past are over. But how does this "death" in the Anthropocene relate to change? This is the topic of the next section.

3. CHANGE AS MODULATION

In order to develop the relationship between change and the immobilized time and space of the vacuum, we can look at Steven Shaviro's concept of modulation. Shaviro bases his reading on a Deleuzian topology, so a brief background needs to be provided.

Much of the thought of Gilles Deleuze can be understood in relation to extensive and intensive properties (DeLanda 19-25). Extensive properties such as height, weight and length can be cut and divided, while intensive properties such as pressure and temperature "*cannot be divided without involving a change in kind*" (25). Deleuze is an intensive philosopher, meaning that he is interested in forces and properties which involve change, but not a change in kind. He is not interested in the change of a human into an animal, but rather in the change of a human into a human-animal, retaining the properties of one kind while expanding it towards another (Deleuze and Guattari 242). A vacuum can be considered an example of an intensive concept. A vacuum cannot be cut in half, as with extensive properties.

Either there is an absence of air pressure, or there is not. However, what is more important for this essay is that the concept of the vacuum has intensive effects in the novel, how it can encourage Ransom to become something other than he was, without becoming something else entirely. This is one way to die and live in the Anthropocene. In order to develop this thought, Shaviro's work is key.

In the second chapter of *Post-Cinematic Affect* Shaviro uses the video for Grace Jones' song "Corporate Cannibal" to develop two concepts: modulation and metamorphosis. In short, modulation is an intensive force, while metamorphosis is extensive. An important aspect of Shaviro's argument is that modulation takes place in a vacuum-like space, which can be seen in an early description he gives of Jones' video: "there is literally nothing in the video aside from Jones' skin, her features and her silhouette. Behind her, there is only an empty blankness; it is this absence of any image whatsoever that we see as white" (Shaviro 11). The "nothingness," "empty blankness" and "absence" that he mentions mirror some of the characteristics of the vacuum. Shaviro calls this *relational space* and he argues that it represents "processes which do not occur *in* space but define their own spatial frame" (16).

This description illustrates how the vacuum works in *The Drought*. Rather than occurring in the pre-drought understanding of space the characters have spent their lives developing, a new spatial frame has been defined with the never-ending drought (although there does seem to be some relief at the end of the novel). At the same time, *The Drought* punishes characters who try to escape where they are, imagining totally new scenarios for the future (that it will rain someday). These future-planning characters are examples of metamorphosis, an extensive property, because they want to cut themselves off from the present in order to invent a new world that does exist. As Shaviro says, "Metamorphosis gives us the sense that anything can happen, because form is indefinitely malleable" (13). This is a negative description. "Anything can happen" is a sign of extension: one form is cut from what it is now, and can be anything else. Modulation, on the other hand, "requires an underlying fixity" (13). Ransom is not escaping from where he is, but is fixed to the present in a way that others are not. The removal of time and space in the vacuum causes Ransom to be completely in the present, with no hope of escape. Paradoxically, by being stuck in the catastrophe of the present, Ransom is able to question the forms of time and space that led to ecological collapse. For, as D. Harlan Wilson says of Ballard's early eco-novels, "they are all about timelessness insofar as they put the nature and structure of time into question, exposing the socially and culturally constructed ways in which we perceive and experience time" (Wilson 59). A comparison with a more contemporary piece of eco-fiction will help bring the structure of the questioning to light, and expand it in one important way.

4. PLASTIC METAMORPHOSIS

In Jeff VanderMeer's novel *Annihilation* (2014), the first book of his *Southern Reach Trilogy* (2014), the absence of space and time is replaced by their intertwining. Both are still put into question, but rather than insisting on the strict separation between modulation and metamorphosis, the novel posits a relation between the two. The state of Area X, an ecological anomaly in which much of the novel takes place, could be described as the opposite of a vacuum because nature is everywhere, sometimes even inside the characters themselves. One consequence of this fullness is that we see the interconnection between human and non-human which is so close that it is almost impossible to decide where humans end and nature begins. This is an illustration of the Anthropocene, in which human activity is nature, having a global effect, and has thus become another physical force.

The plot of the novel follows a group of four women, a biologist, a psychologist, an anthropologist and a surveyor, who volunteer to be the twelfth group to investigate Area X, a secluded area in which some strange things have happened. The members of previous expeditions changed drastically, losing the traits of the people they used to be. They became animals, or other creatures and objects, and they are still in some way present in Area X. They have retained some of their recognizable human features, such as a human eye or human brain cells. However, they have become different categories of living beings. One important event is that in Area X they find a tunnel, home of a strange and unidentified creature that the biologist names the Crawler.

The following quote from when the biologist encountered the Crawler paints an image of an endless creature that is never fully comprehensible to humans. The interesting thing about the quote is that an extensive quality is used, size: "Then it became an overwhelming *hugeness* in my battered vision, seeming to rise and keep rising as it leapt toward me. The shape spread until it was even where it was not, or *should not have been*" (VanderMeer 176-8). This description of the Crawler describes a lack of comprehension of the Crawler's form. This mirrors how the Crawler leaves the characters in the novel confused. However, this confusion is described using an extensive quality, that of size ("*hugeness*") rather than through intensive properties such as pressure (or lack of, as found in a vacuum). The use of an extensive property indicates that *Annihilation* is working in a different way than *The Drought*. Yet this extensive property has the same effect as intensive properties in Ballard's novel. The last sentence from the quote depicts a questioning of time and space. But it does not describe an absence of time and space, rather their intermingling. This has the effect of making characters and events in Area X unpredictable. The strangeness of things which exist in this area leave the biologist perplexed: "As they [the dolphins] slid by, the nearest one rolled slightly to the

side, and it stared at me with an eye that did not, in that brief flash, resemble a dolphin eye to me. It was painfully human, almost familiar" (97). Everything that exists in Area X exists in confusing and inexplicable forms. It is this confusion that allows one form to begin to infiltrate another.

Yet the figure of the Crawler is not just "extensive," it also has features of modulation, as seen in the following description of it: "Did I say I had seen golden light? As soon as I turned that corner entire, it was no longer golden but blue-green [...]. As I adjusted to the light, the Crawler kept changing at a lightning pace, as if to mock my ability to comprehend it" (176). The Crawler changes so fast that it becomes incomprehensible to human senses. One second it is golden light, another second it is blue-green and then it turns into the sea, changing form, shape and structure completely. It changes drastically, but, as with modulation, it always remains the Crawler, representing all of its possible variations at the same time. This type of change brings to mind the image of Grace Jones in "Corporate Cannibal," which also changes form, but remains the same entity. The Crawler is at the same time a figure of profound change. The man who become the Crawler can never go back to just being a man. This is a sign of metamorphosis. In fact, it seems that the Crawler contains features of both modulation and metamorphosis, of both intensive and extensive properties.

Philosopher Catherine Malabou has developed one of the strongest arguments for combining modulation and metamorphosis. In *Ontology of the Accident*, she describes her concept of destructive plasticity, in which one person, a person suffering from Alzheimer's disease, for example, exhibits both the properties of fixity (they are the same person) and profound change (they also become someone else): "There are some transformations that are attacks on the individual... We must all of us recognize that we might, one day, become someone else, an absolute other, someone who will never be reconciled with themselves again, someone who will be this form of us without redemption or atonement, without last wishes, this damned form, outside of time" (Malabou 2-3). Malabou argues that change, once again, takes place outside of the time of the present. Yet she also argues that the separation between modulation and metamorphosis (which we have exaggerated in Shaviro's work) is too simple. Even in metamorphosis, meaning the complete and irreversible transformation of one being into another, contains elements of modulation. To illustrate this point, Malabou turns back to the mythological story of Daphne in Ovid's *Metamorphosis*. Daphne's transformation from a woman to a laurel tree does not negate the person she was before: "the being-tree nonetheless conserves, preserves, and saves the being-woman" (12). The Crawler is also such a figure: what is frightening about it is that it is both the complete transformation of a man into something else, and the preservation of that man within the creature. In this way, "destruction too is formative" (4), meaning the complete

separation of one form from another found in metamorphosis is not just about the end of one form, but the creation of a new figure which also contains the old.

The kind of transformation that people in Area X undergo is indeed an attack on the old individual, who hopes for the future. In its place is a figure of intermingling, of modulation within metamorphosis. However, first a vacuum is needed. The vacuum means the death of previous relations to time and space, those which lead us into the Anthropocene. Thus these novels contain important images for the Anthropocene. If we abandon the world as it is, and focus on new worlds of technological invention, all is lost. *The Drought* shows the first step in this formation: living in the time of collapse. *Annihilation* shows the second: the formation of a new being that does not abandon the old, but which cannot go back to the old forms either. Thus Malabou's reading of destructive plasticity contains an antidote for dystopia. The destruction of ecological collapse is also formative because challenging the old notions of time and space has two effects: it signals the end of the way of life that led us into the Anthropocene, and it suggests a new way of living with our old selves in a new world.

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Vakuumska ekologija: J. G. Ballard in Jeff VanderMeer

Roman J. G. Ballarda *The Drought* (1965) pretvarja ekološko distopijo v strategijo, kako preživeti katastrofo antropocena. Avtorja predlagata izraz „vakuumsko ekologijo“ za literarno strategijo, ki predstavlja način življenja v trenutni ekološki krizi.

Ključne besede: ekologija, antropocen, J. G. Ballard, Jeff VanderMeer, modulacija, plastičnost

Sir Richard Francis Burton Reconsidered and His Travels to Slovenian Lands

Igor Maver

Abstract

Sir Arnold Wilson delivered a lecture before the Royal Asiatic Society on 27 May 1937 in London at 74 Grosvenor Street as the Fifth Burton Memorial Lecture. Regardless of the fact that Burton was indeed an orientalist and an exponent of the British Empire, he nonetheless often challenged many aspects of the dominant British ethnocentrism of his day and decided to 'go native' and get thus immersed into and possibly become part of the culture of the then Other. In his texts he sometimes openly criticized the colonial policies and practices of the British Empire, which can be seen also in the selection of Burton's extracts of texts presented at the Fifth Memorial Lecture discussed here. The article also brings the descriptions of his travels to Lipica on Slovenian ground within the Austro-Hungarian empire.

Keywords: Richard F. Burton, orientalism, travel literature, Slovenian lands

THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY LECTURE

Sir Richard Francis Burton was born in Devon on 19 March 1821. His father was an army officer. Burton accompanied his parents on their frequent trips abroad. Burton was thrown out of Oxford University for disobedience in 1842 and joined the army of the East India Company, where his knowledge of local languages helped his work in surveying and in intelligence. In 1853, taking leave from the company, he undertook a 'Hajj' or pilgrimage to Mecca, in disguise, and his account of this trip made him famous. The following year he explored what is now Somalia with a number of other officers. In 1857, Burton and his fellow officer John Speke embarked on a Royal Geographical Society funded expedition to explore inland from the east African coast, with the hope of finding the source of the Nile. When they arrived at Lake Tanganyika, Speke was almost blind and Burton could hardly walk. Speke travelled on alone and discovered Lake Victoria, which he was convinced was the Nile's source. Burton disagreed and this contributed to a long and bitter quarrel between the two of them. Burton joined the Foreign Office and was appointed consul in Fernando Po, an island off the coast of West Africa. His wife Isabel, whom he had married in 1861, was unable to join him as the climate was considered too unhealthy for her. They were reunited when he was transferred to Brazil and then, in 1869, to Damascus. In 1871, he was moved to Trieste, where his position as a British consul gave him plenty of time to write. Burton was a prolific author, mainly on travel and ethnography. He also translated classical and literature, with a particular interest in eastern erotica: he translated and printed the *Kama Sutra* (1883) and *The Perfumed Garden* (1886). He also published a complete edition of the *Arabian Nights* (1885 - 1888). Burton died in Trieste on 20 October 1890 and is buried in London together with his wife Isabel. A fictionalized version of his travels in Asia and Africa is rendered suggestively by Iliya Troyanov (Troyanov 2009).

The Royal Asiatic Society was established, according to its Royal Charter of 11 August 1824, to further "the investigation of subjects connected with and for the encouragement of science, literature and the arts in relation to Asia". Due to the nature of the Society's close link with the British Empire in the East, much of the work of the society has been focused on topics concerning the Indian sub-continent. However, the target countries of the Society extend far beyond India: they include all of Asia, Islamic North Africa, and Ethiopia, which coincided with Burton's interests. The Society, even today, does not concentrate specifically on recent political history and current affairs, while it does, however, represent Asian cultural studies research with its regularly published Journal.

Sir Arnold begins his lecture, as would be expected, in most complimentary terms, reviewing Burton's status in the late 1930s:

No Englishman of the nineteenth century lived a more romantic life; the lives of few aroused more acrid controversy. Yet he is little remembered today.... Sir Richard Burton was honoured by no university, and, until he turned to translations of oriental *erotica*, his contributions to literature attracted comparatively little attention outside a small circle. His object was neither fame nor money, but a honourable desire to place fully on record all he knew and could discover upon any subject which interested him. His interests were as varied as the countries in which he dwelt, as an official of the Government of India, and, later, as a Consul. Those who followed in his footsteps in Syria, Arabia and Africa, men such as Stanley, Johnston, Du Chaillu, Loret Cameron, Philby and Thomas, have borne witness to his conscientious adherence to geographical truth.... When he dies, *The Times*, in an obituary notice, observed that his name was 'in popular estimation associated with Africa, and rightly so, for there he did his most valuable and original work.' He is remembered to-day mainly as an explorer of Arabia. (Wilson 2)

After his famous explorations in the Near East in what is today Saudi Arabia and in search of the source of the Nile he got married and was given the post of a British Consul at Fernando po on the West coast of Africam known as »the Foreign Office grave«. An explorer at heart, he was not encoured to explore. Wilson reports how his application for surveying instruments, made shortly after his arrival at his post, was endorsed at the Foreign Office as follows:

I.

Is there any precedent?

II.

No; I think it objectionable that our Consuls should furnished with such things. He was instructed accordingly! (Wilson 5)

Wilson in continuation expresses something extremely important:

He was no imperialist. 'I confess to holding the British policeman to be, like the beefsteak, a bore, a world-wide nuisance.' (Burton *Gelele*, qtd. in Wilson 5)

Wilson in his published 1937 lecture continues in the same apologetic vein for Burton, postulating him as a person that saw contemporary British reality as less humane than that in Africa, for example, especially as regards the downright inhuman punishment and prison system, quoting from Burton's *Gelele*:

At times he would rebuke the manners the manners and customs of this country by comparing them to those of some savage land.

Female criminals are executed by officers of their own sex, within the palace walls, and not in presence of men. Dahomey is therefore in one point more

civilised than Great Britain, where they still hang even women, and in public, and in 1864 we hung four murderers on the same gibbet before 100,000 gaping souls at Liverpool. (Burton 1864: 21; 277)

and reminds us that negroes did not, at their worst, invent the hideous punishments of eighteenth-century Europe nor, as in England, hang boys and girls and men and women for trifling offences.

'What white men have done, white men must undo,' he exclaims.

Nations are poor judges of one another: each looks upon itself as an exemplar to the world, and vents its philanthropy by forcing its infallible systems upon its neighbour....The Anglo-Saxon has much to do at home before he sets out to regenerate mankind.

We imprison, punish, and compel to labour our beggars and vagabonds, if they fail to prove how they subsist. We flog youths who are to the full as intellectual as the child-man negro. (Burton 1864: 328)

Sir Arnold Wilson in his published lecture, which has just over twenty pages, clearly cannot avoid Burton's famous translation (Orientalist as it were) of the *Arabian Nights* into English, which came out in 1885-8 with The Burton Club for Private Subscribers in ten volumes, entitled by Burton as *The Book of The Thousand Nights and a Night. With Introduction Explanatory Notes on the Manners and Customs of Moslem Men and a Terminal Essay upon the History of the Nights*. It was probably his greatest commercial and financial success on which he worked while stationed in Trieste as the British Consul, who only received very meagre salary.

It gave him a chance of placing on record what he knew upon many subjects and it brought in money which was an absolute necessity. The demand for it surprised him. The technical excellence of his translation is undisputed: to the value to scholars and psychiatrists of his learned notes all workers in this field have testified. He described it as a work of scholarship published in order that the rulers of the East should understand the mainsprings of eastern life.... (Wilson 21)

Wilson, moreover, touches upon Burton's »sensuality« in this regard but pronounces him not immoral. The mention of his wife Lady Isabel is somewhat naive here, since he defends her right to have burned Burton's notes and letters in the backyard of their Trieste villa, Villa Gosleth/later called Economo after his death, which may have »damaged his reputation«.

No man could ever have written it who was not, like thousands in every age and in every country, profoundly interested in, and attracted by, sensual experiences. Burton was unique only because he was also a scholar devoid of *mauvaise*

bonte, an Orientalist and a linguist. He has done no harm to our morals. That he knew what true love means may fairly be deduced from the passionate devotion to him of his wife, a devout Roman Catholic, who shared his trials and his disappointments and did what she could to ensure that his achievements should not be forgotten. We may regret, but we must condone, the destruction of notes and journals which, in other hands, might, if published, have damaged his reputation. (Wilson 21)

The final description of Burton's death and funeral in Trieste shows just how well-known and well-liked he was, an Englishman, in his adopted city, almost as an Italian, as an Austrian. He received the greatest posthumous honours in a military funeral, although later on his body was transported to England where he is buried at Morlake in a tomb built as an Arab desert tent.

On his death in Trieste on October 20, 1890, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Trieste conceded to him the greatest of all funeral ceremonies of the Roman Catholic Church, and the authorities a gorgeous military funeral, such as was only accorded to royalty—an honour never before accorded in Austria to a foreigner...., and of the 150,000 persons who formed the population of Trieste few who could walk did not witness it. The Diet of Trieste heard an oration in his honour and three great funeral requiems were sung, with Mass and all the obsequies. (Wilson 22)

THE BURTONS IN TRIESTE AND SLOVENIAN LANDS

Trieste has been associated with two well-known English-speaking names of people who resided in it for a number of years, James Joyce and Sir Richard Francis Burton who lived there during 1872–1890. Trieste was until the First World War the main port of the Austro-Hungarian empire with a mixed population of Italians, Slovenes, but also Austrians, Greeks, Jews and many other nationalities. Just as the Burtons went for a long cure in the famous resort of Opatija (then called Abbazia), which Sir Richard described so vividly, so did they often like to visit the location and little hamlet of Lipizza (today's Lipica spelt in the Slovenian language, which means a small lime-tree, since there are many such trees in the meadows there still today), nowadays in the state of Slovenia close to the Italian border. It has been famous for its musical, dashing white Lipizzaner horses that made their way also to the Habsburg court in Vienna. It is situated on the Karst plateau just above Trieste and was thus much more pleasant in the stifling hot summer months than Trieste situated by the sea below. As can be seen from his letters and postcards the Burtons for this reason also liked to spend longer summer periods of time in Opcina (Hotel

Obelisco), today's Opicina (Opčine in Slovenian), a small town on the Karst rim just above Trieste, which was in the late nineteenth century almost predominantly populated by Slovenian-speaking population. Lady Isabel and Sir R.F. Burton's frequent drives inland (into Istria as they mistakingly called it then) were of short duration, as the following extract testifies to:

One of our favourite drives was to Lipizza, the Emperor's stud. It was established three hundred years ago. It is about two hours from Trieste. You come to a kind of farm, where you may get something to eat. You are then taken to the stables, where the Emperor keeps about nine thoroughbred Arab stallions, and afterwards you are taken through the park, where are herds of thoroughbred mares, chiefly Hungarians and Croats, most of them with foals, perhaps two hundred including foals. If anything is not perfect it is sold, and thus you see a very good breed of horses, in Trieste, often drawing a cart. The pleasantest way to make this trip for your own comfort is to take a luncheon basket for yourself and nosebags with corn for your horses, as well as a small tub or pail to draw water for them, as nothing will induce them - and rightly - to let your horses come anywhere near the stud, or to drink out of anything belonging to their horses, and two hours there and two hours back is a long way for animals to go without drink or any refreshment. (Burton 1893: 30)

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- Troyanov, Iliya. *The Collector of Worlds*. London: Faber & Faber, 2009.
- Wilson, Arnold. *Richard Burton. Fifth Burton Memorial Lecture*. London: Oxford University Press: Humphrey Milford, 1937. I was asked by Mick Walton, the tireless researcher of Burton and the brilliant organiser of the 2017 meeting in Opatija in Croatia in Villa Antonio, to read and discuss a few extracts from this published lecture on Sir Richard F. Burton by Oxford University Press in 1937 which are published here.

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Ponovno vrednotenje sira Richarda Francisa Burtona in njegova potovanja v slovenske dežele

Sir Arnold Wilson je imel javno predavanje pred Kraljevo azijsko družbo 27. maja 1937 v Londonu kot Peto Burtonovo spominsko predavanje. Ne glede na to, da je bil Burton orientalist in predstavnik britanskega imperija, je vendarle v mnogočem razbijał tedanji britanski etnocentrizem ter se v smislu mimikrije odločil 'postati domorodec' in tako morebiti postati del kulture takratnega azijskega in afriškega Drugega. Članek prinaša tudi opise njegovega bivanja v Lipici na slovenskih tleh.

Ključne besede: Richard F. Burton, orientalizem, potovalna književnost, slovenske dežele

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Shortcomings and Limitations of Identity Politics and Intersectionality in Sandra Cisneros's *The House on Mango Street*

Lilijana Burcar

Abstract

The article offers a systematic critique of identity politics and intersectionality that today dominate Western mainstream literary theory and Anglo-Saxon literary production by bringing to the fore a much overlooked critical intervention on the part of materialist (literary) system theorists and Western Marxist feminists. It then dissects the ways in which the trappings of identity politics and its upgraded version of intersectionality are manifested in Sandra Cisneros's *The House on Mango Street*, with the class in the triad of class, race and gender eventually weakened and removed from view.

Key words: class, race, gender, identity politics, intersectionality, *The House on Mango Street*, Sandra Cisneros

INTRODUCTION

The House on Mango Street (1984) is a contemporary American classic, written in the form of vignettes and told from the point of view of a first-generation Mexican-American girl, who lives in a Chicago ghetto. The narrator recounts the trajectory of her growth from early childhood to adolescence and beyond by placing it within what mainstream critics acknowledge to be “the socio-political frame of poverty, racial discrimination and gender subjugation” (Olivares 2009). But what appears to be a coming-of-age novel whose protest, according to mainstream critics, seems to be channelled into undoing and overcoming the constructs of race, class and gender in fact gives way to a form of bildungsroman concerned primarily with a seemingly isolated issue of gender. Race and class, as this article argues, in fact resurface sporadically, forming a background tapestry to the discussion of women’s oppression and gender subjugation. Moreover, with systemic exploitation and racism not only disconnected from gender but pushed into the background as seemingly separate and decontextualized phenomena, Cisneros’s attempt at coming up with a progressive bildungsroman encounters major difficulties and ideological traps. These stem from the novel’s subscription to essentialist identity politics and to its upgraded but equally problematic version of intersectionality, which has dominated contemporary American literary production and Western academia since the early 1980s.

Systemic analysis and materialist literary approach (Eagleton), unlike identity politics and its upgraded intersectionalist variant, rest on the understanding of gender and race as integral building blocks of capitalist exploitative relations. Racism and patriarchy are seen as inherent to the functioning of capitalism, constituting its operating subsets rather than being separate and decontextualized categories that according to identity politics exist outside the socio-economic system, or, according to intersectionalists, merely run parallel to it as ahistorical phenomena. System theoreticians headed by Marxist feminists argue further that these categories are neither mutually exclusive, a view disseminated by proponents of identity politics, nor are they only intersectional and thereby tangentially overlapping, which is a modified approach promoted by intersectionalists. System/Marxist feminists instead see these categories as structurally “co-synthetic” (Volpp 1202) and historically specific. Proponents of identity politics, on the other hand, view gendered and racialized categories as self-generating phenomena existing outside broader social relations, thus dismissing the structural causes of their emergence and maintenance. As a result, racism and gender subjugation are reductively interpreted as a matter of individual prejudices, and as driven and sustained simply by negative attitudes that men as a group supposedly uniformly foster towards women and whites against those defined as racialized others. Or,

as put by Sleeter, identity politics “locates sexism [and racism] in biased attitudes of individuals who [supposedly automatically and wholesomely] limit the opportunities of other individuals by [simply] treating them stereotypically” (84). Accordingly, patriarchy is conceptualized as prehistoric and universal, and women’s secondary status and gender oppression the result of oppressive attitudes and prejudices supposedly deeply and universally seated in individual men. Similarly, racism is conceptualized as an atavistic leftover of supposedly no longer existing institutional practices. It is presented as a matter of individual bad taste and moral corruption, with social exclusions not structurally but individually conditioned, that is, as arising from a handful of prejudiced individuals targeting other individuals (Wilson 1996). In this way, as pointed out by Choonara and Prasad: “the enemy of the black [remains] white and the enemy of the woman is man. And all whites are racist like all men are sexist” (N. pag.).

LIMITATIONS OF IDENTITY POLITICS AND INTERSECTIONALITY

The othering of women, which rests on their definition as universally feminine, has been fundamental to capitalist exploitative relations (Lister 1997). Identity politics, which insists on women’s marginalization and gender subjugation being a matter of prejudices and negative behaviour of individual men towards women, avoids these historic conditions and structural demands that have given rise to the contemporary form of institutional patriarchy in Western liberal democracies (Moi 1986). The othering of women has served as a device to justify a new division of labour essential to industrial capitalism which was consolidated in the 19th century, and which has ever since rested on the privatization rather than socialization of social reproduction such as child care and elderly care (Burcar *Restavracija*). In its appropriation of wealth, capital is structurally dependent on women’s different degrees of domestication and the institutional maintenance of their secondary and (semi-) dependent status, or, as put by Mies, on (different degrees of) their “housewifization” (ix). This also leads to the imposition and structural enforcement of women’s secondary status as workers, who are paid for the same work much less than men. Industrial capitalism ushered in a new form of institutional patriarchy based upon the nuclear family and breadwinner model, which in Western capitalist democracies today continues to hold sway in the form of the so-called 1.5 breadwinner model with women, due to the lack of institutionalized child and elderly-care, employed only part-time and for this reason still dependent for their pension and health social transfers on the employment status of their partners/husbands (Burcar *Restavracija*). Rather than patriarchy being

prehistoric and women's gender subjugation a matter of prejudice, its form and content is historically specific and most certainly not universal to all societies as it is bound up with specific socio-economic arrangements.

Accordingly, identity politics also dismisses the structural causes of institutional racism and the reasons for its ongoing perpetuation. Rather than being a matter of individual bias and prejudice, racism is structurally conditioned and systemically maintained. Its origin lies not in "exogenously determined attitudes" (Reich 3), but in "historical, economic and political factors" (Cole 14), associated with the rise and consolidation of capitalist exploitative system in the West and its imperialist expansionism. From its inception, capitalism in the West has been a "racist project" (Brown and de Lissoy 608) and race as a social construct was invented and maintained (also by means of pseudoscience) to be deployed "strategically" (Smith 188). Racialization has proceeded on the basis of projecting imaginary insufficiencies and negative characteristics into people under the pretext of their skin colour and has served as a way of dehumanizing and objectifying them. Only by being stripped of their personhood, could the racialized others be turned into a pool of disposable working bodies, bodies worth less than others, and put into the service of fledgling capitalist class as another natural resource that needed to be paid nothing or next to nothing. Racialization in all its forms and stages of capitalism has been "a tool to exploit labour more thoroughly" (Bonacich et al. 352). It has "historically functioned to legitimize extreme oppression and inequality" (Wilson 125), that is, super-exploitation of those constructed and denigrated as racialized others on the home turf of Western imperial capitalist states as well as in their colonial outposts. Racism in the capitalist democracies of the late 20th and early 21st centuries continues unabated: its form and content have gone from biological racism to cultural racism, with these "newer colour-coded forms of racism [...] directed at migrant communities", which today constitute one of the basic supplies of institutionally cheapened and super-exploited labour for capital (Cole 25).

Intersectionality, which functions as a sophisticated extension of identity politics, fails to acknowledge that Western capitalist democracies have been and continue to be based on a racial contract (Brown and de Lissoy 600) and a sexual contract (Pateman 1988). It avoids the issue of gender and racial oppression being structurally integral to capital accumulation and the fact that these undergo modifications in content and form but will not be done away with as long as this set of relations exists. Intersectionality – also referred to as the theory of race, gender and class – takes these categories as givens, just like identity politics whose tenets it replicates, but attempts to complicate them by claiming that these categories can at certain moments combine or interlock/intersect, thus affecting such individuals differently. In this way, one can experience

different or multiple oppressions, which are seen to emanate from people's prejudices and negative attitudes, and one can at one point occupy the position of an oppressor and at another that of the oppressed or both at the same time. The result is an endless multiplication of categorical permutations so that, as exemplified by Mitchell (2 December 2013, N. pag.), "a ruling class, gay, black man will have a different experience, and therefore, a different politics, than [for example/say] a straight, white, working class woman". Intersectionality has been rightly critiqued as being "limited, [merely] descriptive and non-explanatory" (Gimenez 28), and despite its appearance to the contrary as still essentialist and divisive. All it enables us to do, according to its critics, is to merely "map the distribution of the population in these manifold locations" and "to investigate the extent to which identities coincide or not" but it "cannot explain either the source of inequalities or their reproduction over time" (Gimenez 28-29).

This is also directly related to the fact that intersectionality treats race, gender and class as equivalents. In this way, it redefines class as another form of oppression, functioning supposedly in isolation from and at times in combination with, and therefore, crucially, always on the same level as race and gender. But as pointed out by Gimenez, "class is qualitatively different from gender and race" (30): while gender and race are social constructs and ideologies, class "is not simply another ideology legitimating oppression; rather it denotes exploitative relations between people mediated by their relations to the means of production" (24). In this way, intersectionality removes from view the understanding of class as "the crucial social relation on which depends the ability [...] of capitalism to sustain and reproduce itself" (Cole 23). In other words, class represents the basic and fundamental determinants of the organization of the social fabric under capitalism, to which race and gender are subsets. Intersectionality, on the contrary, flattens and thus redefines class as one with gender and race, that is, as merely another in a series of oppressions stemming from individuals who discriminate against poor people. Poverty is no longer understood to be structural and systemic but a matter of individual occurrence and negative discriminatory attitudes that bar people from access to education and housing, thus causing or entrenching their poverty. Intersectionality, according to system theorists, functions on the same level as identity politics: it simply recreates "a list of naturalized identities, abstracted from their material and historical context" (Mitchell N. pag.), and more than that, it depoliticises class by turning it into its opposite, a non-relational identity category. The end result is again "the perpetual articulation of difference" whose structural origins remain obscured and consequently unaddressed, which has led to "the fragmentation and stagnation of political activity" (Cole 23). The focus is instead on discriminatory attitudes as though these were the sole originator and the driving force of what are in fact structural

and systemic inequalities. In this way, exploitative social relations, which are the crux of structural inequalities, remain unaddressed. This is also an essential problem that plagues *The House on Mango Street*.

CLASS, RACE AND GENDER TRIANGLE IN *THE HOUSE ON MANGO STREET*

Cisneros also subscribes to the view that identity is a composite of separate and at best only tangentially overlapping categories. In the novel, class or structural relations of systemic exploitation is flattened to the same level as ideologies of race and gender in order to be, prototypically, remoulded into its opposite, that is, the weakest link in the triad of race, gender and class. As a result, a major class issue such as poverty, for example, seems to be self-generating and self-originating rather than structurally induced and reinforced. Poverty seems to cling to the Chicana/o community as an inexplicable curse that for some mysterious reason cannot be left behind. This is best seen in the description of the housing conditions the narrator's family like the rest of her community has to endure, and in the family's search for a house of their own which yields unsatisfactory results.

The house is an essential symbol in *The House on Mango Street*. First, what Esperanza, the narrator, reminds us is that her family "didn't always live on Mango Street" and that what she "remember[s] most is moving a lot" (Cisneros 3). Frequent relocations speak of frequent evictions and dislodgings. Esperanza's parents are the so-called working poor, with her Mexican father scraping a living as a private gardener in a house whose inhabitants "sleep close to the stars" while every day he "wakes up tired in the dark, drinks his coffee and is gone before his children wake" (57). With little or below-poverty income, the family is left to its own devices and forced to rent whatever inadequate and cramped lodgings there are momentarily available on the market, which also leaves the family at the mercy of their landlords. This and the inadequacy of housing conditions is driven home in what is one of the most explicit descriptions provided by the narrator who remembers that once they "had to leave the flat" they rented "quick": "The water pipes broke and the landlord wouldn't fix them because the house was too old." (4).

The narrative hints at the discrepancy between the myth of American dream and the reality that Mexican and other Latin American immigrants have had to face for generations as a result of being subjected to systemic exploitation. The novel, however, never alludes to these conditions directly with the house serving only as an implicit symbol of poverty. The narrative contrasts the romanticized image of the home found in official media and other propaganda apparatuses

against the grim reality faced by the super-exploited Chicana community. It does so by dwelling on the narrator's resentment against her parents and their promises:

[Mama and Papa] always told us that one day we would move into a house, a real house that would [...] have real stairs, not hallways stairs, but stairs inside like the houses on TV. ... The house on Mango Street is ours [...] But even so, it's not the house we thought we'd get" (3).

After years of drudgery and hard work, Esperanza's parents have to do with a house that still shows all the signs of poverty and according to the girl narrator "isn't it" (5). The house is "small and red with tight steps in front and windows so small you'd think they were holding their breath. Bricks are crumbling in places, and the front door is so swollen you have to push hard to get in." (4). The "tightness, suffocation, and decay" of the house on Mango Street are reflective of Esperanza's and the rest of the community's exploitation, which, according to Martin, translates into "a nailed, barred, prison-like space" (56). But why the family is stuck in a vicious circle of poverty and has to make do with only modest improvements to their secondary status despite all the hard work, however, remains a mystery. Poverty is not problematized as constructs of gender are in this novel. Instead, it is merely alluded to in descriptive and static terms and presented as yet another among many of the unrelated phenomena that plague the narrator in her childhood and late teenage-hood. In this way, it only constitutes a backdrop to what appears to be a separate and more troubling issue of gender oppression.

Moreover, when poverty is treated directly, it is presented as a given state of affairs. The causes of structural poverty and its negative impact on the overall well-being of those directly affected by it are removed from view. The issue of poverty is instead evoked and repackaged as a matter of negative, even hostile, treatment Esperanza experiences as a child whose family is poor. This is evident from the following exchange:

"Once when we lived on Loomis, a nun from my school passed by [...] Where do you live? she asked. There, I said pointing up to the third floor [...] the paint peeling. You live there? The way she said it made me feel like nothing." (4-5).

The issue of poverty is reduced to a matter of insulting behaviour and discriminatory attitudes individuals harbour against those they perceive as less fortunate than themselves, and to a matter of personal responsibility and internalized blame on the part of its victims. In this way, it is those at the receiving end who end up being blamed for finding themselves in a trap not of their own making, a stance which the narrative does not counter. Structural poverty thus comes across and is implicitly invoked as people's own responsibility and personal fault.

In this respect, Cisneros's novel stands apart from other Chicana novels of maturation (e.g. by Helena Viramontes, Anna Castillo, Cherrié Moraga and Isabella Rios) that contextualize the plight of immigrants within a broader geopolitical capitalist system of socio-economic relations of exploitation. They point to the direct involvement of American corporations and the IMF in the dispossession and displacement of Latin Americans, which forces them to emigrate. Unlike Cisneros's, these narratives inadvertently foreground the forces behind "the creation of a Mexican transnational labour force in the US" and "the local repercussions" that follow (Oliver-Rotger 305) to keep it controllable and pliable. They point to legally sanctioned and systemic exploitation of Mexican immigrant workers through the government's imposition of a permanently temporary and therefore non-citizen status on the majority of racially marked immigrant workers (Sharma). This has resulted in the consolidation of appalling working and living conditions for agricultural, industrial and service-based Latin American immigrant workers, below-poverty payments and "harsh laws against the legal and illegal immigrants' rights to the welfare services" (Oliver-Rotger 305). All of this translates into the shaping of a specific social position or structural location members of Chicano communities find themselves locked into, and which also explains the real causes of their structurally induced poverty.

Systemic exploitation is structurally intertwined with the racialization of the Chicana community, which in the novel translates into "a sense of otherness, exclusion, objectification" and powerlessness on the part of its members (Martin 57). Dilapidated living conditions the novel alludes to are not exclusive to Esperanza's family. They serve as a mark of systemic poverty that is naturalized and deepened through the racialization of Latin Americans in the US. Within this frame, the exploited are systematically rendered invisible as humans and turned instead into mere disposable bodies to be made use of and cast off indiscriminately. Their social welfare is not a matter of concern. This is even more explicit in the case of Mexican newcomers, especially undocumented workers, derogatorily referred to as wetbacks, which is a racial slur for those who have once crossed the Rio Grande and ended up working as indentured labour in the Southwestern fields in boiling summer temperatures. This state of affairs is hinted at between the lines in the vignette *Geraldo, No Last Name*. Geraldo is an undocumented worker, who is a victim of a hit-and-run accident and bleeds to death. Nobody knows his last name. Anonymity entrenched by his legally racialized status as the ultimate other is a marker of his utter disposability. He might be the victim of a hit-and-run accident, but "what does it matter?" He is "just another brazer who didn't speak English. Just another wetback. You know the kind. The ones who always look ashamed." (64).

The racialization of Mexican Americans and their construction as "undeserving others" goes back to the Mexican-American war and the US annexation of

California, Texas, Arizona, New Mexico and Nevada in 1849 (Cole). The newly self-installed Anglo-Saxon elite declared all Mexicans “a mixed, inferior race with considerable Indian and some black blood” so that “to take lands from such ‘inferior barbarians’” was seen not as a crime but god’s wish (Cole 108). Pressing them into jobs at sub-minimum wages was justified as an expression of generosity on the part of the incoming Anglo-Saxon moneyed elite. This racialization was also extended to groups of Mexican workers first recruited by agribusinesses, and mine and railway businesses under the two Bracero programs, with the first one implemented during WWI and the second one during WWII. The expression *bracero* comes from the Spanish word *arm*, and means “he who works with arms” (Mandeel 172). Bracero program was in effect an “indentured servitude program” (Vogel) which set into motion similar programs and government policies that continue to this day. The aim was to create a pool of surplus labour and a captive labour force for capital, legally stripped of basic rights and exempted from minimum labour protection laws, which would also put pressure on the rest of the wages. The Bracero program served as a template that “legally designated Mexicans as racial outsiders unfit for integration into American society” (Paret 513). It conferred upon them the status of permanent temporary migrant labour with no basic citizenship rights. This highly vulnerable (contract-bound) status that leaves Latin American immigrants subject to wholesale exploitation under the threat of deportation continues today in the form of guest worker programs. These are targeted at Latin Americans and carry “a racially exclusive character” (Paret 513). Labelled as illegal aliens whether they be documented or undocumented workers, Latin Americans under these programs are legally excluded “from federal wage and hour legislation” and have no right to form or join unions (Ness 445). They are legally exempted from access to “social services and programs such as unemployment insurance, social-assistance, old-age pensions, etc” (Sharma 472). This “structural and legal, institutional subordination of immigrant workers and their communities” is also reflected in “an escalation of workplace and community raids, detentions and deportations, racial profiling, police abuse, and so forth, [which in turn] feeds hate crimes against immigrants and generates increasing hostility towards Latino/a communities” (Robinson and Barrera 19). In these ways, “the state’s repressive activities combine with corporate strategy” (ibid.) to keep people racially stratified and divided, and to keep an increasing segment of the workforce super-exploitative and supercontrollable (also by means of its criminalization), while, ironically, scapegoating it for the deepening crisis of the welfare system.

In spite of carrying an isolated and decontextualized reference to *brazers* (*braceros*) and Geraldo the undocumented worker, *The House on Mango Street* avoids this line of more accurate and in-depth investigation. Instead, in its pursuit of race, class and gender as separate categories that intertwine only occasionally and

more often as a result of negative attitudes individuals display against others, it reverts its focus to interracial tensions. These are presented as self-originating, self-standing and as the source and cause of people's insecurity:

Those who don't know any better come into our neighbourhood scared. They think we're dangerous. They think we will attack them with shiny knives. They are stupid people who are lost and got here by mistake. But we aren't afraid. [...] All brown all around, we are safe. But watch us drive into a neighbourhood of another color and our knees go shakity-shake and our car windows get rolled up tight and our eyes look straight. Yeah. That's how it goes and goes. (28)

The main source of people's stigmatization and insecurity turns out to be interracial antagonism with the mainstream society and its state mechanisms being merely a passive bystander. It looks as though interracial antagonism or what are in fact learned attitudes of distrust that one group harbours towards the other is to blame for the racial oppression that pervades American society as such. These negative attitudes appear to exist by themselves and for themselves. In this sense, "structural oppression" is negated and reworked into a matter of personal attitudes or "differences" among individuals as though these were self-originating and self-standing. With structural oppression reduced to and reconfigured as an identity "difference", what drops out of view is the class itself. Institutional racialization of immigrant communities and the very construction and reproduction of racial difference to dehumanize and exempt those targeted from already minimal rights, and to artificially stratify the working population so as to keep it disunited and controllable, disappear from view. Instead, it is individual attitudes, which also define a member's group as homogeneously discriminatory, that are to blame for one's ghettoization and enclosure. According to this decontextualized thinking, ghettos, ironically, turn out to be not such a bad thing. Identity politics, which insists on race and gender as given categories, is in a sense after all a politics of identity enclosures or self-imposed ghettos.

In the novel, the image of the house comes to serve primarily as a recurring symbol of women's domestication and entrapment. The novel presents patriarchal constraints as synonymous with and exclusive to the Mexican-American community, and by extension to the rest of ethnicized communities (Burcar *Ethnicizing*). It manages to do so by cutting its gaze off from the significance that institutional patriarchy and constructs of gender have for the social organization and functioning of capitalist America as a whole. Predictably, women's confinement to household drudgery and fulltime childcare, which constricts them and makes them dependent on men, is portrayed as arising solely from men's harassing and negative attitudes towards women, automatically also undercutting their freedom

and possibility of self-realization. This stance is best captured in Esperanza's most often quoted observation: "I guess the Chinese and Mexicans don't like their women strong." (Cisneros 10). The solution offered by the novel's conclusion is culturally essentialist: the main protagonist is to leave her community and join mainstream white America instead, thus supposedly also escaping negative treatment and patriarchal constraints, which the novel, in accordance with identity politics, reduces to individual antagonisms between men and women and as emanating by default from individual biological men. This notion becomes fully developed in the most important among the concluding vignettes titled *A House of My Own*, which is a pun on Woolf's room of one's own. The narrator dreams of a house and therefore of a space "all her own" (108) ensconced in the heart of mainstream America, where, according to the narrative, she is no longer weighed down and silenced by the determinants of a patriarchal culture which rests on the negative attitudes and stereotypical behaviour of the men in her community towards women. This is a house that the narrative presents as a safe haven just by the merit of existing outside the ghetto and hence a house that cannot be and is "[n]ot a man's house. [n]ot a daddy's" but "[a] house of my own" with "[n]obody's garbage to pick after" (108).

It is precisely at this point that identity politics finally backfires. To join mainstream America in fact does not mean escaping institutional patriarchy at all. In a country where women's secondary status is directly tied to the privatization of social reproduction, women continue to be entrapped by official policies that encourage women's domesticity in the form of a modernized breadwinner model, precisely in order for the capitalist state to avoid investing into a public network of accessible and full-day childcare facilities. Limited institutional childcare (especially for children under three years of age) leads to prolonged maternity and parental leaves for women on the one hand and part-time jobs on the other, which automatically edges women out of long-term, formal (full) employment, making them dependent on their partners. The so-called successful women can avoid this entrapment only by outsourcing domestic work and care, which is to be carried out at the expense of the well-being of other, especially poorer and most often immigrant women. Relocation to the mainstream society means acquiescing to the very same system of structurally maintained forms of women's domestication and oppression that also hamper women in the ghetto (Burcar *Ethnicizing*). In its isolated treatment of gender and patriarchy, Cisneros's novel also obfuscates and evades a clear structural linkage between gendering, racialization and ghettoization, which in turn structurally defines the position of migrant women within and outside what are in fact permeable rather than sealed borders of their racialized communities. In this way, it overlooks the system of racially driven "double wages", and along with it even lower gendered double wages paid to immigrant women,

which has been a permanent feature of US employment policies (Oliver-Rotger 138). Mexican and other Latin American immigrant women who today work either in North American urban sweatshops or fields together with children to supplement the meagre, depressed wages of their husbands are facing exactly the same situation of state-sponsored institutional patriarchy and racism as did their counterparts at the end of the last century. This goes to show both the existence of synergetic linkage between seemingly disparate categories on the basis of which otherness is produced, and direct embeddedness of race and gender issues in the class structuration of the US society.

CONCLUSION

Even though the development of the protagonist in the novel is outward-oriented rather than solipsistic, the result, however, is a limited social awakening on the part of the narrator and the reader alike. The vignettes offer insights into the narrator's growing awareness of gender issues with racial subjugation and systemic poverty gradually edged out from the centre of investigation. As this paper has demonstrated, rather than race and gender being merely interlocking or intersecting, they are structurally intertwined and inbuilt categories of class with gender (and racial) oppression having broader and deeper structural roots that cannot be interpreted or reduced to the level of negative attitudes men supposedly uniformly harbour against women or whites against those defined as others. To do so is to fall into a trap of identity politics and its modernized version of intersectionality that take results for causes.

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Pomanjkljivosti in omejitve politike identitet in interseksionalnosti v Hiši na ulici mangov Sandre Cisneros

Članek temelji na sistemski kritiki politike identitet in interseksionalnosti, ki danes podčrtujeta zahodno etabliirano literarno teorijo in anglo-saksonsko literarno produkcijo. To kritiko uvaja skozi prizmo zapostavljenih in spregledanih kritičnih intervencij, ki so plod materialistične (literarne) sistemske teorije z zahodno marksističnimi feministkami na njenem čelu. Ta spoznanja članek aplicira na literarno analizo Hiše v ulici mangov Sandre Cisneros, izpostavljač pasti identitetnih politik in interseksionalnosti, v katere je ujet roman, in iz česar izhaja, da se znotraj trikotnika rase, spola in razreda, zavedanje slednjega vse bolj briše do točke njegove odstranitve.

Ključne besede: razred, rasnost, spol, identitetne politike, interseksionalnost, Hiša na ulici mangov, Sandra Cisneros

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The Translation History of English Classics: a Slovenian Case Study

Darja Mazi - Leskovar

Abstract

This article discusses some English classics of children's literature that have made their way into Slovenian children's literature, become part of the national canon, and can still be bought in bookstores or borrowed in libraries. Among these rank *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, *Treasure Island*, *Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens* and *The Chronicles of Narnia*. The study also examines if the authors are fully acknowledged with the title of the original source text and if the translators names are given in the colophon.

Keywords: English classics of children's literature, Slovenian books, translation history

Slovenian literature has been traditionally open to translation and generations of Slovenian children and young readers have been offered books from various cultures and traditions. Even today the statistics reveal that in this country more translated books than books written by Slovenian authors have been published yearly for children. The 2017 annual report on the quality book production, elaborated by the Central Institute for the Research of Slovenian Children's Literature, shows that in the year 2016 among 800 quality fiction books there were 500 translations and 330 Slovenian texts.¹ Among foreign books those with English as the source language are most numerous – all in line with the position of English in the world system of languages and its impact on the global translation trends. However, since fiction in English is derived from a variety of cultural environments, it is important to stress that in 2016 most translated books (10%) were written by British authors. They are followed by the translations from American fiction, represented by 5% books. However, the tradition of translation of English books started long ago before English became world language number one. The first translation from English, *Poor Richard's Almanac* by Benjamin Franklin, was published in 1812 as *Prava pot k dobrimu stanu, ali ena beseda ob pravih časi* and blockbusters from United Kingdom and the USA were offered to Slovenian readers from 1850s onwards².

In this article, I intend to illustrate how a few selected books, written in (British) English in Great Britain and ranked as classics of English children's literature made their way into the realm of Slovenian children's literature and later, through retranslations, and new editions, conquered generations of target readers. My primary aim has been to select those quality books that have endured the test of time, and have thus been present for at least 50 years not only in the English speaking cultures but also on the international market. The additional criterion was that this prose fiction can still be borrowed in Slovenian libraries and bought in bookstores. Therefore only the translation history of the works that have been translated at least once during the present century have been singled out.

The research has demonstrated that among such texts figure *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (Lewis Carroll, 1865), *Treasure Island* (Robert Louis Stevenson, 1883), *Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens* (James Matthew Barrie, 1906) and *The Chronicles of Narnia* (C. S. Lewis, 1950–1956). My goal is to reveal the outlines of the Slovenian publication history of the translations of these, generally acclaimed

1 *Priročnik za branje kakovostnih mladinskih knjig – Odklenjeni kriki. Pregled književne produkcije za mladino iz leta 2016/Handbook for Reading Quality Children's Literature–Unlocked Screams. Survey of Production of Books for Children in 2016.*

2 For example, *Uncle Tom's Cabin; or, Life Among the Lowly* (1851) was translated already in 1853, Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* in 1907.

as international classics.³ All selected books are also included among the *100 Best Children's Books of All Times*.⁴ Additionally, I will examine basic information, presented in the colophon – the author's name, the original title, the name of the translator, the place and the year of publication, the publishing house and, in case of illustrations, also the illustrator's full name.

TREASURE ISLAND

Translations of *Treasure Island* (Robert Louis Stevenson) have been present in the Slovenian book market since 1920. As in most translations of the period, the translator is indicated with initials only: J. M. According to the findings of Gillian Lathey (*The Role of Translators in Children's Literature; Invisible Storytellers*) the use of initials was the expression of the modesty topos (Lathey, 2010: 112) and a step on the way from no accreditation to full recognition of translators' role in international exchange of books. Subsequent fourteen editions give the full names of the translators. All these versions are alike in entitling the book *Otok zakladov*, which is a literal translation of the original title and which was the choice of the first Slovenian translator.

The second translation of this adventure story was published in 1950, thus thirty years after the first one. However, the third edition was published only six years later and subsequently the book entered the Slovenian children's canon. It was included on school reading lists and several editions followed. They were all illustrated and the illustrators are acknowledged with their full names. Of all fifteen editions only four are adaptations, targeting an audience of younger children. Three of the adapted versions were translated from Italian, French and English. The most recent editions of *Treasure Island* came out in 2016 and in 2017. The latest one is into Braille.

ALICE'S ADVENTURE IN WONDERLAND

The famous children's classic, *Alice's Adventure in Wonderland*, has also been published fifteen times, even though the first translation was published as late as 1969. It was entitled *Alica v čudežni deželi* (1969) and reprinted only in 1983. However, subsequently interest in this world classic has been constantly rising.

3 In histories of children's literature, e.g. *The Hidden Adult, Defining Children's Literature* (2008).

4 TIME compiled this survey in consultation with respected peers such as U.S. Children's Poet Laureate Kenn Nesbitt, children's-book historian Leonard Marcus, the National Center for Children's Illustrated Literature, the Young Readers Center at the Library of Congress, the Every Child a Reader literacy foundation and 10 independent booksellers.

Most translations have retained the title of the first target text which, translated into English, would read »Alice in Wonderland«. This, by now the standard title, has been changed only when the edition also includes the text of *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There* (1871), also known as *Alice through the Looking-Glass* or shortly *Through the Looking-Glass* (1871), the sequel to *Alice's Adventure in Wonderland*. Thus, the Slovenian 1990 edition, is entitled *Aličine dogodivščine v čudežni deželi in v ogledalu*, which would read in English »Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and in Looking-Glass«. By the present time, the two Carroll's texts have been translated into Slovenian by eight translators, all dully acknowledged on the front covers.

Four editions were published up to the year 2000 and nine editions in the following fifteen years. All these books are illustrated even though they target different age groups. Among those aiming at younger children, ranks the picture-book *Alica v čudežni deželi* (2007), containing six puzzles. This visual text is a translation of an Italian adaptation. Colophons on all editions provide the information required by the library reference services.

In 1986 the story was adapted for the theatre, and subsequently for the puppet stage. The content can thus address the youngest segment of the public through dramatization.⁵ It is likely that these performances also contributed to the increasing popularity of the book: the latest edition was published in 2015.

PETER PAN IN KENSINGTON GARDENS, PETER PAN AND WENDY

In contrast, James Matthew Barrie's texts about Peter Pan, the boy who wouldn't grow, and Wendy, have been translated 'only' three times in the present century – but altogether eleven times. Most editions bring the text of *Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens* and in one book. All translations are entitled *Peter Pan* and they are all illustrated. The first translation was published in 1960. Its translator, Janko Moder, adapted it for the stage as well. The play was successfully performed by professional and amateur theatre groups. Even though Barrie's fantasy can address children very well, a few editions have been adapted to suit better younger children. All books bring the expected standard information in the colophon. The latest edition was published in 2013.

Most conversions of the two Barrie's source texts into Slovenian were done by Janko Moder. Even though this article is deliberately limited to the presentation of the publication history of the selected literary fiction and thus omits

5 I have deliberately omitted any mention of adaptation of the selected texts for other media, as requiring a separate study in itself.

any evaluation of the target texts or their comparison, it seems appropriate, to stress the importance of the fact that *Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens* and *Peter Pan and Wendy* were translated by one of the founding members of the Slovenian Association of Literary Translators,⁶ the recipient of several national and international prizes for literary translation. Furthermore, it would not be right and fair not to stress that Moder was not the only Slovenian translator, recognized also in the larger European and world contexts, who devoted himself (also) to children's literature. They all contributed to the high standards of language, characterizing most of Slovenian fiction books, originating in other languages and cultures.

THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA

Among the books, the C. S. Lewis's *The Chronicles of Narnia* proves exceptional for at least two reasons. Firstly, in contrast to the other translations, they represent a complete set of seven stories, and secondly, even though they were first translated only in the late 1990, their publication history might be described as sensational for the Slovenian context: with 17 publications in only 20 years. An additional reason for looking at these stories is that three of them have been included on the Primary school recommended reading lists. These are and the *Voyage of the Dawn Trader*, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* and *Prince Caspian*.

The Slovenian titles of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, *Prince Caspian* are literal translations of the originals: *Lev, čarovnica in omara* (first published in 1994) and *Princ Kaspian* (first published in 1997), respectively. The title of the *Voyage of the Dawn Trader*, on the other hand, was translated in two ways: Jakob Emeršič chose *Potovanje jutranje zarje* (1997), a literal translation of the original, whereas Miriam Drev's title, *Potovanje potepuške zarje* (2007), literally "The Voyage of the Vagabond Dawn", stresses the theme of wandering. Besides these three books, the other four *Chronicles of Narnia*: *The Silver Chair*, *The Horse and his Boy*, *The Last Battle* and have also been translated and retranslated in Slovenian. All editions contain full texts and display complete bibliographic information, thus acknowledging the author of the original text, the source title and the translator.

The most recent translations of the *Narnia* series were published in 2009, when four books from *The Narnia Chronicles*, *The Horse and his Boy*, *The Magician's Nephew*, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* and *Prince Caspian* were published. Additionally, various episodes from this series have been adapted for the stage and have thus further consolidated the popularity of this fantasy series.

6 Društvo slovenskih književnih prevajalcev (DSKP).

CONCLUSION

This outline of the Slovenian publication history of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, *Treasure Island*, *Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens*, *Peter Pan and Wendy* and *The Chronicles of Narnia* in the Slovenian language reveals that these British quality children's classics have maintained their status within Slovenian children's literature, as they have in its English counterpart and just as they have internationally.

The selected and studied prose texts were first translated in the period from 1920 to 1994. Each of these blockbusters has been translated at least three times and by three translators. Besides, they were all retranslated several times already in the 20th century, even the Narnia books, published for the first time only in the mid 1990s. In addition, each of the examined target text has been reedited at least three times in the present century. These data prove that these translations can thus be judged as books of interest for contemporary readers. In fact they can address readers of different age groups since, with the exception of Narnia series, they can be read also in adaptations. The full texts were adapted either by the Slovenian translators, translating from the original English text or from an adapted version of the original. The study has also revealed that the translation of adaptations was based on Italian, French and English (e.g. all three in the case of *Treasure Island*). Considering the adaptations, it can be concluded that they target younger children. The only exception is the adaptation of *Treasure Island* which aims at a special-needs group of readers. It can be presumed that it is precisely this translation into Braille that can make this old classic appreciate anew.

The study also proves that every book is presented in accordance with the bibliographic conventions in force at the time of its publication. Accordingly, translations published after 1920 contain a colophon with all information relative to the book, including the author's, translator's and illustrator's names as well as the original title in English. Additionally, when the Slovenian translation is based on an adaptation, the title of the adaptation is given as well. Moreover, the findings of the research of the context in which the examined translations have been quoted has revealed that *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, *Treasure Island*, *Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens*, *Voyage of the Dawn Trader*, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* and *Prince Caspian* (the last three are part of *The Chronicles of Narnia*) have been included in the Primary school recommended reading lists. They can be therefore considered as part of the Slovenian literary canon for children. As representatives of the English literature, they can open new perspectives on human existence to young readers. However, perhaps even to larger audiences, since the changing concepts of the borders between

children's literature and literature for adults have been altering the readership of books and the area of fiction addressing readers of all ages seems to have been gaining ground.

Despite the small number of cases examined here, the history of publications of the studied books reveals also a certain pattern, similar to the one already confirmed by the research of translation history of American books which entered Slovenian children's literature in the 20th century.⁷

Stevenson's *Treasure Island* (*Otok zakladov*), in this context the book with the longest life in the Slovenian literature, represents the books translated in the period when for the first time a few English texts aiming at children and not at general public or adults were published. This adventure was reprinted for the first time in 1950, in a period when, after the Second World War, the target literature in Slovenia started opening up again to Western literatures. The new wave of translations of children's literature from Britain and the USA resulted in the 3rd edition of *Otok zakladov*, after a gap of only five years. It was a period of preparation for the encounters of Slovenian readers with various British literary heroes, as Barrie's *Peter Pan* (1960). Nevertheless, English fantasy with its characteristic nonsense only fully addressed Slovenians with the translation of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* in the late 1960s. Numerous translations of English books published in the 70s and the 80s prove that the market was welcoming fiction from other cultures. However, the publication history of *The Chronicles of Narnia* shows that the real breakthrough for translation came after 1990 when also books written by someone like C.S. Lewis, a writer who held academic positions in English literature at both Oxford and Cambridge, were translated – despite his work being profoundly influenced by Christian values. Seventeen editions of the books that make up the Narnia series in the period of only fourteen years prove that the reading audiences had been waiting for these fantasies, not only already well known in the children's literature of other countries but also sold in their millions.

To conclude, it is also worth highlighting the adaptation of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, *Peter Pan* and the *Narnia* series for the stage, all following the translation of the entire text. It is acknowledged that the phenomenon of dramatization plays an important role in children's culture and it can be claimed that it had a positive impact not only on the consolidation of the position these masterpieces have gained in the target literature but also on their integration into a larger Slovenian cultural context.

7 Discussed also in »140 let prevodov iz ameriške mladinske proze/140 Years of Translation of American Prose for Children« by Darja Mazi - Leskovar.

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Zgodovina prevodov angleških klasikov: izbrani slovenski primeri

Članek obravnava zgodovino prevodov *Petra Pana*, *Alice v čudežni deželi*, *Otoka zakladov* in *Zgodb iz Narnije*, saj so ta kakovostna mladinska dela angleške mladinske književnosti mednarodno priznane uspešnice, ki so sprejete tudi v kanon slovenske literature.

Ključne besede: angleški klasiki mladinske književnosti, slovenska besedila, zgodovina prevodov

Anglo-American Cultural Influence in Slovenia: The Case of Personal Names

Eva Sicherl

Abstract

The article aims to address the growing tendency of Slovene native speakers towards borrowing English personal names when naming their new-borns. Statistical data confirm that foreign (and, with that, English) names have increased in the past decades, and statistical lists illustrate how in the case of personal names, 'exoticisms' (e.g. *Liam*, *Patrick*, *Nick*, listed among the most popular 200 first names in the 2001-2015 period) compete with name forms that have been adapted and nativised long ago (e.g. *Patrik*), or are currently being introduced for the first time into Slovene. The influx of name borrowings from English is discussed from the point of view of pragmatic borrowing as advocated by Andersen (2014). A historical overview of the borrowing of English personal names into Slovene is given, and the role of English as the model discussed. Such pragmatically borrowed items carry significant sociolinguistic signals about the borrowers' attitudes, and these are analysed, based on questionnaires completed by parents of children aged 2-6. The significance of Anglo-American cultural influence is thus sought to be evaluated.

Keywords: cultural influence, English, Slovene, personal names

1. INTRODUCTION

The sportspages of Slovene newspapers have recently reported on the achievements of a young Slovene snowboarder, Tim Kevin Ravnjak (b. 1996). Sports results aside, Tim Kevin epitomizes a trend noticeable during the past decades of Slovene parents to choose previously unknown English-sounding and/or English-looking names for their offspring. According to the national statistical data provided by the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, hereafter SURS, *Kevin* as a male name first appeared in Slovenia around 1970, gained popularity in 1990, and peaked in 1996. Regionally, about 50 percent of all new-borns named *Kevin* lived in the north-east of Slovenia, followed by the south-west of the country (about 25 percent) (SURS; cf. Lenarčič 2012: 405). But why have so many Slovene parents in the 1990s decided to name their child *Kevin*? The unwitting culprit for the popularity of this name is most probably the American actor Kevin Costner, whose acting career peaked between 1987 and 1992. Similarly, the name *Tim* was first hesitantly used around 1970 in Slovenia, then made a breakthrough after 1990, peaked in 2001, and is still going strong.

However, the naming of a newborn gives the baby identity. The present article aims to shed some light on the role Anglo-American culture may play in the selection of personal names in Slovenia. Slovene parents can choose from a number of original Slovene first names whose etymologies are undoubtedly Slovene (e.g. *Mojca*, *Ajda*, *Svit*, *Bor*), and there is an even greater pool of names to choose from that have been borrowed in the past from various sources and that are no longer felt to be foreign at all although their origins may be Germanic, Romance, Latin(ate), or Slavic (e.g. *Albert*, *Renato*, *Aleš*, *Igor*). But during the past few decades, the lists of popular names that are given to new-borns in Slovenia have become increasingly foreign-sounding. Between 1981 and 1990, several English-derived names (e.g. *Robert/Robi*, *Alen/Alan*, *Elvis*, *Patrik*, *Diana*, *Lana*, *Samanta* and *Sabrina*) made it onto the list of 200 most popular names of the decade.¹ The next decade (1991–2000) saw a new influx of (potentially) English names: *Kevin*, *Vanes(s)a*, *Tara*, *Alex(ander)*, *Kim*, *Patrick*, *Melani(e)*, *Neli*, *Sarah*, *Nick*, with *Diana*, *Samanta*, *Alan*, and *Sabrina* still persevering among the top 200. The statistical list for 2001–2015 shows new additions, such as *Zara*, *Liam*, *Ian* and *Emma* featuring among the top 200. Given that naming a newborn child is one of the most intimate events in a family's life – why do parents feel the need to introduce a foreign(-language) element into this act?

1 The etymological origins of these names are, admittedly, not always English, but English-speaking culture may have played a decisive role in their dissemination. For the criteria on inclusion among names from English source, see section 4.1. However, in some cases it is difficult to pinpoint the source; the currently popular forms *Max* and *Alex* may be both German- or English-derived, *Laura* can be both Italian- or English-influenced.

2. METHODOLOGY

SURS has compiled statistical lists of personal names used in Slovenia from 1931 onwards (available at <https://www.stat.si/ImenaRojstva/sl>), and these have been used to ascertain if there is indeed a rise in the use of foreign names now as compared to the trends of the past. A comparison of statistical data for the 1961–1970 decade and the 2001–2015 period respectively, analysing the most popular 200 boys' and girls' names for each of these periods with a view to their foreignness has shown a rise by approximately 20% (cf. Sicherl 2017). This article aims to establish to what extent the newly introduced names have been initiated by a British/American source. The theoretical framework used in the research is that provided by pragmatic borrowing as advocated by Andersen (2014). Finally, we seek to find out whether parents who prefer foreign names over native ones share any common sociological characteristics and what their reasons were for having opted for names from an English source for their children. Based on questionnaires completed by parents of kindergarten children, some sociolinguistic signals about the borrowers' attitudes are sought to be analysed.

3. PRAGMATIC BORROWING AND PERSONAL NAMES

English as the world's *lingua franca* and the popularity of Anglo-American culture practically throughout the world have resulted in English exerting a major influence on other languages, particularly in certain lexical fields (cf. Andersen 2014: 17). Research on anglicisms has mostly dealt with lexis, but has, in recent decades, begun to move beyond the word level and has started to include pragmatic and stylistic elements (see Prince 1988, Onysko 2009, Treffers-Daller 2010). It is now widely acknowledged that borrowings can convey a broad range of stylistic and pragmatic effects (cf. Onysko and Winter-Froemel 2011: 1550). Andersen thus argues for a broad definition of pragmatic borrowing that also includes associated speaker attitudes, taking into account 'sociolinguistic aspects' and considering 'relevant demographic predictors and factors such as register and style' (cf. Andersen 2014: 18, 24).

The reorientation towards the pragmatic aspects of borrowing has resulted in more research on factors that motivate the use of borrowed lexemes, 'such as the attitudes, symbolic values and prestige associated with the SL culture' (Andersen 2014: 21). Pragmatically borrowed items carry important signals about the borrower's attitudes. Although the influence of English on present-day Slovene is a case of remote language contact, English is nevertheless continuously present on Slovene territory through popular culture (cf. also Šabec 2018). By borrowing

English personal names (along with other borrowings from English), Slovene speakers participate in global trends, but such borrowing is done idiosyncratically and in a locally specific manner (see also Buchstaller 2008: 26, and Fischer 2015).

A study made by Onysko and Winter-Froemel (2011) explores the pragmatic motivations for lexical borrowing in more detail, and has yielded some findings which can, to a degree, also be applied to the borrowing of English personal names. Borrowing of names is related to linguistic innovation, and the main motive for it is to be found in the prestige and fashion of the SL culture. Undoubtedly, the global spread of the English language has had an impact on naming practices world-wide (for an overview in different languages, see Fischer 2015).

If we bear in mind the huge numbers of male and female names at disposal that already exist in the language and are quite unmarked, any introduction of new, marked name forms may seem superfluous. It is difficult to explain the motivation for the choice of a borrowed name over a native one in strictly linguistic terms. By choosing a foreign name, the parents try to introduce some local colour of the SL culture into their own. Fischer (2015: 238) observes that 'the deliberate giving of a name that has been taken from the English-speaking world implies a positive attitude towards the use of the English language and the values it is associated with'. Once a borrowed name becomes popular and frequent, its markedness begins to disappear; that is why we find loanword-exoticism doublets in Slovene such as *Patrik* and *Patrick*, the former so 'naturalised' that it was borrowed anew as *Patrick* in the 1990s (similar examples include *Ela* and *Ella*, *Sara* and *Sarah*). The reasons for such borrowing may be sociolinguistically diverse, but in the case of English names used in Slovenia the influence of pop culture and media is probably of primary importance.²

4. BORROWING OF PERSONAL NAMES IN SLOVENIA

The phenomenon of borrowing personal names is, naturally, not limited to Slovenia. It has been observed elsewhere in Europe and beyond (cf. Lenarčič 2012: 886; see also Gerhards and Hackenbroch 2000, and Fischer 2015).³ Name borrowing has also had a long tradition in Slovene culture. Many names of foreign

2 The same phenomenon is observable in Britain and the USA: new names that appear in lists of popular baby names frequently include popular film and TV-inspired first names.

3 The British themselves have had to come to terms with an influx of foreign personal names, such as *Gemma*, *Irene*, or *Claire*. Statistical data, however, should be viewed with some caution: the official UK statistics in 2013 place the name *Mohammed/Muhammad* just behind the most popular boy name *Oliver* for newborn boys and before *Jack* (www.ons.gov.uk). However, *Mohammed* is used in the UK for the naming of the newborn exclusively by Muslims and as such cannot be described as an import into the English language.

origin have been present in this area for such a long time that they are no longer felt to be foreign at all, e.g. numerous Biblical names and names of saints that have been fully adapted into Slovene and can be found in variant forms in most other European languages in countries with Christian tradition (*Janez*, *Tomaž*). Also borrowed centuries ago and completely adapted are some German names which testify to the strong influence of German culture on practically the entire Slovene territory (e.g. *Rudolf*, *Oto*, *Karel*, *Ida*, *Erna*). While names of German(ic) origin can be found throughout Slovenia, certain name borrowings of Italian (e.g. *Bruno*, *Franko*) and Hungarian (e.g. *Lajoš*, *Tibor*) origins remain restricted to the areas bordering on Italy and Hungary respectively (see SURS). Along with German names, some names that originate in Greek or Latin have been present for a long time and have become completely nativised (e.g. *Aleksander*, *Roman*, *Dijana*, *Ksenija*, *Mohor*, *Irena*). Later additions include names from Slavic languages (e.g. *Igor*, *Vanja*, *Uroš*, *Stanislav*, *Nataša*), which are also no longer felt to be foreign at all and are by now deeply rooted. Some of these newer additions to the pool of personal names are variants of the older forms; thus, *Nataša* co-exists along with *Natalija*.

During the recent decades, however, increasing numbers of new names of foreign origin have entered lists of birth in Slovenia. Although some of these have become quite familiar (e.g. *Karin*, *Iris*, *Ingrid*, *Ula*, *Arne*), others remain exotic and decidedly foreign, particularly if their spellings include non-Slovene characters (e.g. *Alex*, *Max* as opposed to *Aleks(ander)*, *Maks(imiljan)*), a hiatus (e.g. *Dorian*, *Diana* instead of the more homely *Dorijan*, *Dijana*), or double lettering (e.g. *Vanessa*, *Ulla*, *Ella*, *Emma*). The current trend in naming newborns in Slovenia therefore seems to be: the more foreign(-sounding and -looking), the better. Another apparent trend is the brevity of names, as increasing numbers of three- or four-letter names dominate the lists. Furthermore, there is a trend towards usage of imaginative names that are created by parents themselves and have no etymological background (see also Lenarčič 2012: 891); these express the name-givers' desire for individuality, are fashionable in a particular period and are expected to go out of use after some time (e.g. *Nal*, *Amar*, *Nia*, *Din*, *Lian*, *Naj*, *Ajna*, *Nejla*, *Nej*, to list just a few from the 2001–2015 top 200-name list).

4.1 English name borrowings in Slovenia, a brief historical overview

The time of the first language contact between English and Slovene cannot be established with any certainty, but the indirect contact between these two languages was certainly carried out via the intermediary German language and this took place centuries ago (cf. Sicherl 2015). The German influence is also noticeable in

some old name borrowings that can be traced back to their British origin.⁴ Thus, the first cultural influence of English is observable in some saints' names.

One of such early borrowings from English is the name *Ožbalt* (variant *Ožbolt*), which entered from the German form *Oswald*, and this can be traced back to the English name *Oswald* and its Old-English (OE) form *Osweald*.⁵ The 7th-century Northumbrian king Oswald became venerated as a saint, and the cult of St Oswald was started in Britain in the Middle Ages, spreading to Western and then Central Europe.⁶ In Slovenia, several churches in the north of the country (Carinthia, Styria) were consecrated to this saint as early as the 12th century, so the name must have been familiar to at least part of the Slovene population since⁷. In Slovene, the name has produced several shortened forms such as *Ožbe*/*Ožbej*/*Ožbi*, and variants *Ožbald*/*Ožbold*/*Osvald*/*Ozvald*. Most of these are very rare, but the form *Ožbolt* has resurfaced since 1991 as a name for newborns, remaining limited to the north of the country. Interestingly, the traditional Carinthian form *Ožbej* has gained ground since 1981, and has been on the rise in 2001–2015 (ranking as high as 70th of all male newborn names in that period); while still mostly used in the north, it has also spread to most other regions in Slovenia. *Ožbej* can serve as a classic example of a name that has been so completely adapted and nativised that its origin is felt to be native Slovene, particularly on account of the typical Carinthian ending *-ej*.

Other early name borrowings whose origins can be traced back to English are *Edvard* (< Eng. *Edward* < OE: *Ēadweard*), *Edita* (Eng. *Edith* < OE: *Eadgyth*/*Eadgyð*), and *Edvin* (Eng. *Edwin* < OE: *Eadwine*). These are not really perceived to be English at all by the present speakers of Slovene. As names of saints venerated by the Roman-Catholic Church they have spread successfully throughout Catholic Europe and some appear in the Slovene almanacs by Vodnik (1795–1797) (cf. Lenarčič 2012: 201). They have no doubt made their entrance into Slovene via German, and their popularity varied. Thus, *Edvard* peaked between 1931 and 1960, produced shortened forms *Edo* and *Edi*, but only the latter form is still recorded in the top-200 name lists. *Edvin* may have got a new lease of life

4 However, in the case of Germanic name borrowings, it is also possible that some have come in via continental West-Germanic dialects rather than from the British Isles or that they have had parallel development on both sides of the Channel (see *Robert* vs. *Rupert/Ruprecht* below).

5 The etymologies of the names are cited after Hanks et al. (2006), Lenarčič (2012), and Keber (2008). The statistical data on the rankings and regional distributions of individual names are provided by SURS.

6 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oswald_of_Northumbria (accessed October 2017)

7 The first church of St. Ožbalt in Jezersko dates back to the 12th century (Dr. Ferdinand Šerbelj, pers. comm. August 2015), and Sv. Ožbalt ob Dravi is mentioned for the first time as a place name in a document of St. Paul's Abbey in Lavanttal in Carinthia in 1372 (cf. http://www.kam.si/romarske_cerkve/ozbalt_ob_dravi.html; accessed August 2016).

within the growing Muslim population living in Slovenia (see Lenarčič 2012: 202), on account of its similarity to traditional Muslim names beginning in *Ed-* and/or ending in *-in*.⁸ Another saint name that originates from the British Isles, but seems to have gained popularity only recently, is *Patrik* (Eng. *Patrick* < Lat. *Patricius*). It had probably been known as the name of the Irish saint and as such appeared in various Slovene almanacs and in calendars, but had not been used as a personal name prior to 1971 when it started to appear in the national statistics. It entered the list of top 200 personal names in 1981–1990 (155th place), and the next decades saw an even steeper rise in its popularity. It was the 50th most popular name in the 1990s, and rose to the 31st place in 2001–2015. Also statistically recorded since 1971 is the foreign form *Patrick*, which was likewise on the rise in 1991–2000 (110th place) and 2001–2015 (155th place). Lenarčič (2012: 633) attributes the surge in popularity of *Patrik/Patrick* to the success of the American actor Patrick Swayze in the 1980s and 1990s.

Apart from *Patrik*, *Ožbej*, *Edita* and *Edi*, the statistical lists of popular names of the decades following 1960 cite new additions to the pool of personal names used in Slovenia. Judged from the synchronic point of view, some of these have gone completely native on account of their frequency/popularity and their form, which has allowed for unproblematic spelling and pronunciation (e.g. *Robert*, *Alan*, *Kevin*), and, consequently, rapid integration into the language system. Some others remain decidedly foreign-sounding and 'exotic' in the ears of most Slovene native speakers (e.g. *Zoe*, *Rubi*, *Liam*, *Ian*, *Nick*, *Erin*, *Emily*, *Vanessa*; the latter are mainly recent imports and still stand out even if their forms are unproblematic in terms of integration). Standing out among these imports is the name *Robert* as the most successful English-derived name borrowing of all time. It has been present in Slovene prior to 1930 and can be traced back to the German, French and English name *Robert* or its Latinised variant *Robertus* (< Old High German: *Hrodebert*; OE: *Hrēodbēorht*, *Hrodberht*, *Hrēodbēorð*, *Hrædbærð*, *Hrædberð*; Old French: *Robert*). The name, however, must have been familiar among Slovenes in an older form *Rupert* (from Germanic *Hrodberht*), as proven by place names like *Šentrupert*. *Robert* was an immensely popular name for male

8 Lenarčič (2012: 885) argues that names given to their children by Slovene citizens of Bosnian or Albanian origin remain foreign-sounding as they are used to 'express and retain their religious and national identity'. It appears, however, that names such as *Tarik* and *Lejla* are now used beyond the Muslim community. Lenarčič (2012: 887) also points out that many parents of Bosnian origin show a preference for names which are neither real Muslim names nor typical Slovene names (e.g. *Elvis*, *Almira*), while parents of Serbian or Croatian or mixed origin opt for names which are French, English, or in some other way foreign-sounding. A similar trend has been observed in France with parents of Arab origin, who often choose a Greek name like *Yannis/Yanis*, the form of which may be reminiscent of Arab names, to avoid the traditional Christian variant *Jean* (see Lenarčič 2012: 342).

newborns in Slovenia for two decades, between 1961 and 1980, when it ranked 4th among all male names. It has experienced some decline in popularity since, but has always ranked among the top 200 names. It has been frequent all over Slovenia, and is presently in the 19th place of all male names. It has produced a shortened form *Robi*, which has been popular since 1971 and can be found throughout Slovenia. The variant *Robin* is rarely used, but has been constantly present since 1961 when first recorded. The form *Robin* can also be found used as a female name, but this is much rarer.

Some currently popular names (e.g. *Liam*, *Alan*, *Ian*, *Kevin*, *Tara*) can be ascribed English source, though their respective origins may not be English but most often Celtic; however, they have been introduced into Slovene in their anglicized forms. Often the popularity of a name can undoubtedly be attributed to the influence of an English-speaking culture or a prominent personality from that culture enjoying strong media presence (e.g. *Elvis*, *Diana*, *Kevin*, *Patrick*). Some of these names have undergone interesting development after their adaptation. Thus, *Alan*, whose origin is either Breton or other Celtic, was first recorded between 1961 and 1970, and then made it to the top 200 male names; it ranked 134th in 1971–1980, 137th in 1981–1990, 136th in 1991–2000, and 164th between 2001 and 2015, its popularity prevailing in the south-west of Slovenia. Its popularity was even surpassed by the variant *Alen*, which ranked 77th between 1971 and 1980, 35th between 1981 and 1990, 25th between 1991 and 2000, and 39th in 2001–2015. This variant is popular throughout Slovenia, but, again, prevails in the south-west (32nd place). However, the form *Alen* is mainly found among the Croatian, Serbian and Bosnian-Muslim population living in Slovenia (see also Lenarčič and his explanation of the use of the name in ex-Yugoslavia in Lenarčič 2012: 30–31). *Elvis* (the etymology of the name is not transparent, the origin may be the Irish form *Ailbhe*) was first recorded as a name in Slovenia between 1961 and 1970, and experienced a sharp rise in popularity between 1971 and 1990 (ranking 99th in 1971–1980 and 62nd in 1981–1990). There was some decline between 1991 and 2000 (but still 107th rank), after 2000 it left the list of the top 200 boy names. At first, its appearance can be linked to the popularity of Elvis Presley (peaking between 1953 and 1970), but afterwards the name has obviously caught on among the Muslim population of Slovenia irrespective of Presley's fame. Its rankings are highest in the regions with a dense Muslim population, and its use peaked well after Presley's death in 1977. Lenarčič (2012: 213) attributes its popularity among the Muslims to its similarity to some traditional Muslim names beginning in *E(l)-* and ending in *-is*, such as *Enis* (compare similar development of *Edvin* above). The popularity of *Diana/Dijana*, although first recorded between 1931 and 1940 and relatively rare in the following decades, rose suddenly between 1981 and 2000, coinciding

with the media presence of Princess Diana throughout the 1980s and 1990s, and declining after 2001.⁹

Other recent additions from the latest lists provided by SURS are forms like *Melani/Melanie*, *Samanta/Samantha*, *Sarah*, *Lana*, *Ian*, *Ella*, *Liam*, and *Lucas*. In most of these cases, statistical data prove regional differences in their distribution. As was the case throughout history, Slovenia's bordering areas seem more prone to the acceptance of foreign names.

Confirming the recent trend of brevity of names, some popular shortened forms from long established names may have been produced under English influence. Thus, *Nik* may be either shortened from the long nativized forms *Nikolaj/Niko*, or created from the English form *Nick*. Similarly, *Tim* may have been shortened from the traditional *Timotej*, or modelled after the English name *Tim*, and *Tom* either shortened from the traditional *Tomaž/Tomi* or modelled after the English name *Tom*.

Finally, the latest trend of unique, creative names can be potentially ascribed to the influence of (particularly) American culture as of that foreign culture that is considered prestigious in the Slovene area. We can assume that the naming practices of Slovene parents are influenced by celebrities from the popular culture and their own names for children. Thus, the trend of unique names seen with Hollywood stars echoes with Slovene celebrities (e.g. names like *Shiloh Nouvel* and *Maddox Chivan* in Angelina Jolie's family vs. *Šajana* and *Kanenas* for the children of two respective Slovene pop singers) as well as with other young parents in Slovenia. That such naming patterns are actually borrowed has been confirmed by some parents' replies in our questionnaire.

4.2 English name borrowings in literature and in colloquial use

Another influence of Anglo-American culture can be detected in abbreviated name forms used in colloquial Slovene. These have not been names given to newborns, but rather fashionable nicknames typically used for grown-ups in the circle of friends and family. Thus, *Franc* can be referred to as *Frenk*, *Karel* as *Čarli*, and *Janez* as *Džoni*.

Žarki se plazijo po tleh, topli. **Frenk** visi na oknu in stoka, joj, ko bi bil zdaj zunaj. Meni pa je dobro in mirno. (D. Jančar: *Noč nasilja*; Nova beseda)

Najbolj zadovoljen je bil novi reprezentančni zdravnik dr. Vasja Kruh: nihče ni poškodovan, le **Džoni** Novak čuti rahle bolečine v desni nogi. (Delo 2000, Nova beseda)

9 The trend of borrowing British royal names may be seen in the popularity of *Edvard* (see above) in the 1930s and the following decades, and may continue with *Zara*. *Zara* is not originally English, it was first used in English in the translation of Voltaire's play *Zaïre*; alternatively, its popularity in Slovenia may be attributable to the name of the Spanish fashion store Zara. As a girl's name, *Zara* was first recorded in Slovenia in 2001–2013 and immediately got high rankings (68th), becoming popular throughout the area.

Nič velikega se ne zgodi v Kekcu, čeprav tudi njegova zgodba ni kar tako: Kekec (z vso intenzivnostjo ga predstavlja Žiga Saksida) je postal predsednik Slovenije, in to prav zoporno odločen, Rožle pa je njegov glavni oponent s terorističnimi prebliski (z zbirko njegovih homemade tempiranih bomb se ukvarja prebrisani Grabnar – Janez Habič *Džoni*); pravzaprav predstava velike stvari minimalizira do neznatnosti in majhne povečuje do neznosnosti, oboje s komičnim učinkom. (Delo 2000, Nova beseda)

Pravzaprav je moj drugi najstarejši prijatelj. Prvi je *Čarli* Novak. Ne po letih. (Delo 2000, Nova beseda)

Somewhat surprisingly, such English nicknames can be found even in the classics of Slovene literature.¹⁰

”Ne jezi se nad mano, *Fanny*; glej, zunaj že skoro prihaja jesen in jeseni je moje pregrešno srce najbolj nemirno... Ne jezi se nad mano, *Fanny*, in oprosti mi, kadar te razžalim.“ Francka je čutila gorkoto njegovega lica in ni razumela njegovih besed, slišala je samo njegov glas, ki je bil tako mehak in blag, da jo je božal kakor z ljubeznivo roko. (I. Cankar: *Na klancu*, 1902; https://sl.wikisource.org/wiki/Na_klancu)

Ko je stala med durmi, se je vzdignil v postelji, obraz se mu je spačil v zlobi in v strahu in klical je s tako hripavo kričočim, sovražnim in prosečim glasom, da se je vzdramil onkraj potoka učitelj Šviligoj, stopil k oknu ter zmajal z glavo. ”*Beti!* Pojdi od mene, ampak tako ne pojdi! (I. Cankar: *Ženitba kancelista Jareba*, 1907; <https://nl.ijs.si/imp/wikivir/dl/WIKI00322-1907.html>)

Tvoje življenje pa je kakor drevo, ki bi dajalo žlahten sad lačnim in žejnim. Če naju Bog vidi ...“ -- ”Čakaj, da ti povem, kako sta Binček pa *Suzi* ... Minka, na mleko glejte ... kako sta Binček pa *Suzi* ... o, dobro jutro, *Suzi!* Kaj pa Binček?“ (I. Cankar: *Ponesrečen feljton*, 1910; https://sl.wikisource.org/wiki/Ponesrečen_feljton)

5. ANALYSIS OF BORROWERS' ATTITUDES

Our final aim is to find out whether parents who prefer foreign names over native ones share any common sociological characteristics and what their reasons were for having opted for names from an English source for their children. For this purpose, a questionnaire was prepared and parents of kindergarten children with (possibly) English-derived names were asked to complete it. In this way, some sociolinguistic signals about the borrowers' attitudes were sought to be analysed.

10 Probably the first to use an English name in his work was the Slovene dramatist Anton Tomaž Linhart with his play *Miss Jenny Love* (1780). The tragedy, however, was written by Linhart in German.

First, 50 questionnaires were distributed among parents of kindergarten children aged 2 to 5 to inquire about their child's name(s) and how the choice was made. Thus, we inquired about the child's full name, the names of the parents (and, thus, indirectly, about the parents' origin), the parents' education, their place of residence (village/town/city), and their age. The second part of the questionnaire aimed to establish how the child's name was actually chosen, i.e. was the choice made by both parents, just the mother, just the father, the grandparents or somebody else; the parent was asked to state whether he/she had a preference for traditional/homely names, foreign names, or new/creative names. When asked about the reasons for their choice, the parent could choose among several answers: the name was traditional in their family, the name was quite special and borne by nobody else, the name was identical to that of some friends'/acquaintances'/relatives' child, the name was found in a book of names, the child was named after somebody whom the parent admires, the child was named after a character in a film/book/series, the child was named after a celebrity (e.g. a singer, actor, sportsperson), or the parent was asked to state some other reason for their choice. To verify whether the meaning, longevity and origin of the name had played a role in the name selection process, the parents were asked about these factors as well. They were asked to state whether they were aware of the meaning of the chosen name or not or whether the chosen name intentionally had no meaning and was created by them. As for the longevity, they were asked to state their preference for short names, long names or names consisting of two or more parts (e.g. Ana Marija). When asked about the origin of the chosen name, they had to state whether they had chosen a nativized name, a foreign name, or a name which cannot be assigned an origin. The final part of the questionnaire assessed how premeditated the name choice had been. The parents were asked whether the name had been chosen some time before the birth, in the maternity hospital, or sometime after the birth. Finally, the parents were asked whether the child is now called by its full name or whether the name has been shortened (and into which form) or whether another name is used for the child.

The analysis of 50 questionnaires showed that in only 15 cases the name was undoubtedly English(-influenced), in 10 other cases the influence of English/American was possible (e.g. *Kayla*), so the results of the analysis presented below should be viewed with caution as the sample is small and conclusions tentative. It turned out that the origin of the parents indeed influenced the name choice: non-Slovene parents from ex-Yugoslavia show a preference for foreign names, usually to express their national/religious identity (e.g. *Lejla*, *Aleksandar*), but these are never English-derived. If the chosen name is English-derived, it is given to children coming from entirely Slovene families or mixed families. The factors that were completely irrelevant in the name choice were the parents' education, their age, and place of residence. Whenever an English name was chosen, either both parents were involved

(83%; in 16 % of these a sibling had a say too), only the mother (8 %) or only the father (8 %). The parents who had chosen an English name for their child have expressed a preference for foreign names in only 25 % of the cases, 58 % stated they preferred new, creative names, and, understandably, only 17 % liked traditional names. When asked about the reasons for their choice, the influence of the English-speaking cultures comes to the fore: 50 % of the parents have named a film/book/TV-series character or an actor that had influenced their choice. The rest of the replies show dispersion: the choice was made by a sibling, the name was found in a book of names, or was chosen because it “sounds good with the family name”, or was chosen on account of its unproblematic pronunciation (e.g. in the case of a mixed Slovene-Chinese family), etc. When asked about the meaning of the chosen name, only 25 % stated that they were aware of the meaning, to 75% the meaning of the name was irrelevant. The brevity of the name was another issue: 42 % preferred short names, 17 % preferred long names, none stated a preference for two-part names, and 41 % explicitly said the longevity of the name was irrelevant. The answers about the origin of the chosen name roughly correspond to the replies about their preferences expressed earlier (see above); thus, 42 % preferred foreign names, 8 % preferred traditional homely names (the names they chose were obviously perceived as completely nativized), to the rest the origin was irrelevant. The choice of all English-derived names was premeditated (100 %), the name had always been chosen well before the birth. Finally, all the names seem to have stuck: in only 8 % of the cases the name has been shortened (e.g. *Oliver* into *Oli*).

6. CONCLUSION

Although parents in Slovenia today are free to choose the name they like, their creative imagination is still largely influenced by existing cultural practices and beliefs (see also Gerhards 2010: 147-153). The deliberate choice of a name taken from an English-speaking culture is underlain by a positive attitude towards the use of the English language and the values it is associated with. The tendencies towards individualization and transnationalization (as suggested by Gerhards 2010) are confirmed, if only indirectly, by the findings yielded by the analysis of borrowers' attitudes (section 5).

When dealing with English-derived names adopted by parents in Slovenia, two groups of names emerge: nativized names with origin that can be traced back to an English-speaking culture, and English-derived and -influenced 'exoticisms' of the latest period (e.g. *Zoe*, *Ruby*, *Erin*). The division between the two groups is not always as clear-cut as one would wish for, and a subgroup can be formed consisting of names that are deviations from long established nativized names, but whose present forms have probably been influenced by a foreign source (e.g. *Mark*

instead of traditional *Marko*). Judging from the parents' answers in the questionnaire, such names are felt to have been nativized already (e.g. *Mark*, *Tim*).

Another issue that has been opened up for possible future research concerns the durability of the new names in the language: will Tim Kevin Ravnjak prove to be a model for future name-givers?

With fashion and the aesthetics of names gaining in importance, it can be expected that the pool of names is about to grow in diversity in terms of origin and phonetic/orthographic form. However, it remains to be seen if this trend is to contribute to transcultural hybridity and the formation of multi-ethnic identities.

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Corpus *Nova beseda* (accessed October 2017)

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Anglo-ameriški kulturni vpliv v Sloveniji: primer osebnih imen

Prispevek se osredotoča na težnjo slovenskih staršev po poimenovanju svojih otrok z imeni, ki so sposojena iz angleščine. Statistični podatki potrjujejo, da se je v zadnjih desetletjih povečal vnos tujejezičnih in s tem tudi angleških osebnih imen, statistični sezname pa kažejo, kako pri osebnih imenih eksotizmi (npr. *Liam*, *Patrick*, *Nick*, ki se uvrščajo med dvesto najbolj priljubljenih imen za zadnje statistično obdobje 2001–2015) tekmujejo z imeni, ki so bila prevzeta in podmačena pred mnogimi leti (npr. *Patrik*), ali pa jih tokrat prvič uvajamo v slovenščino. Vnos imenskih sposojenk iz angleščine obravnavamo z vidika pragmatičnega sposojanja, kot to opisuje Andersen (2014). Podan je zgodovinski pregled sposojanja angleških osebnih imen v slovenščino ter opisana vloga angleščine kot jezika dajalca. Takšne pragmatično sposojene prvine izkazujejo tudi sociolingvistične značilnosti sposojevalcev, ki jih analiziramo s pomočjo vprašalnika, ki so ga izpolnjevali starši vrtčevskih otrok v starosti 2–6 let. Ob tem skušamo ovrednotiti vpliv anglo-ameriške kulture na Slovenskem v tem segmentu.

Ključne besede: kulturni vpliv, angleščina, slovenščina, osebna imena

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Hate Speech and French Mediaeval Literature

Miha Pintarič

Summary

Hate speech is spoken or written word which expresses a hostile attitude of a dominating majority towards any kind of minority. The author analyses a few examples of hate speech in literary history and concludes that such a phenomenon is typical of *The Song of Roland*, whether uttered in a direct way or spoken between the lines. One will expect hate speech in epic and heroic poetry, less in the Troubadour poetry. Yet we come across this awkward characteristic even in their love poetry. To be quite clear, in the poetry of Bernart de Ventadorn. The last part of the article is about the courtly romance. The author concludes that hate speech can only be controlled by love, not any, but the love that makes one a better person, and which the Troubadours called *fin'amors*.

Key words: hate speech, epics, troubadours, courtly romance, middle ages

Hate speech is spoken or written word which expresses a hostile attitude of a dominant majority to some kind of minority (minorities, indeed, do not openly attack the majority, and if they do, one should have a look into what they really are). The majority vs minority relationship can be defined in terms of legal power, ideology (religious, racial), money, social status or, simply, number. The limits between 'majority' and 'minority' are rather vague, this is why any precise definition will be impossible in such cases, and the meanings of the respective expressions most relative; for a would-be marginal (group), well endowed with funds, can buy himself (herself or itself) a way to power, and exercise an equivalent kind of tyranny he, she or it has been complaining to be a victim of. This is quite possible though not necessary. Numbers are not decisive since »statwistics« will serve you in any position.

Hatred will be perceived by the target persons or target groups as unjustified, and hate speech will be experienced as threatening. In other cases, 'hate speech' works under cover (Shakespeare, as always, is a treasury of examples: Iago is one of a hypocrite trying to make the best out of his situation of a marginal whose intentions are pernicious (*Othello*); another, Antony (*Julius Caesar* III, ii), delivers a speech to get moral satisfaction – and, in fact, much more than that – from an apparently lost cause, by his art of rhetorics: a minority thus overpowers a majority and puts itself in its place; Iago is vicious and will be punished while Antony, pursuing a just and noble cause, will be rewarded. Shakespeare believes in some universal moral order, just as mediaeval and most renaissance authors do). (Yates)

The expression of hatred is universal, so much so that one does not have to understand the meaning of what is being said for a discourse to be qualified as 'hate speech';¹ non-linguistic markers may be enough for him (or her) to realise he or she had better bundle up his or her belongings and vanish into thin air while he or she still can. A few well-known examples of hate speech are Hitler and Goebbels's anti-Jewish addresses, communist ideological discourse which preceded the physical elimination of their then ideological opponents (and with them, many who were in fact not); Tito's speech from the balcony of the University of Ljubljana was typical, as well as this *locus verecundiae* itself; the speeches that spawned the latest Balkan wars: the memorandum of the members of Serbian Academy, Milošević's infamous 'Ne čujem dobro!' – 'I cannot hear you!', and his address at Ušće, with an attendance of one million). Others speak in silence.

Everything exists in opposites. Pre-socratics thought so, and Hegel did. Hatred has its opposite, and so has hate speech. Love as the opposite of hate should

1 To me everything uttered by the North Korean news presenter is hate speech although I do not understand a word of Korean.

produce 'love speech'. It is very doubtful, though, that the crowd listening to words of love and peace being delivered in a voice which exceedingly reminds one of barking, will get the message. It rather feels that there is not much difference between 'love speech' and 'hate speech', if there is any between love and hate. Hate produces hate speech even if it uses the 'opposite' discourse, the words of love. It does not have to change the words, not even their meaning, only their sense. The problem, however, is also terminological. While it is pretty clear what one means by 'hate', it is not so with 'love'. From human to divine, from passionate to charitable, the variety of choice is surprising, and so is the nature of different kinds of 'love'. Hate speech is not, here, Catullus' *Odi et amo*, or a troubadour song descending from the heights of a quasi-mystical experience (the likeness is very strong), it is not psychologically grounded or 'individual', hate speech refers to a group, or an individual only as a member of that group. Hate (speech) will therefore mean something like the opposite of 'charitable love' (speech) as a secular ideal, that of Jean de Meung, for instance. Essentially, it has nothing to do either with the love of God, or with the Salvation Army. Social markers of hate speech can be stronger than its rhetorical markers.

Hate speech is often not grounded in any real circumstances, but even when it is, it is unethical and should not be perpetrated. In the Middle Ages, the 'hate-speech' label did not exist although the thing itself did. The reality was interpreted dualistically, as black and white rather than in full colour. Feelings were stronger, especially those of shame and guilt (someone else's, preferably), as well as other moral categories. Hate speech addresses fear. As such, it is universal, even animals understand it to a degree similar to humans.

THE SONG OF ROLAND (LA CHANSON DE ROLAND)

There is no unrequited hate in the *Song of Roland*, which can itself be read (or listened to as it used to be) as one long hate speech. Everybody hates everybody, exceptions are few (among those are Charlemaine and Roland, Roland and Oliver...). Charlemaine hates Marsile, and the feeling is reciprocated, only Marsile has deceitful intentions which Charlemaine has not. Every soldier in one army hates every soldier in the other army without having ever met him (not her). As if it was not enough, there are factions that hate each other, which is even more evident on the Christian side (Ganelon and Roland, for example). The 'commanding officers' rather like the idea supported by Ganelon:

To your misfortune will you listen to a fool ... little he cares by what death we die. It is not right that a counsel of pride proceed any further; let us leave the fools and listen only to the wise. (Roland 2/15)

Ganelon has had enough of warfare and would like to return home. But Roland, no. He knows he has a mission to complete, he can see right through the changing world and grasp the essence of things. He finds no listening ear, though. When Roland suggests Ganelon should be the messenger to the king Marsile, which is as much as being doomed to a bitter end, Ganelon's discourse changes to hate speech, and Roland's immediately after that.

When Ganelon sees that now Roland is mocking him, his mortification is so great that he nearly bursts with anger. His senses almost leave him, but he says to the count: 'Indeed, I have no cause to love you; you have brought an unjust judgment on me...' (Roland 7-8/22-23)

The situation becomes even more complicated after Ganelon suggests Roland should lead the rearguard. These men are soldiers, surely, and they should be ready to fight and die. Even so, not all of them are to the same degree eager to die. These soldiers need not hate every particular enemy (although hate probably helps in battle). Roland is hoping enough of them would grasp the situation from his point of view to continue the conquest. In 'modern' view, Roland is the main perpetrator of hatred in the *Song* with his name in the title. The mediaeval viewpoint of hate speech, however, may be more pragmatic, meant either as a functional address before combat, a motivation and an ideological simplification with the purpose of reducing the enemy's human side and make it ethically acceptable to kill him (her?). It recalls the incident which occurred at Saint Eustache in Paris, when the two factions of pretenders to the throne, the Armagnacs and the Bourguignons, fell out with each other, or rather, the Armagnacs were ambushed and slaughtered, then roses were strewn over the corpses to neutralise the stench.

A variety of paradoxical hate speech is also an 'insult' which produces an ambiguous impact (but which all the heroes of *The Song of Roland* generously give away to their enemy) :

... essayant de ravalier autrui au rang de non-locuteur (d'où le recours à des termes d'adresse dépréciatifs de type non-humain / plus ou moins animé), le code utilisé pour ce faire reste néanmoins éminemment humain, dans le sens où le langage ne peut s'adresser qu'à un autre locuteur ... l'insulte [est] un acte de langage à prendre en compte dans les rituels de solidarité ... (Lagorgette 330)

THE TROUBADOUR POETRY

If there is a safe haven in the ocean of mediaeval literary hate speech, it ought to be the troubadour poetry. But is it really? Certainly not. Not only Bertran de Born

and the likes of him were past masters of hate speech, engaging their feudal lords in battling against each other or against a third party, and ending up in Dante's *Hell* (XXVIII, 118 ss),² warfare was the essential way of life – if not its meaning – of these noblemen who lived on the ideal as contradictory as the *joven*, spending in profusion what they did not have and then restoring it by making violence to the other. Hate speech can be found in the very *cansós*, 'chansons d'amour' –

S'eu en volgues dire lo ver,
eu sai be de cui mou l'enjans:
d'aquelas c'amon per aver.
E son merchandadas venaus!
Messongers en fos eu e faus!
Vertat en dic vilanamen;
E peza me car eu no.n men! – ,

just as in the *sirventès* with all kinds of topic, preferably war and military campaigns, or just plunder. It is the sublime 'chantre d'amour', Bertran de Ventadorn, though, who calls the fair sex, well, some of them, 'merchandadas venaus' – in a *cansó*... If this is not hate speech, let me know what hate speech is. (Hamlin 103)

COURTLY ROMANCES

French courtly romances are texts impeccable in terms of politeness and respect of the courtly code of conduct. Courtly heroes may sometimes yield to the temptation and satisfaction of putting the other in a position of the underdog, this is nevertheless the least typical of their genre. There is violence, yes, and the whole feudal world is founded on the principle of violence, i.e. the reinforcement of the will of the stronger. Which is done by the application of an individual's power (his own or his army's). Courtly romances are full of violence although not in the same way as epic poetry since violence is not in the centre of attention and is rarely spoken of in a direct way (besides, it is always an individual who makes it and an individual who takes it).

In Chrétien de Troyes' *Erec and Enide*, Enide tells her husband of the rumors about him, namely, people are saying that he has withdrawn from chivalric life because he has found too much happiness in his marriage. He has become a *recreanz*, which is almost as much as a coward. Erec suddenly becomes rude to his wife and

2 Indeed, G. Guiran, in an article on Bertran de Born, states that the violence and its terminology in the poetry of this poet are not to be understood as his own, individual 'property', but as »la cérémonie collective dans laquelle la classe aristocratique des guerriers trouve la justification de son existence«. (Guiran 247)

stops even speaking to her. It is obvious that in this case, silence has taken the role of hate speech, which the situation calls for though the temporary animosity of Erec towards Enide never gets as far as to be expressed properly. Characters other than Erec or Enide speak with hostility not so often *to* them but *about* them, i.e. indirectly.

The count, continuing to rail
at Erec, could he be attained,
made threats he would not be restrained
from promptly having Erec's head.

Directly, he addresses the men of the posse chasing Erec:

'May that man's future fate be dread
Who fails to spur with all his might!
The man who can behead the knight
And give me one I so detest
I shall consider serves me best.

(*Erec* pp. 103-104)

Another villain count, Oringle, is even worse, he beats Enide – and what kind of knight is a knight who beats women? – but never really directly addresses her by using 'hate speech'.³

Hate is the opposite of love. Philosophically, and particularly in the Middle Ages, Love means 'being' while hate corresponds to 'non-being.' Hate is evil, love is good (this is a very generalised statement which may sometimes prove wrong but is true on the whole). Since evil is nothing, hate speech is a vehicle for nothing. The supreme Good is the aim of all human aspiration and, at the same time, the universal flow of goodness. Hate speech is the effort evil opposes to this flow in order to stop it. Evil cannot win but it does cause a great deal of grief. To say that evil is nothing, in this sense, disregards entirely the individual and his (or her) desires, plans, frustrations, tragedies etc. They are indeed so small when looked at from a distance that they seem not to have any real existence at all. They do, however, have an existence, as 'small' as it may be. They do matter, just as global or cosmic events do, or more.

'Nothing will come of nothing' – the word of king Lear is prophetic. Whoever does not give love, gives nothing and will get nothing. Let us just think of the troubadours and one of their key values, 'donars', for which Marcabru says it is the brother of 'jovens'! The youth gives without thinking twice. Since it has no

3 On violence, but not hate speech, see also M. Pintarič.

wealth, it is generous in giving itself, which is a spiritual gift when given and understood properly. And whoever is ready to kill for possession will lose even what he (or she) has got. Courtly romances and epic poetry offer enough examples. Whoever has patiently renounced everything without ulterior motive, will get it all. Miracles and different stories support it. (*Jongleur*) For renouncement leads to transformation, and transformation to conversion. There is 'transformation' in the *Song of Roland*, in its most rude form since it is forced upon candidates by threats. But there is one in the *Chevalier au barisel* (The Knight with a barrel), and it is a conversion most 'organic', one is tempted to say, although it may not look so. It happens by the grace of God. One tear fills up the whole barrel, and the knight is saved... (on conversion in mediaeval poetry, see *Poésie*)

And what has all this got to do with hate speech? This is precisely what the last example should clarify: renouncing hate speech, even if it is only replaced by silence, the 'good' silence, may be the first step towards integrating the flow of good that holds up the universe. One does not even have to renounce it, he (or she) can just forget about it (which regularly happens in states of modified consciousness, like when falling in love – *amors melhura*, said the troubadours over and over again, did they not?). Love of whatever sort should make one a better person if it is true. And there will be no need for hate speech ever again.

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Discours de haine et la littérature française du Moyen Âge

Discours de haine est parole proférée ou écrite qui exprime une attitude hostile de la majorité dominante envers une minorité quelconque. Après avoir analysé quelques exemples de 'discours de haine' de l'histoire (littéraire) plus ou moins récente, l'auteur trouve que ce discours, soit exprimé directement soit sous-entendu, est typique de la *Chanson de Roland*. On s'attendait, d'ailleurs, au discours de haine dans la poésie épique, ce qui n'était pas le cas de la poésie des troubadours. Même là, cependant, on rencontre cette attitude gênante, et non uniquement dans les sirventès (chansons des serviteurs, chantant des valeurs morales etc.), dans la chanson d'amour (cansò), pareillement. Non uniquement chez Bertran de Born, dans la poésie de Bernart de Ventadorn également. Le dernier passage porte sur le roman courtois avant de conclure que l'on ne peut maîtriser le 'discours de haine' que par l'amour, dans le sens dynamique, un amour qui rend l'homme meilleur.

Mots clés : discours de haine, épopée, troubadours, roman courtois, moyen âge

Sovražni govor in francoska srednjeveška književnost

Sovražni govor je govorjena ali pisana beseda, ki izraža sovražni odnos prevladujoče večine do kakršne koli manjšine. Avtor analizira nekaj primerov sovražnega govora v bolj ali manj sodobni (literarni) zgodovini in ugotovi, da je takšen govor, bodisi neposredno bodisi med vrsticami, značilen za *Pesem o Rolandu*. Sicer pa je avtor pričakoval sovražni govor v epski poeziji, manj pa v trubadurski. Vendar tudi tam naletimo na to nerodno značilnost, in ne samo v sirventezi (pesmi, ki jih pojejo oprode in opevajo moralne vrednote etc.), prav tako v kanconi, ki je vendarle ljubezenska pesem. In to ne le pri Bertranu de Bornu, temveč celo v pesmih Bernarta de Ventadorna. Zadnji del članka tematizira dvorski roman in sklene z mislijo, da lahko sovražni govor obvladamo samo z ljubeznijo, in sicer s takšno, ki naredi človeka boljšega, to pa je *fin'amors*.

Ključne besede: sovražni govor, epska poezija, trubadurji, dvorski roman, srednji vek

Le colbertisme et les grandes comédies de Molière

Boštjan Marko Turk

Synopsis

La présente étude vise à répondre à la question du substrat que le colbertisme, l'idéologie dominante du règne de Louis XIV, aurait pu présenter dans les grandes comédies de Molière. Le mercantilisme « à la Roi-Soleil » faisait notamment appel à la classe bourgeoise qui « tambour battant » entraînait sur les tréteaux de l'histoire. L'attitude de Molière *versus* « la gent épicière » fut ambiguë, dans le sens plénier du terme. Si on prend comme critère du comique les thèses d'Henri Bergson, exposées dans son essai *Le Rire*, on constate certains points faibles dans ce qui devrait être le persiflage intégral du bourgeois entrepris dans les grandes comédies. Comme explication, on donne l'hypothèse suivante : par un réflexe de défense le dramaturge n'aurait pu accepter la classe qui montait et dont il faisait partie. La raison en serait que le statut du comédien l'empêcha de faire la même manœuvre qu'eux : de monter à l'échelle sociale. Les gens que côtoyait Molière furent aux yeux de « l'honnête homme » – des parias. Molière faisait des gorges chaudes des bourgeois sans s'apercevoir que le temps de la noblesse – laquelle il n'osait pas critiquer – n'était plus. Les événements du 1789 l'ont démontré.

Mots-clefs : Molière, comédie, colbertisme, bourgeois, comique, Henri Bergson, monomanie, mécanique, vivant, souplesse, figure rhétorique.

Les grandes comédies de caractère que Jean Baptiste Poquelin-Molière a réalisées entre 1662 et 1673 (*l'École des femmes* (Molière 1956, 443, 1),¹ 1662 ; *l'Avare* (Molière 1956, 341, 2), 1668 ; *le Tartuffe* (Molière, 1956, 681, 1), 1670 ; *Le Bourgeois gentil-homme* (Molière, 1956, 514, 2), 1670 et *le Malade imaginaire* (Molière, 1956, 825, 2), 1673) pourraient se réduire à un dénominateur commun qui, au premier point de vue, présente une équivocité. La période où ces œuvres ont été créées coïncide avec le règne du Roi-Soleil qui unissait le royaume afin de mieux asseoir son autorité. Il met en place un vaste système qu'on appelle le colbertisme, mouvement indissociable de l'acmé de la monarchie absolue. Comme la définition du vocable « colbertisme » pourrait exclure des éléments qu'elle ne saurait intégrer, il vaudrait mieux déceler ses options fondamentales au lieu de mettre au point la proposition énonçant une simple équivalence entre l'idée et l'ensemble des termes connus qui l'expliciteraient, puisque le colbertisme est avant tout la grande analogie reflétant l'esprit du siècle :

Les uns appellent colbertisme la ferme application des règles économiques de l'ancien régime en général désignées sous le nom de mercantilisme. On ne peut affirmer qu'ils se trompent : ils usent plutôt du pléonisme et pratiquent l'art des lapalissades. D'autres nomment colbertisme le primat de l'État sur la finance, l'industrie et la marchandise ; voire le dirigisme étatique ; mais ils oublient que Jean-Baptiste Colbert eut une doctrine plus ouverte et une pratique plus souple que ne le voudrait leur définition. En fait si nous devons coûte que coûte donner droit de cité au terme de colbertisme,² il devrait surtout servir à désigner ce qui fut la méthode originale et la gloire du collaborateur de Louis XIV (...) Cette tournure d'esprit s'accommodait exactement avec celle du Roi et renforçait la solidarité de l'équipe dirigeante (Bluche 1986, 207).

Le point de départ du colbertisme est notamment l'idée que

Le prince, dont la puissance repose sur l'or et sa collecte par l'impôt, doit s'appuyer sur la classe des marchands et favoriser l'essor industriel et commercial de la Nation afin qu'un excédent commercial permette l'entrée des métaux précieux.³

Le négoce fut le premier souci du nouveau système mercantiliste : « *Car rien, pas même la religion, ne touchait Colbert autant que le commerce du royaume* » (Boulenger 1911, 348). Comme le centre du royaume est la cour, Louis XIV « *pour parvenir à ce but, veille à l'élimination des contre-pouvoirs qui lui font ombrage : il prive ainsi*

1 *L'École des femmes* est indissociable de *La critique de l'École des femmes*, une glose qui se propose d'expliquer les « pour » et les « contre » quant à l'acceptation de la première.

2 L'adjectif relationnel, dérivé du nom propre est « colbertien » et non « colbertise » : à comparer : « *Le fer de lance de la politique maritime colbertienne* » (Bluche 1986, 203).

3 Cf. : <https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mercantilisme> (consulté le 3 juillet, 2018).

la noblesse des responsabilités gouvernementales qu'il confie à la bourgeoisie » (Horville 1994, 142). Cela ne fut pas sans lien avec une norme qui se mettait en place :

Durant la première partie du 17^e siècle, les extravagances de comportement et la fantaisie étaient acceptées et même parfois appréciées, il s'établit progressivement des règles de plus en plus rigides. Chacun doit se situer à l'intérieur des cadres bien déterminés. La singularité n'est plus admise ; elle est dénoncée comme étant anormale (Horville 1994, 143).

Le classicisme, famille d'esprit à laquelle appartenait Molière, ne pourrait pourtant être appréhendé qu'en relation à la monarchie absolue dont il incarnait de grands principes. Ses auteurs, parmi lesquels Molière, furent même titulaires de fonctions à la cour : ils adressaient fréquemment les dédicaces de leurs œuvres au souverain de la France et de Navarre. Participer « *aux stratégies de la gloire* » (Burke 1995, 1), c'était pour chacun d'entre eux contribuer à former « *l'esprit dans le siècle le plus éclairé qui fut jamais* » (Voltaire 1948, 15). Ils ne furent pas les seuls : chacun, de « la gent épicière à la haute noblesse », qui tendait à remplir les postulats de « l'honnête homme », travaillait dans le même sens.

Pourtant, la notion-clef du classicisme « l'honnête homme », est un terme que le grand modèle des dramaturges fixait comme la cible préférée dans ses pièces. Le bourgeois qui incarnerait les valeurs de « l'honnête homme » est un des points de mire le plus souvent exploités chez lui.

Molière représente des scélérats ou des vicieux de grande envergure, et jette le ridicule sur les honnêtes gens : ainsi Tartuffe a de l'allure, et c'est Orgon qui est un sot : Célimène se tire de l'affaire par le mensonge et des révérences, et Alceste est dupé, etc. Molière a ridiculisé les honnêtes gens (Des Granges 1923, 537).

En fait, les grandes comédies mettent en relief la singulière déconstruction des valeurs que le règne de Louis XIV imposait. Molière n'osa presque pas critiquer la haute noblesse. Il n'y a que deux exceptions : « *Dorante (Le Bourgeois gentilhomme) et Don Juan sont grands seigneurs corrompus et corrupteurs* » (Abry 1946, 233). Au contraire, ses cibles sont principalement des bourgeois, surtout quand ils veulent adopter des manières aristocratiques. Dans certaines pièces cette orientation est moins prononcée (*Dom Juan*) dans d'autres (*l'École des femmes*, *George Dandin*, *le Bourgeois gentilhomme*, *l'Avare*) elle a tendance à s'exprimer à plein régime.

Afin de mieux comprendre l'enjeu en question, la définition du terme bourgeois, notamment dans l'aire sémantique de l'époque, s'impose au préalable :

Essayons de nous représenter clairement ce qu'est un bourgeois au dix-septième siècle français. Certains bourgeois apparaissent dans les comédies de Molière.

Gorgibus dans les *Précieuses ridicules*, Monsieur Jourdain, George Dandin, Chrysale dans *Les Femmes savantes* sont des bourgeois ; de même la maison de *L'Avare* et celle du *Malade imaginaire* sont des maisons bourgeoises. Il s'agit toujours de vieilles familles bourgeoises ayant pignon sur rue (Auerbach 1998, 138).

Molière visait à faire des gorges chaudes des bourgeois. Dans ce but il recourait à l'individualisation des figures qu'il prenait du quotidien. Ce qui ne fut pas sans risques : il visait notamment la couche sociale à laquelle la première autorité du plus grand empire que l'Hexagonale ait jamais connu, commençait à conférer d'importantes prérogatives dans l'administration. Dans les yeux de Louis XIV il s'agissait de niveler la pyramide de l'ensemble des sujets de la cour compartimentée en classes sociales :

Dans le jeu du monarque nous retrouvons le rôle trifonctionnel du pouvoir : fédérateur, diviseur, niveleur. (...) Niveleur Louis devait l'être aussi, nécessairement, instinctivement. Saint-Simon qui avait bu du petit lait lors de l'incident de Mme de Torcy,⁴ ne cesse au fil de ses Mémoires de dénoncer avec rage et véhémence l'implacable volonté du roi d'abaisser les Grands, particulièrement les ducs et pairs, d'élever à leur place les bâtards, les bourgeois (Petitfils 1995, 439).

Le ridicule est le ressort du comique. Pour comprendre les intrications de ce phénomène l'essai *Le Rire* d'Henri Bergson (Bergson 1970) pourrait offrir les clefs de lecture. En fait, il présente une des meilleures sources de l'herméneutique du risible.

Le point du départ méthodologique est basé sur les défauts d'une figure dramatique qui est sujette à la contradiction provenant du conflit entre ce qu'on appelle la légèreté ou la souplesse de la vie d'un côté et la rigueur mécanique de l'autre. C'est un décalage qui présente l'infraction à la règle générale, puisque le classicisme accorde la plus grande attention à l'équilibre par lequel il incite à rechercher dans la perfection de l'œuvre d'art les éléments constants d'une beauté pérenne : celle qui survivra au naufrage des siècles. Chaque désynchronisation entraîne donc une tare quant à l'état de la stabilité :

Recherche d'un équilibre intérieur et profond, sérénité de l'artiste patiemment appliqué à atteindre, dans le fini, le plus de perfection possible, tels sont les deux traits auxquels une tentative d'élucidation du classicisme nous contraint à revenir le plus fréquemment (Peyre 1983, 165).

Le conflit du mécanique et du vivant vise l'équilibre organique, i. e. la disposition naturelle reposant sur la souplesse de l'existence. Et : « *C'est injustice de*

4 Cf. : Saint-Simon, 1965, 53.

corrompre ses règles » (Montaigne 1870, 323). Le raidissement est donc à l'origine de l'incompatibilité qui est la source de tout malentendu – et du comique :

D'abord, cette vision du mécanique et du vivant insérés l'un dans l'autre nous fait obliquer vers l'image plus vague d'une raideur (...) appliquée sur la mobilité de la vie, s'essayant maladroitement à en suivre les lignes et à en contrefaire la souplesse (Bergson 1970, 405).

La nature du conflit ne peut être quelconque : elle est inconsciente : le personnage comique se meut dans les limbes indécis, sans connaître ni l'origine de son mouvement ni la phénoménologie de ce qu'il est censé faire. Il est comme exempt de tout ce qui se passe avec lui et de ce qui le concerne.

Le comique est inconscient. Comme s'il usait à rebours de l'anneau de Gygès, il se rend invisible à lui-même en devenant visible à tout le monde. Un personnage de tragédie ne changera rien à sa conduite parce qu'il saura comment nous la jugeons ; il y pourra persévérer, même avec la pleine conscience de ce qu'il est, même avec le sentiment très net de l'horreur qu'il nous inspire. Mais un défaut ridicule, dès qu'il se sent ridicule, cherche à se modifier, au moins extérieurement. Si Harpagon nous voyait rire de son avarice, je ne dis pas qu'il s'en corrigerait, mais il nous la montrerait moins, ou il nous la montrerait autrement (Bergson 1970, 394).

Le personnage comique s'identifie au vice qu'il incarne – en le partageant avec la nième liste de personnes sous la typologie desquelles il se range *in ultima analysis*. Toute comédie dépend *in nuce* de la profondeur de l'effet que le dramaturge tire des généralités psychologiques d'une figure. C'est pour cette raison que le titre de la comédie ne saurait être que le nom commun. En ce qui concerne la tragédie, c'est différent. Le personnage tragique affronte son vice en toute conscience de la fatalité. Lors du revirement tragique qui, inévitablement résulte en chute, le protagoniste confirme son statut exemplaire. Le nom de la tragédie ne pourrait donc être qu'un nom de personne. Le héros peut même affirmer sa propre valeur qu'il rajoute au système des valeurs générales bien qu'entre la première et le deuxième il y ait décalage que lui-même reconnaît comme l'essor du mécanisme théâtral.

L'exemple en est *Phèdre* (Racine 1950, 817). Héritière d'un sang familial *a priori* coupable, elle lutte afin de dépasser les contingences humaines. Elle affirme sa situation tragique en dénonçant les dieux qui l'ont poussée à effectuer des actes répréhensibles. Si Phèdre lutte contre une finalité supérieure et imprévisible, Othello de Shakespeare (Shakespeare 1957, 943) mène une action énergique contre un préjugé qui paraît aux yeux du lectorat du 21^e siècle, superflu.⁵ Henri Bergson constate :

5 Il s'agit de la race d'Othello.

Beaucoup de comédies portent un nom commun : l'Avare, le Joueur, etc. Si je vous demande d'imaginer une pièce qui puisse s'appeler le jaloux, par exemple, vous verrez que Sganarelle vous viendra à l'esprit, ou George Dandin, mais non pas Othello ; le Jaloux ne peut être qu'un titre de comédie. C'est que le vice comique a beau s'unir aussi intimement qu'on voudra aux personnes, il n'en conserve pas moins son existence indépendante et simple ; il reste le personnage central, invisible et présent, auquel les personnages de chair et d'os sont suspendus sur la scène (Bergson 1970, 394).

Molière a pris un grand nombre de libertés – compte tenu de l'environnement dans lequel il vécut depuis son retour des provinces à Paris⁶ – afin de mettre à jour de mauvais penchants qui se sont rassemblés de façon cohérente et systématique dans les types caractéristiques de son théâtre, notamment dans les bourgeois qui apparaissent sous la forme des « honnêtes hommes ». Les grandes comédies ne peuvent donc être comprises sans tenir compte du vice que l'auteur a fait incarner dans un personnage. Celui-ci s'identifie avec son défaut jusqu'à ce qu'il n'en devienne complètement obnubilé. A un certain moment, il n'est plus lui-même ; il commence à apparaître sous la forme dont les dénominateurs communs ne se réduisent qu'à la complaisance du mal que le vice a occasionnée: celle-ci s'empare, en instance finale, de l'intégralité de son caractère. La typologie de l'écart devient ainsi la suprême force morale de sa dramaturgie.

Molière a été un des trois ou quatre hommes, dans toute l'histoire de la littérature, dans toute l'histoire de l'humanité, qui aient réussi le plus pleinement à dresser en pleine vie les types humains (Faguet 1914, 179).

Molière est – *in fine* – le maître du sursaut métonymique⁷ au cours duquel il transforme une figure humaine, existant concrètement et portant son nom propre qui la distingue des autres à l'intérieur d'un groupe social – en type, en en donnant l'exemplaire infrangible. Il ne se présente désormais que par le nom commun, séparé à jamais du modèle qui l'a inspiré une fois.

Le degré *nec plus ultra* de la typologie du théâtre de Molière est la monomanie : le personnage réduit à un vice et inconscient des séquelles que celui-ci effectue sur lui et sur l'ensemble de sa famille s'appelle monomane. Pourtant, la monomanie n'est autre chose que la singularité d'un type social (le plus souvent le *pater familias*) poussée jusqu'à la noirceur. *In nuce*, le retour aux données immédiates de la conscience, aux structures transcendantes de celle-ci et à l'essence des êtres que le dramaturge a fait, lui a permis – en ce qui concerne les traits distinctifs d'un

6 C'était en 1658.

7 Dans ce cas-là on parle du procédé *pars pro toto*.

bourgeois respectable avec pignon sur rue, par exemple, d'effacer la distance, l'écart qui sépare celui-ci du monomane, compte tenant de la désignation que dénote ce terme dans son théâtre. Ce qui diffère, c'est le niveau de l'articulation : c'est-à-dire à quel point le lectorat (et les spectateurs) sont prêts à saisir la différence qu'il y a entre un type virtuel et la gamme de ses incarnations concrètes. Comme le 17^e siècle tendait à pousser l'individu à disparaître derrière le type général, les hommes durent agir en conformité avec le modèle, posé au préalable. Pour les pères de familles (*pater familias*), alors « couronnes » du microcosme sociétal, cette règle semble presque inévitable. On rappelle : « *Chacun doit se situer à l'intérieur des cadres bien déterminés. La singularité n'est plus admise ; elle est dénoncée comme étant anormale* » (Horville 1994, 143). Il y a là un paradoxe ouvert, – notamment, comment faire concilier la monomanie et la pratique des normes imposées par l'« *aurea aetas* » d'un Roi-Soleil – ainsi qu'un danger résultant de l'analyse dramaturgique d'une telle antinomie : *l'École des femmes* et *le Tartuffe* en témoignent.

Considérant *l'École des femmes* qui « *est la première des grandes comédies de Molière tant par l'importance du sujet que par l'extrême habileté de l'intrigue* » (Faguet 1914, 32), on s'aperçoit aisément que son objectif primordial consiste en la mise en suspens d'une des valeurs de base de la classe bourgeoise. La portée de la critique par laquelle Molière tympanisait le noyau qui fait la force des sociétés, fut aisément reconnue et remplacée dans le contexte :

L'École des femmes (1662) réagit contre les sévérités de l'organisation familiale traditionnelle et le prosaïsme bourgeois » (Jasinski 1947, 427). Et : « En effet, Molière par *l'École des femmes* portait la hache, et avec quelle vigueur, dans une des institutions les plus chères à cette société, la doctrine sociale de l'éducation des femmes et du mariage. Que cette doctrine eût ses étroitesse, ce n'est pas lieu de l'examiner et ce n'est peut-être pas sur le théâtre qu'il eût convenu d'en discuter ; ce qui est certain c'est que cette doctrine était par la bourgeoisie française considérée comme sacrée (Danrey 1996, 870).

Afin de miner cette doctrine il ne fallait au dramaturge qu'axer la singularité d'une forme abstraite sur un exemple concret : des Arnolphe existaient partout pendant le grand siècle. L'autorité paternelle garantissait notamment la stabilité du modèle social :

La jeune fille fut élevée au couvent, dans la piété, loin de tout contact avec le monde, et tenue avec soin à l'écart des réalités de la vie ; à l'âge de 18 ans, à 20 ans, elle sortait du couvent pour être mariée à celui que ces parents avaient choisi pour elle ; elle devenait alors épouse obéissante, mère dévouée, gardienne du foyer, cloîtrée dans son intérieur, comme elle l'aurait été si elle était entrée en religion. Cela faisait des mariages heureux et des maisons solides (Ibidem).

Arnolphe est un des pères de l'époque qui n'en manquait pas. Molière le garnit d'une « accidence » qui est pour le protagoniste de *l'École des femmes* pourtant de valeur substantielle : non seulement qu'il veuille se revigorer en mariant la fille qui pourrait bien être son enfant⁸ mais il apparaît au tout début de la comédie sous un nom qui n'était pas le nom de sa famille. Il a choisit – afin de paraître plus aristocratique l'appellation d'un noble, i. e. de M. de la Souche. C'est un nouveau *pars pro toto* par lequel le dramaturge indique la volonté du protagoniste de vouloir oblitérer ses origines pour être mieux acceptable à l'intérieur de la couche sociale dont il est en train de franchir le seuil. Ceci faisant il réaffirme la définition du comique, proposée par Henri Bergson, c'est-à-dire, le conflit entre la rigidité monomaniaque et la souplesse de l'existence :

Du mécanique plaqué sur du vivant, voilà encore notre point de départ. D'où venait ici le comique ? De ce que le corps vivant se raidissait en machine. Le corps vivant nous semblait donc devoir être la souplesse parfaite, l'activité toujours en éveil d'un principe toujours en travail (Bergson 1970, 410).

En plus : Arnolphe concentre sa personnalité autour d'un seul objectif. Il fait élever Agnès comme s'il s'agissait de sa fille : elle appartient donc à une autre génération : à celle qui n'est pas la sienne. Comme il y avait l'habitude, pendant le règne de Louis XIV, que les parents choisissent soigneusement celui que leur fille mariera lors qu'elle aura quitté le couvent, le comportement d'Arnolphe n'est qu'une antinomie : il voudrait être le père et le fiancé en une même personne. Il se propose comme celui qui a la prérogative de choisir et en même temps comme l'objet de ce choix. C'est-à-dire qu'il tend à posséder sa femme (Agnès) comme on possède un enfant ou un immeuble, à l'époque. Ce qui est nettement du mécanique plaqué sur du vivant.

Son fond, c'est l'instinct despotique, l'amour féroce de la propriété, le propriété-tisme furieux. Il est le bourgeois qui prétend que sa femme soit son bien comme la maison est son bien (Faguet 1914, 180).

L'imagination de l'auteur représente Arnolphe comme absorbé par ce qu'il fait et comme incapable d'appréhender dans quelle mesure son comportement influence sur sa peur primordiale qui est de n'être pas exproprié. On entend par là la possibilité d'être privé (dérobé) de ce qui lui tient le plus à cœur, c'est-à-dire de sa pupille. Molière pousse la manie d'Arnolphe jusqu'à ce qu'elle ne rejoigne le fond de son anxiété *psychasthénique* : rempli d'obsession et en proie à un nombre

8 C'était un reproche qu'on adressait souvent à Jean Baptiste Poquelin: elle concernait sa relation avec les dames Béjart, mère et fille.

d'inhibitions, la chose qu'il craint le plus est l'imposture : c'est pour cette raison que ses manœuvres vont dans le sens de la seule solution possible, au moins en ce qui concerne son point de vue, c'est de pousser à l'extrémité les règles de la « bienséance » citadine : d'en profiter en pleine licence en installant dans son logis une ingénue.

Depuis l'apparition de la classe bourgeoise l'unique élément, que celle-ci pût utiliser afin de concurrencer la noblesse, était la devise du colbertisme, c'est-à-dire l'argent et la propriété. Dans le calcul qu'Arnolphe fait, la perte de la dignité que représente l'imposture est équivalente à la perte de la propriété, dans ce cas-là de son orpheline qui est sous sa tutelle. Ce sera un objet qui dans le langage d'Arnolphe lui sera dérobé, sans récompense.

En tant que monomane il ne voit pas que la seule chose qu'il puisse faire, afin de ne pas devenir cocu, est d'éviter le chemin qu'il est en train de prendre. La femme ne devrait jamais être traitée comme une propriété. Enfin, la déception d'Arnolphe est le produit du mécanisme théâtral qui débute par l'idée fixe du premier. Il est confronté au fait que sa fiancée appartient maintenant à un autre, cette fois-ci par la décision souveraine de son libre arbitre. Par la volonté de son père biologique qui – pour le besoin de la cause – vient d'être identifié au bon moment,⁹ Agnès voit le chemin ouvert vers le mariage avec celui qu'elle aime. La « manœuvre » d'Arnolphe ne conteste pas seulement le comportement dans l'affaire mais pose la question qui a été évoquée en premier lieu, celle de » *l'instinct despotique qui n'a pas de limites* » (*Ibidem*).

Pour comprendre l'enjeu de Molière en face des péripéties décrites précédemment, la citation suivante pourrait présenter une certaine « clef de lecture » : « *Molière est subversif à double titre, en tant qu'ennemi de bien des valeurs établies et aussi des idées reçues* » (Cairncross 1988, 11). C'est une appréhension qu'on pourrait corroborer par les griffes que sortaient les adversaires lors de la première représentation de la *Critique de l'École des femmes* (Molière 1956, 521, 1) :

Ils disaient bien d'autres choses encore, et plus dangereuses. Ils dénonçaient le caractère scandaleux du sermon et des Maximes. Ils déclaraient que Molière avait blessé le respect que l'on doit à « nos mystères ». Ils découvraient dans les Maximes une parodie des Dix Commandement. Molière commençait-on à dire, était un impie et bon pour le bûcher (Adam 1962, 288, 2).

L'attitude d'Arnolphe envers Agnès, prise dans l'optique que l'on voit dans *l'École des femmes*, remet en question ce qui a été habituel et considéré convenable par la classe bourgeoise qui, sous la férule du Roi-Soleil, allait devenir le ferment du royaume :

9 C'est Enrique, beau-frère de Chrysalde et père d'Agnès.

Molière conquiert le théâtre dans le même temps que la bourgeoisie s'enrichit et s'élève au pouvoir. Tout en admirant la bonne santé de sa classe originelle, il insiste sur ses ridicules. Il contribue à codifier et à publier sa morale toute neuve et, au même moment, il la discrédite par les bons tours qu'il joue à ses représentants (Simon 1953, 25).

La réaction des honnêtes gens qui – visés dans l'intimité de leurs foyers – présentèrent le sujet du persiflage, fut une chose logique.

Créer un barbon qui, poursuivant les normes de l'époque, se propose de marier celle qu'il a faite élever proprement pour les besoins de sa cause, fut une folâtrerie qui criait au scandale, surtout parce que le birbe sortait du quotidien, ayant été pris sur le vif. En même temps, c'était un exemple « plus que parfait » du mécanique plaqué sur du vivant. C'est miner le paradigme d'après lequel la classe des honnêtes hommes est ce qu'elle est. C'est mettre en question leur principe vital. La réaction qui ne saurait tarder, ne peut pas surprendre :

C'est alors que toutes les rancunes se déchaînent. Nombre de gens se crurent visés quelques-uns avec raisons, dans ce portraits, gravés à la pointe sèche, de poètes-reaux envieux, de critiques aigres, d'amateurs prétentieux et ignorants (Lafenestre, 1909, 49).¹⁰

Si Molière dans *l'École des femmes* visait comme cible la question de l'éducation des jeunes filles, il change de champ de bataille avec *le Tartuffe*. Le conflit dramatique du premier drame se poursuit : Molière cette fois-ci porte la hache sur la religion : dans la dialectique des enjeux sur le ridicule, on constate que c'est un sujet prenant. Orgon est la figure centrale qui dans les yeux du critique passe pour un honnête homme. C'est lui qui est directement associé à la noblesse (de la Fronde), mettant par ceci en relief les choses substantielles à la cour de Louis XIV. Orgon fut un soldat dans les rangs de la Fronde ce que le roi n'oublia pas :

Molière, il est vrai, a pris soin d'indiquer que son héros n'est pas toujours et partout un imbécile. Dorine nous rappelle que, dans cette guerre de la Fronde que Louis XIV n'oubliera jamais, Orgon a pris parti, et que, dans l'exercice de sa charge, car tout riche bourgeois a sa charge, il a « en homme sage » montré sa fidélité au monarque (Cairncross ; Butler 1988, 73).

Pourtant, l'antinomie qui se révèle sous la forme du mécanique plaqué sur du vivant apparaît lorsqu'on juxtapose le statut social d'Orgon, qui est *pater familias*

10 En fait, il était question d'une des plus grandes cabales dans la littérature nationale, comparable à celle dont l'instigateur secret fut Richelieu (*Le Cid* (Corneille 1963, 215) : « *Il n'est pas possible de parler avec équité de la querelle du Cid sans évoquer en contrepartie celle de l'École des femmes* » (Adam 1962, 472,1).

en même temps qu'un honnête homme, au dévouement que celui-ci cultive pour un inconnu, accidentellement rencontré au cours d'une liturgie. Il s'agit là d'un événement qui n'a pas de racine évolutive mais d'un « coup de foudre » pareil à celui qu'éprouvent les amoureux, incapables d'expliquer d'où provient l'émotion et quelles en sont les causes.

De prime abord, cela paraît de la folie. Cet enthousiasme exubérant qui passe la mesure est également contraire à toute forme de la causalité matérielle, qui donnait à Orgon la primauté sur la famille. La propriété et l'honneur de la position sociale entrent ici en antinomie avec les principes indémontrables de l'enseignement évangélique, à tel point que le spectateur soit prêt à prendre Orgon pour un fou ou pour un bête. La « bonne nouvelle », pour laquelle l'Orgon s'échauffe sur Tartuffe, exige l'abnégation intégrale en ce qui concerne les choses d'ici-bas : « *illum oportet crescere, me autem minui* » (Jean, 3, 30). La seule clé qui pourrait fournir une explication logique à l'aberration d'Orgon, serait qu'à travers la pratique spasmodique de la charité focalisée à l'unique objet, celui du nouvel hôte de la famille, Orgon voudrait faire des actes qui amadoueraient sa mauvaise conscience : celle d'un bourgeois riche, bien établi et dont le quotidien est une négation incontestable de l'austérité qu'exige l'évangile, pris à la lettre. Le dénouement du drame qui remet les choses à la place où elles étaient lors de l'exposition – en donnant raison au feu bienfaiteur de la figure éponyme de la pièce – empêche de pouvoir considérer une telle solution comme probable. Il n'y a donc qu'une interprétation du comportement d'Orgon :

On dit : » Orgon est bête. « Ce que nous appelons la bêtise n'est plus souvent qu'une forme d'intransigeance. C'est du moins cette intransigeance qui constitue les trois quarts de la bêtise d'Orgon. Orgon est »bête« comme un amoureux, un prosélyte, un totalitaire ou un »mordu« sont bêtes. A d'autres époques cette bêtise eût été traitée sous la forme d'un enthousiasme exaltant (Guicharnaud 1963, 39).

L'intransigeance dans la bêtise est ce qui s'appelle l'aveuglement. C'est un délire caractérisé par la préoccupation unique. Orgon possède sa famille : la question sur la nature de cette possession ne fut jamais posée puisque c'est un fait accompli appartenant à la même catégorie des faits, *a priori*, que celui d'Arnolphe qui prend possession d'Agnès. En plus : Orgon transmet, saisi par un spasme, dont il n'est lui-même pas conscient, la possession de sa famille aux mains de Tartuffe. Sans savoir qu'il en est, par ce biais-là, arrivé aux mains avec lui-même. Il est ravi de voir la générosité de ce qu'il vient d'accomplir. Orgon a tout transmis à son nouvel ami : sa fille, les richesses, la maison et sa femme aussi. Dans les séquences des phrases itérées « *Et Tartuffe?* » (Molière 1956, 700, 1) on voit les actes de la remise volontaire de ce qui, pour un mari, devrait présenter une chose inaliénable.

Ces actes sont l'exemple de la monomanie basée sur du mécanique plaqué sur du vivant. « *C'est que la vie bien vivante ne devrait pas se répéter. Là où il y a la répétition, similitude complète, nous soupçonnons du mécanique fonctionnant derrière du vivant* » (Bergson, 1970, 403).

Orgon confère sa femme à Tartuffe d'autant plus facilement que celui-ci, par une métonymie fondée en *pars pro toto*, prend la place de l'épouse de son bienfaiteur, comme suit du dialogue entre Orgon et Dorine.¹¹ C'est à Tartuffe qu'Orgon voue les expressions tendres de l'affection au lieu de les destiner à son épouse : « *Et Tartuffe ?* » (Molière, 1956, 700, 1). Elle est pour lui comme inexistante : mieux : elle paraît effacée dans la marée des états affectifs à laquelle Orgon est sans cesse en proie. Tartuffe est une obsession qui domine le cerveau de son mari : dans l'univers mental de celui-ci le centre et la circonférence sont présentés à la perspective de l'unique objet, celui de l'Hypocrite. Bref, il s'agit d'un univers où Elmire n'est nulle part. Poursuivant son aveuglement jusqu'à la fin il confie à l'imposteur – dans le dernier excès de sa crédulité – la cassette qui pourrait le compromettre gravement. C'est Tartuffe qui alors devient maître de la maison. Grâce à un *Deus ex machina* Orgon est sauvé de l'étripage ainsi que de sa folie. En fait, il réussit à survivre la phase monomaniaque sans qu'il dût en subir des conséquences durables. Il reprend le train de vie qu'il menait avant la rencontre fatale.

Dans la série des pièces qui s'attaquent à la bourgeoisie, la suivante est celle qui contient le persiflage du tiers état en titre : *le Bourgeois gentilhomme*. Molière se servait d'épithètes qualificatives quant aux titres de ses comédies. Pour rappeler :

Beaucoup de comédies portent un nom commun : l'Avare, le Joueur, etc. Si je vous demande d'imaginer une pièce qui puisse s'appeler le jaloux, par exemple, vous verrez que Sganarelle vous viendra à l'esprit, ou George Dandin, mais non pas Othello ; le Jaloux ne peut être qu'un titre de comédie. C'est que le vice comique a beau s'unir aussi intimement qu'on voudra aux personnes, il n'en conserve pas moins son existence indépendante et simple ; il reste le personnage central, invisible et présent, auquel les personnages de chair et d'os sont suspendus sur la scène (Bergson 1970, 394).

Le Bourgeois gentilhomme est l'unique comédie où le persiflage est inclus dans le titre même de la pièce. En fait il s'agit de l'oxymore : la bourgeoisie et la noblesse sont deux strates, à l'époque nettement séparées l'une de l'autre. Molière vise l'indigence de l'esprit de la « gent épicière » en la mettant dans une situation inférieure – au préalable – quant à la noblesse. C'est son intention.

Pourtant la chose est plus délicate et scabreuse qu'elle ne paraît au premier point de vue. Le mot »gentilhomme« s'applique à ceux qui possèdent une noblesse

11 Voir *supra*.

légale, *apriori*. La bourgeoisie est aux antipodes de cela. Si un noble prend la possession des privilèges dès sa naissance et en jouit par la suite, le bourgeois présente son contraire. Il ne peut compter que sur lui-même. Il doit tout à ses facultés de comprendre, de connaître et d'appréhender ; à ses aptitudes, et à ses compétences qui lui permettent de se débrouiller et de réussir, du point de vue des affaires et des finances, bref du point de vue du mercantilisme dans sa variante à la Louis XIV.

M. Jourdain dut, en principe, remplir toutes les conditions requises pour un bourgeois qui a réussi à accomplir ce qu'on demandait à l'époque de quelqu'un à sa place : M. Jourdain est un homme à succès. En plus, c'est un « colbertien » par excellence. Tel est l'état des choses au préalable avant que le rideau ne soit levé. Voyant le décor de sa maison, on sait qu'il s'agit d'un individu au statut social prestigieux. En outre, le protagoniste de la pièce n'est pas seulement aisé, il est riche. « *Il prête inconsidérément de l'argent, mais il sait exactement combien il a prêté. Ce n'est pas un homme qui a perdu la tête* » (D'Hermies 1935, 8) Bref, M. Jourdain vit « *dans la maison ayant le pignon sur rue* » (Auerbach 1998, 138). Recruter des maîtres et des musiciens ; constituer un groupe d'instrumentistes pour interpréter des œuvres musicales de toutes sortes ; organiser des réceptions, des dîners, des ballets ; donner des cadeaux ; inviter les gens et les servir, rien ne paraît exagéré quant à ses ressources.

De plus : M. Jourdain n'est pas une exception à la règle, c'est une règle. Sa maisonnée est une maisonnée standard quant aux normes qui régissent la vie de la bourgeoisie fortunée dont l'existence se déroulait dans l'aisance et le confort. Au 17^e siècle la capacité financière des familles bourgeoises permettait notamment de faire appel à une large domesticité pour réaliser la totalité des tâches de la vie courante : serveurs, gouvernantes, précepteurs, maîtres et enseignants se chargeaient de l'entretien de la cellule familiale ainsi que de l'éducation des membres de la famille. Leur objectif fut de leur apprendre l'élégance d'esprit et des manières, selon un strict respect des mœurs du temps. En se faisant instruire, M. Jourdain ne fait autre chose que suivre la pratique de l'époque.

Il prend à tâche d'atteindre le niveau de « *kalos kai akagathos* », ¹² la perfection de l'honnête homme :

La cour royale et les nombreux salons mondains qui s'organisent à Paris élaborent un modèle, celui de l'honnête homme », auquel il convient de se conformer. Personnage universel, l'honnête homme se distingue par sa faculté d'adaptation : il doit pouvoir faire bonne figure en toute circonstance. Pour atteindre ce résultat, il lui faut (...) avoir des connaissances sur tous les sujets. Voilà qui lui permettra (...) de briller au cours des conversations, dont la pratique devient un véritable art (Horville 1994, 144). M.

12 En grec, « beau et bon ».

Jourdain veut devenir membre de la communauté des gens vertueux, bienséants et honorables pour lesquels écrivent les auteurs contemporains, notamment Molière. *In fine* le « bourgeois gentilhomme » « *témoigne de l'émergence et de l'affirmation croissante de la bourgeoisie à l'intérieur de la société de ce siècle, face à la noblesse qui occupe tout l'espace de la conscience sociale* ». ¹³

Et il a les moyens pour parvenir à son but. Les maîtres, les professeurs et les musiciens que M. Jourdain invite dans sa maison ne sont qu'un coût insignifiant pour son budget : il est un disciple fervent et concentré qui s'applique à atteindre l'idéal de l'époque. Il n'y a rien d'irrationnel dans ce qu'il fait. Il comprend les choses avec pénétration : il s'avère être perspicace et clairvoyant, soucieux quant au but qu'il poursuit. Il agit comme un bourgeois lorsque celui-ci monte en franchissant les obstacles. Au bout du compte : M. Jourdain est un « porte-parole » remarquable de sa classe. De ce point de vue la désignation du « monomane » s'appliquerait difficilement à lui. Il suffit de prendre en considération les preuves subséquentes de son aptitude *a priori*, données *supra*, dans les paragraphes qui précèdent.

Contrairement à l'exposition de *l'École des femmes* et celle de *Tartuffe* qui présente l'action (dramatique) dans laquelle sont pris Arnolphe et Orgon comme l'action synthétique, celle de M. Jourdain est en fait analytique : elle tire son origine des moments qui sont *ante litteram*, c'est-à-dire qui se sont passés avant que le rideau ne soit levé. Le choix du titre pourrait s'expliquer donc par un certain embarras de l'auteur concernant la vraisemblance du protagoniste. Afin de renforcer l'intentionnalité de l'intrigue, c'est-à-dire, garantir que celle-ci soit en intégralité orientée vers un seul objet – et c'est la monomanie de M. Jourdain – il a dû choisir un titre qui dit un mot de trop de ce qu'il fallait. Le titre a de la vigueur : il sous-entend une offense univoque à l'égard de la classe bourgeoise. Par la métonymie qu'il contient, il communique le message qui crée une situation embarrassante et même des risques d'erreur. ¹⁴

Considérant la maxime de Nicolas Boileau : « *Jamais au spectateur n'offrez rien d'incroyable : Le vrai peut quelques fois n'être pas vraisemblable* » (Boileau 1961, 172) on pourrait se demander si l'oxymore que le titre évoque implique le caractère de ce qui semble vrai, juste, aux yeux du sens commun et qui comme tel est la maxime principale du classicisme. Et en conséquence, si la figure de M. Jourdain, considérée dans l'entière de sa personne, i. e. diachroniquement, répond aux normes de la vraisemblance, celle-ci étant une des règles de l'identité de l'art classique sans laquelle le théâtre classiciste ¹⁵ ne serait pas.

13 Cf. : <http://jack-martial.chevalier.over-blog.com/article-mon-ideal-l-honnete-homme-du-xviii-siecle-105067950.html> (consulté le 8 juillet 2018).

14 On pourrait se servir d'une formule plus explicite : c'est que M. Jourdain serait un niquedouille puisque il vient de la strate sociale où prévaudraient des nigauds.

15 Y compris le théâtre de Molière.

En plus : l'analyse de la pièce ne peut passer outre le fait que les maîtres, les musiciens et les autres « invités » dans la maison de M. Jourdain paraissent eux-mêmes comiques, à leur tour : c'est-à-dire qu'ils satisfont à la perfection au critère de la souplesse naturelle s'opposant à la rigueur. Ils pourraient bien assumer le rôle inverse de ce qu'on pourrait attendre de leur part. L'ouverture de la pièce révèle notamment du mécanique plaqué sur du vivant : il s'agit de la manière par laquelle les maîtres présentent leurs disciplines et insistent sur leurs importance et avantages. Ce n'est pourtant qu'une introduction aux passages où ils s'écartent le plus du dynamisme et de la souplesse que constituent le rythme naturel de l'existence humaine. C'est la scène de la contestation sur les soi-disant primautés de leurs branches. Leur dispute qui amène des échanges de paroles, puis d'actes hostiles est un des passages du *Bourgeois gentilhomme* où on constate la prévalence des éléments de farce par rapport à ceux de la haute comédie.¹⁶ Les échanges de violence que les « maîtres » entreprennent est un indice exquis dénotant l'inanité de leurs disciplines et d'eux-mêmes, *mutatis mutandis*. Ainsi :

Monsieur Jourdain.— Monsieur le philosophe. Maître de philosophie.— Infâmes! Coquins! Insolents! Monsieur Jourdain.— Monsieur le philosophe. Maître d'armes.— La peste l'animal! Monsieur Jourdain.— Messieurs. Maître de philosophie.— Impudents! Monsieur Jourdain.— Monsieur le philosophe. Maître à danser.— Diantre soit de l'âne bâti! Monsieur Jourdain.— Messieurs. Maître de philosophie.— Scélérats! Monsieur Jourdain.— Monsieur le philosophe (Molière, 1956, 527, 2).

La réaction de M. Jourdain est significative : » *Comment ? Marauds que vous êtes ... Le philosophe se jette sur eux, et tous trois le chargent de coups, et sortent en se battant* » (*Ibidem*). M. Jourdain prend le rôle qui est le contraire exact de celui qu'il assume dans la comédie : il se moque de ceux qu'il a lui-même désignés afin qu'ils opèrent la transsubstantiation de son être du « bourgeois » au « gentilhomme » : » *« Monsieur le Philosophe, Messieurs. Oh ! Battez-vous tant qu'il vous plaira, je n'y saurais que faire, et je n'irai pas gâter ma robe pour vous séparer »* (Molière, 1956, 528, 2). Le procédé auquel on assiste s'appelle le dérangement, le renversement de l'ordre habituel. Il arrive comme une sorte du revirement : les rôles changent : les piégeurs deviennent eux-mêmes piégés. Ainsi :

La littérature moderne a exécuté bien d'autres variations sur le thème du voleur volé. Il s'agit toujours, au fond, d'une interversion de rôles, et d'une situation qui se retourne contre celui qui la crée. Ici se vérifierait une loi dont nous avons déjà signalé plus d'une application. Quand une scène comique a

16 La pièce originellement appartient au genre des comédies de caractère, ce qui est le plus haut niveau de la comédie.

été souvent reproduite, elle passe à l'état de « catégorie » ou de modèle. Elle devient amusante par elle-même, indépendamment des causes qui font qu'elle nous a amusés (Bergson 1970, 432).

Finalement, M. Jourdain prend le rôle qui a été destiné à ses enseignants : ceux-ci se retrouvent là où ils voudraient voir leur « élève », c'est-à-dire, au début du « pont aux ânes ». En tant que figure rhétorique il s'agit d'un *quiproquo*, d'une interférence de deux séries que constituent d'un côté les enjeux des « maîtres » et les réactions de M. Jourdain de l'autre. Le lecteur comprend que c'est celui-ci qui est généralement dupé dans la pièce. De l'autre côté il voit que le sujet dupé a réussi à jouer une duperie à ses dupes, ce qui redouble son intérêt. Bergson dit :

Une situation est toujours comique quand elle appartient en même temps à deux séries d'événements absolument indépendantes, et qu'elle peut s'interpréter à la fois dans deux sens tout différents. On pensera aussitôt au quiproquo (Bergson 1970, 433).

C'est un *quiproquo* référentiel dont l'effet est de jeter la lumière du doute sur le comportement des enseignants et sur leurs doctrines. C'est un cas très particulier que Molière – afin de sauvegarder son effet – ne reprendra plus dans la pièce :

Et il nous fait rire parce qu'il rend manifeste à nos yeux l'interférence de deux séries indépendantes, source véritable de l'effet comique. Aussi le quiproquo ne peut-il être qu'un cas particulier. C'est un des moyens (le plus artificiel peut-être) de rendre sensible l'interférence des séries ; mais ce n'est pas le seul. Au lieu de deux séries contemporaines, on pourrait aussi bien prendre une série d'événements anciens et une autre actuelle : si les deux séries arrivent à interférer dans notre imagination, il n'y aura plus quiproquo, et pourtant le même effet comique continuera à se produire (Bergson 1970, 434).

Pourtant : une lecture attentive démontre que la dégradation que Molière entreprend à propos des bourgeois tend à modifier la classification typologique de l'œuvre même : il y a des passages qui sont notamment plus proches du drame que de la comédie de caractère. Dans son théâtre, ce n'est pas inusuel. *Le Misanthrope* connaît le mélange des genres : *George Dandin* de même. Pourtant, considérant *Le Bourgeois gentilhomme* du point de vue du colbertisme, on voit que les éléments par lesquels M. Jourdain voulait s'anoblir appartiennent au passé et figurent comme superflus : M Jourdain, « le philosophe sans le savoir », arriverait à comprendre que l'ère de la noblesse n'est plus. Ce qui compte c'est l'adresse, l'aisance et la dextérité qui permettent de profiter des situations avantageuses et de gagner. Le 17^e siècle fut une période propice.

C'est le « bourgeois gentilhomme » qui s'en rend compte (le premier) puisque dans le dialogue qu'il échange avec le maître de philosophie, il conclut :

Monsieur Jourdain. Mais de toutes ces façons-là, laquelle est la meilleure ?
Maître de philosophie. Celle que vous avez dite : Belle Marquise, vos beaux yeux me font mourir d'amour. Monsieur Jourdain. Cependant je n'ai point étudié, et j'ai fait cela tout du premier coup (Molière, 1956, 533, 2).

M. Jourdain, « le bourgeois gentilhomme » s'avère être plus sage et plus intelligent¹⁷ que son maître qui devrait lui apprendre la sagesse (en commençant par l'alphabet, la phonétique et les « règles » que l'ordre des mots devrait suivre dans une phrase banale en français). Le terme « la philosophie » est composé de « *philein* » et « *sophia* », l'amour du savoir ou de la sagesse. Celle-ci préférerait le protagoniste de la pièce à ces maîtres.

Par ce biais on est revenu au point de départ, avant que le rideau ne soit levé : le bourgeois est la figure la plus apte : elle a plus de capacités et plus d'intelligence que les autres membres du réseau social : comme le bourgeois ne pouvait compter que sur lui-même il a acquis des aptitudes qui au temps du Louis XIV lui permirent de faire son entrée sur les tréteaux de l'histoire.

La leçon que Molière a déduit des trois pièces dont l'analyse forme l'essentiel du présent écrit, se confirme à propos des comédies qu'on n'a pas pris en considération : *L'Avare* contient une critique peut-être encore plus sévère de la bourgeoisie : Molière concentre son attention sur le point précis qui fait toute l'ontologie d'un de sa classe : sur l'argent. Là, on voit qu'Harpagon est la face cachée d'Arnolphe : les deux *patres familias* sont consommés par le souci unique, c'est-à-dire par le fait qu'ils sont incapables d'appréhender à quelle mesure leur comportement influence sur la peur primordiale qui est de n'être pas exproprié. On entend par là la possibilité d'être privé (dérobé) de ce qui leur tient le plus à cœur, c'est-à-dire de l'argent en tant que garantie du statut social. Argan du *Malade imaginaire* présente de ce point de vue le dernier pas en avant : C'est en fait un drame dont le sujet est l'illusion que la santé puisse s'acquérir par l'argent. Que la santé soit la chose la plus précieuse, Molière le savait bien : jouer Argan était son dernier rôle : il est mort lorsqu'il s'efforçait de rendre l'illusion plausible. Il ne lui restait que la rancune, contre l'argent et la santé en premier lieu.

La contradiction que le dramaturge « de la Cour » faisait des gorges chaudes de la classe sociale qui avançait « le tambour battant », pourrait s'expliquer par le suivant : Molière aurait méprisé les bourgeois par une sorte de réflexe de défense :

17 On prend le mot « intelligence » dans le sens étymologique du mot : « *inter* » et « *lego* », i. e. être capable de lire « le dedans » des choses, leur quiddité. M. Jourdain est dans ce domaine plus universel que ses maîtres.

bien qu'il soit sorti de leur rang, il n'a jamais pu devenir égal à eux en termes de la rentabilité de leurs revenus qui (seule) permettait la montée à l'échelle sociale de l'idéologie prédominante du moment, i. e. du colbertisme. Bien que ses œuvres aient été acceptées et admirées par la cour, il ne pouvait évidemment se soustraire à l'image que les comédiens et les dramaturges à l'époque, portèrent comme un signe marqué au fer rouge sur la peau, durable, voire définitif. Cette empreinte fut celle des individus hors caste, des parias.

Ce qui séparait l'auteur de grandes comédies des normes de la classe naissante, marchant vers ascension, pourrait se formuler de la sorte : « *Les hommes de théâtre sont à cette époque en marge de la société ; la foule les aime parce qu'ils l'amuse, mais la société les méprise et l'Église les excommunie* » (Danrey 1996, 864). Il y a là une question rhétorique : que pourrait-il être pire pour les adhérents d'une nouvelle strate sociale qui avance infailliblement que le miroir tenu par l'un d'entre eux ? L'image reflétée par la glace viserait leur comportement et leur montrerait à quel point l'arrivisme convulsif est en contradiction avec les postulats ayant permis à leur état d'effectuer la longue marche à travers l'histoire. Oui ou non ? En plus : ce serait leur rappeler les origines qu'ils voudraient surtout oblitérer ? De ce point de vue, le conflit entre Molière et les bourgeois ne semble plus inexplicable.

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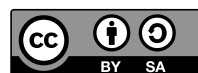
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Kolbertizem v velikih Molièrovih komedijah

Pričujoča študija poskuša odgovoriti na vprašanje o mestu kolbertizma, prevladujoče ideologije v času Ludvika XIV., v poglavitnih komedijah značajev J. B. P. Molièra. Ugotavlja temeljno dihotomijo, opirajoča se na navedke iz besedil. Meščanski razred je v razmerah tedanjega političnega sistema osnovanega na merkantilizmu namreč napredoval na mesto, s katerega še danes obvladuje večino sveta. Veliki dramaturg je izšel iz njihovih vrst, a se zaradi splošnega odnosa do njegovega stanu, z njimi ni mogel identificirati. Če so imeli meščani naraščajoč ugled in prevladujoč finančni položaj, se je Molière boril za svoj obstoj. Pozorno branje njegovih ključnih komedij to odkrije.

Ključne besede: Molière, komedija, kolbertizem, meščan, komično, Henri Bergson, monomanija, mehanično, živo, mehkoba, retorična figura.

The colbertism in the comedies of Molière

The article deals with the role of the bourgeois in the great comedies of J. B. Molière. It shows the artist's dichotomy regarding the class which was – in the time of Louis XIV – getting the decisive influence over the “state affairs”. The article tries to find the answer why.

Key words: Molière, comedy, mercantilism, bourgeois, comical, Henri Bergson, monomania, mechanic, living creature's organic movement, rhetorical figure.

Le passage de l'oral à l'écrit dans *Récits des hommes libres*, Hamadi

Maja Tomšič

Résumé

L'écriture des *Récits des hommes libres* d'Hamadi peut être considérée comme un acte historique, notamment dans le cadre de la littérature berbère qui, dans les pays de son origine, reste essentiellement orale et qui risque de disparaître. Avant d'aborder la création ou bien les caractéristiques du recueil de contes berbères écrit par Hamadi, il convient de présenter le lien étroit entre la littérature berbérophone et la question culturelle des Berbérophones. En dehors des *Récits des hommes libres*, la littérature berbérophone contemporaine, en train de se développer, lutte pour la préservation de l'héritage littéraire des Berbères et pour la connaissance de cette littérature au plus vaste public. Par ailleurs, les contes merveilleux, faisant partie d'une longue tradition orale, dépendent avant tout de la mémoire et de la narration éphémère de celui qui les raconte. Dans le procédé de la mise à l'écrit, Hamadi a passé, avec expertise, par la traduction pour pouvoir écrire les contes, recueillis en tamazight, en français. Les *Récits des hommes libres* reflètent tant l'oralité et des caractéristiques de l'héritage littéraire des Berbères que la créativité artistique d'Hamadi. Grâce à leur richesse poétique, ces contes, adaptés à l'époque moderne, transmettent « la conception de la vie propre aux Imazighènes » (Hamadi, 1998 : 9) et l'émotion suscitée par la narration originale en berbère.

Mots clés : Berbères, tradition orale berbère, conte merveilleux, *Récits des hommes libres*, Hamadi, écriture des contes berbères.

La culture berbérophone est assez hétérogène, dont témoigne sa dispersion géographique et ses différences concernant ses modes de vie, sa position sociale et ses versions linguistiques. (Galand-Pernet, 1998 : 5). En effet, les Berbères seraient les premiers à occuper le territoire de l'Afrique du Nord. Leur présence est attestée même avant la conquête musulmane et remonterait à l'époque préhistorique. (Berthier, 1947) En dehors des berbérophones émigrés en Europe ou ailleurs, les berbérophones d'Afrique seraient répartis entre huit états : Maroc, Algérie, Tunisie, Libye, Mauritanie, Mali, Niger, Burkina-Faso (ibid. : 8).

Au Maghreb, la langue berbère est considérée notamment comme un dialecte ou comme une langue seconde. L'arabe serait encore la seule langue nationale, la langue officielle ou bien la langue « de maîtrise du social, du politique et du culturel » (Fares, 1987). En conséquence, la culture, la littérature des Berbères semblent être assez dispersées et risquent de disparaître. (Camps, 1996 : 62-64) Aujourd'hui, il existe au Maghreb un mouvement des berbérophones revendiquant une politique multiculturelle et reconnaissant leur existence dans la société. Tout cela témoigne du fait qu'une identité transnationale berbère soit de plus en plus affirmée. Les berbérophones lettrés, débarrassés d'un complexe d'infériorité, sont de plus en plus nombreux dans la défense de leur langue maternelle. (Galand-Pernet, 1998 : 11-38)

La littérature berbère est essentiellement orale. L'héritage de la littérature orale des Berbères est abondant et se transmet de génération en génération. (*Encyclopédie Larousse*) Cette tradition orale connaît avant tout les contes merveilleux, les contes d'animaux, les contes satiriques ou plaisants, les récits moralisateurs et les légendes hagiographiques. (Bounfour, 1994) Concernant les contes merveilleux, il est difficile de déterminer leur origine. La tradition orale des Berbères est assez ancienne, elle refléterait même des influences de la mythologie de l'Antiquité, mais aussi des éléments de contes merveilleux de l'Europe occidentale (Basset, 1920 : 114) et de la tradition orientale. (Hamadi, 1998, 36) En outre, il existe beaucoup de contes berbères qui ne refléteraient aucune influence thématique des contes d'autres pays ou civilisations traitant aussi de thèmes préhistoriques.

Les contes merveilleux berbères seraient racontés par les femmes, non par les hommes. Souvent, les auditeurs se réuniraient autour du foyer et l'histoire commencerait. Il serait interdit de raconter ces contes pendant la journée, car cela apporterait malheur, d'après une croyance ancienne. (Basset, 1920 : 101-105) Au Maroc, les conteurs, c'est-à-dire des hommes, raconteraient d'autres types de contes en plein air, « sur les places et les marchés. » Ceux-ci transmettraient la tradition orale ainsi que certains modes d'expression, comme par exemple « l'épopée, le chant, les devinettes, les proverbes » (Bastin, 1991).

La littérature orale dépend notamment de la mémoire des conteurs. D'un côté, un conteur ou une conteuse berbérophone raconte normalement une histoire

mémorisée presque phrase par phrase ou mot par mot. De l'autre côté, une narration en public ne peut jamais être identique à la narration précédente. Faisant partie d'une tradition orale, les contes berbères sont constamment soumis à des changements (Bastin 1991). Ils ont subi et subissent encore une évolution à travers le temps et à travers différentes régions. D'ailleurs, cette littérature connaîtrait de grandes pertes au cours de l'histoire. (Encyclopédie Larousse). Malgré des changements évolutifs, la masse des contes berbères a des caractéristiques persistantes et reconnaissables. (Encyclopédie Larousse) De plus, l'originalité des contes berbères provient directement du phénomène de la performance. Le rôle des conteurs est essentiel dans la diffusion et la (trans)formation des contes. Ce sont les conteurs, qui contribueraient aux caractéristiques spécifiques des contes concernant le domaine de la thématique, de la narration et de la culture. (Bounfour, 1994)

Par ailleurs, il existe des contraintes dans la diffusion des littératures berbères en Afrique du Nord (dans les pays où il sont le plus diffusés). D'abord, la majorité des textes se transmettent encore à l'oral par des conteurs, des chanteurs ou des médias, etc. Il existerait encore des conteurs de villages et les contes seraient normalement racontés auprès du feu domestique. La tradition orale des Berbères se transmet aussi lors de fêtes, de rites (notamment les chants), etc. Cette transmission est normalement accompagnée de la réaction ou de l'intervention directe de l'auditoire. La production reste surtout locale, ce qui serait dû aussi à des obstacles linguistiques. Ainsi, la réception des œuvres littéraires en berbère dépend essentiellement de la voix (dans les régions berbères d'Afrique du Nord). (Galand-Pernet, 1998 : 11-38) En outre, la langue berbère connaît un grand nombre de variétés selon les régions et même selon des groupes de berbérophones assez restreints. Il faut mentionner qu'une langue littéraire commune à tous les Berbères n'existerait pas. Il s'agirait plutôt des langues littéraires régionales qui diffèrent, d'ailleurs, du langage quotidien. On connaît quelques langues littéraires berbères, par exemple celle de Kabylie. Cela représente un problème dans la diffusion de la littérature écrite berbère, malgré une certaine inter-compréhension et un sentiment de familiarité entre différentes régions berbérophones. (Galand-Pernet, 1998 : 11)

Les textes écrits ne représentent qu'une partie infime de la production littéraire berbère. Concernant la littérature écrite en berbère, ses débuts remonteraient à l'introduction de l'Islam dans les pays berbères. Il est question avant tout de textes de religion, de traités promouvant la religion musulmane, de livres sacrés d'hérétiques, de chroniques historiques, de traductions d'ouvrages du droit arabe. (Basset, 1920 : 64-66). Au Moyen Âge, les textes d'historiens berbères représentaient une source d'informations importante sur des traditions de tribus, par exemple (ibid. : 69). Concernant la littérature écrite, ils sont attestées des productions abondantes et variées des Ibadites (entre les VIII^e et XVI^e siècles) et des Chleuhs. (ibid. : 75) En effet, les documents historiques témoignant de

la littérature écrite en berbère seraient rares. La recherche des manuscrits se poursuit. Une grande partie des anciens textes en berbère serait encore à trouver. (Galand-Pernet, 1998 : 11-38)

Aujourd'hui, la lecture des textes berbères ne serait pas encore une activité courante dans les pays berbérophones. Ainsi, on assiste à un effort important, à travers l'Afrique du Nord, de la mise à l'écrit de la littérature berbère. De nos jours, on assiste à l'édition de romans, de nouvelles, de poèmes contemporains et de nouvelles éditions d'œuvres anciennes. Les jeunes générations d'écrivains berbérophones tendraient à franchir les limites anciennes de la littérature, concernant des aires, des états différents et des règles anciennes strictes de la poésie et de la prose (des règles concernant le vocabulaire et les procédés rhétoriques). (Galand-Pernet, 1998 : 11) Les auteurs berbérophones semblent être intéressés notamment par l'actualisation des thèmes issus des contes, des mythes berbères anciens. Il est question de la modernisation de la littérature berbère qui entre maintenant aussi dans le domaine du théâtre. (Bounfour, 1994) Le rôle clé de celui-ci est évident, par exemple, en Kabylie où depuis les années 1980 le théâtre aide à ouvrir la voie aux œuvres littéraires modernes. Les jeunes générations d'auteurs et de chercheurs berbérophones essayent de contribuer à l'unification (transnationale) de la langue *tamazigt*. Ils s'appliquent à la promotion de cette langue. Depuis ces dernières décennies, les berbérophones à travers le monde cherchent à enrichir et à moderniser les langues locales. (Galand-Pernet, 1998 : 11-38)

Passons maintenant au public occidental ou bien au public francophone qui peu accéder à la littérature berbère notamment à travers des œuvres (littéraires) publiées à l'écrit. Il y a aussi d'autres possibilités d'accès à la littérature berbère - des émissions télévisées et des spectacles théâtraux ou des narrations de contes en public (lors des festivals, par exemple). (Galand-Pernet, 1998 : 11-38) En dehors de la poésie, le conte serait le genre narratif le plus étudié dans ce domaine. En effet, il en existe de nombreux recueils et études. (Bounfour, 1994) L'intérêt pour la littérature des Berbères serait assez récent. Ce n'est qu'au XIX^e siècle que se publieraient les premiers témoignages des littératures berbères. (Galand-Pernet, 1998 : 11-38) Les recherches les plus récentes (depuis les années 1980) seraient centrées notamment sur le texte littéraire lui-même, la poésie, l'histoire de la transmission et les variantes textuelles. (ibid.)

Hamadi El Boubsi a recueilli et écrit des contes berbères dans le recueil *Récits des hommes libres : Contes berbères* (1998). Il est connu notamment en tant que comédien, conteur, écrivain, dramaturge, chanteur et metteur en scène. Il est né au Maroc en 1958 et vit en Belgique depuis son enfance. (Bastin, 1991) En dehors de ses pièces de théâtre, il a publié par exemple les œuvres suivantes : *Visages et Autres Séismes* (recueil de poèmes), *Le Chauve Pouilleux* (conte), *Les Fous : Récits de sagesse et de folie*, *Les Amants : Récits d'amour et de haine*, *Les Errants : Récits d'exil et*

d'errance. Il a aussi contribué à l'enregistrement de chants berbères : *Le Fleuve au Nom de Femme* et *Le Chant de la Terre*. (Hamadi, 1998)

Entre les années 1980 et 1986, dans le Nord du Maroc, il a recueilli une vaste collection d'œuvres de tradition orale (notamment des contes, des proverbes, des chants). Il a ensuite publié quelques recueils de contes, parmi lesquels *Récits des hommes libres*. (Hamadi : « On porte un ailleurs en soi », 2008) Le recueil *Récits des hommes libres* a été publié par les *Editions du Seuil*, à Paris, en 1998, dans la collection intitulée *La mémoire des sources*. Dans la préface, Hamadi présente son chemin de la création du recueil. Il s'agit d'une collecte de contes qu'il a rassemblés « en langue *tamazight* auprès de conteuses de la tribu des *Aït Touzine* du nord-est du Maroc. » (Hamadi, 1998 : 9)

De nos jours, par exemple au Maroc, le public visé de ces contes merveilleux seraient les enfants, les adolescents et les femmes (Bastin, 1991). Il faut savoir que la fonction de ces contes berbères ou du message qu'ils transmettent est avant tout une fonction cohésive (Galand-Pernet, 1998 : 11-38). Ils visent à toucher et à susciter une réaction du public qui s'y reconnaît. Il s'agit d'une manifestation à l'oral et en public qui fait, entre autres, renforcer les valeurs culturelles au sein d'un groupe berbérophone. En outre, ces contes ont aussi une fonction esthétique émouvant le destinataire, le persuadant, lui procurant un plaisir, etc. (ibid.)

Dans notre cas, le contexte semble être un peu différent. Le recueil de contes, *Récits des hommes libres*, serait destiné à tous, aux enfants et aux adultes, aux femmes et aux hommes. Vu l'inégalité dans le monde berbère et ailleurs, entre les hommes et les femmes, et aussi l'inégalité entre les pauvres et les fortunés, Hamadi considère le conte comme « une parole subversive de femme ». (Bastin, 1991) Dans le monde actuel où la langue et la culture des Berbères sont envisagées comme minoritaires ou même inférieures par les autorités, la publication de ce recueil de contes semble être un acte de *rebellion*. Un acte historiquement important qui lutte contre la disparition de la tradition orale berbère et qui fait appel à la reconnaissance de la multiculturalité. En outre, cette œuvre littéraire peut contribuer à une plus grande considération et estimation des auteurs issus de l'immigration en Europe, par exemple. En outre, Hamadi explicite que c'est notamment l'émotion que les contes sont censés transmettre au public. Il exprime le désir de faire réagir l'auditoire et de le *toucher*. (Bastin 1991) *Récits des hommes libres* semblent être destinés à être lus à haute voix à un auditoire. Ils présentent d'un côté des histoires universelles capables de toucher aussi un public qui serait moins familier avec la culture ou l'histoire du monde berbère. De l'autre côté, ils reflètent « une conception de la vie propre aux *Imazighènes* » (Hamadi, 1998 : 9) et l'originalité de la tradition orale des Berbères.

Il faut préciser que ces contes rappellent bien la différence entre la tradition littéraire occidentale (essentiellement écrite) et la tradition littéraire berbère (au

moins pour le moment, principalement orale) en Afrique du Nord. La tradition orale est caractérisée par une inconstance. La narration à l'oral est un événement collectif éphémère et toujours unique. Au contraire, la version écrite des contes est interchangeable et durable. Elle contribue à la diffusion de la littérature à un public plus grand et éloigné du lieu de sa création. À l'écrit, les contes, issus d'une tradition orale, sont normalement créés par un auteur qui en avait choisi ou bien qui en propose une seule version. En outre, le contexte différent de la réalisation, de l'écriture d'un conte, influence les caractéristiques de style que l'auteur choisit. Il doit maintenant tenir compte de la mise en page, de la ponctuation, entre autres, afin d'essayer de transmettre le rythme de la narration et de provoquer une certaine émotion ou réaction auprès du public. (Bastin 1991)

Dans son processus de l'écriture de *Récits des hommes libres*, Hamadi a dû passer par la traduction : la traduction du tamazight en français. Ce n'est pas une traduction littérale des contes berbères (accompagnée de notes ethnographiques), mais un recueil lisible et achevé au niveau du style. Hamadi a transmis dans le texte en français l'émotion suscitée par la narration en berbère, ainsi que le coloris culturel des Berbères. D'un autre côté, il a adapté le texte à l'époque moderne et au public visé, au public francophone (en tenant compte de ses connaissances acquises), même si en général on risque ainsi de perdre une certaine richesse poétique de l'expression originelle.

Les contes berbères dépendraient notamment de celui qui les raconte et de l'époque dans laquelle ils sont racontés (Bastin, 1991). Dans le recueil *Récits des hommes libres*, Hamadi a conservé la forme et le contenu des contes qu'il a rassemblés (ibid.). Sa fidélité à la tradition orale des Berbères est percevable aussi dans sa propre trace artistique – conformément à la tradition établie, il semble incarner le rôle d'un conteur. Ce conteur est dans notre cas un narrateur de mots à l'écrit. En tant qu'écrivain, Hamadi semble envelopper ce recueil de contes de son propre style d'écriture. Il est connu que « sous le nom de style, se forme un langage autarcique qui ne plonge que dans la mythologie personnelle et secrète de l'auteur » (Barthes, 1953 : 14). Issus de la tradition orale des Berbères, les contes d'Hamadi se caractérisent, même à l'écrit, par un style assez oral. Il semble que, mis à l'écrit, ils rappellent la narration éphémère en public, proposée par un conteur. La narration de ceux-ci est, par exemple, caractérisée par des commentaires du narrateur, tel que le commentaire suivant : « *Bien des conteurs vous le diront aussi ...* » (Hamadi, 1998 : 11).

En outre, l'une des caractéristiques principales des contes berbères sont les formules d'introduction et de conclusion. Elles proviennent d'une croyance ancienne : raconter les contes merveilleux serait un acte dangereux. Autrefois, ces formules avaient le pouvoir magique de chasser les mauvais génies. (Basset, 1920 : 105-110) Il s'agit de formules qui ne sont plus efficaces aujourd'hui, mais dont la

forme se transmet encore. (*Encyclopédie Larousse*) Il existe une grande variété de ces formules à travers différentes régions berbérophones. Les plus importantes, dans l'expulsion du mal, seraient les formules finales, nombreuses en Berbérie. Leur rôle primordial serait de séparer le narrateur du contenu et des personnages évoqués. Ensuite, les formules finales serviraient au narrateur à pouvoir confirmer la réalité de l'histoire qu'il vient de raconter (Basset, 1920 : 107-109).

Les débuts et les fins des contes rédigés par Hamadi ne semblent pas être de vraies formules, par lesquelles commence normalement la narration d'une conteuse, au Maghreb. Les contes d'Hamadi commencent différemment, sans aucune allusion aux forces surnaturelles ou aux mauvais esprits. Ainsi, il y a souvent par exemple des récits commençant par une ou plusieurs phrases introductives et une ou plusieurs phrases conclusives. Les premières présentent normalement le temps de l'action du récit, qui est toujours très éloigné de l'époque de la narration. Les secondes, par contre, servent à conclure l'histoire, ils évoquent habituellement la situation finale. D'un autre côté, certains contes dans le recueil proposé par Hamadi sont introduits par un court poème. Un lecteur qui n'est pas assez familier avec la littérature berbère pourrait se poser différentes questions : S'agit-il d'un fragment d'un poème plus long ou de vers inventés par Hamadi lui-même ? ; Les-a-t-il ajoutés librement ou faisaient-ils déjà partie du conte ? Ces vers, sont-ils destinés à être chantés (et par qui) et quelle serait leur éventuelle mélodie ? Si ces questions restent ouvertes, une partie relativement importante du contexte et du message culturels se perd. Il est connu que l'une des obstacles évidentes concernant la compréhension d'un texte écrit réside dans le fait que le sens soit moins évident à l'écrit que dans un message exprimé à l'oral. Un conte écrit ne révèle pas les circonstances dans lesquelles il a été raconté. (Lederer, 1994 : 18) Ce que l'on peut constater dans notre cas, c'est que les vers, dont nous sommes en train de parler, portent une signification évidente qui est étroitement liée au contenu du récit qui les suit. Considérons par exemple les vers évoquant le basilic que l'héroïne Lalla Aïcha est en train de « soigner » (Hamadi, 1998 : 34). Ce poème invite le lecteur à découvrir que les contes berbères, notamment ceux racontés par les hommes, seraient accompagnés de chants et de poèmes (ainsi que de la danse et de la jonglerie). (Bastin, 1991) En outre, les formules d'introduction seraient normalement composées de phrases rythmées, rimées et chantées (*Encyclopédie Larousse*). Ensuite, le style poétique de ces vers ne semble pas être complexe. C'est un style libre, il n'y a pas de rimes. Il y a pourtant une répétition qui contribue aux caractères mélodique et rythmique du poème. Voici la version française du poème :

Il y avait et il y avait
Il y avait partout le basilic
Et partout le lys.

En outre, les phrases dans ces contes merveilleux sont souvent assez longues. Considérons par exemple le cas du dernier paragraphe ou bien de la conclusion de l'histoire de *l'homme trahi* :

On dit que le roi lui trouva une autre femme. Quel celle-ci non plus ne lui donna pas d'enfant, qu'il s'arrangea pour la faire écarteler et qu'il vécut mari trompé jusqu'à fin de ses jours car, comme disent les anciens, il était de ces hommes qui jamais ne comprennent qu'il faut aimer pour être aimé ! (Hamadi, 1998 : 80)

Cette dernière phrase complexe est caractérisée par l'ironie. De plus, il semble que sa longueur fait rappeler la narration d'un conteur en public (vu le manque de longues pauses entre les propositions).

En dehors des longues phrases complexes que nous venons de mentionner, la narration de ces récits peut devenir assez concise. Il est question de phrases simples et assez courtes qui sont juxtaposées. Grâce à un rythme ralenti de la narration, ces phrases contribuent à un effet de gradation dans le récit. Elles figurent normalement dans des situations assez intenses.

En outre, il y a la répétition de certains ensembles de mots. Celle-ci est normalement liée à la répétition concernant l'histoire d'un conte. Cette narration cyclique est bien évidente, par exemple, dans le deuxième conte du recueil, dans l'histoire de *Lalla Aïcha* et de *Mohammed le Bien-Nommé* (Hamadi, 1998 : 33). Ces deux personnages reprennent la même conversation, mot à mot, plusieurs fois au cours du récit. Non seulement que la répétition sert probablement à mieux mémoriser le contenu à un narrateur ou à un public, mais elle contribue aussi à l'effet de gradation. Considérons ensuite le cas d'une réplique du personnage de *Shtim Shlim* qui voulait apprendre « toutes » les sciences existantes : « *La science des étoiles, la science des terres et la science des mers.* » (ibid. : 61) L'emploi des pronoms personnels ou des noms propres est assez fréquent au cours des récits.

Le vocabulaire de ces récits semble être assez simple (« *l'absence lui était plus légère* ») (ibid. : 12) et c'est l'intrigue ou l'action qui est mise en avant. D'un autre côté, les récits sont *enveloppés* d'un style d'expression assez poétique. C'est notamment le cas de formules d'introduction et de conclusion, d'autres expressions de métaphore, de comparaison et d'allégorie. Évoquons aussi l'emploi récurrent de la personnification : « *... leurs oliviers donnaient des olives ...* » À la gradation, que nous avons déjà mentionnée, s'ajoute souvent l'exagération. Celle-ci accompagne des phénomènes magiques, par exemple. D'ailleurs, elle est évidente dans de longs titres de contes. En effet, la narration est pleine de termes ayant une note connotative prédominante (« *Leurs deux maisons étaient collées l'une à l'autre.* ») (ibid. : 11) et pleine d'ironie, de vivacité et d'espièglerie.

Au bout du compte, dans *Récits des hommes libres*, Hamadi a traduit et transcrit en français des contes berbères tout en transmettant leur capacité de toucher le public. Ces contes, publiés en France, destinés aux lecteurs francophones, sont maintenant confrontés avec un univers différent, où une éventuelle narration à haute voix se passera, probablement, dans un cercle plus intime d'auditeurs. Le charme de ce recueil se trouve dans le fait que, même à l'écrit, ces contes suggèrent qu'il sont racontés à plusieurs personnes, dans les pays berbérophones ; grâce au style d'écriture d'Hamadi, la narration de ces contes à haute voix pourrait devenir un événement collectif dans le monde francophone aussi.

Par ailleurs, il est presque impossible de confirmer l'authenticité de ces contes. Dans notre cas, une nécessité de confiance s'impose, une confiance liant le narrateur et son public, que ce soit un auditeur ou un lecteur. De plus, il faut reconnaître l'importance de la mémoire des conteuses berbères dans la transmission et la conservation de leur tradition orale. Bien que la tradition narrative dans les pays berbères exige une préservation stricte de la forme et du contenu, de génération en génération, différents conteurs et auditoires contribuaient à la variation des contes traditionnels berbères, perceptible notamment d'un point de vue diachronique. On pourrait supposer que dans le futur, même les contes retranscrits par Hamadi n'échapperont pas au pouvoir de l'évolution.

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Prehod iz ustne v pisno tradicijo v *Récits des hommes libres*, Hamadi

Članek ponazarja zgodovinski pomen *Récits des hommes libres*, Hamadijeve zbirke berberskih ljudskih pripovedi. Poleg procesa nastajanja in vidnejših značilnosti omenjenega dela, bomo poskušali razložiti vez med berbersko literaturo in berbersko kulturno problematiko. Sodobna berberska literatura se bori za ohranitev svoje kulturne dediščine, del katere je bogato ljudsko izročilo – predvsem pripovedke. Slednje temeljijo med drugim na spominu pripovedovalcev ter njihovega občinstva. Pisatelj in igralec Hamadi je zgodbe zbral v severnem Maroku v berberskem jeziku in jih naposled prevedel oziroma zapisal v francoščini. *Récits des hommes libres* odražajo vpliv ustnega izročila, zlasti značilnosti neposrednega pripovedovanja zgodb, in Hamadijev ustvarjalni pristop k samemu zapisu. Pripovedi v tej zbirki so tako precej poetične, prilagojene sodobnemu času in sposobne vzbuditi podobna čustva ali odzive, kot jih izzove pripovedovanje v njihovem izvornem jeziku.

Ključne besede: Berberi, berbersko ljudsko izročilo, *Récits des hommes libres*, Hamadi, zapis berberskih pripovedi.

The Passage from the Oral to the Written Tradition in *Récits des hommes libres*, Hamadi

The article presents the process of writing and the historical significance of *Récits des hommes libres* by Hamadi, a collection of Berber traditional tales. Before addressing the characteristics of this collection, we'll explain a close connection between the Berber literature and its cultural question. The modern Berber literature struggles to preserve its cultural heritage. Furthermore, the Berber tales, as part of a long oral tradition, depend above all on the memory of local storytellers and their audience. When writing down Berber tales, that Hamadi had collected in northern Morocco, he translated them from a Berber language to French. *Récits des hommes libres* reflect a certain orality, characteristics of the Berber storytelling tradition and Hamadi's creativity. Thanks to a rich poetic expression, these tales, adapted to our modern times, transmit the emotion probably evoked by the original storytelling in Berber language.

Key words: Berbers, Berber oral tradition, tales, *Récits des hommes libres*, Hamadi, the writing of Berber tales.

„Dort fühlt man die Wärme des fremden Lebens”: Zofka Kveders (1878–1926) pazifistischer Briefroman

Irena Samide

Abstract

Zofka Kveder (1878-1926), aus einer Arbeiterfamilie stammende slowenische Literatin und Publizistin, stellt mit ihrer Biographie paradigmatisch das Leben in der multi-kulturellen und multisprachlichen Habsburgermonarchie dar: In Ljubljana, Triest, Bern, Prag und ab 1906 in Zagreb lebend, schrieb sie auf Slowenisch, Deutsch und Kroatisch, redigierte mehrere Zeitungen und Zeitschriften, schrieb Prosatexte und Theaterstücke und gab 1917 den Briefroman *Hanka* heraus. Es wird im vorliegenden Beitrag versucht, anhand dieses bisher wenig beachteten Romans eine weibliche Perspektive auf den Krieg zu zeichnen, wobei die gängigen Positionen der Weiblichkeit ebenso in Frage gestellt werden wie die tradierten kriegskonnotierten Männlichkeitsmuster. Zofka Kveders Roman *Hanka* kann, so die These, einige wichtige Aspekte zu antimilitaristischen und pazifistischen Tendenzen der bisher genderspezifisch wenig erforschten geopolitischen 'Ränder' Europas aufzeigen und gleichzeitig auf eine Literatin aufmerksam machen, deren Schreiben wesentlich das Bild der ausgehenden Habsburgermonarchie vervollständigt.

Schlüsselwörter: Zofka Kveder, Pazifismus, *Hanka*, Briefroman, Krieg

1 EINLEITUNG

„Wann ist der Mensch am freimütigsten, wann offenbart er sich am ehesten, wann enthüllt er seine Seele am furchtlosesten?“¹ fragt sich die zwanzigjährige Zofka Kveder (1878–1926) in dem Brief, den sie an Marica Bartol Nadlišek (1867–1940), die Redakteurin der ersten slowenischen Frauenzeitschrift *Slovenka* schreibt, und antwortet sich gleichzeitig:

Vielleicht in Briefen, vielleicht in Tagebüchern. Sehen Sie, deswegen lese ich Tagebücher und Briefe am liebsten. Dort fühlt man die Wärme des fremden Lebens, den fremden Herzschlag, atmet die Blüte der fremden Seele, wenn Briefe wirklich freimütig sind. Und das fühlt man. Daher sind mir Briefe etwas Heiliges und ich lese sie mit Achtung, die noch tiefer ist, wenn der Brief offener ist, warm und unmittelbar. (Govékarjeva 1927: 1)

Es ist gerade „die Apologie des Gefühls“, die Anton Debeljak in einer zeitgenössischen Rezension des Briefromans *Hanka* – einer von den wenigen Reaktionen auf den vielleicht künstlerisch überzeugendsten Roman Zofka Kveders – hervorhebt (Debeljak 1918) und damit den Roman, dem er u. a. auch „klassische Konturen“ zuschreibt, vordergründig in die weibliche Sphäre rückt. Die fragmentarische Briefform, die die erste slowenische Berufsschriftstellerin und „Begleiterin der Moderne“ (Žerjal Pavlin 2011: 323) für ihren Kriegsroman wählt, ist, wie im Folgenden gezeigt wird, geradezu ideal für die Darstellung der *anderen* Seite des verheerenden Krieges; die komplexe Struktur und symbolbeladene Sprache eröffnen somit eine neue Sicht sowohl auf die Kriegsproblematik als auch auf die s. g. „weibliche“ Perspektive.

2 DER MULTIKULTURELLE UND MULTISPRACHLICHE HINTERGRUND ZOFKA KVEDERS

Die Autorin, die unter verschiedensten Namen veröffentlichte – außer ihren regulären Namen Zofka Kveder, Zofka Kvedrova, Zofka Jelovšek und Zofka

1 Der Brief Zofka Kveders aus dem Jahr 1898 befindet sich im Nachlass von Marica Bartol Nadlišek in der Handschriftenabteilung der National- und Universitätsbibliothek Ljubljana NUK, Ms 703 (Pisma in korespondenca, B korespondenca, ovoj 9 Zofka Kveder, št. 1). Denselben Brief stellt Minka Govékarjeva (1874–1950) an den Anfang ihrer biographischen Erzählung (Govékarjeva 1927: 1.) Die deutsche Übersetzung zit. nach Vitorelli 2007: 27. Ähnlich zum Briefgenre äußert sich Kveder auch einige Jahre später, 1904, in dem Beitrag *Pisma*, veröffentlicht in der Zeitung *Ljubljanski zvon*: „Ich liebe Briefe; sie sind etwas Lebendiges, Persönliches. Wie eine Stimme, die aus der Ferne kommt, wie ein warmer, begrüßender Blick, der im Herzen etwas Fröhliches und Helles erweckt [...]“ (Kveder 1904: 412; übers. v. I. S.)

Kveder-Demetrović und zahlreichen orthographischen und stilistischen Variationen davon versah sie ihre journalistischen und literarischen Texte gerne auch mit verschiedensten Pseudonymen – wie Milena, Žiška, Poluks, Modroslava, Janja Legat, Zmagoslava² etc. – wird in der slowenischen Literaturgeschichtsschreibung sowie im slowenischen Literaturunterricht als eine eindeutig slowenische Autorin präsentiert. Nur wenige LiteraturwissenschaftlerInnen – unter ihnen die Herausgeberin der kritischen Ausgabe ihrer *Gesammelten Werke* (Kveder 2005, 2010, 2013, 2016) Katja Mihurko Ponž (vgl. Mihurko Ponž 2003) – weisen auf ihren interkulturellen und multisprachlichen Hintergrund hin: Sie war eine polyglotte Autorin, die ihre literarischen und publizistischen Texte auf Slowenisch, Kroatisch und Deutsch verfasste und sich außerdem auch im Tschechischen souverän hin und her bewegte. Ihre Skizzen, Prosaminiaturen, Essays, Reiseberichte, Erzählungen und journalistischen Beiträge schrieb sie für die deutschsprachige *Prager Politik*, für die Wiener Zeitschrift *Dokumente der Frauen*, für den Grazer *Arbeiterwillen*, für die Wochenbeilage *Frauenzeitung* des *Agramer Tagblatts* und für zahlreiche andere österreichische, schweizerische, tschechische und kroatische Periodika und Publikationen, wovon das Meiste noch gänzlich unbearbeitet ist: Aufgrund der noch nicht digitalisierten Journale liegen nämlich die meisten dieser Beiträge zerstreut in diversen europäischen Bibliotheken und Archiven vor. Erst ab 2013 kann die deutschsprachige Leserschaft Zofka Kveder (wieder) wenigstens ansatzweise kennenlernen: Der Drava-Verlag veröffentlichte die deutsche Erstübersetzung ihres bedeutendsten slowenischen Romans *Ihr Leben* [*Njeno življenje*].

Ihre Deutschkenntnisse waren exzellent, nicht zuletzt aufgrund ihrer deutschsprachigen Ausbildung – 1893 beendete sie ihre Ausbildung auf der Ursulinenschule in Ljubljana, fing wenige Jahre später an, sich literarisch zu betätigen und zog 1899 zunächst nach Triest und später in die Schweiz, wo sie sich 1899 als Studentin an der Universität Bern in der Schweiz inskribierte, an einer der wenigen Universitäten Europas, wo es bekanntlich möglich war, auch ohne Matura (und als Frau) zu studieren. Das Studium brach sie zwar bereits nach einem Semester ab, doch die Studienzeit in Bern war für ihren ganzen Lebens- und Schaffensweg äußerst wichtig: „Doch diese Monate in der Schweiz waren tatsächlich ergiebig! Sie reichten für einige Jahre aus und erst heute erkenne ich, wie nützlich sie für mich waren!“ äußert sie sich in *Pisma* [Briefe], die 1904 in der Literaturzeitschrift *Ljubljanski zvon* veröffentlicht wurden (Kveder 2013: 22–23).³ Nach einigen Zwischenstationen kam sie nach Prag, wo sie nicht nur von 1904

2 Vgl. u. a. den bio- und bibliographischen Eintrag in der *Slowenischen Biographie*, der allerdings sehr knapp und ergänzungsbedürftig ist (Redaktion 2013).

3 Zu ihrem Bildungsweg vgl. auch Pezdirc Bartol 2018.

bis 1914 die literarische Zeitschrift *Domaći prijatelj* [*Der Hausfreund*] redigierte, sondern auch immer wieder in tschechischen und vor allem deutschsprachigen Zeitschriften publizierte. Nachdem sie sich 1906 in Zagreb niedergelassen hatte, war sie sieben Jahre lang als Redakteurin der deutschsprachigen Zeitung *Agramer Tagblatt* tätig, wo sie unter anderem für die Wochenendbeilage *Frauenzeitung* zuständig war. Die These Matjaž Birks, ihre Ernennung zur Zeitschriftenredakteurin sei ein deutliches Zeichen dafür, dass sie vom Zagreber deutschsprachigen Umfeld als eine wichtige Emanzipierte sowie engagierte Schriftstellerin und Publizistin anerkannt wurde (Birk 2012) mag sicherlich ihre Gültigkeit haben, und ihre Entscheidung, den nächsten größeren literarischen Text auf Kroatisch zu publizieren, hängt zweifellos mit ihrer Einbettung in das kroatische kulturelle Leben zusammen. Mit diesem Roman wendet sie sich schließlich an ein breiteres Publikum: Sowohl durch die Wahl der Sprache als auch durch das Thema, das sie anspricht, zieht sie die Leserinnen und Leser aus einem größeren (süd)slawischen Raum an. Der Roman *Hanka*, den sie bereits 1915, im zweiten Kriegsjahr, niederschrieb, wurde 1916 noch als Manuskript mit dem von der kroatischen Kulturvereinigung *Matica hrvatska* verliehenen Preis ausgezeichnet und Ende 1917⁴ herausgegeben. Erst 1938, zwölf Jahre nach dem Tod der Autorin, wurde der Roman im Rahmen eines ersten Versuchs, einen Gesamtüberblick über das Schaffen der Autorin zu verschaffen, ins Slowenische übersetzt. Der Text, der durch viele Kroatismen, künstliche Satzstrukturen sowie eine archaische, auch grammatikalisch oft inadäquate Sprache gekennzeichnet ist, bedürfte heute allerdings einer gründlichen Revision bzw. Neuübersetzung. Eine ausgezeichnete Möglichkeit dafür böte die textkritische und sorgfältig edierte, achtbändige Ausgabe der *Gesammelten Werke* Zofka Kveders an, worin seit 2005 bereits fünf Bände erschienen sind. Leider kann und darf jedoch *Hanka* aufgrund rigider Richtlinien, die für die weitaus eminenteste Reihe slowenischer Klassiker (seit 2005 auch Klassikerinnen – Zofka Kveder ist die erste Frau, die in der Gesellschaft ihrer 31 prominenten schriftstellerischen Kollegen genießen darf) gelten, darin nicht veröffentlicht werden: Es werden nämlich nur diejenigen Texte „zugelassen“, die ursprünglich in slowenischer Sprache entstanden sind. Gerade bei Zofka Kveder, die die meisten (auch slowenischen) Texte außerhalb ihrer engen Heimat geschrieben hat und die, wie eingangs erwähnt, bereits früh international Fuß fasste und in mehreren Sprachen publizierte, ist das Festhalten an so einer Entscheidung fragwürdig. Bereits Vlatka Tucović weist in ihrer Rezension des 1. Bandes *Gesammelter Werke* darauf hin, dass die ersten Herausgeberinnen, Marja Boršnik und Eleonora Kernc,

4 Es kann sogar angenommen werden, dass der Roman trotz des offiziellen Erscheinungsjahrs 2017 tatsächlich erst 1918 erschienen ist, wovon der handschriftliche Vermerk des Bibliothekars zeugt. Vgl. Kovač 2003.

die sich in den dreißiger Jahren mit großem Engagement an die Arbeit machten, in diesem Sinne fortschrittlicher und offener waren als die heutigen Machtträger.⁵ Die Richtlinien betreffen natürlich nicht nur den Roman *Hanka*, sondern auch zahlreiche in anderen Sprachen, hauptsächlich auf Deutsch geschriebene literarische Texte und publizistische Beiträge. Was für einen Teil ihres Œuvres die fremdsprachigen Texte einnehmen, ist momentan noch schwer zu bestimmen. Nach den bisherigen Recherchen steht nur fest, dass diese Produktion um Einiges umfangreicher ist als bisher angenommen.⁶ Dies scheint paradigmatisch für die slowenische betont national orientierte Literaturgeschichtsschreibung zu sein, die nur wenige Dissonanzen und Abweichungen zulässt und somit ganze Teile des jeweiligen Gesamtwerks ausgrenzt.⁷

3 HANKA

Eine Konstante unter zahlreichen Themen, die Zofka Kveder in ihren Texten angeht, stellen Frauenschicksale dar: Ihre Protagonistinnen sind liebende und grausame Mütter, eigensinnige Töchter, kosmopolitische Migrantinnen und Flaneurinnen, leidenschaftliche Liebhaberinnen und verzweifelte Ehefrauen, raffinierte Künstlerinnen und Intellektuelle, aber auch missbrauchte und erschöpfte Arbeiterinnen, von der Welt und ihren Familien verlassene Greisinnen, Prostituierte, unglückliche, in eine Zwangsehe gedrängte oder in ihrer ewigen Jungfräulichkeit vereinsamte Frauen u.v.m. Nach 1913 erscheint bei ihr ein neues Thema: Krieg, das am überzeugendsten in dem Roman *Hanka* versprachlicht wird. Wie Marta Verginella (2015) mit Blick auf das historiographische und autobiographische Schreiben von Frauen im Krieg und über den Krieg feststellt, meiden die meisten slowenischen Autorinnen eine unmittelbare Konfrontation mit dem Krieg. Diese Feststellung könnte auch auf das fiktionale Schreiben übertragen werden. Kveders *Hanka* ist somit eins von den wenigen Werken vom künstlerischen Rang, die sich an dieses schwierige Thema heranwagen.

5 Die Herausgeberin Katja Mihurko Poniz hat, wie Vlatka Tucovič explizit betont, in dieser Hinsicht keine Entscheidungsfreiheit. Vgl. Tucovič 2006: 228f.

6 Eine (provisorische) Übersicht deutscher Texte der Autorin sowie eine gelungene Erzähltextanalyse dreier deutscher Erzählungen bietet die Magisterarbeit Eva Erzen Winklers (2018).

7 Beispiele, bei denen der anderssprachige literarische Opus der jeweiligen Autorin / des jeweiligen Autors nur am Rande erwähnt oder noch lieber stillschweigend umgangen wird, gibt es unzählige, das bekannteste ist sicherlich France Prešeren, dessen deutschsprachiger Opus ein Fünftel seiner ganzen literarischen Produktion umfasst. Vgl. Miladinović Zalaznik 1998. Dazu zählen noch Luiza Pesjak ((1828–1898; vgl. Samide 2017), Janez Trdina (1830–1905; vgl. Miladinović Zalaznik 2005), um von Alma Karlin (1889–1950), die nur auf Deutsch schrieb und aus diesem Grund nach dem Zerfall der Habsburger Monarchie in allen politischen Systemen in Ungnade fiel, ganz zu schweigen.

Zofka Kveder, als überzeugte Verfechterin der jugoslawischen Idee, wollte mit diesem Roman den 1. Weltkrieg in all seinem Verhängnis für die südslawischen Völker zeigen; wie bekannt, verhielt sich der Großteil der slowenischen, kroatischen und bosnischen politischen Szene loyal zur Kriegspolitik der Habsburgermonarchie, während die Serben als Feinde gebrandmarkt und zum vorrangigen Hassobjekt der patriotischen Agitation wurden. Anders als viele deutschsprachige Autorinnen der Donaumonarchie, die in jener Zeit das Genre der Erinnerungsliteratur entdeckt haben und ihre Lebensrückblicke – häufig bereits im sehr fortgeschrittenen Autor wie z. B. Marie von Ebner Eschenbach – in ihre Memoiren, Autobiographien, Familienchroniken einfließen ließen (vgl. Bittermann-Wille 2005: 20f.), handelt es sich bei *Hanka* um ein genuin fiktionales literarisches Werk, das hinsichtlich seiner Tendenz – und nicht seiner Gestaltung nach – mit dem weit- aus berühmteren Roman der ersten österreichischen Friedensnobelpreisträgerin Bertha von Suttner verglichen werden könnte. In der Habsburger Monarchie – aber auch im restlichen Europa – lebte man, wie es Mira Miladinović Zalaznik in Bezug auf Bertha von Suttner ausdrückt, „in einem von kriegesischen Konfrontationen geradezu bestimmten Dauerzustand, den man als etwas Selbstverständliches hinnahm“ (Miladinović Zalaznik 2017: 197). Es ist m. W. nirgendwo überliefert, dass Zofka Kveder den 1889 erschienenen Roman *Die Waffen nieder!* Bertha von Suttners bzw. ihre pazifistischen Bestrebungen gekannt hätte, jedoch die Sätze, die Suttner in ihren *Memoiren* festhielt und die das *Prager Tagblatt* am 22.6.1914, einen Tag nach ihrem Tode, abdrucken ließ, könnten letztendlich auch für Kveders Roman gelten:

Der Friedensliga wollte ich einen Dienst leisten – wie konnte ich das besser tun, als indem ich ein Buch zu schreiben versuchte, das ihre Idee verbreiten sollte? Und am wirksamsten, so dachte ich, konnte ich das in Form einer Erzählung tun. Dafür würde ich sicherlich ein größeres Publikum finden als für eine Abhandlung. [...] ich wollte nicht nur, was ich dachte, sondern was ich fühlte – leidenschaftlich fühlte – in mein Buch legen können, dem Schmerz wollte ich Ausdruck geben, den die Vorstellung des Krieges in meine Seele brannte;⁸

Obwohl sich Zofka Kveders Text im Wesentlichen von Suttners erfolgreichem, in 17 Sprachen übersetztem Roman⁹ unterscheidet, geht es ihr, so wie

8 Bertha von Suttner: *Memoiren*. Hrsg. von Liselotte von Reinken. Bremen 1965, S. 139ff. Zit. nach Mira Miladinović Zalaznik 2017: 203.

9 Der Roman erschien zwar bereits 1914 auch in slowenischer Übersetzung, jedoch nur in Amerika, in der slowenischen Zeitung *Glas Naroda*, die ihn – in entsprechend reduzierter Form – in 66 Auszügen drucken ließ. Mehr dazu vgl. Miladinović Zalaznik 2017: 207f. Zu Bertha von Suttner, ihrem Lebens- und Schaffensweg vgl. auch die Monographie Lughofer / Tvrdík 2017.

Suttner primär darum, auf die Gräueln des Krieges hinzuweisen und gleichzeitig versuchen, den Krieg für alle Ewigkeiten abzuschaffen, im festen Glauben und in tiefer Überzeugung, dass „dieser Krieg, worin noch immer Leute vergehen, der letzte in der Geschichte der Menschheit sei“ (Kveder 1938: 8). Es ist keineswegs auszuschließen, dass das verspätete Erscheinen des Romans auf Kveders dezidiert pazifistische Haltung zurückzuführen ist, die in den ersten Kriegsjahren von den Behörden keineswegs geduldet werden konnte. Zofka Kveder war sich natürlich der „Gefahr“ bewusst, die ihre Ablehnung des Krieges mit sich bringen würde.

Um jegliche Assoziationen an ihre Heimat im Vornehinein zu vermeiden, verlegt sie den Schauplatz des Geschehens nach Polen. Die polnische Nation war seit dem Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts territorial zersplittert: die drei Großmächte, Russland, Habsburger Monarchie und Preußen, teilten sich die Gebiete untereinander. Anhand dieser geopolitischen Teilung, die im Roman auf zwei Antagonismen reduziert wird, auf die habsburgisch-germanische und zaristisch-slawische Welt, entwirft Zofka Kveder eine differenzierte, aus der geokulturologischen Sicht sehr bewegende Modellierung der Welt. Im Grunde genommen geht es nämlich um den kulturhistorischen Konflikt zwischen dem Germanentum und dem Slawentum, der sich im Spannungsfeld zwischen der Protagonistin Hanka, einer „reinrassigen“ (Kveder 1938: 12) Polin und Hans, einem typischen Deutschen, manifestiert. Auch die beiden Töchter des Ehepaars oszillieren zwischen diesen zwei Nationen, zwischen zwei Seelen und zwei Kulturen. Zwar leben alle zusammen in Polen, aber nicht am gleichen Ort. So bestimmt der jeweilige Wohnungsort ihre Wahrnehmung, ihr Verhalten, ihre Ansichten und Werte. Während der deutsche Mann, der Geldbringer, der prototypisch als ein Mensch des Verstandes, der Korrektheit, des Willens, der Ausdauer bezeichnet wird, in der hektischen Warschau lebt, zieht sich die sensible, sinnliche, emotionale, leidenschaftliche, aber, wie sie selber sagt, mittlerweile gezähmte, „dressierte“ polnische Frau auf das geographisch nicht näher definierte Land zurück; dieses Land beschreibt sie als ein idyllisches Natur-Paradies mit Wäldern und Wiesen. Mit anderen Worten: Dem Dorf wird der Status einer Idylle zugeschrieben, er ist neuromantisch, idealistisch belegt, es handelt sich also um einen Ort der Stille, der Güte, der Tiefe und der Reflexion. Die Stadt hingegen ist das Gegenteil davon und wird beherrscht durch Hektik, Oberflächlichkeit und Einsamkeit, die sich trotz großer Menschenmengen – oder gerade wegen ihnen – langsam unter die Haut jedes Einzelnen hineinschleicht.

Auf dem Lande, in einer verlassenen Bibliothek, entdeckt Hanka ihre Lust an der Historiographie und begegnet dort dem idealisierten *Anderen*, ihrem Landesgenossen, Kazimir Stachynski, der allmählich zu ihrem geschätzten Brieffreund und gleichzeitig entscheidend für ihre intellektuelle und emotionale Entwicklung wird. Stachynski ist somit viel mehr als nur der ‘andere Mann’

in ihrem Leben, da die Disharmonie zwischen Hanka und Hans ja nicht primär auf ihre Mann-Frau-Beziehung zurückzuführen ist, sondern es sind in erster Linie die nationalen und weltanschaulichen Differenzen, die die Kluft zwischen den Beiden vertiefen. Durch Kasimir nimmt sich Hanka sowohl als Intellektuelle bzw. als Historikerin – sie schreiben gemeinsam an dem Monumentalwerk *Neue Beiträge zur Geschichte der polnischen Nation* – als auch als Frau wahr, obwohl ihre (Liebes)Beziehung aufgrund objektiver Gegebenheiten eine rein platonische bleibt.

Der Roman ist als eine reflexiv-meditative Chronik in Briefen verfasst. Obwohl er eigentlich als ein fiktiver Dialog angelegt ist, geht es im Grunde genommen um ein Selbstgespräch, um ein ständiges Hinterfragen der eigenen Position, der eigenen Wahrnehmungen und Standpunkte. Beim Ausbruch des Krieges muss Kasimir an der russischen Front teilnehmen, gehört also, aus ihrer Familienperspektive betrachtet, zu den 'Feinden'; aber Hanka ist Pazifistin, sie tritt gegen jeglichen Krieg auf, und diese neue, für sie unerträgliche Konstellation ist für Hanka nur ein Grund mehr, die Grausamkeit und die Sinnlosigkeit des Krieges anzusprechen. Hanka schreibt an Kasimir über ihren Alltag, über ihre Nöte und Ansichten, über ihre Gedanken, Träume, Visionen, Wünsche. So gibt es im Roman Reminiszenzen, Reflexionen, die um den Status der Frau in der Ehe, in der Familie und der Gesellschaft kreisen, womit die traditionellen Muster entlarvt und programmatisch negiert werden. Aber genauso leidenschaftlich werden im Roman auch aktuelle Fragen behandelt, Souveränität, innerpolitische Teilungen, das Unrecht, das der Kapitalismus verursacht u. v. m.

Der Hauptfokus des Romans liegt jedoch auf dem Krieg in all seinen Facetten. So werden darin ausführlich das Leiden von Flüchtlingen sowie das Sterben von Soldaten beschrieben. Es dominieren semantische Felder wie 'Wahnsinn', 'Schmerzen', 'Schrecken', 'apokalyptische Stimmung', 'Barbarentum', 'Schlachtfeld' und zahlreiche Metaphern aus diesen Bereichen. Kveders radikale und „Unbehagen erweckende Art der Darstellung, die an mehreren Stellen ins grausamste Detail geht und die den Leser keineswegs [...] schont, ist“, wie Eva Eržen Winkler (2018: 15) treffend feststellt, nicht nur im Kontext des (verspäteten) Naturalismus zu verstehen, sondern „dient auch zur Desautomatisierung der Wahrnehmung; sie ersetzt die LeserInnen und KritikerInnen in Erstaunen und bringt sie zum Nachdenken“ (ebd.). Der Krieg wirkt sich katastrophal auch auf Hankas private Geschichte aus: Ihr bis dahin geborgenes, aber auch gelogenes Eheleben wird ruiniert, sie verliert ihre Mutter, ihren Bruder, sie glaubt, die intime Verbindung zu ihren beiden Töchtern verloren zu haben, was sich jedoch nicht (gänzlich) bestätigt, schließlich verliert sie aber noch ihren einzigen Freund, Kazimir. Und obwohl sie nach all diesen Katastrophen ein selbstbestimmtes, selbstbefreites Leben beginnt, führen all diese

verheerenden Ereignisse zu einer Skepsis und Resignation gegenüber dem Zivilisationsfortschritt im Allgemeinen.

Der Krieg, der in der Literatur in der Regel als entscheidendes Moment der Geschichte dargestellt wird, als eine kollektive Handlung, die nach dem Willen der herrschenden Eliten ihre Macht legitimieren, die kollektive Identität (neu) begründen und durch die rhetorisierte Poetik das Heroische als Verhaltensnorm konstruieren sollte, erfährt bei Zofka Kveder eine ganz andere, entgegengesetzte Prägung. Indem die üblichen narrativen Muster, die traditionsgemäß den hohen Gattungen wie Epos, Tragödie und Ode sowie der höchsten Stilebene vorbehalten werden, bei Kveder ins Fragmentarische zerfallen und durch die Briefform eine sehr persönliche, private Färbung bekommen, wird der Krieg als ein „der Kontrolle des Einzelnen entgleitendes, eigendynamisches, schwer beschreibbares, komplexes und in zahllose Einzelhandlungen zerfallendes Geschehen“ (Frank 2015: 9) präsentiert. Sie übt implizit Kritik an der heroisierenden und ästhetisierenden Tradition der Kriegsrepräsentation, indem sie die traditionellen narrativen Strategien reflektiert und sie in Kontrast zu ihren eigenen stellt: „Man kann den Krieg ja gar nicht allumfassend beschreiben, es gibt da nur Fetzen, Splitter,“ stellt sie fest (Kveder 1938: 157). Und so geht sie erzähltechnisch auch vor. Die Ich-Erzählerin, die lediglich ihre eigene Wahrnehmung bietet, stellt, rein räumlich gesehen, eine Randerscheinung dar. Sie nimmt nicht unmittelbar am Krieg teil, sondern berichtet eindrucksvoll als Augenzeugenreporterin von den Rändern des Krieges. Am Rande sieht sie all die Aspekte, die in den heroisierenden Darstellungen des Krieges gar nicht vorkommen, d. h., sie sieht Lazarette, Krankenhäuser, sie sieht Flüchtlinge, Frauen, Kinder, die aus Galizien nach Prag einreisen, um den Schrecken des Krieges zu entkommen, sie berichtet aber auch darüber, was sie hört, was sie von den Zurückgekehrten erfährt; all das sind jedoch nur Fetzen, Splitter. Durch ihre Perspektive offenbart sich, wie fragwürdig das Konstrukt des Krieges als einer organisierten, gesteuerten, kollektiven Handlung ist; Kveder zeigt, dass es im Grunde genommen nur um eine Ansammlung unzähliger Einzelereignisse geht, um Fragmente, die bei ihr nicht künstlich zu einer homogenen Ganzheit verschmelzen.

Nur einmal, ein einziges Mal, wird diese Ich-Erzählperspektive durchbrochen: durch den Brief ihres Bruders, den er direkt von der habsburgischen Front schreibt und der als authentisches Dokumentarmaterial beigelegt wird. Seine Schilderungen grausamster Verhältnisse bringen in die Geschichte noch ein zusätzliches Maß an Authentizität ein; dieses referentielle Signal soll jedoch nur als ein Zeichen, nicht aber als faktografisches historisches Ereignis verstanden werden. Kveder behält bis zum Schluss ihre authentische, subjektive Erzählweise bei und indem sie die Erzählordnung nicht einhält, zeigt sie nur, dass sich der Krieg als solcher der Ordnung und der Kohärenz entzieht.

Im Roman tritt sie eindeutig für die Armen, Mittel- und Heimatlosen ein. Vor dem Hintergrund ihrer anfänglichen Differenzierung zwischen der germanischen und der slawischen Seele beharrt Kveder konsequent auf der Unterscheidung zwischen den wahnsinnigen Europäern, wozu Deutsche und Österreicher gezählt werden, und den armen, entwurzelten Polen und Galiziern, die entweder für fremde Fahne kämpfen oder aufgrund harter Kämpfe ihre Heimat als Flüchtlinge verlassen müssen und daraufhin oft nach Prag reisen, die 'ewige Stadt', die sie zwar wohlwollend aufnimmt, die aber doch immer irgendwie fremd bleibt. Das Fremde und das Eigene¹⁰ zeigen sich somit als zwei Grundkategorien des Werkes.

4 FAZIT

Der Erste Weltkrieg bezeichnet für die Kulturgeschichte Europas eine Wende, die die gesellschaftliche Stellung der Frau maßgebend ins Wanken bringt. Die Frau befindet sich auf einmal in einer paradoxalen Situation. Einerseits wird ihr Engagement an der 'Heimatfront' hochgelobt, wo sie als Krankenschwester und Pflegerin über die Nacht unentbehrlich wird, andererseits versucht man wiederum das tradierte Weiblichkeitsideal aus der Vorkriegszeit aufrechtzuerhalten bzw. wieder zu beleben. An diesem Prozess sind entscheidend auch Autorinnen beteiligt. Der 1915 niedergeschriebene und Ende 1917 herausgegebene, von Zofka Kveder in kroatischer Sprache geschriebene Roman *Hanka* stört, so scheint es, den traditionellen, 'männlich' konnotierten Diskurs über den Krieg. Dennoch wäre es angebracht, der Versuchung zu widerstehen, den Roman von vornherein einfach unter der Rubrik „weiblicher Blickwinkel“ in eine Art Gruppenperspektive zu zwängen. Zofka Kveders Bearbeitung des schwierigen Themas erweist sich nämlich aus mehreren Sichtweisen als unikat. Die bewusste Entscheidung für die epistolarische Form ermöglicht der Ich-Erzählerin auf den Krieg aus der Innenperspektive zu blicken, wobei auch individuelle Ängste, Bedenken, Zweifeln und Reflexionen zum Ausdruck gebracht werden können, für die es in den dominierenden Kriegsnarrativen in der Regel keinen Platz gibt. Kveders offen dargelegte pazifistische Ansichten stimmen keineswegs mit der oktroyierten monarchischen Kriegsbegeisterung überein und die Nachricht über den Tod Kasimirs am Ende des Romans spendet den zu Hause wartenden Leserinnen und Lesern bestimmt keinen Trost. In der fragmentarischen Struktur des Textes wird die ganze Sinn- und Orientierungslosigkeit des Krieges semantisiert und durch die am Rande des

10 Zvonko Kovač (2003) geht explizit auf diese interkulturelle Dimension des Textes ein und weist im Vergleich zwischen den Romanen *Ihr Leben* und *Hanka* auf eine größere künstlerische Überzeugungskraft des Letzteren hin.

Kriegsgeschehens berichtende und erzählende Hanka wird der durch den Krieg geschaffene narrative Raum vom Rand aus ausgeweitet, womit der Blick auf das Periphere und (scheinbar) Minderwertige noch zusätzlich verschärft wird.

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„Tam čutiš toplino tujega življenja”: pacifistični pisemski roman Zofke Kveder (1878–1926)

Prispevek obravnava pisemski roman *Hanka* slovenske pisateljice Zofke Kveder, ki je izšel v hrvaščini leta 1917 in in v slovenskem prevodu leta 1938. V prispevku se izkaže, da se ta malo znani vojni roman Zofke Kveder bistveno razlikuje od siceršnjih vojnih narativov in da ga lahko tako po tematiki kot strukturi uvrstimo med eminentno pacifistična dela prvih dvajsetih let 20. stoletja. Obenem prispevek prevprašuje vlogo besedil slovenskih avtorjev in avtoric, napisanih v tujem jeziku, in pri tem zavzema stališče, da bi morala nacionalna literarna veda spričo spremenjenih družbenih razmer razmisliti tudi o ustrežnejši umestitvi teh besedil v literarni kanon.

Ključne besede: Zofka Kveder, pacifizem, Hanka, pisemski roman, vojna v književnosti

“There you feel the warmth of foreign life”: Pacifistic Epistolary Novel by Zofka Kveder (1878–1926)

The present paper addresses the novel *Hanka* written by Slovene writer Zofka Kveder, published in Croatian in 1917 and translated into Slovene in 1938. The paper shows that this little-known war novel differs substantially from other war narratives and that it can be ranked among the eminent pacifistic literary works of the first two decades of the 20th century. At the same time, the paper questions the role of the texts of Slovenian authors written in a foreign language, and stands up for the view that the national literary sciences should consider the more appropriate placement of these texts in the literary canon.

Key words: Zofka Kveder, pacifism, *Hanka*, novel, war in literature

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Literaturübersetzer als Dolmetscher, Moderatoren oder sogar Autoren

Amalija Maček

Zusammenfassung

Literaturübersetzer übernehmen viele Rollen, die über das eigentliche Übersetzen hinausgehen. Der vorliegende Beitrag konzentriert sich auf die Rolle des Moderators und Konsekutivdolmetschers von Lesungen, als auch auf die Rolle des Autors. Die Umfrage erreichte nur eine kleinere Anzahl von Teilnehmern, jedoch konnte sie bestätigen, dass Literaturübersetzer von den Veranstaltern aus finanziellen Gründen oft fast „gezwungen“ werden zu moderieren und zu dolmetschen. Diejenigen, die wenigstens eine kurze Schulung auf diesem Gebiet genossen haben, dolmetschen gerne und nach eigenen Aussagen auch gut. Diejenigen, die versuchen ohne Vorkenntnisse und ohne Notizen zu dolmetschen, haben meist schlechte Erfahrungen gemacht. Es zeigt sich der Bedarf nach Dolmetschkursen für Literaturübersetzer, die sowohl von Universitäten als auch von Übersetzerverbänden organisiert werden könnten. Umgekehrt könnten auch Konferenzdolmetscher vom Literaturunterricht während ihrer Ausbildung profitieren.

Die Umfrage bestätigte auch die gängige Vorstellung, dass Literaturübersetzer meist „verhinderte“ Autoren sind und gerne auch selbst schreiben würden. Auf jeden Fall sollte man den Literaturübersetzern den ihnen gebührenden Künstlerstatus anerkennen und sie nicht wie Dienstleister behandeln.

Schlüsselwörter: Literaturübersetzer, Konsekutivdolmetscher, Moderator, Autor, Ausbildung, Respekt

In Krisenzeiten des Verlagswesens und der Kultur im allgemeinen übernehmen Literaturübersetzer immer mehr Rollen, sei es als Geschäftsleute mit eigenem Unternehmen (zumindest einer Ich-AG), Werbeagenten für eigene Dienstleistungen und Literaturagenten für die übersetzten Autoren, Buchhalter, Kulturmanager, Blogger und Literaturkritiker, Organisatoren von Veranstaltungen und vieles mehr. In diesem Beitrag möchten wir uns auf einige spezifische Rollen fokussieren, für die Literaturübersetzer mit ihren Fachkenntnissen zwar geeignet, aber nicht unbedingt geschult und vorbereitet sind. Es handelt sich um Fälle, in denen der dem Klischee entsprechende zurückgezogene, stille Literaturübersetzer plötzlich selbst im Rampenlicht steht – als Dolmetscher, Moderator oder sogar als Autor.

Der Beitrag basiert auf 20 Jahren Erfahrung als Literaturübersetzerin, Pädagogin und 10 Jahren als Leiterin der Dolmetschstudiums an der Universität Ljubljana, methodologisch aber wurde eine kleine Umfrage unter den Übersetzern aus dem Deutschen in verschiedene europäische Sprachen durchgeführt, die vor allem eins zeigte: Literaturübersetzer mögen keine Online-Umfragen (was sowohl auf die Verfasserin dieses Textes als auch ihre Kolleginnen und Kollegen zutrifft), da sie zu wenig Platz und Freiheit bieten, eigene Erfahrungen und Meinungen zum Ausdruck zu bringen. Und sie mögen keine Technik (auch hier gab es Probleme auf beiden Seiten). So ergab es sich, dass nur vierzehn Antworten auf die eigentliche Umfrage eingegangen sind, jedoch erhielt die Verfasserin auch ungefähr so viele Privatmails, in denen Kollegen aus vielen europäischen Ländern ihre Erfahrungen schilderten, wofür sie dankbar ist.

LITERATURÜBERSETZER ALS KONSEKUTIVDOLMETSCHER

Bei vielen Buchmessen und Lesungen erlebt man, dass fremdsprachige Autorinnen und Autoren nicht von einem professionellen Dolmetscher, sondern von einem Literaturübersetzer gedolmetscht werden. Im besten Fall ist es der Übersetzer ihres / seines Werkes, manchmal auch nicht. In einem Fall berichtete eine Kollegin in ihrer Mail darüber, dass sie gebeten wurde, eine Veranstaltung zu dolmetschen, weil der Autor ein Freund von ihr war. Sie hatte keine Erfahrung mit Dolmetschen davor und war nach der Veranstaltung, bei der sie die Fragen nicht in voraus kannte und die Redesequenzen bei den Antworten viel zu lang waren, um sie sich merken zu können, nach eigenen Worten „unzufrieden und erschrocken“.

Oft rührt das daher, dass die Veranstalter zwischen den zwei Berufen gar nicht unterscheiden. Einer der Literaturübersetzer, der ebenfalls eine Mail schickte, schrieb: „Ich wurde ohne Bagage dazu verdonnert, nur weil Träger meinen, Dolmetscher und Übersetzer sind Synonym. Pff!“

Oft will man im Rahmen von finanziell unterernährten Veranstaltungen nur Geld sparen, da professionelle Dolmetscher teurer sind und der Literaturübersetzer manchmal für das gleiche Honorar moderieren und gleichzeitig dolmetschen oder wenigstens als Gast und als Dolmetscher fungieren. Diese Aussage bekräftigen auch die Aussagen der Teilnehmer (siehe unten).

Einige Veranstalter sagen, dass sie Literaturübersetzer den professionellen Konferenzdolmetschern vorziehen, da die Letzteren oft nicht vertraut sind mit dem literarischen Diskurs. Die Teilnehmer an der Umfrage sind hier vorsichtiger: 53,8 % finden es auch, dass Literaturübersetzer die besseren Dolmetscher für „ihre“ Autoren seien als Konferenzdolmetscher. 46,2 % aber geben differenzierter zu, dass es nicht unbedingt so sei und dass es von dem jeweiligen Literaturübersetzer und dem jeweiligen Konferenzdolmetscher abhängt.

Die Qualität der Verdolmetschung bei Literaturveranstaltungen variiert stark, denn viele Literaturübersetzer sprechen die Sprache, aus der sie zwar hervorragend übersetzen können, nicht wirklich fließend, manchmal aber verstehen sie die gesprochene Umgangssprache gar nicht. Das führt zum Stottern, Pausen, kurzen Nachfragen bei dem Autor. Seine Botschaft verflüchtigt sich, was sehr schade ist. Vor allem aber gilt es leider oft, dass Literaturübersetzer, die nur selten dolmetschen, kein Notizensystem erlernt oder wenigstens selbst entwickelt haben, was zu sehr kurzen Sequenzen führt, die sie noch fähig sind zu verdolmetschen, und den Autoren die Möglichkeit nimmt, einen Gedanken wirklich auszuführen. So gibt einer der Teilnehmer zu: „Ich dolmetsche nach und nach, fast simultan, nach kurzen Sätzen.“ Das nennt man Dialogdolmetschen und es wird meist im Kommunaldolmetschen, etwa bei Arztbesuchen oder Asylbewerbungen gebraucht, für Veranstaltungen mit abstrakteren Inhalten wäre Konsekutivdolmetschen mit Notizen geeigneter.

Bei der Umfrage zeigte sich das folgende Bild: Bei den Gründen, warum man als Literaturübersetzer gebeten wurde, zu dolmetschen, gaben 45,5 % an, dass sie als gute Dolmetscher bekannt sind; 27,3 % wählten die Antwort, dass sie den Autor einfach am besten kannten, und 27,3 % bestätigten unsere Annahme, dass es für den Veranstalter kostengünstiger war, sie zu engagieren als einen professionellen Konferenzdolmetscher.

Ganze 76,9 % wurden schon mehrmals angefragt, eine Veranstaltung konsekutiv zu verdolmetschen, was davon zeugt, dass das Thema aktuell ist. 15,4 % wurden einmal angefragt, 7,7 % nie. Und tatsächlich haben viele auch gedolmetscht (die Prozenträte kann vielleicht damit zusammenhängen, dass sich nur die Literaturübersetzer, die tatsächlich auch dolmetschen, von der Umfrage überhaupt angesprochen fühlten): 53,8 % wählten die Option: „Ja, ich habe oft gedolmetscht und ich finde es logisch, dass man mich darum bittet.“ 15,4 % haben es nur einmal gemacht und es ging gut. Jeweils 7,7 % aber haben zugegeben, dass sie es

entweder einmal versucht haben, aber es ging nicht gut (ähnliche Erfahrungen standen auch in den meisten Mails), dass sie es sich niemals trauen würden und/oder dass sie meinen, Dolmetschen sei ein besonderer Beruf, der eine besondere Schulung erfordere. Dieser niedrige Prozentsatz bei der letzten Antwort überrascht, auf der anderen Seite könnte man auch sagen, dass das Konsekutivdolmetschen eine natürliche und Jahrtausende lang ohne Training erfolgreich ausgeübte interkulturelle Tätigkeit sei. In diesem Sinne überrascht es nicht, dass 54,5 % der Befragten antworteten, dass sie sich das Konsekutivdolmetschen selbst angeeignet hätten. 18,2 % haben einen kurzen Kurs besucht und überraschende 27,3 % haben Dolmetschen sogar studiert. Das bestätigt die Annahme, dass die Umfrage meist von den Literaturübersetzern beantwortet wurde, die auch gute und sogar geschulte Dolmetscher sind. Literaturübersetzer mit weniger Qualifikationen und schlechteren Erfahrungen auf dem Gebiet des Dolmetschens haben es vorgezogen, der Verfasserin eine Mail zu schreiben oder an der Umfrage gar nicht teilzunehmen. Es überrascht, dass trotz Schulungen und Studium nur 9,1 % die offizielle Notizentechnik von Rozan (1956) verwenden.¹ 63,6 % verwenden zwar Notizen, haben jedoch ein eigenes System entwickelt, was natürlich auch möglich und vollkommen in Ordnung ist. 27,3 % haben immerhin angeführt, dass sie einfach versuchen, sich das Gesagte zu merken, was bei vielen Veranstaltungen dazu führt, dass einige interessante Informationen (und die meisten Jahreszahlen) wegfallen, was schade ist. Man könnte mit einem Blatt Papier und ein paar notierten Zahlen die Qualität der Wiedergabe wesentlich verbessern. Es gibt natürlich auch Genies wie Alida Bremer, die sich auch extrem lange Sequenzen bis ins kleinste Detail merken können, aber das sind eher Ausnahmen.

LITERATURÜBERSETZER ALS MODERATOR VON LITERATURVERANSTALTUNGEN

In vielen Ländern ist Moderator von Literaturveranstaltungen zwar kein besonderer Beruf, jedoch bevorzugt man als Moderatoren angesehene Experten, sei es Literaturkritiker, Professoren oder Journalisten, die schon einen Namen haben und so für die hohe Qualität bürgen und von sich aus Publikum anziehen. Nicht selten werden Literaturübersetzer dazu aufgefordert, selbst zu moderieren – sei es ein Gespräch mit dem Autor, den sie selbst übersetzt haben, oder mit anderen Übersetzern und Autoren, da sie das literarische Milieu und seine Gepflogenheiten Bestens kennen. Manchmal spielen auch hier die Kosten eine Rolle – wenn der Übersetzer schon da ist, kann er noch als Moderator (und/oder Dolmetscher)

1 Neben Rozan siehe auch Matyssek (2006), Jones (2002), Gillies (2013, 2014) oder für die slowenische Sprache Biffio-Zorko/Maček (2015).

dienen, was einige Übersetzer auch gerne tun, denn als Übersetzer hat man immer viele Fragen an (seinen) Autor und ist froh, selbst einmal zu Wort zu kommen. Wenn Literaturübersetzer gute Moderatoren und Dolmetscher sind, kann das zu einem angenehmen, da fließenden Ablauf der Veranstaltung führen, denn man kombiniert im besten Fall die Verdolmetschung schon mit der nächsten Frage.

Bei der Umfrage zeigten die Antworten, dass 61,5 % der Literaturübersetzer bereits ein Gespräch mit einem deutschsprachigen Autor moderiert haben. Zu 66,7 % handelte es sich sowohl um Autoren, die man selbst übersetzt hatte, als auch um Autoren, die von anderen Übersetzern übertragen wurden. Es gab niemanden, der nur „eigene“ Autoren moderieren würde, jedoch ganze 33,3 %, die nur Gespräche mit Autoren moderiert haben, die von anderen übersetzt wurden, was interessant ist. Die Veranstaltung fand entweder in Deutschland oder im Ausland statt, meist moderierten die Literaturübersetzer sowohl in Deutschland als auch in ihrem Heimatland (55,6 %).

Die Gründe, warum sie sich auch als Moderatoren betätigten, sind sehr unterschiedlich und erstaunlich gleichmäßig verteilt: 12,5 % haben ein Gespräch moderiert, weil sie den Autor übersetzt haben und sein Werk kennen, 12,5 % weil es wenig Experten für deutschsprachige Literatur in ihrem Land gibt, und 37,5 % haben angegeben, dass sie oft moderieren (was impliziert, dass sie sich bereits einen Namen als Moderatoren gemacht haben und deswegen eingeladen werden). Natürlich sind vorgegebene Antworten bei Online-Umfragen einengend, dennoch ist es interessant, dass niemand die Option gewählt hat, dass man selbst die Veranstaltung organisiert hat und deswegen auch moderierte. Das zeugt davon, dass Literaturübersetzer meist von anderen dazu aufgefordert werden, diverse Rollen zu übernehmen. Von der Zurückhaltung und Vorsicht der Literaturübersetzer zeugt auch die letzte Frage zu diesem Thema, ob sie sich denn als professionelle Moderatoren bezeichnen würden, worauf 80 % mit einem „Nein“ antworteten.

LITERATURÜBERSETZER ALS AUTOR

Man sagt oft, dass Literaturübersetzer oft verhinderte Autoren seien.² Man geht davon aus, dass sie sehr gerne selbst schreiben würden, sich jedoch nicht trauen. Viele etablierte Autoren sind selbst Literaturübersetzer, was davon zeugt, dass

2 Dieser Ansicht opponiert z.B. Hinrich Schmidt-Henkel. Seiner Meinung nach sind das „zwei grundverschiedene Metiers.“ Laut Schmidt-Henkel sollte man nur selber schreiben, wenn man etwas zu sagen hat. Der Literaturübersetzer könnte schreiben, wenn er wollte, denn die Sprache dafür hat er. Aber selbst wenn der Literaturübersetzer das schriebe, was er zu sagen hat, hätte er nur eine Sprache. Ihm würde dann das fehlen, was beim Übersetzen den Raum eröffnet, der für den Literaturübersetzer so faszinierend und existentiell notwendig ist: der Kontakt zwischen zwei Sprachen und der Raum zwischen zwei Sprachen. Vgl. Lignuapolis-Webseite.

sich die beiden Berufe sehr gut ergänzen, jedoch kennen wir auch Fälle, in denen ein Autor fast eifersüchtig war auf seinen Übersetzer, wenn dieser sich auch als Autor profilieren wollte. Es kann schon zu Problemen führen, wenn Autor und sein Übersetzer zu einer gemeinsamen Veranstaltung eingeladen sind und der Übersetzer auch als Dolmetscher fungiert und so automatisch fast doppelt so viel Redezeit (und Aufmerksamkeit) wie der Autor erhält, was für den Autor frustrierend und den Übersetzer unangenehm sein kann.

33,4 % der teilgenommenen Literaturübersetzer gaben an, dass sie auch selbst schreiben und veröffentlichen. Ebenfalls 33,4 % haben es versucht, jedoch nicht veröffentlicht. Je 16,7 % haben sich entweder nicht getraut oder man hat es sich gewünscht, jedoch nicht getan. Die Prozentsätze sind viel höher als erwartet und zeugen davon, dass Übersetzer, die ja für die Ausübung ihres Berufes sicherlich literarisch begabt sein müssen, tatsächlich oft oder fast immer „verhinderte Autoren“ sind.

Falls man etwas publiziert hat, haben die Übersetzerkollegen nach Aussagen der Teilnehmer darauf sehr positiv reagiert und sogar gratuliert. Positiv waren auch die Reaktionen der Autoren, die man davor übersetzte. 30 % der Literaturübersetzer, die auch schreiben, sind bereits auf der Bühne zusammen mit den übersetzten Autoren aufgetreten. Hier sind die Antworten anders als erwartet. Aus der Literaturszene kennt man leider viele Fälle, in denen die Autoren eher nicht erfreut sind, wenn sich der Übersetzer auch als Autor präsentieren möchte, was natürlich vom Kontext und den Involvierten abhängt.

SCHLUSSFOLGERUNGEN

Der Beitrag zeigt, wie viele Rollen Literaturübersetzer aus verschiedenen Gründen übernehmen und dass es Bedarf nach beruflicher Weiterbildung gibt, damit sie auf diese zusätzlichen Aufgaben besser vorbereitet wären. Man sollte selbstkritisch sein, an Schulungen teilnehmen und darauf achten, mit Dumpingpreisen anderen Berufsbildern (z.B. den Dolmetschern) nicht zu schaden. Sehr gut und pointiert fasst es einer der Teilnehmer zusammen: „Als literarischer Übersetzer + Interviewer + Dolmetscher bin ich glatt überfordert. Es sind drei verschiedene Gedankenarten bzw. Rhythmen. Es killt außerdem Arbeitsplätze und Geselligkeit.“

Meiner Meinung nach könnte man dennoch bestimmte Synergien zwischen den zwei Berufen fördern. Literaturübersetzer, die dolmetschen, würden wenigstens eine kurze Ausbildungsmaßnahme auf diesem Gebiet brauchen. Das bestätigen auch die Antworten der Umfrage: 61,5 % der Befragten sind fest davon überzeugt, dass man spezielle Dolmetschkurse für Literaturübersetzer

anbieten sollte. Bei der Frage, wer solche Kurse organisieren sollte, sind sich die Befragten ebenfalls überraschend einig, Universitäten sollten solche Kurse anbieten (54,5 %). An zweiter Stelle stehen Übersetzerverbände mit 36,4 %. Da die administrativen Wege bei der Einführung eines jeden Fortbildungsprogramms auf der universitären Ebene wenigstens in Slowenien extrem langwierig sind, fände ich es persönlich vorerst effizienter, solche Kurse im Rahmen des Übersetzerverbandes zu organisieren, konkret in Slowenien vor allem in Ausblick auf das Jahr 2022, in dem Slowenien Gastland auf der Frankfurt Buchmesse sein wird.

Was die Dolmetscherausbildung angeht, bin ich und 84,6 % der Befragten fest davon überzeugt, dass es gut wäre, wenn angehende Konferenzdolmetscher während ihres Studiums auch Literaturunterricht erhalten würden, was momentan nicht der Fall ist (die meisten studieren zwar auf BA Ebene Sprachen und die jeweilige Literatur). Die meisten Befragten gaben an, dass das wichtig für die Allgemeinbildung sei und Horizonte erweitere, jemand kommentierte treffend, dass „Literatur ein Gebiet sei, wo man auch in der Lage sein muss, ‚zwischen den Zeilen‘ zu hören“.

Abschließend könnte man sagen, dass die Umfrage trotz der geringen Anzahl von Antworten zeigte, dass es in der Praxis zu professionellen Anomalien kommt – vor allem aus finanziellen Gründen. Literaturübersetzer sollten darauf achten, den Beruf des Dolmetschers zu respektieren und wenn sie ihn ausüben, sich auf die Arbeit entsprechend vorzubereiten bzw. weiterbilden. Überraschend war die Zuversicht der Befragten in vielen Hinsichten, was zur Annahme führt, dass sich an der Umfrage eher nur diejenigen beteiligten, die die erwähnten Rollen auch tatsächlich oft und gut ausüben. Eine jede Online-Umfrage ist wie jede Statistik begrenzt in ihrer Aussagekraft, interessant war es nichtdestotrotz.

Neben der Trennung, Synergie und gegenseitigem Respekt zwischen den unterschiedlichen Berufsbildern, die ein Literaturübersetzer heute oft ausübt, ist es mir wichtig zu betonen, dass Literaturübersetzer vor allem Zeit, Raum (*a room of one's own* – wie bei Virginia Woolf) und soziale Sicherheit brauchen, um ihr kreatives Potential als Künstler³ entfalten zu können – oder wie es einer der Mail-schreibenden in seiner „rückMAILdung“ ausdrückte: „Ich interpretiere literarische Texte als seien sie eine musikalische Partitur, die immer neu gespielt werden kann ohne sich zu wiederholen.“

3 Wenngleich andere davon sprechen, dass die Entwicklung eher in die Richtung geht, dass sich die Literaturübersetzung aus einer Kunstform immer mehr zu einer Dienstleistung entwickelt (Schnell, 2009, 209 ff.), wozu auch einige Literaturübersetzer mit unkritischer Hyperproduktion beitragen.

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Književni prevajalci kot tolmači, moderatorji ali celo pisatelji

Književni prevajalci dandanes prevzemajo vse več vlog, ki presegajo samo prevajanje. V tem prispevku smo se osredotočili na vloge moderatorja in tolmača literarnih prireditev ter avtorja književnih del. Anketa je zajela le majhen vzorec, a je kljub temu potrdila, da so književni prevajalci pogosto „prisiljeni“ moderirati in tolmačiti, saj organizatorji literarnih dogodkov ne razpolagajo z dovolj sredstvi. Prevajalci, ki so bili deležni vsaj osnovnega izobraževanja na področju konsekutivnega tolmačenja s pomočjo zapiskov, radi in po lastnih navedbah dobro tolmačijo. Tisti, ki izobraževanja niso bili deležni, imajo pretežno slabe izkušnje. Kaže se potreba po tolmaškem izobraževanju književnih prevajalcev, ki lahko

poteka na univerzah ali v poklicnih združenjih, prav tako konferenčnim tolmačem ne bi škodilo, če bi njihov izobraževalni program vseboval tudi literarne vsebine.

Anketa je v presenetljivo veliki meri potrdila tudi splošno predpostavko, da bi prevajalci pravzaprav radi tudi sami pisali. Vsekakor pa bi morali književni prevajalci imeti status umetnikov in ne zgolj izvajalcev storitev.

Ključne besede: književni prevajalec, konsektivni tolmač, moderator, avtor, izobraževanje, spoštovanje poklica

Literary translators as interpreters, moderators or even writers

Literary translators today take on more and more roles that transcend sheer translation. In this article we focus on the role of a moderator and interpreter of literary events and an author of literary works. Our questionnaire comprised only a small sample, but it nonetheless confirmed that literary translators are frequently »forced« to moderate and interpret, since the organizers of literary events usually do not have enough financial means. Translators who received at least an elementary education in the field of consecutive interpreting with the help of notes are happy to interpret, which they in their own words like to do.

Keywords: literary translator, consecutive interpreter, moderator, author, respect, education

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The Circus and the Deadly Child: Ruptures of Social Code in *Jude the Obscure*

Tobias Wilson-Bates

Abstract

Thomas Hardy's *Jude the Obscure* has frequently been read as Hardy's social critique of marriage, class, and systemic education. Readings of the novel in this critical tradition have a tendency to simplify the text into an allegory emergent from Hardy's own biography. I seek to destabilize these readings by instead engaging with the text as one not concerned with institutions but rather the underlying social codes that give them coherence. By pairing Mikhail Bakhtin's concept of speech and counter speech with Lee Edelman's queer critique of child-centered futurity, I offer a new reading of the novel that privileges codes and legibility as central to the novel's critical project.

Key words: Thomas Hardy, *Jude the Obscure*, Victorian fiction

At various moments in *Jude the Obscure*, the reader is placed in the position of the shocked spectator. Indeed, sudden violence and harsh disillusion are two of the text's most remarkable features. Traditionally, these moments, where implicit social violence becomes explicit, are generally read as exclamation points to the work's criticism of specific social institutions. This paper seeks to destabilize such claims by revisiting the novel's most bizarre scenes. The first, when a peculiar band of market folk spring into violence during a public meeting, and, the second, when Little Father Time murders his siblings before committing suicide. These scenes that interrupt the social moment and scatter the preceding discourses of the novel provide insight into the greater nature of the novel's exploration; namely, that it is not social institution that is at fault for the misery of the text, but society's deeper inability to formulate logics capable of accounting for the world at large.

I begin my reading by quoting a displaced fragment of text within Hardy's narrative: "The farcical yet melancholy event was the beginning of a serious illness for him; and he lay in his lonely bed in the pathetic state of mind" (240). This passage, removed from its context in the novel, seems as if it could be applied to almost any moment in *Jude*. The scene is a reaction shot to a traumatic moment of unexpected reversal. The reader is probably inclined to think of Jude Fawley in this moment, perhaps in the long still section of the novel following the deaths of his children and Sue's departure for religion and for Phillotson. However, this is an earlier moment and a different man. Here we are actually reading Phillotson's reaction, not to Sue's departure with her lover, but to a scene of carnivalesque mayhem that erupts at the town council meeting when Phillotson argues for the private nature of his marital affairs.

What's telling about this scene, and the school teacher's reaction to it, is that Phillotson does not seem to take ill because of the council's verdict on his actions or even his consequential dismissal. Phillotson's conversations with Gillingham leading up to the meeting have prepared him for just this oppositionary logic of right and wrong: "[B]y resigning I acknowledge I have acted wrongly by her; when I am more and more convinced every day that in the sight of Heaven and by all natural, straightforward humanity, I have acted rightly" (238). Through the first half of the meeting, Hardy describes this simple logic playing out quickly. Phillotson "contended...that the matter was a domestic theory which did not concern them," followed by the townspeople's response that "the private eccentricities of a teacher came quite within their sphere of control, as it touched the morals of those he taught" (239). Here then we have quick and clean articulation of the identity of the individual posed against the landscape of the social. Phillotson's position as a perpetuator of normative social identities makes him a particularly apt figure for this play of personal versus social agency. But as we learn through the ostracizing of Jude and Sue, no such position is necessary for becoming an object of exclusion.

Phyllotson appears preeminently aware of these logics. As a disenchanted scholar and school teacher, he is situated in a privileged position of knowledge concerning his social context. In attempting to become a scholar and failing, he has already come up against the social apparatus writ large, and in structuring the experiences of his faceless students (he has no particular memory of Jude despite the intimate scene from earlier life and the brief educational correspondence), he is aware of himself as a participant in its reproduction. At play, then, is the concept of the social code. As Jude passionately states to Sue only a few pages before the scene in question, "I have sometimes thought, since your marrying Phyllotson because of a stupid scandal, that under the affectation of independent views you are as enslaved to the social code as any woman I know!" (232).¹

It's worth reflecting on how the idea of "code" operates particularly as an organizing concept in these moments and makes explicit other moments of the text that display a concern with social coding. The idea of the code allows the reader to work in two directions simultaneously. First, there is a totalizing tendency in choosing code over tradition or law because its bare structuralism allows for a sort of all-encompassing multi-valence. When Jude accuses Sue that she is bound by social code, the statement is effective because it works beyond the simple situation of her marriage and extends to the implicit socio-cultural apparatus that exerts pressures of class, propriety, and mobility throughout the text. The natural modern connection to code as the underlying structure of digital media is a compelling parallel that might be used to imagine how the term operates. Code constructs all that is possible in the virtual landscape, and beyond expressing what *is*, it also underlies the logic of all that could possibly be.

The second value of code is that the singularity of the term allows for meaning to operate on the specific as well as the abstract level. Code is at once the entire system and an instance within the system. Jude's declaration about Sue's enslavement to social code signals outwards to the social scene while at the same time referencing the particularities of the marriage institution. In this way, the concept always potentially contains its own interplay of individual articulation and social response.

Mikhail Bakhtin approaches the social code from the level of language. Speech, as an always-socially-situated phenomena, consistently indicates its existence within its larger social context, even at the level of the word. The word, for Bakhtin, never exists alone but always signals towards other words and contexts and "encounters an alien word not only in the object itself: every word is directed toward an *answer* and cannot escape the profound influence of the answering

1 This use of "code" as a metaphor for underlying social structures echoes an earlier moment where Phyllotson is separated from Sue due to Code, "It was part of his duty to give her private lessons in the evening, and some article in the Code made it necessary that a respectable, elderly woman should be present at these lessons, when the teacher and the taught were of different sexes. (99)

word that it anticipates" (28). Programmed into social discourse is this complex oppositionary logic of speech and counter-speech.

With this basic framework in mind, I'd like to return to the scene addressed earlier where Gillingham and Phillotson discuss the issue of individual morality in relation to the social scene. The conversation moves back and forth over the course of several pages and eclipses several days in narrative time. The end result is a final argument and opposition where Phillotson declares that the committee's sentiment "doesn't affect me in my public capacity," only to have Gillingham counter that as an issue concerning youth and "the morals of the town," Phillotson's position is "indefensible" (238).

It's necessary to summarize the scene carefully because, without an understanding of this basic dialogue, the odd following scene is easily misinterpreted. When Phillotson speaks out at the public meeting, he is already completely aware of the speech and counter-speech that will play out given the social codes involved. Phillotson argues for conduct performed along the moral guidelines of universal empathy while the community responds via the moral concerns of specific social situation. Hardy doesn't even transcribe the speech of this interaction, writing in a brief paragraph, "All the respectable inhabitants and well-to-do fellow-natives of the town were against Phillotson to a man" (239). Given that the reader has already dialogically negotiated the logics of this scenario, it makes perfect sense that the scene is so abbreviated.

However, what follows next is one of the more suddenly surreal explosions of nonsensical violence in all of Hardy's writing. None of the preceding scene warrants environmental description, meaning that the reader is left to imagine where and how the public meeting has been conducted. One might envision some sort of open public forum with seating where some vaguely middle-class men and women sit with expressions of disapproving skepticism while Phillotson pleads his case. However, this vision is punctured suddenly by an element even the narrative itself seems surprised by: "But, somewhat to his surprise, some dozen of more champions rose up in his defence as from the ground" (239). This moment of confusion seems to bridge a gap that forms simultaneously between two levels of code. First, the social code of the town within the novel is interrupted. The speech/counter-speech rehearsed by Phillotson and Gillingham before the meeting and the repetition of the same speeches within the meeting are suddenly broken by an unexpected "other." Second, the reader's relation to the narrative scene itself is destabilized. Hardy has either left out many of the participants in this pivotal scene until they begin to speak or the characters did not exist at all until they suddenly erupt into the middle of the town's social life.

To rephrase, the reader is as absolutely unprepared for the champions from the ground as Phillotson. One might even surmise that the faceless "respectable

inhabitants” are likewise astonished to suddenly find themselves in the company of amoral itinerants. Hardy’s description of Phillotson’s defenders only enhances the absurdity of the scene:

The body included two cheap-jacks, a shooting-gallery proprietor and the ladies who loaded the guns, a pair of boxing-masters, a steam-roundabout manager, two travelling broom-makers, who called themselves widows, a gingerbread-stall keeper, a swing-boat owner, and a ‘test-your-strength’ man. (239)

The interjected individuals, already an oddity in their moral stand, are rendered even more bizarre by the carnivalesque array of their professions. How does one not notice being in the same room with a ‘test-your-strength man’? What does it mean that two of the women “call themselves widows”? Connected as they are by fairs and markets, does this group constitute another community or merely a chance meeting of itinerant professionals?

Their position in relation to Phillotson’s moral stand is also unclear. They rise up in his defense, but is it in accordance with the school teacher’s “natural charity” or is it in some other mode of critique? This list in its intertextual possibilities alone is remarkable. The steam-roundabout manager brings to mind the opening scene of “On the Western Circuit”; the shooting gallery keeper rings of Dickens’ George Rouncewell; and the gingerbread-stall keeper almost seems a premonition of Jude’s future occupation. The women performing widowhood also seem significant in their claim. What is to be gained by claiming to be widows? Are they on the move despite marriage like Arabella in Australia, or are they in some other mode of relationship that requires a cover-up?

These questions and considerations are for the most part unanswerable or absurd, but that is just what makes the entire situation interesting. Hardy moves from this recitation of curious professionals into an even more bizarre scene of madcap violence:

[T]hey expressed their thoughts so strongly to the meeting that issue was joined, the result being a general scuffle, wherein a blackboard was split, three panes of the school-windows were broken, an inkbottle was spilled over a town-councillor’s shirt-front, a church-warden was dealt such a topper with the map of Palestine that his head went right through Samaria, and many black eyes and bleeding noses were given, one of which, to everybody’s horror, was the venerable incumbent’s, owing to the zeal of an emancipated chimney-sweep, who took the side of Phillotson’s party. (239)

This scene does work on a number of narrative levels. First, it is the most active sequence of the entire novel. The other moment of unexpected rupture, the

murder-suicide of the children, happens outside of the reader's vision and involves significantly less action. The climactic conflict also finishes off the backwards logic of the overall sequence. It's only when the school-windows start breaking that the reader realizes the entire series of events is actually taking place inside the school-house. Setting leaps into existence just like Phillotson's supporters, and even more characters enter the fray as we're introduced to a chimney-sweep omitted from the earlier list of combatants. The social logic of the town and the narrative logic of the novel seem to scatter confusedly at this moment.

Despite the riotous hullabaloo, the narrative voice remains distanced and impassive throughout, at one point pausing the action to show the reader at what position the church-warden's head enters a map of Palestine. It is as if, at this moment of most intense immediate experience, the reader is positioned at a great distance from the text and forced into a heavily mediated relationship of narrative vision. This mediation of detached narrative voice is entertaining as it contrasts with the wildness of the events described, but the curious distance from a heavily emotional context also sets a precedent for the following scene and the even darker events thereafter. Emphasizing the narrator's coolness is Phillotson's crippling inability to come to terms with the event.

It is my argument that Phillotson's consequential illness has nothing at all to do with the town's rejection of his case or the loss of his position, and everything to do with the fantastic eruption of the carnivalesque moment in the middle of his premeditated social dialogue. Hardy describes Phillotson's reaction to the event at length, beginning with, "The farcical yet melancholy event was the beginning of a serious illness for him; and he lay in his lonely bed in the pathetic state of mind of a middle-aged man who perceives at length that his life, intellectual and domestic, is tending to failure and gloom" (240). There is a harsh divergence here, once again, between the position of the narrative voice and that of the character described on the page. Phillotson clearly does not see the event as farcical, but rather as a death-knell to his already strained ability to cope with the world at large.

Of course, this "world at large" for Phillotson has a very specific meaning. It is a world where identifiable subject-positions are definitively mapped into the social landscape. Thus, when Phillotson eventually changes his position concerning his wife, it is not to some new understanding of the situation but rather a reversion to the opposite extreme of his former stance. Hovering above this back-and-forth is the disconnected narrator, who seems detached from either extreme of the social logics exemplified in Phillotson's behavior. This position of exteriority implicitly poses the question of what the overarching voice of the novel proposes, a question that becomes that much more poignant when the novel represents its most notable scene of pain and trauma.

Throughout the critical history of *Jude*, the narrator is collapsed with the critical social voice of Hardy. Critics assume that the narrative perspective of the novel is simply a cipher for how Hardy responds to criticism or proposes social critiques of marriage since Hardy himself is not dissimilar from the class and educational status of his protagonist. The novel is often shaped into a biographical narrative involving Hardy's position on reader response to his tragic vision, criticism of marriage as an institution, or the anger of a lower-class autodidact writing towards a system of judgmental elitism.² Each of these formulations demands an oppositionary logic that identifies the narrator by defining it against society. One of the earliest and most cited responses to the novel, Margaret Oliphant's "The Anti-Marriage League," sets up the novel as a series of social oppositions at the level of novel and character. What's most interesting about the reading that sees Jude as "a puppet flung about between them by two women—the fleshy animal Arabella and the fantastic Susan"—is that it solidifies discourses surrounding the novel into the paths they generally follow thereafter (306). Whether later critics agree with Oliphant that Hardy preached an indecent doctrine of "hideous circumstance" or felt that Hardy's intentional perversity signaled more complex social claims, there has been a tendency to see the novel as pedantically trumpeting a monologic social agenda (305).³

This reading requires a certain amount of willful exclusion of the elements of the text that don't fit into comfortable binaries, which is especially troubling since the text itself problematizes the possible efficacy of oppositional logic at its most climactic moments. The impossibility of reading the text's social aims as singular, so explicit in the public meeting, echo in the figure of Little Father Time. The morose child with the paradoxically allegorical name splinters novelistic themes and the unity of the plot in his character and actions. He is at once young and ageless, allegorical past and "beginning of the coming universal" (326). Furthermore, his monotone sadness fashions him into a kind of closed-off Bartleby in the social schematic of the novel. It's unclear whether love can affect him, if his sadness stems from a bad marriage, a non-marriage, or a colonial upbringing. Like Phil-

2 A couple of examples of scholars that reinforce this reading include Walter Gordon who writes in his article "Father Time's Suicide Note in the *Jude the Obscure*" that "Father Time is surely a thinly veiled persona for Thomas Hardy himself" (298) and Alex Moffett who writes in his "Memory and Crisis of Self-Begetting in Hardy's *Jude the Obscure*" that he does not wish "to contest Hardy's class-based critique of, in Tim Dolin's words, 'the ideological bias of the notion of individual change operating within societal stability'" (86)

3 A peculiar result of reading the novel as pure social commentary is the repeated appearance of the text in legal discourse including the relatively recent articles "Unwilling Fathers and Abortion: Terminating Men's Child Support Obligations" in *The Modern Law Review* (2003), and, "So Young and so Untender': Remorseless Children and the Expectations of the Law" in *Columbia Law Review* (2002).

lotson's defenders, he seems to simply rise from the ground and, like Phillotson, the defense for his crime seems to be one of natural charity.

Little Father Time appears as a continuation of the nineteenth-century unwanted child tradition, evoking his long line of *Oliver Twist*-like predecessors as he trudges alone through the street towards another temporary home. However, it's deeply unclear what cause he champions or what social ills he represents. In fact, his apositionality forecasts an issue that Lee Edelman later confronts in relation to the modern apolitical child. In his book *No Future*, Edelman tackles the issue of identity as it's determined through opposition in the normative social scene. Edelman describes the Child as "the emblem of futurity's unquestioned value" and proposes a queer oppositionality that stands against the very "logics of opposition" as such (4). This difficult formulation, Edelman states,

suggests a refusal...of every substantialization of identity, which is always oppositionally defined, and, by extension, of history as linear narrative ... in which meaning succeeds in revealing itself—as itself—through time. Far from partaking of this narrative movement toward a viable political future, far from perpetuating the fantasy of meaning's eventual realization, the queer comes to figure the bar to every realization of futurity, the resistance, internal to the social, to every social structure or form. (4)

Edelman's argument points towards the inability of oppositionary social code to account for the entirety of the social scene. The inadequacy of the social code does not lie in its structures, but rather in its very concept. In light of this line of argumentation, *Jude* may be re-imagined as a critique of foundational social logics rather than a criticism of social institutions such as marriage, education, and religion.

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Cirkus in smrtonosni otrok: Razkroj družbenega koda v romanu *Jude the Obscure*

Jude the Obscure Thomasa Hardyja je bila pogosto interpretirana kot družbena kritika zakona oziroma poroke, razreda in systemske izobrazbe. Takšna branja v tej kritiški tradiciji pa vendarle poenostavljajo tekst v alegorijo, ki izhaja iz Hardyjeve lastne biografije. Avtor članka želi destabilizirati takšne interpretacije in se ukvarja s tekstom, ki naj se ne bi ukvarjal z institucijami, marveč bolj z relevantnimi družbenimi kodi, ki jim omogočajo koherenco. Ob uporabi Bakhtinovega koncepta govora in protigovora s queerovsko kritiko prihodnosti, ki naj bi bila osredinjena na otroka, avtor ponuja novo branje, ki bolj temelje na kodu in berljivosti, ki je po njegovem mnenju osrednjega pomena v kritičnem projektu romana.

Ključne besede: Thomas Hardy, *Jude the Obscure*, viktorijanska proza

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